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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Tom Neubauer Named Volunteer of the Year**

*By the Florida Economic Development Council*

**PANAMA CITY, FL-** On June 29, 2004, the Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC) District 1 members officially named Tom Neubauer with ERA Neubauer Real Estate the **2004 Richard L. McLaughlin Economic Development Volunteer of the Year Award** winner for their district at the annual FEDC Conference in Orlando, FL.

Mr. Neubauer has worked closely with the Bay County Economic Development Alliance (EDA) and the Bay County Chamber of Commerce for many years. He has held several office positions including chairman of the Bay County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors in 1997 and chairman of the Bay County Economic Development Alliance Board of Directors in 2003. In addition, he has been involved with other community organizations considered important to economic development in Bay County, including Bay Medical Center Board of Trustees, Panama City Port Authority Board of Directors, Secretary/Treasurer of the Bay County Defense Alliance, Past Chairman of the Gulf CoastBoard, and Haney Technical Center Advisory Board.

As chairman of the Economic Development Alliance in 2003, Mr. Neubauer participated in several key projects. Under his leadership, 610 new jobs were created with millions of dollars in new investment. One noteworthy project with which Mr. Neubauer was heavily involved was the successful recruitment of Oceaneering International to Bay County. Oceaneering created 180 high wage jobs and brought a \$25 million investment to Bay County. In addition to job recruitment efforts, Tom Neubauer was very active serving existing industries. He led a successful outbound trade mission to Mexico, which projects over \$1.1 million in total business in the next twelve months. Furthermore, Mr. Neubauer launched the Enterprise Bay program, an effort aimed at increasing private sector involvement and funding for the EDA. By year-end, Enterprise Bay had eight members and had raised \$40,000 in private sector funding.

Although Mr. Neubauer's professional obligations keep him busy, he remains dedicated to economic development and his role as an active EDA board member. He has always maintained a professional, considerate, and friendly manner with the EDA board of Director's, volunteers, and staff. During his year as the EDA Chairman, Mr. Neubauer was diligent about communicating with the staff and offering personal encouragement and advice.

**About the FEDC**

The FEDC is a not-for-profit statewide organization consisting of individuals concerned with furthering the economic growth of the state and presents the awards annually to recognize outstanding volunteer achievement in economic development in a community or throughout the state of Florida. The ***Richard L. McLaughlin Economic Development Volunteer of the Year Award*** is named in honor of Richard L. McLaughlin, who firmly believed in the significance of volunteer contributions to the achievement of economic development goals for the state.

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