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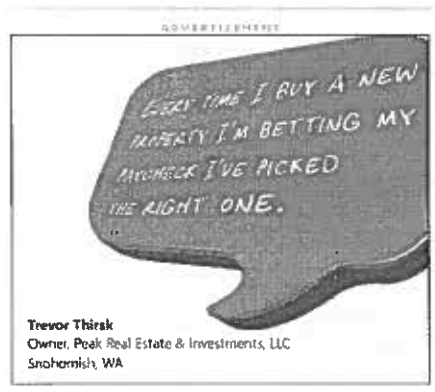
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Huckabee, Posey talk politics, tour mobile training RV

BY JIM WAYMER • FLORIDA TODAY • OCTOBER 14, 2008

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ROCKLEDGE -- Mike Huckabee said federal dollars for job retraining, such as the program he learned about here Monday, make much more sense than bailing out Wall Street financiers.



Trevor Thirk
Owner, Peak Real Estate & Investments, LLC
Snohomish, WA

"I think it's a fantastic model of a way to bring employment to people," Huckabee said, in discussing the Mobile Outreach Skills Training program.

The former presidential hopeful had just stepped off a recreational vehicle, converted into a mobile classroom for manufacturing workers.

Huckabee, along with State Sen. Bill Posey, Republican candidate for the 15th Congressional District seat, got a tour of the vehicle Monday, parked at Mainstream Engineering Corp. in Rockledge.

Huckabee was in Brevard County on Monday stumping for several Republican candidates,

including Thad Altman, congressional candidate for District 24.
Huckabee said the Fair Tax, which would replace all federal income taxes with a single national retail sales tax, would help preserve American manufacturing jobs.

"That singly would change the whole game," Huckabee said.

The Mobile Outreach Skills Training program trains and places low-skilled workers in entry-level manufacturing jobs after an intense two-week course in basic manufacturing skills. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and local work-force boards.

The program could help bridge the employment gap between the 2010 sunset of the space shuttle program and the next generation of spacecraft, said Claudia Follet, director of grants and partnership development with Time Wise Management Systems, which runs the program.

"They need a career path," Follet said. "After two weeks, we get them a job."

Graduates of the program start at an average of \$31,200 a year, with health benefits, according to Time Wise.

"The technicians at the Space Center are exactly what we need," said Robert Scaringe, president and founder of Mainstream Engineering, which hosted Monday's event. "We have a tremendous number of openings."

Mainstream Engineering makes "high-speed, high-efficiency compressors and turbines for air, steam, refrigeration and other chemical process applications," according to its Web site. It also makes thermal control systems and other components for spacecraft.



Arkansas governor and former presidential candidate Mike Huckabee, right, and state Sen. Bill Posey toured the Time Wise Mobile Outreach Skills Training unit Monday morning in Rockledge. (Tim Shortt, FLORIDA TODAY)

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The company also is working on a 100-mph diesel hybrid car -- "the Hundred" -- which it plans to unveil at an international car show in 2012.

"I think it's a really good idea. You rarely see something that comes out of Washington that truly helps people every day," Posy added.

"There's no downside to it."

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