

Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and VISITORS CENTER



The Lark

January 2009

Volume XIII Issue 1

BRINGING BUSINESS & THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER!

4787 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

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markwest@markwest.org

DANE JASPER CEO OF SONIC.NET HONORED AS MARK WEST CHAMBER'S 2008 SPIRIT AWARD WINNER

With over 400 local chamber representatives, elected officials and media members in attendance, the Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center honored Sonic.net President and CEO Dane Jasper as a Spirit of Sonoma County *Businessperson of the Year*. The Sonoma County Spirit awards ceremony is an annual awards program which recognizes outstanding business leaders and entrepreneurs who contribute to the economic vitality of Sonoma County. The 26 honorees are individually selected by local chambers of commerce and trade organizations. This was the first year that our Chamber took part in the Spirit awards, which is now in its 8th year. Recognition was given to the Chamber for this being our first year as a Spirit Awarding Chamber.

Dane Jasper of Sonic.net (one of our Chamber members), was unanimously chosen by the Board of Directors. Dane Jasper started Sonic.net as a class project in the early 1990s at Santa Rosa Junior College. 18 years later, Sonic.net is the largest independent Internet Provider in Northern California with over 47,000 subscribers and employing over 75 individuals. Dane Jasper has given back to our community by offering free WiFi access throughout downtown Santa Rosa, Windsor and Petaluma, on SRJC campuses and onboard Airport Express buses. In his spare time Dane supports Canine Companions for Independence, Santa Rosa Parks and Recreation, the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer and many more worthy organizations.

Also in attendance from our chamber were Chamber President Jim Bajgrowicz from the Office of James Bajgrowicz, *continued on page 6*



Anthony Gerald, Airport Express, Dane Jasper, Sonic.net, Jim Bajgrowicz, Chamber President



Sonoma County Spirit Awards Ceremony December 5, 2008



Social hosted by Cal-Am Water and Exchange Bank more on page 3

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

AFTER HOURS BUSINESS SOCIAL

Hosted by **B & G PETS**

6119 Old Redwood Highway, Suite A3
Windsor Village just North of Shiloh

Thursday, January 8, 2009

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Bring your business cards

BLOOD DRIVE

BBR and RVFA in the parking lot at Molsberrys

Friday, January 9, 2009

afternoon

*Our Mission:
The Mark West Area
Chamber of Commerce
is organized to advance
the economic well-
being and uniqueness
of the Mark West Area
so that its citizens and
all areas of its business
community shall prosper.*



*Jim Bajgrowicz,
President*

The next Board of
Director's meeting
is January 13 at
Grace Fellowship,
608 Larkfield Center
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

*Want to keep abreast
of important information
pertinent to business
and legislative items??*

Go to: calchamber.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our success as a Chamber is ever increasing and for good reason. We have a Board of Directors which has been and continues to be willing to pitch in and work for the betterment of business and the community. Many activities enumerated last issue are the result of the work of our Board and they are making surprising plans for the New Year!

Joyce Partington thought it best to resign from the Board due to an upcoming lengthy vacation to Florida. Joyce was the chairperson for the Christmas tree lighting event, working with local schools and their chorus. Joyce will be back in the office as a volunteer upon her return. Will Brodt of Promos OnCall was appointed to the Board to fill the vacancy. Thank you chairperson Joyce Partington.

One can't say enough good things about our Business After Hours socials directed by the Ambassadors. The last few have had participation of 65-75 members and guests. Along with the socializing, business is discussed, member services are enumerated, new members inducted, refreshments served, and prizes won. Our hosts for the December 11th gathering were CalAm and Exchange Bank. Very well done by all!

Your Chamber joined and participated in the Spirit of Sonoma County Awards Program honoring Dane Jasper of Sonic.net as our candidate. Let's plan on this event again for 2009. Thank you chairman Tony Gerald.

Economic news for the new year: federal, state, county governments, and local business outlooks are not optimistic. Job losses are increasing, state projects (especially in Sonoma County) are being cut and taxes increased. Creative thought will be necessary for many businesses to keep going. This is where shopping locally comes in. Shop where you and your neighbors are employed and live. Enjoy the now lower price of fuel, both gas and PG&E gas for heating.

It may be too late to wish you a Happy New Year, but the sentiment is there with you for the entire year.

Best Wishes, Respectfully, Jim Bajgrowicz, President

I feel that you are justified in looking into the future with true assurance, because you have a mode of living in which we find the joy of life and the joy of work harmoniously combined. Added to this is the spirit of ambition which pervades your very being, and seems to make the day's work like a happy child at play.
-Albert Einstein

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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December's Business After Hours Social was co-hosted by Exchange Bank and Cal American Water at the Exchange Bank Branch in the Larkfield Center. It was a wonderful event with a very nice turnout. There was a very nice spread of food and desserts prepared by Molsberry Markets as well as a variety of soft drinks, bottled water and a nice selection of wine.

I invited the President of the Windsor Chamber of Commerce, Kurt Mitchler, DDS to this event. When he came shortly after we were all enjoying good conversations, food, etc., he surprised us by bringing Santa Claus. This certainly added to the atmosphere. He was a big hit!

As, hopefully, all of you know, we have been having a great time with our various prize drawings. Cal American Water added twenty dollars to the "Pot of Gold", making it sixty dollars for the winner - Tom Nunes of T & D Associates. The 50/50 Raffle was won by Jeanie Haddorff of Healthy Are We. Door Prize winners were Denise Brodt of Promos Oncall, Tony Lindstrom of Cal Am Water, Jim Bajgrowicz, Phillip Petersen of Wine Country Chauffeur and Dee Gutmann, VC Volunteer.

New members introduced were Phillip Petersen, owner of Wine Country Chauffeur and Maureen Merrill of Harris Merrill Communication Consulting. Each gave us a description of themselves and their respective businesses.

We wish to thank Tony Lindstrom and his staff for co-hosting this successful and very enjoyable event, and Laura Buhner, Exchange Bank Branch Manager, all of her staff and executives for providing their office for this Social.

Mark your calendar for January 8, 2009, our next BAH Social. So many good opportunities to meet new people, network your business, and share a brief enjoyable time with established Chamber Members. It has been very good for me in my business...but you have to attend to get those benefits. Hope to see you there, and bring a guest if you'd like.

Have a Great New Year. If we all work together, we can make it a successful New Year.

contributed by Walt Smith, Past President, VP Business Services

DECEMBER SOCIAL

*Hosted by
CAL-AM WATER
& EXCHANGE
BANK*



Laura Buhner, Branch Manager, Larkfield and Ron Malnati, VP Exchange Bank



Phillip Petersen of Wine Country Chauffeur receives his new member plaque from Evan Jacobs of Cal-Am Water & Santa



Michael Merrill, Jim Bajgrowicz with Maureen Merrill of Harris Merrill Communication Consulting as she receives her new member plaque from Evan Jacobs, Cal-Am



Host Anthony Lindstrom of Cal-Am Water draws a winner from the Pot of Gold held by Will Brodt of Promos Oncall.

Visit www.MarkWest.org/DecemberSocial2008 for more photos

BUSINESS-AFTER-HOURS-SOCIALS

- JAN 8 B & G PETS**
- FEB 12 CELLULARWORLD**
- MAR 12 C. GRAY LANDSCAPING**
- APR 9 HILTON GARDEN INN**
- MAY 14 SONOMA COUNTY AIR MUSEUM**
- JUN 11 CHANCELLOR PLACE OF WINDSOR**
- JUL 9 GOODWILL INDUSTRIES/JOB LINK**
- AUG 13 AUTOBAHN**
- SEP 10 AIRPORT EXPRESS/ACTION RENTS**
- OCT 8 CAL AMERICAN WATER**
- NOV 12 SONOMA EYEWORKS**
- DEC 10 EXCHANGE BANK/MOLSBERRY MARKETS**



Sonoma CONNECTION

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**CALCHAMBER
RELEASES LIST
OF NEW LAWS
AFFECTING
CALIFORNIA
BUSINESSES
IN 2009**

The California Chamber of Commerce has released a list of new laws scheduled to take effect in 2009 or earlier that will have an impact on businesses in California.

“California employers need to be aware of several new laws affecting their businesses,” said CalChamber President and Chief Executive Officer Allan Zaremborg. “The CalChamber’s CalBizCentral compliance division is already a step ahead, offering training materials that will help businesses start off the new year in full compliance.”

NEW LAWS

(for full list and resources, visit http://www.calchamber.com/alert/alert_12-5-08-4.htm)

- **Family and Medical Leave Act:** The U.S. Department of Labor published the final version of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) regulations pertaining to military families and qualifying exigencies. The regulations define what a “qualifying exigency” is for purposes of qualifying for up to 12 weeks of FMLA leave. Families with active military personnel may now be eligible if their situation meets one of the new qualifying exigencies: short notice deployment, attendance at official military events or activities, arranging or providing child care, attending school or day care meetings, handling financial and legal matters, and rest and recuperation visits when the soldier is on leave.

- **Cell Phone Use:** Since July 1, 2008, drivers have been required to use a hands-free device while talking on a cell phone and driving. Starting January 1, 2009, text-based communication while driving is prohibited as well, with the same penalties—\$20 for the first offense and \$50 for subsequent offenses. Specifically, the law prohibits writing, sending or reading text-based communication, including text messaging, instant messaging and e-mail on a wireless device or cell phone while driving.

- **Invalid Waivers:** A bill amended Labor Code Section 206.5, making null and void the execution of any release on account of wages due. Employers who violate this law are guilty of a misdemeanor. The new law—effective January 1, 2009—adds the following language: “For purposes of this section, ‘execution of a release’ includes requiring an employee, as a condition of being paid to execute a statement of the hours he or she worked during a pay period, which the employer knows to be false.”

- **Temporary Employees:** Wages for employees of temporary services employers shall be paid weekly or daily if an employee is assigned to a client on a day-to-day basis or to a client engaged in a trade dispute. This requirement does not apply to employees who are assigned to a client for more than 90 consecutive calendar days unless the employer pays the employee weekly. Failure to do so can result in civil and criminal penalties.

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Tradeshow 2008
Benjamin Tire & Brake



Tradeshow 2008
Burgess Lumber



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Ambassador Club?
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Wikiup Professional Park, 136 Wikiup Drive, Suite B, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

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- **Minimum Pay for Exempt Computer Professionals:** Effective January 1, 2009, Labor Code Section 515.5 was amended to allow payment to computer professionals as a monthly or annual salary. The hourly rate for 2009 is increased from \$36 to \$37.94. For 2009, the minimum monthly salary exemption is \$6,587.50, and the minimum annual salary exemption is \$79,050.
- **Exemption for Physicians Paid on Hourly Basis:** A licensed physician or surgeon who is primarily engaged in performing duties for which licensure is required is exempt from overtime if he/she is paid at least the minimum hourly rate set annually by the state. Effective 1/1/2009, the minimum hourly rate is \$69.13.
- **Political Speech:** In July 2008, the president of the National Labor Relations Board issued guidelines to employers concerning employee participation in political advocacy activities and providing guidance to employers as to when disciplinary actions for these activities may be appropriate.
- **Workers' Comp Injury Reporting:** Labor Code Section 6409.1 was amended to change the reporting of work-related injuries and illnesses. Once the regulations are finalized, insured employers must file a form as prescribed by the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) with the DWC, and self-insured employers must use a new, yet-to-be created electronic form within the time specified. Amended reports following a death must now be filed with the DLSR.
- **Nutritional Information for Chain Restaurants:** A new law requires chain restaurants with 20 or more facilities in California to post nutritional information. Beginning July 1, 2009, to December 31, 2010, each facility must disclose nutritional information or calorie count information about the food it serves. Nutritional information includes, but is not limited to, all of the following, per standard menu item, as that item usually is prepared and offered for sale:
 - > total number of calories; grams of carbohydrates; grams of saturated fat; and milligrams of sodium.

Mandatory changes have been made to three of the notices California employers are required to display to explain workers' rights to employees.

- New federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) rules published on November 17 include new poster and notice requirements.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) workplace poster includes required changes, according to the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.
- The state Employment Development Department (EDD) notice to employees has changed for 2009.

**CALCHAMBER
RELEASES LIST
OF NEW LAWS
AFFECTING
CALIFORNIA
BUSINESSES
IN 2009**



*Tradeshow 2008
Airport Health Club*



*Tradeshow 2008
Barefoot Cellars*

**MANDATORY
CHANGES
MEAN NEW
POSTERS MUST
BE DISPLAYED**

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DANE JASPER CEO OF SONIC.NET HONORED

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Chamber Ambassador Kathleen Palmer from Sonoma Connection, Chamber Treasurer John Essman from Sonoma Connection, Chamber Past President Walt Smith from Just Transportation, Chamber Head Ambassador Anthony Geraldi from Sonoma County Airport Express as well as Sonoma County Airport Express Corporate President Raymond Neese. Accompanying Dane Jasper were his wife Tara and Sonic.net General Manager Jen Moyer.

Besides congratulating Dane Jasper on his award, the Mark West Chamber would like to also congratulate Mark West Chamber member Roger Olsen from the Pacific Coast Air Museum. Roger was honored by our friends at the Windsor Chamber of Commerce for all the great work he does in our community.

RIBBON CUTTING: BIG BOYS BUNS & BURGERS

The Mark West Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center proudly welcomes George Fiori and Greg Jones, owners of Big Boys Buns & Burgers with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Big Boys Buns & Burgers has been pleasing people of all ages with real old-fashioned goodness. Their burgers are simply the best, and the milk shakes are made with real ice cream the old-fashioned way. George treated chamber ambassadors to his fabulous homemade Minestrone Soup following the ribbon cutting. For an Old Fashioned good time visit Big Boys Burger & Buns at 406 Larkfield Center soon.

RIBBON CUTTING: RESTORATION STATION

The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center welcomes Mackensie Ashton, owner of "Restoration Station" located at 860 Piner Road in Santa Rosa with a ribbon cutting ceremony highlighting her one year anniversary. Restoration Station is dedicated to the art of high quality furniture repair, refinishing and restoration. With the culmination of 17 years of hands-on knowledge in woodworking, interior design and project management, she transforms furnishings into beautiful masterpieces, retaining their classic style. Visit Mackensie's shop or call 707-538-2136 for a Free Estimate, or visit her website: <http://www.restorationstations.com>



RENEWALS

Wikiup Golf Course (1988)
BoDean Co. Inc. (1993)
Triple Crown Awards (1998)
Redwood Credit Union (2002)
Clone Digital Print (2004)
AutoBahn (2005)
Sonic.net (2007)
Struthers Lighting Products (2007)

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**Mark West Area
Chamber of Commerce
and VISITORS CENTER**



4787 Old Redwood Hwy, Suite 101
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*All the Best
to You
in 2009!*

**AFTER HOURS
BUSINESS SOCIAL**

**JANUARY 8, 2009
5:30pm - 7:30pm**

hosted by
B & G PETS
6119 ORH, Suite A3
Windsor Village
just North of Shiloh

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