

Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and VISITORS CENTER



The Lark

November 2020
Volume XXXIV Issue 11

BRINGING BUSINESS & THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER!

4787 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Visitors Center: Mon. - Fri. 9 am - 4 pm www.markwest.org

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office@markwest.org

ANNUAL CHAMBER AWARDS

Every year the Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce gives out three very special awards. Two are bestowed by the Board of Directors and the third is awarded to a Board Member by the Chamber President. These awards are given to individuals or businesses who have really stepped up during the year and helped the Chamber accomplish something extra special that also benefited the community. We are featuring two of these awards this month and will feature the third next month.

Volunteer of the Year:

Stephanie Bisordi, Bisordi Ranch & Vineyards, LLC

Stephanie and her husband Robert created the now famous Lunches for Lifesavers program. This program provided a meal for all the Sutter Hospital emergency room workers every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for over three months. Then, due to overwhelming support by the Press Democrat, Chamber members and the community, it has been continued and is still providing snacks and occasional meals to this day.

Board Member of the Year: Alicia Mills, Mark West Union School District Executive Assistant

Alicia has been instrumental in all aspects of arranging, coordinating, setting up, and documenting Chamber Board meetings. She has also served on Chamber special committees, including the Community Faire Committee, where she did an outstanding job of helping promote that event. Her efforts and her contributions to the Chamber and the community have made a big difference in many people's lives.

Member of the Year: We will feature the Chamber's Member of the Year in next month's newsletter.



Stephanie Bisordi of Bisordi Ranch & Vineyards, LLC, is at center in the white coat. With her are Rob Bisordi, Robbie Bisordi, Lori Bisordi, and Kyle Gallegos. At left are Doug Williams (Chamber Past President), and Steve Plamann (Aaction Rents, and Chamber President), presenting Stephanie's award.



Alicia Mills, Board Secretary, being honored as Board Member of the Year. Alicia is the District Secretary for Mark West Union School District. At left is Ron Calloway, District Superintendent. Steve Plamann (Aaction Rents, and Chamber President) is presenting her award plaque.

COME HANG AN ORNAMENT!

Molsberry's Market will once again be hosting a Christmas tree! We want YOU to provide an ornament. Contact the Chamber to schedule a time when we can video a representative from your business or organization hanging your ornament and saying a brief promotional "Season's Greetings". We'll be sharing these 20-second videos on social media throughout the month of December. Contact Beth Henry, VP Publicity and Public Relations, at (707) 578-7975 or office@markwest.org. The Chamber thanks Kringle's Korner Christmas Trees (at the Luther Burbank Center) for donating the tree, and Aaction Rents for transportation.



Steve Plamann
Aaction Rents
President

*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.*

CHAMBER MEETINGS

Board of Directors

Second Tuesday
Of Each Month
11:30 am - 1:00 pm at
Best Western Plus Wine
Country Inn & Suites
870 Hopper Av. S.R.

Ambassadors Mtg.

Second Tuesday
Of Each Month
1:30 pm - 3:00 pm at
Best Western Plus Wine
Country Inn & Suites
870 Hopper Av. S.R.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the year 2020 comes to an end we are all likely looking back at what the year meant to us, our families, our friends, our businesses, and our associates in the community. Many of us are assessing the damage to our personal lives and our financial security. You may own a business that was greatly impacted by social distancing or by businesses being forced to close. You may be realizing how out of touch you are with family and friends. You may have lost a loved one to the coronavirus or gotten sick from it yourself. I think most of us will be glad and relieved to put 2020 behind and once again have hope for a New Year.

The year-end analysis can also bring joy, as it has for me. I, along with the Mark West Area Chamber Board Directors, selected and honored Stephanie Bisordi of Bisordi Ranch & Vineyards as Chamber Volunteer of the Year, and I selected Alicia Mills as our Chamber Board Member of the Year. We have also selected our Member of the Year, and will announce that in next month's Lark newsletter. The selection process forced us to look at successes, accomplishments, and community achievements by many people and organizations. And there were many to choose from. This made me realize how most individuals and businesses handled this year and how they were still able to positively affect themselves and our community.

Stephanie Bisordi and her family (husband Robert, children Robbie and Lori, with Lori's fiancée Kyle in tow) created the Lunches for Lifesavers program, which brought food to Sutter emergency room workers every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for many months and it continues today with snack drop-offs. This is such a pure gift to the whole community. The Press Democrat awarded the Bisordi family with their North Bay Spirit Award and the Mark West Area Chamber also named them our Spirit of Sonoma County Award winner for 2020.

And where would the Chamber Board and I be without the great skills and effort by Alicia Mills, to set up, organize and record our Board meetings? All her efforts helped keep us on track, productive, and together in our new ZOOM meeting world.

I guess no matter how much "bad" life throws at us, "good" comes around and hits a homerun.

The Mark West Area Chamber, along with Molsberry Market, will again put up a Christmas tree at the market. We are inviting all members to add their special decoration to the tree between the 3rd and the 18th of December, by appointment only. We will film and photograph you hanging the ornament and air it on Facebook and YouTube. This is designed to help promote your business during the Christmas shopping season. You will be able to talk about your business and any special things that you would like the viewers to hear. Call the Chamber office and leave a message at 707-578-7975 or email us at office@markwest.org.

Steve Plamann, President



With gavel in hand, Chamber President Steve Plamann keeps the Chamber moving on a positive, caring and grateful path, with a touch of humor.

NEW CHAMBER MEMBER: INTRODUCING THE LARKFIELD RESILIENCE FUND



Larkfield Resilience Fund

The Larkfield Resilience Fund (LRF), a non-profit 501-c3, is proud to be a new member of the Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce. The LRF represents our community's wildfire survivors by working to leverage grant funding opportunities to rebuild our community better and more resilient. The LRF board of directors is composed of wildfire survivors from the 2017 Tubbs Fire. Since its inception in 2018, the LRF has generated public-private partnerships that have resulted in the planting of over 3,000 trees in our community, the construction of a perimeter fence along Mark West Springs Road and Old Redwood Highway, and organizing community emergency preparedness efforts. The LRF board of directors includes Stan Goodell, Katrina Lassen, Lisa Newman, Shawn and Christine Ratliff, Brad Sherwood, and Haley Skerrett.

The LRF board of directors meets once a month and is currently working on a project to landscape the Old Redwood Highway and Mark West Springs Road corridor. Hailed as the "Gateway to Wine Country" for visitors driving into town from Calistoga, the LRF recognizes the importance of beautifying our gateway while also providing critical wildfire suppression through vegetation management. The LRF will be seeking community support for this inspirational landscaping project. Visit www.larkfieldfund.com to learn more.

The LRF remains committed to working with our community as it applies for new grant opportunities and coordinates community events such as the Larkfield Estates holiday lights competition! Drive through Larkfield Estates (enter on Chelsea Drive from Old Redwood Highway) after December 20th and see how this neighborhood is showing its holiday spirit by illuminating beautifully rebuilt homes!

The LRF is appreciative of the Chamber's efforts to support our community's rebuilding from the Tubbs Fire and looks forward to advancing the Chamber's goals as one community working together!

Contributed by The LRF Board

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT YEAR-END REPORT

I took on the new role of Membership Development Consultant in July, an offshoot of my position on the Chamber Board as VP of Membership, with the dual goal of increasing our business membership and making sure that our existing members continue to receive programming and value for their membership dollar. As an independent contractor, I live for the challenge of completing a project successfully, and goodness knows this year has been full of challenges.

As a member myself, I have looked forward every year to the trade show in order to connect with the public and other businesses in the community, but this year demanded something different. This past summer I had a great time working with an outstanding Faire Committee to bring a version of our Community Faire into the virtual world of Facebook and YouTube. We didn't raise as much money as we had in years past, but we made a lot of new friends, gained some new members, strengthened existing relationships, and helped to move our Chamber forward into the public eye.

Are we staying relevant? We're trying! We are actively looking for your input as to where we should be focused in the days ahead, not only in the coming months as we all continue to reinvent ourselves in a Covid world, but in the coming years as we rebuild with our community.

We started the year with 88 active members and we have 92 as I write this, 11 of them new for 2020 --- an endorsement of the fact that Chambers of Commerce are still needed and can play an important role in helping businesses to connect with and within our community. I'm looking forward to growing the Chamber in 2021 and working with you to strengthen our business community.

Contributed by Beth Henry

TREASURER’S REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

Your Chamber ended its fiscal year on June 30, 2020 in a strong financial position, with unrestricted funds of \$18,692 in our account at Exchange Bank.

During the year, we were fortunate to have experienced a very successful and fun trade show at the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, which raised a net contribution of \$8,619 to our bottom line. This represented an increase of 281% over our previous year’s results.

Also contributing to profitability last year was a modest restructuring of our membership dues for the first time in over 15 years, coupled with the implementation of Platinum Sponsorship opportunities, and well managed promotional and membership retention successes of our Membership Director, Beth Henry. This represented an increase of 219% over our previous year’s membership income.

Throughout both periods, expenses were held in check due to the assistance of our many volunteers and supporters.

So far this fiscal year, we have remained financially stable throughout the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As of October 31, 2020, we have unrestricted funds of \$17,943 in our account at Exchange Bank.

With a new membership cycle beginning in January 2021, the Chamber is positioned to withstand future challenges from the pandemic and can focus on providing ongoing help and assistance to our membership.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of our members and volunteers whom I have been honored to serve as Board Member, Treasurer, and Ambassador. On January 1, 2021, I will be leaving your Board of Directors for personal reasons. I will still maintain my membership and am looking forward to seeing you at Chamber events when it’s deemed safe by our county officials. Until then, stay well!

Contributed by John Essman, SonomaCONNECTION

**ONLINE EVENT:
LOCAL
BUSINESS
STRATEGIES
FOR THE 2021
SONOMA
COUNTY
LANDSCAPE**

TOPICS: Adjusting to the new business marketplace; Reinventing the consumer experience; Business planning.

For local business owners and those who manage financials & marketing.

Thursday, Dec. 10
10:00am - 10:45am
Zoom/online

Register:
**glocal/coop/
strategies2021**

Presented by Exchange Bank & Go Local Sonoma County

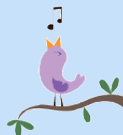
To host a Ribbon Cutting, contact...

Aggie Maggio
aggiemaggio@icloud.com
707-486-1303



Interested in joining our Ambassador Team?

Contact the Chamber at
office@markwest.org
707-578-7975



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, all events through December 31, 2020 have been postponed.

The times, dates, and locations of all future Mark West Area Chamber events are subject to re-scheduling, depending upon governmental guidelines. For the latest event information, check the Chamber website at <http://www.markwest.org/>

Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Hosted by Extended Child Care Coalition
1745 Copperhill Pkwy #5, Santa Rosa

Chamber 39th Annual Installation Dinner
6:00 - 9:00pm
Hosted at Charlie's Restaurant at the Windsor Golf Club, 1320 19th Hole Drive, Windsor

Chamber Business Luncheon
11:30am-1:00pm
Topic: Mark West Site-Specific Plan
Speakers: James Gore (Sonoma County 4th District Supervisor), Pete Lescure (Lescure Engineers), and PRMD staff
Hosted at Best Western Plus Wine Country Inn and Suites, 870 Hopper Ave, Santa Rosa

Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Hosted by Salon Marcel (Ribbon Cutting)
4795 Old Redwood Hwy, Suite C, Santa Rosa

Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Hosted by Solstice Senior Living at Santa Rosa (Ribbon Cutting)
3585 Round Barn Blvd., Santa Rosa

Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Bisordi Ranch and Vineyards, LLC
1350 River Road, Fulton

Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Hosted by Atlas Pavers Co.
1710 4th Street, Santa Rosa

Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Hosted by Anytime Fitness
490 Larkfield Center, Santa Rosa

Holiday Tree Lighting - Community Event 6:00pm
Hosted by Mark West Union School District;
Molsberry's Markets, Inc.; Sonoma County Fire District; Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce

Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Co-hosted by Larkfield Exchange Bank and Molsberry Markets, Inc.
500 Larkfield Center, Santa Rosa

The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors willingly gives our positive endorsement of the Sonoma County reopening plan and we believe it should move forward with the solidarity of our community leaders and with the hope of strengthening the revival of our business community.

NORTH BAY BUSINESS JOURNAL VIRTUAL EVENTS

Our friends at the North Bay Business Journal offer a number of virtual business events to help stimulate business and community action.

- Wine, Spirits, & Beer Industry Awards
- North Coast Cannabis Industry Conference
- Nonprofit Leadership Awards
- Top Real Estate Projects in the North Bay Awards

View the list and link to events: <https://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/calendar/?ref=menu>



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MARK WEST AREA COMMUNITY INFORMATION

AREA POPULATION - within a 3 mile radius - 20,000
 ELEVATION - 160 feet above sea level
 BOUNDARIES - Area approximately bounded by:
 Shiloh Road - North Piner Road - South
 West Olivet Road - West Lodge on Mark West Springs Rd - East

The Lark Newsletter is published monthly under the direction of:
 The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center
 4787 Old Redwood Hwy, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

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The Lark Newsletter is emailed to member businesses each month.
 For more information, contact the Chamber office at 578-7975.

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Deadline for publication is the 3rd Wednesday of the month.
 Please email your materials to info@markwest.org

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CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP DUES

Standard Dues - *Effective January 1, 2020*

\$149.00	Business (1-5 Personnel)	Non-profits get a 10% discount off Basic pricing
\$229.00	Business (6-10 Personnel)	
\$299.00	Business (11+ Personnel)	
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SPECIAL
YEAR-END REPORT
ISSUE

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