

Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and VISITORS CENTER



BRINGING BUSINESS & THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER!

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

707.578.7975

Office Hours: Mon - Thurs 1 - 4pm

www.markwest.org

markwest@markwest.org

The Lark

September 2008

Volume XII Issue 9

THE WINE COUNTRY HARVEST FAIRE & BUSINESS SHOWCASE & GRAND RAFFLE

OCTOBER 9, 2008 4 - 8 PM

FREE food, wine, beer and other beverages to enjoy - provided by Chamber members to the public during our annual Tradeshow! It is fun for adults *and* kids - families are welcome! Bring your family and tell your friends! This year, we will have a Grand Raffle every hour with gifts donated by Chamber members and tradeshow sponsors.

Register your business now for booth space and advertising for the upcoming tradeshow at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts. Our tradeshow is a wonderful way to introduce your business to the Mark West community. Donations to Grand Raffle are needed, too! Your participation or donation helps the Chamber earn funds for the coming year.

Call or email the Chamber for more info, or online at markwest.org

EXCHANGE BANK NAMED BEST IN 2008

Laura Buhner, VP & Branch Manager, at the Larkfield Branch of Exchange Bank and staff are fully committed to superior customer service -- just like all of the bank's 21 branches. That's reflected in the fact that this year, readers of local business publications named the 118 year old institution the Best Business Bank, Best Local Bank and One of the Best Places To Work in Sonoma County.

The friendly service customers receive is a keystone of Exchange Bank's culture of commitment to customers and to the community. Serving Sonoma County since 1890, Exchange Bank has the opportunity to provide community members with products and services for all of their banking needs. From checking and savings, to Wealth Management and home loans, Exchange Bank is your one-stop shop.



Laura Buhner,
VP & Branch Mgr,
Exchange Bank Larkfield

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*Chamber Installation Dinner
more on page 3*

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

AFTER HOURS BUSINESS SOCIAL

hosted by **DAVIS CARPETS**

at the Chamber Offices 4787 ORH

Davis Carpets will have a Demonstration of the Flat Wire and Kool Glide Microwave Carpet and Seaming System.

The Wine Country Harvest Faire
and Business Showcase

Booth space still available - contact the Chamber or visit markwest.org

This FREE event showcases businesses while guests enjoy complimentary food and Sonoma County wines and beverages. The public is welcome!

Thursday, Sept 11, 2008

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Bring your business cards!

October 9, 2008

4:00 pm - 8:00 pm

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 September 9 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

The Benefits of Exposure!

If you didn't attend, you missed a great Business After Hours gathering at the FINAL EDITION. New members Johnson Pools, Mariposa Seamstress, C. Gary Landscaping, Essner Tree Service and Verdin's Restoration Service were introduced, circulated with the crowd and even generated business! Great exposure for them and the other members and guests who attended.

We know that we're in a period of recession, with costs rising and business lagging. This makes for the perfect opportunity for greater exposure of your business/service. The Chamber's Wine Country Harvest Faire and Business Showcase on October 9th from 4 to 8 pm is the chance to mingle with several thousand business prospects that don't even know they need you!

But there are some tricks to the trade that will ensure greater exposure and remembrance by all you meet.

First, plan an attractive table and be sure it is manned for responding to questions for the entire time of the business showcase; be sure to have informational handouts, business cards, inexpensive giveaways (with name address & phone #) that last (*see member www.PromosOnCall.com*), blank contact slips & pens, and a container in which to deposit them. Also have a basket or prize to raffle off using the contact slips.

Save the CONTACT SLIPS! They now become your contact list for after the trade show. After all, they indicated interest by having deposited a contact slip! Make it a point to contact each after the show. That's how you develop new business!

Respectfully, Jim Bajgrowicz, President



The Chamber held its 27th Annual Installation Dinner in the ballroom of Chamber member Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa. The event was attended by 60 members. The food was delicious, as promised!

Our new board of directors was officially installed by Supervisor Paul Kelley. Our speaker Dorothea Logan of Logan Investigations discussed "How to properly screen an employment application", "Company Security" and "Home Security".

Outgoing President Walt Smith honored Pat Dearmin as Director of the Year, and Aaction Rents as Business of the Year.

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AUGUST SOCIAL & MWCSO FUNDRAISER

hosted by: **FINAL EDITION**

The Final Edition Bar and Cocktail Lounge hosted the August 14th social. Many of our members and guests including the majority of our newest members showed up for this most enjoyable evening. Owners Carol and Andy Divodi treated everyone to some delicious cheeses, meat balls in a special sauce, buffalo wings and artichoke dip with crackers.

Chamber ambassador Don Wilson served as Master of Ceremonies for the gathering and gave a very nice introduction to Carol and Andy. Carol told how she and Andy had previously owned another cocktail lounge in Petaluma named "First Edition". After retiring and relocating to Santa Rosa they found they had too much time on their hands. They had the opportunity to purchase the former "Eddies" in the Larkfield Shopping Center and reopened it as the Final Edition. Carol said she and Andy are very proud to be part of our community and are equally proud to be members of our chamber.

Besides thanking everyone for attending the evening's social, Chamber President Jim Bajgrowicz from the Office of James Bajgrowicz said a few words pertaining to the Mark West Chamber Business Showcase and Trade Show taking place October 9th at the Wells Fargo Center for the Performing Arts, and PCAM's Airshow. New member plaques were then presented to Carlos Gray with C. Gray Landscaping, Chuck and David Verdin with Verdin's Mobile Auto Lens Restoration Service, Rebecca White with Rebecca Graphics, Amparo Chavez from Mariposa Seamstress, and Phil Essner with Essner Tree Service.

Our 50/50 raffle awarded \$68.00 to Chuck Verdin of Verdin's Mobile Auto Lens Restoration with another \$67.00 going to help support chamber functions. Our Pot of Gold drawing (with a \$50.00 pot) went unclaimed for the second month in a row as neither David or Carol Soderstrom or any of their staff from So. Pro., Soderstrom Properties were in attendance when their business was drawn. The pot grows another \$10.00 to a total of \$60.00 - up for grabs at our September 11th Social which is sponsored by Davis Carpets and will be held at the Chamber Offices and Visitors Center.

Door prizes donated by the Final Edition, Pacific Coast Air Museum and Airport Express were given out to conclude the evening's festivities. Thanks again to Carol and Andy Divodi and their employees at the the Final Edition for a wonderful gathering!

Submitted by Anthony Geraldi, Head Ambassador



*Dawn "Cookie" Fields,
Head Chef
Carol & Andy Divodi,
Owners
Vivian Hornady,
Bar Mgr.*

*Visit www.MarkWest.org/
August2008Social
for more photos*



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CONNECTION**
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Kathleen Palmer
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BUSINESS-AFTER-HOURS-SOCIALS

- SEP 11 DAVIS CARPETS**
- OCT 9 WINE COUNTRY HARVEST FAIRE**
- NOV 13 NORTH BAY CORPORATION**
- DEC 11 CAL AMERICAN WATER**
- JAN 8 AKEENA SOLAR**
- FEB 12 CELLULARWORLD**
- SEP 10 SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT
2009 EXPRESS/ACTION RENTS**

RESOURCE FOR BUSINESSES SEEKING TO HELP SCHOOLS IMPROVE

Survey after survey has shown that business executives consider education of prime importance, but believe California schools are doing a poor job of teaching students the basics or preparing them for the working world.

Now, two non-profit groups made up of business and education leaders are providing online information that businesses can use in supporting school achievement in their local communities.

An honor roll of schools that are succeeding using current funding levels is being generated each year by the California Business for Education Excellence (CBEE) Foundation. The test data supporting the honor roll selection is provided by Just for the Kids-California. The website for the latter — www.jftk-ca.org — links to the list of honor roll schools and enables visitors to look up and compare school achievement test results.

The common-sense thought that success in elementary school is important to a student’s performance later in life is being confirmed by test data. A study by the Public Policy Institute of California found that children at risk of failing the California High School Exit Exam can be identified accurately as early as the fourth grade. Other comparisons of test data have found that if students aren’t proficient when they leave sixth grade, they are not going to be successful in their high school work. The data underscores the importance of helping students boost their proficiency in the earlier grades, rather than waiting until high school.

More important, the same information can be used to nudge the less-successful schools to learn from the best practices of their colleagues. The Just for the Kids website permits visitors to compare schools with similar socioeconomic demographics, which helps counter arguments that the makeup of the student body is the reason for different results.

The CalChamber is encouraging business people to help point struggling schools in their areas to the best practices that are working for other similar schools. Given that the workforce comes from the community, investing time and effort on improving the schools ultimately amounts to enhancing the skills of future employees.

“We can’t wait for education reform to come from the state capital,” says Raymond W. Holdsworth, chair of the CalChamber Education Committee. “Education reform will come from the community when business, parents and educators join forces to help policymakers see how accountability and perseverance can produce results.”

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*Interested in joining our Ambassador Club?
Contact
Tony Geraldj,
837-8700
tony@airportexpressinc.com*

Serving Larkfield



Our Larkfield team works hard each day to make sure you receive high-quality water. Please do your part in conserving this valuable resource. To learn more about your water quality and ways to conserve, visit our Web site at www.calamwater.com.



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How Business Can Help

- Get involved with your schools locally.
- Go to www.jftk-ca.org to find info about how schools in your area are performing.
- If a school in your area is doing well, make sure state and local opinion leaders (elected officials, media representatives, community groups) know that schools in your community are honor roll schools being recognized for significant student academic achievement.
- Encourage those opinion leaders to find out more about these schools by visiting and talking to school leaders and faculty.
- Help give honor roll schools a voice in your region and help them share their “best practices” with other schools in your community.
- If schools in your area need to improve, encourage school leaders to tap into the experience of their peers at the nearest honor roll school. *calchamber.org*

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB), in partnership with the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board, is pleased to bring you the Summer 2008 Business Confidence Report. The purpose of the Business Confidence Report is to gauge executives’ perceptions of current and future economic conditions both within the county and the country.

Highlights from the Summer Business Confidence Report include:

- Sonoma County executives perceive some challenges to current economic conditions and forecast greater challenges for the next few months.
- Those surveyed from the Technology industry reported the highest level of confidence, while those from the the Real Estate/Construction industries reported the lowest.
- Sonoma County’s manufacturing and purchasing trends indicate economic contraction.
- More than 71% of Sonoma County executives said that the recent increase in gas prices had impacts on their company’s/organization’s operations.

*If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at (707) 565-7170.
Ben Stone, Executive Director, Economic Development Board
http://www.sonoma-county.org/edb/pdf/2008/annual_tourism_report_2008.pdf*

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IMPROVE**

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CONFIDENCE
2008**

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Carolyn Finley
422 Larkfield Center
528-6400 (F) 528-6432
jbogoue77@att.net

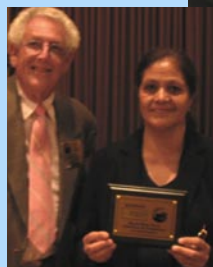
Big Boy's Buns & Burgers
George Fiori
Greg Jones
406 Larkfield Center
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Gregjones13@yahoo.com

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907 Adele Drive
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sgorelczenko@brookdaleliving.com
Brookdaleliving.com

RENEWING MEMBERS

Airport Health Club (1990)
Sonoma Eyeworks (2003)
Pacific Union College (2006)
Patricia Dearmin (2007)
Guy's Barber Shop (2007)

Carlos Gray
of C. Gray
Landscaping



Amparo Chavez
of Mariposa Seamstress

EXCHANGE BANK NAMED BEST IN 2008

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The Larkfield Branch has been serving the community since 1964. The branch is open Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm; and Saturday 9am – 2pm. You can contact the branch by calling 524-3077 or visiting at 500 Larkfield Center.

27TH ANNUAL INSTALLATION DINNER

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Daryl Anderson of Wikiup Properties received a special acknowledgement for his many years of service on the Chamber Board. In addition to leading the Tradeshow Committee, Daryl has served as President of the Board twice, and he was responsible for the installation of the Hwy 101 directional signs leading visitors to the area: "Entering the Mark West Area Larkfield and Wikiup Next Exit". He led the project to lease and remodel the Chamber's new offices and Visitors Center, providing us a great location and income!



Pat with Daryl Anderson
of Wikiup Properties.

While Daryl has "retired" from serving on the Board, he is very active on this years' Tradeshow Committee, helping us to achieve another successful Wine Country Harvest Faire!



Skip Graham, retired,
John Essman of Sonoma
CONNECTION, Brad
Pighin of GRP Wealth
Strategies, Anthony
Gerald of SC Airport
Express



Walt Smith of Just
Transportation
congratulates
Ignacio Jacinto
of Aaction Rents,
Business of
the Year

Dee Gutman
Dana & Sue Larson
of Sue Larson
Financial Services,
Susan Lindstrom,
Paralegal, Anthony
Lindstrom of Cal-Am



Office Volunteer Joyce Partington of Stoke Ranch,
Office Manager Pat Morelli, Office Volunteers Pat
Dearmin and Dee Gutman



Pat Dearmin also serves as
Board Secretary and was
named Director of the Year.

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and VISITORS CENTER**



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**AFTER HOURS
BUSINESS SOCIAL**

**THURSDAY
SEPTEMBER 11, 2008
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm**

hosted by

DAVIS CARPETS
at the Chamber Offices
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