

# Richmond CHAMBER NEWS

A Richmond Chamber of Commerce Publication  
Richmond, California • February 2004

1924

80th Year

2004

## SUMMIT TO ADDRESS COUNTY JOB LOSS

by Mark Howe, Chair

### CONTRA COSTA SUPERVISOR CALLS FOR INDUSTRIAL SUMMIT IN WEST COUNTY:

Shocked by a 16% decline in high-paying manufacturing jobs in Contra Costa County, Supervisor John Gioia is planning a summit during the first quarter of 2004 to address this issue. The Richmond Chamber will be involved, as will the Council of Industries. The Chamber feels the Supervisor's initially planned one-size-fits-all marketing approach will only target large employers, exactly the ones who are leaving and who are less likely to come in the first place.

Medium size manufacturers (25-100 employees), like many of those in Richmond today, are an audience that is more likely to bear fruit. We need to stay focused on this point. I ask Paul Kaplan (KKMI), Jesse Esquivel (Quality Erectors), John Lawliss (Harbor Plastics), Richard Evans (Encore Glass),

ment, the new owner of the Ford Plant. We were encouraging her to join the Chamber Board, which she did. During lunch, the subject of City-imposed design guidelines on an Orton property came up, along with their anticipated costs. The project is right up the street from a project of mine where I faced the exact same predicament several years ago. We compared notes and I suggested a construction technique that will save them \$140,000. Now that is a good return on your dues dollar! Focused information works.



At KKMI, the new upscale boat yard on Cutting near Canal, they faced an on-street parking problem with the city and asked if the Chamber could help. KKMI was hosting a parade of prestigious Americas Cups yachts for the Moet Cup the following week and they needed action fast. The Chamber knew who to call and later that week Isiah Turner and acting Police Chief Bennett met at KKMI and proposed an acceptable solution to both parties. Good job, Chamber!

Another recent example of the Chamber working for its membership concerns our local graphic designers. At a finance committee meeting it was discovered that the Richmond Redevelopment Agency was planning to award an \$80,000 City marketing contract to a shiny shoe San Francisco firm without first trying to see if local firms were qualified to perform the work. We objected, the City council agreed and now Steve Duran is working with the local graphic arts community on the project.

If the Chamber can't solve your problem, nobody can!  
*continued p. 3*

**State of the City  
with  
Mayor Irma Anderson  
Annual Luncheon  
Wednesday, March 3, 2004  
11:45 a.m.  
Bermuda Room  
Nevin Ave. at Civic Center  
Prepaid Reservations Only  
(510) 234-3512**

## events

### CALENDAR

#### February

Feb. 16 -- office closed  
President's Day

Feb. 20 -- 6 to 10 pm  
Crab Feed

Feb. 25 -- 7:45 am  
Networking Breakfast  
Courtyard by Marriott

#### March

Mar. 11 -- 5 to 7 pm  
Mixer  
Courtyard by Marriott

Mar. 18 -- 7 pm  
Symphony, Free  
Convention Center

Mar. 19 thru 21  
Rakasa Festival  
Convention Center

Mar. 24 -- 7:45 am  
Networking Breakfast  
Courtyard by Marriott

## chamber

### MEETINGS

#### February

Feb. 3 -- 8:00 am  
Government Relations

Feb. 3 -- noon  
Ambassadors

Feb. 5 -- 7:30 am  
Board of Directors

Feb. 10 -- 7:30 am  
Education Committee

Feb. 17 -- noon  
Manufacturers Forum

Feb. 17 -- 3 pm  
Finance Committee

Feb. 18 -- 7:30 am  
Executive Committee

Feb. 19 Leadership Day  
Toastmasters meets  
every Monday at noon  
in the Chamber  
Boardroom.

#### March

Mar. 2 -- 8 am  
Government Relations

Mar. 2 -- noon  
Ambassadors

Mar. 4 -- 7:30 am  
Board of Directors

Mar. 9 -- 7:30 am  
Education Committee

Mar. 17 -- 7:30 am  
Executive Committee

Mar. 18 Leadership Day

Mar. 30 -- 8 am  
Government Relations

Mar. 30 -- noon  
Ambassadors

## flyer deadline!

The flyer deadline for inclusion in the Mar. issue is Feb. 13. Reach over 700 businesses!  
Call (510) 234-3512 or email:  
newsletter@rcoc.com

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Richmond, California



photo by Ellen Gailing

Latressa Wilson Alford, aide to Congressman George Miller, is a winner at the Mechanics Bank Holiday Mixer.

Rich Gomez (Professional Finishing), Desa Bubavich (Amigo Environmental) to please participate in this forum and explain what it will take to keep you in Richmond and attract those like you.

Please email comments regarding this issue to summit coordinators Kate Breslin at kbres@bos.cccounty.us, and Amy Lobel at amy@zellandassociates.com. For the really courageous among you, there are also speaking opportunities at the summit.

[Please email me (Mark Howe) with your thoughts on the subject, so I can help make this Summit relevant to our business community. Howefam2@pacbell.net]

### DOLLARS AND SENSE:

This week I went to lunch at the Hotel Mac with Ivonne Folster, the Vice President of Orton Develop-

Richmond Chamber of Commerce



### Chamber Crab Feed

Friday, Feb. 20 -- Get your tickets now!

WELCOME **NEW** MEMBERS

**Approved Lending**

Ms. Liz Forbes  
Home Loan Specialist  
3260 Blume Drive, Suite 110  
Richmond, CA 94806  
510.223-9047  
www.LizForbes.com

**12/03/03 to 1/04/04**



Don't miss  
the next  
**Networking  
Breakfast...**  
held monthly at the  
Courtyard by Marriott.  
Wednesday, February 25, 2004



photo by Ellen Galling

YMCA Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Breakfast Chair, Mayor Irma Anderson, welcomes Chamber President Judy Morgan and Karl Gramm, UPS Division Manager.

**TEXTURE HIGHLIGHTS EXHIBIT**

"HIGH TOUCH, LOW TECH" is the next art exhibition at the National Institute of Art and Disabilities (NIAD) at 551 -23rd Street (near Barrett Ave.). The opening reception is Tuesday, March 2, 2004 from 6-8 p.m.

This show is being co-curated by art students from Piedmont High School and also showcases art by NIAD artists with low vision, highlighting their interpretation of texture.

Come see... and be touched by, unusual textiles, ceramics, sculptures, and more.

There will be music and refreshments.

**ARE YOU A CONNECTOR?**

by Judy Morgan, President/CEO

Last summer the Honorable Karen Fenton, member of the WCCUSD School Board, came into my office with a book. "I want you to read this," she said.

The book she gave me to read is **The Tipping Point**. I loved the book; it really makes you think about how to effect change. To quote the author, Malcolm Gladwell, "It is a book about change. In particular, it's a book that presents a new way of understanding why change so often happens as quickly as it does. For example, why did crime drop so dramatically in New York City in the mid-1990s? Why do teens smoke in greater and greater numbers, when every single person in the country knows that cigarettes kill? Why is word of mouth so powerful? The phrase "Tipping Point", for example, comes from the world of epidemiology. It's the name given to that moment in an epidemic when a virus reaches critical mass. It's the boiling point. Does everything have a Tipping Point? Wouldn't it be cool to try to look for Tipping Points in business or in social policy or in advertising or in any number of other non-medical areas? The book shows how to start "positive epidemics of our own. This is not an abstract, academic book. It's very practical. And it's very hopeful. It's brain software."

In the book, the author describes three personality types: Connectors, Mavens and Salesmen. The Connectors know everyone, the Mavens know everything and the Salesmen can sell any idea. Think about whom you know that fits into one of these categories.

These are the people who can make change happen.

I was exposed to the book again when Coro of Northern California, a Leadership group, held a meeting in the Chamber office. They interviewed a carefully selected Richmond personality every hour to learn about our community. At the end of the day, their facilitator referred to the book, **The Tipping Point**, asking them if they could categorize the people they met that day into the three personality types. Who could effect change? If they had a cause, who should lead the charge? It was interesting to hear them describe the Richmond Neighborhood Coordinating Council and the Chamber working together as Connectors in agreement on an issue which could effect change.

I believe our new Chairman of the Board, Mr. Mark Howe, is a connector. By reading his column this month you will recognize this trait. He knows a lot of people from all walks of life; he moves in many circles. He moves from Point Richmond to North Richmond. He is a people person who cares about people and wants to make a difference. So I think that if we channel his energy, contacts and personality, we may see many positive changes in the Chamber this year. Watch for the (our) Tipping Point and read the book.



*"The importance of Street Tech is something that can't quite be quantified. There is much more to it than technological training...it is the focus it (Street Tech) puts on reaching out to the community and helping those of us without the means to cross the invisible digital divide."* - **Randy Arevalo, 2003 Street Tech graduate**

We have much to be proud of and thankful for in 2003. We will graduate nearly 70 students (a 50% increase over 2002) this year, many of whom have gone to work as PC Technicians for outfits like BankTec, Best Buy, the City of San Pablo, Dryer's Ice Cream, Walden House, and the Western States Bankcard Association. Moving forward, we will be kicking off our own technical support business, **ReliaTech**, in January 2004. Below is a recap from 2003 and some highlights for the year ahead:

- Our graduates averaged an **80% pass rate** for industry-standard A+ (PC Technician) and Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) exams.
- Our **community computer refurbishment projects** resulted in the donation of 152 computers to 10 churches, nonprofit organizations, and schools. Our students completed projects for themselves, including a project to provide computers to a school in Ghana, West Africa.
- Our A+ students participated in **community volunteer projects** at the Theater, the E-Bus, the San Francisco Contra Costa Childcare Center, and the YMCA.
- Street Tech staff and selected officials, including **Assemblymember Hancock** and **Congressman Amodeo**, visited Street Tech in April.
- Street Tech was certified by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education as a training center.

New funding supporters for 2003 include the California Re-Use Agency, J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation, Microsoft, the Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund, and SBC. We also expanded local partnerships with ChevronTexaco, the Renaissance Foundation, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, and the West County Council of Industries.

Up and coming in 2004:

- Street Tech's new technical support business, **ReliaTech**, began operations after a Grand Opening event on **Saturday, January 17**. The business includes a PC Repair shop and off-site desktop and networking support for consumers, small business, nonprofit organizations and schools. Contact Jessy Gonzalez at 510-815-6089 or jessy@streettech.org for more information.
- Street Tech and ReliaTech will be launching **new websites**.
- New training courses under consideration for 2004 include the Microsoft Certified Desktop Support Technician (**MCDST**) and seminar courses in wireless networking and virus prevention.

Thank you for your wonderful support in 2003. With your help we are confident that we will be able to meet our fundraising goal of \$300,000 and stay on course to "bring technology jobs to the streets" in 2004. Peace!

Paul Lamb  
Executive Director (December 2003)

**Business Sp**

You have a business issue you're struggling about and want to bring it to the attention of the Chamber News, please submit your letter to newsletter@rcoc.com or 1505 Macdonald Ave., Richmond, CA 94804. Business Speaks.

Mark Howe, Chair

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**HEARD ON THE STREET**

•Amot Controls, located in an 80,000 SF facility near One Barrett, has been shopping their property to the commercial brokerage community, indicating that they will soon be closing this long-time Richmond plant to consolidate operations at their Texas facility. Moral: A retention and information gathering policy needs to be planned at the upcoming forum.

•Point Richmond seems to be heading the way of many old downtowns unable to compete in our car centric world; evidence — more vacant storefronts. Mariah Wilderness is rumored to be closing their doors. Stevens Design Group has left for Marin. Vertigo outgrew and vacated their newly completed office building for the technology park down the street. Scuttlebutt also indicates that the long-time owners of The Baltic Restaurant, Chuck and Melanie, are selling to a new management. On a positive note, Harbor Plastics will soon be moving into the Veriflo building on Canal that was recently purchased by Richmond Development.

•From the fertile mind of Graham Hawkes (deepflight.com), we have a new company in Brickyard Cove called precisionremotes.com. Because of 911, their business is growing by leaps and bounds and will soon be looking for new space. This is a homegrown company that is growing very fast, which, despite the ghoulish nature of their product, should be nurtured to provide high-paying manufacturing jobs in this community. The summit's goal is to find ways to encourage and nurture this type of employer.

•An article last week in the West County Times indicating that the City of Richmond is near bankruptcy, caused an earthquake at New York muni bond rating agencies. Consequently, Moody's has placed the City of Richmond on credit watch which lowers the market value of the City's outstanding Municipal bond issues and makes it harder and more expensive for the City to issue new bonds. The event forced the City to issue a rebuttal to the article.

Next month: "North and South of 580". Please email me (Howefam2@pacbell.net) with any important thoughts you may have on the West County business environment. The chamber wants to help YOU!

**HOME-BASED BUSINESSES UNITE**

West County now has a new Home-based Business Alliance to support business owners who work from home.

Recently created, this group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at EastBay Works, 2300 El Portal Drive in San Pablo, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The next meeting is Wednesday, February 11, 2004.

For more information, call Maria LoValvo, Business Services Representative for EastBay Works at (510) 374-7450 (Office) or (510) 393-2446 (Cell).

**INTRODUCTION TO FEDERAL CONTRACTING**

Find out where your company fits into the Federal Government market, how to research government contract opportunities, or more about certification programs for small businesses.

When: Monday, February 23, 2004

Where: EastBay Works - 2300 El Portal Drive, San Pablo

Time: 1 to 4 p.m.

Preregistration is required: ( 916) 334-9388 or www.TheFTC.org

**JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT ANNUAL BOWL-A -THON**

**TEAMS WANTED**

Please join us as companies and organizations from the area challenge each other to help make a STRIKE for education! Have fun with friends and coworkers, network, win prizes, and celebrate the fact that your participation will help Junior Achievement reach more kids in our community with our in-school business and economic education programs.

Teams already signed up this year include:

Chevron USA Products Company, Citibank, FedEx, General Grinding, Kaiser Permanente, Legal Strategies Group, The Mechanics Bank, C. Overaa & Co., PG&E, Port of Oakland, ProActive Business Solutions, SBC and Shaper Lighting.

The Bowl-a-thon is Saturday, February 21, 2004.

For more information or to obtain a fundraising packet, contact your Company Coordinator or Junior Achievement at bat@jaba.org or (650) 553-2192.

**CRAB FEED IS "UNDER THE SEA"**

"Under the Sea" is the theme for the 4th Annual Chamber Crab Feed, a networking/fundraising/community event on Friday, Feb. 20 at the Richmond Auditorium.

Doors open at 6 p.m. and dinner is served at 7 p.m. There will be a no-host bar. Seats are \$35 and corporate tables for eight are \$500. Donations for the raffle, door prizes and silent auction are being sought.

All-you-can-eat crab, pasta, Ceasar Salad and bread are the main feature of the Crab Feed which will once again be catered by the Contra Costa College Culinary Arts Dept. Dessert is courtesy of Zoe's cookies and other delights. A silent auction, raffle, door prizes and music fill out the evening.

Erica Denham and Melissa Sylver are the Co-Chairs of this year's event. Erica is the Sales Manager and Melissa the Banquet Manager at the Courtyard by Marriott and both are active Chamber Ambassadors, traditionally the hosts of the Crab Feed. Other Ambassadors on the committee are Arnie Kasendorf, Commission on Aging, Tim Meese, WCC County Volunteer Program, Chris Phipps, Bay Area Rescue Mission, Tom Waller, Y2 Marketing, and Darlene Williams, Postnet. Rodney Hiram of Hiram Design Group did the flyers.

To reserve tickets/tables or donate items, please call the Chamber at (510) 234-3512 or email, sandi@rcoc.com

**PHIPPS NEW AMBASSADOR CHAIR**

Chris Phipps, Procurement Coordinator for the Bay Area Rescue Mission, is the new Chair of the Chamber Ambassadors.

Chris has been an Ambassador for almost five years and has achieved many of the goals of Ambassadorship, such as (to name only three):

- Promote your business while supporting the Chamber
- Enhance networking opportunities
- Make Professional contacts on a social level

The Chamber is always ready to welcome new Ambassadors. If you think you are interested, call us at (510) 234-3512 for more information.



photo by Ellen Gailing

At the Holiday Mixer: Louise Nickels, On the Move Travel & Tours, Retiring City Manager Isiah Turner, Janet Johnson, Richmond Redevelopment Agency, and Rhonda Harris, R. Harris & Assoc.



photo by Ellen Gailing

William Schwerin, Executive Vice President/Senior Lending Officer at The Mechanics Bank, welcomes Chamber members to the Holiday Mixer.

Thank you President Circle Members for your continued support of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce.

Chevron  
Richmond  
Refinery

THE MECHANICS BANK  
SINCE 1961

KAISER PERMANENTE

REPUBLIC SERVICES, INC.

Richmond Sanitary Service

Thank You!

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS – YOUR WATCHDOG

by Gretchen Grover, Chair, Government Relations Committee

Ever wonder what Chamber committees do? The Government Relations Committee (GRC) tracks what's happening in local government and takes positions on issues of concern to the business community.

In 2003 the GRC focused on planning and redevelopment because the City put together a new senior management team in 2002 that announced those areas were priorities for Richmond. New Planning Director Barry Cromartie and Assistant City Manager Jay Corey both came to talk with the GRC.

Early in 2003, Barry told the GRC that his initial analysis of the department had identified many areas for improvement. He described departmental initiatives that looked at standardizing procedures, developing user-friendly checklists, putting information on the web, and holding planning staff accountable. The committee expressed its support for the direction the Planning Department was going.

Prior to implementing the new cost recovery fee system for his department, Cromartie presented the concept to the GRC. He also came back to the GRC mid-summer to ask the Chamber to support streamlining the permit review process to create a category of administrative review which would allow staff to save time and approve small, non-controversial projects. Although the proposal applied to houses not businesses, Cromartie came to the GRC for support. He indicated that efficient use of staff time would mean that they would be available to handle larger, business-related projects. Plus, he added, if this program works, it may be possible to add a similar administrative process for small business improvement projects.

The GRC took his request to the full Chamber Board. They agreed to support the program, and sent a letter to the City Council urging them to support the Planning Department. The Chair of the GRC testified at the City Council meeting addressing the proposal.

That's how the system works. GRC meets and discusses a variety of issues, and if something needs to be addressed, takes the matter to the full Chamber Board. The Board votes on all official positions.

In 2003, the GRC also discussed the public process for what to do with the Civic Center, proposals for new business at the Port, a master sign ordinance, the redevelopment of downtown and the Macdonald Avenue area, the ongoing development of the Ford Building, the environmental impact review for the West County landfill closure, and the City's local hiring and business certification ordinances. The Port proposal and the EIR were formally supported by the Chamber Board.

The GRC meets the first Tuesday of the month at 8 a.m. at the Chamber office and is open to all Chamber members. If there is something you would like us to consider, come to a meeting and let us know!



### Chamber Crab Feed

**Friday, Feb. 20**  
**Save the Date!**

## chamber ANNIVERSARIES

**Congratulations!**

and happy anniversary to the following businesses for their continuous years of Chamber membership:

**12/03/03 to 1/06/04**

### OVER 45 YEARS

IMTT - Richmond - CA  
C. Overaa & Company  
Richmond Country Club  
Shaper Lighting Products  
Weill Industrial Supply Inc.

### 41 TO 45

SBC

### 36 TO 40

Kister, Savio, & Rei, Inc.  
Masterson, Calhoun & Lundberg  
Watson, Hoffe & Hass

### 31 TO 35

East Bay Municipal Utility District  
Petsas & Hill Certified Public Accountants

### 26 TO 30

Interactive Resources, Inc.

### 21 TO 25

Doctors Medical Center San Pablo & Pinole  
West County Times

### 16 TO 20

ASML Optics  
Richmond Art Center  
St. David's School  
YMCA of the East Bay

### 11 TO 15

Community Violence Solutions  
West Contra Costa Unified School District

### 6 TO 10

Diversity & Leadership, Clark Research Assoc.  
Contra Costa Co. Employment & Human Svcs.

### 1 TO 5

Corporate Media Systems, Inc.  
Jagwire Design  
Manpower Staffing  
Claudia Brown, Prudential California Realty  
USFilter

*Please patronize these businesses*

#### Richmond Chamber of Commerce Board Members

Michel Burleson / Doctors Medical Center  
Helen Carr / Contra Costa College  
Sharon Craig-Carter / Chevron Richmond  
Carla Della Zoppa / Security Pacific Real Estate  
Michael Fenley / Hilltop Mall  
Virginia Finley / Signature Realty  
Joshua G. Genser / Attorney-at-Law  
Barry J. Gordon / The Mechanics Bank  
Karl Gramm / UPS  
Gretchen G. Grover / EBMUD  
Peter A. Hass / Watson, Hoffe & Hass  
Jerrold Hatchett / SimsMetal  
Sheri Hickman / Kaiser Permanente  
Mark Howe / MSH Management

Ivonne Inurritegui-Folster / Orton Development  
Larry Landry / General Chemical  
Richard McCombs / MBA Polymers, Inc.  
Judy Morgan / Richmond Chamber  
Peter Nuti / Richmond Sanitary Service  
Carl Overaa / C. Overaa & Company  
Mark Quilici / California Casting Inc.  
Will Rigney / SBC  
Melanie Shelby / P.G. & E.  
John Ziesenhenn / M.A. Hays Co.  
  
Ex Officio  
Jay Corey / City of Richmond  
Gloria Johnston Ph.D. / WCCUSD