

# Richmond CHAMBER NEWS

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

1924

80th Year

2004

## ALL ABOARD!

by Mark Howe, Chair

**T**hink dock lines not train whistles.

My name is Mark Howe and I am excited to be the spokesperson for the West County business community this year.

I was a practicing CPA for several years and have been a small business employer for the last 15 years, which means that I bring with me some preconceived ideas about the current business environment. Like many of you, I am frustrated by some of the problems I face. And I also agree with you that the business community is underappreciated and misunderstood.

And yes, I also think that the situation is getting worse. But I am an idealist and I think there is a better way – for every time one of us complains about some business problem, I want to see a suggestion, from the complainer's point of view, that would solve the problem. Write it down, get it published in the Chamber Newsletter/Website and make sure the person that caused the problem reads it.

At the Point Richmond Business Association meeting, I complained that it took me four months to get a use permit for a restaurant. But I also suggested a solution: "We could establish a merchant window at the City Planning Department like the banks do, in recognition of the relative economic importance of the business customer." After all, complaining without proposing a solution does not solve anything.

I recently asked a Chamber member what she thought of the Chamber. "Mark," she said, "running my business is like a war: I have to meet a payroll that never goes away; I fight with my lenders; I have to manage my employees; I collect a multitude of taxes for the government for which I am often rewarded

*with a stiff penalty; I face skyrocketing comp, casualty and medical insurance costs, and with what time I have left, I have to keep my customers happy and my product competitive – I just don't have time for the Chamber and it is hard for me to see how what they do helps my business. Although some of the information I get and people I meet at Chamber functions is valuable, I wonder if it is really worth the cost of membership."*

I have just one goal this year. I want the Chamber to focus on fundamental business issues that from our members' point of view clearly benefit them.

To help decide which of our current activities meet this new requirement, we could use a black and white test like "Does this Chamber activity improve the revenue or decrease the costs for our members?" This rule has to be interpreted broadly to include networking activities which can increase member income and are a staple of the Chamber diet.

To make sure the issues we explore are relevant to our members, I propose we segment our membership into specific industries like retail, hospitality, recycling, recreational maritime, petro-chemical, property owners/developers, health care, non-profit and others. These groups will investigate and

discuss issues that are of specific interest to each business segment. I see the leaders of these groups coming from within the segment with some  
*cont. p. 3*



The Kaiser Permanente School of Allied Health Services joins Kaiser Permanente Optical Services and the Kaiser Permanente Regional Laboratory on Marina Way South.

photo by Ellen Gailing



The Chamber joins the Overaa family in Dedicating their new building. Holding the ribbon are (l.) Chamber Ambassador Arnie Kasendorf, Richmond Commission of Aging, and (r.) Chamber Board member Gretchen Grover, EBMUD.

photo by Ellen Gailing

## events

### CALENDAR

#### January

Jan. 5 -- office reopens

Jan. 8 -- 5 to 7 pm Mixer

Jan. 19 -- office closed MLK Day

Jan. 28 -- 7:45 am Networking Breakfast Courtyard by Marriott

#### 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

## chamber

### MEETINGS

#### January

Jan. 6 -- noon Ambassadors

Jan. 13 -- 7:30 am Education Committee

Jan. 15 -- Leadership Day

Jan. 20 -- noon Manufacturers Forum

Jan. 20 -- 3 pm Finance Committee

Jan. 21 -- 7:30 am Executive Committee

Jan. 23 - 24 Planning Conference

Toastmasters meets every Monday at noon in the Chamber Boardroom.

#### 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

*All meetings at the Chamber Office unless otherwise noted.*

## flyer deadline!

The flyer deadline for inclusion in the Feb. issue is Jan. 16. Reach over 700 businesses! Call (510) 234-3512 or email: newsletter@rcoc.com

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### Chamber Crab Feed

Friday, Feb. 20 -- Save the Date!  
(See flyer for details)



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www.rcoc.com

WELCOME **NEW** MEMBERS

Mr. Michael Cohn &  
Ms. Molly Stone  
**Cohn-Stone Studios**  
560 South 31<sup>st</sup> Street  
Richmond, CA 94804  
(510) 234-9690  
[cohnstone@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cohnstone@sbcglobal.net)  
[www.cohnstonestudios.com](http://www.cohnstonestudios.com)

Mr. Dan Doellstedt  
**Dansun Designs**  
609 B Golden Gate Avenue  
Richmond, CA 94801  
(510) 236-8920  
[www.dansundesigns.com](http://www.dansundesigns.com)

Ms. Lorena Huerta  
**Desarrollo Familiar, Inc.**  
205 39<sup>th</sup> Street  
Richmond, CA 94805  
(510) 412-5930  
[www.familias-unidas.org](http://www.familias-unidas.org)

Ms. Irene Molina  
Ms. Joyce Richards  
**Girl Scouts of the SF Bay Area**  
7700 Edge Water Drive, #340  
Oakland, CA 94621  
(510) 562-8470  
[www.girlscoutsbayarea.org](http://www.girlscoutsbayarea.org)

Ms. Gloria Crayton  
**State Farm Insurance**  
1400 65<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 120  
Emeryville, CA 94608  
(soon to be at Richmond Parkway  
at San Pablo Ave.)  
(510) 232-3351  
[www.statefarm.com](http://www.statefarm.com)

**11/03/03 to 12/03/03**



**Wednesday, January 28, 2004**

## Business Speaks

If you have a business issue you feel strongly about and want to be heard in the *Chamber News*, please submit an article to [newsletter@rcoc.com](mailto:newsletter@rcoc.com) or mail to 3925 Macdonald Ave., Richmond, 94805, c/o Business Speaks.

## TOP TEN FORECASTS: WORKFORCE AND WORKPLACE 2004

1. **Employment Market Turbulence.** Pent-up energy among employees who have felt trapped in their current positions will stimulate unprecedented churning in the labor marketplace. The turbulence in the employment market will threaten corporate stability and capacity to serve customers. Some companies will go out of business because they are unable to retain a sufficient number of qualified employees to get the work done.

As the economy picks up, employers that treated employees badly during the tight economy will be in serious trouble. More workers will leave, laid-off employees won't return, and fewer applicants will choose to work there.

2. **Shift to Sellers' Market in Labor.** As the economy picks up, employers will face the most severe shortage of skilled labor in history. Corporate recruiters will become more aggressive in a highly competitive race to attract and hold top talent. Workers who are fortunate enough to have found their preferred work environment will tend to stay longer. People will seek stability, but may change jobs more frequently in their search for their personal Employer of Choice®.

3. **Fluid International Job Movement.** Economic issues and skilled labor shortages in the United States will move even more jobs to other countries, where workers will improve their skills to perform new tasks. In some cases, US employers will discover that foreign workers are not performing satisfactorily and jobs will be returned to this country.

4. **Retirement will Evaporate.** Retirement, as we have known it for two generations, will continue its metamorphosis. Fewer people will retire completely. Retirees will move into jobs in other fields, start their own businesses, and engage in other activities to remain active and productive into their seventies, eighties, and even nineties.

5. **Training and Education will Accelerate.** Workers will discover that their skills are obsolete or insufficient to gain the jobs they want. Employers will place greater emphasis on education and training. Corporate development programs will accelerate to accommodate new employees and the redevelopment of existing staff. The demand for vocational education will begin to grow, as people realize the increasing need and higher income paid to skilled workers. Educators will be challenged to make major changes to the current system to produce graduates ready to cope in a faster-moving world.

6. **Leadership Deficit will be Crippling.** As employers discover serious inadequacies, leadership development will take on new importance. Senior executives not

demonstrating leadership qualities will be asked to leave. Up and coming managers will be expected to learn and practice leadership skills—before being moved into senior or even mid-level positions.

7. **Flexible Employment will gain Popularity.** As more people work flexible hours, work from home, and use technology to work for employers in distant locations, the traditional workday and work-week will further erode. Part of this movement will be driven by parents—male and female—who want to spend more time with their children.

8. **Casual is Here to Stay.** Despite some movement to return to more formality in the workplace, corporate casual will remain the norm in most industries. Informality will be seen in clothing, culture, office décor, and workplace structural design. Emphasis will be placed on productive relationships—inside and outside the organization.

9. **Advantage of Agility.** Companies will re-create themselves to be more agile, more nimble, more responsive to their customers and their workers. Marketers will seek ways to become more sensitive to their external environment, feeding intelligence quickly to senior executives who will act in a more timely manner than has been seen before. Relationships, resources, knowledge, and speed will become strategic weapons.

10. **Workers Becoming Independent.** More people will become independent contractors, selling their services to employers on a project, contract, or set-term basis. This movement will stimulate the development of specialized staffing firms and electronic communities to connect individual workers with employers.

*For additional information on any of these forecasts, call The Herman Group, Consulting Futurists, in Greensboro, North Carolina, at (336) 282-9370. These forecasts were prepared by Roger Herman and Joyce Gioia, Strategic Business Futurists concentrating on workforce and workplace trends. Roger and Joyce are Professional Members of The World Future Society and Founding Members of The Association of Professional Futurists.*

Idell Weydemeyer  
Labor Market Information Division (LMID)  
Employment Development Department (EDD)  
925-602-1536  
[www.calmis.ca.gov](http://www.calmis.ca.gov)

## RETIRING...



Nate Carter, Membership and Special Projects Coordinator for the Richmond Chamber for the last several years, has retired and moved north.

Nate is also a budding photographer and his pictures have graced many of these pages this year.

We will miss him.

## LAST CHANCE --ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS 2004!

Now on sale at the Chamber office -- Entertainment 2004 Books, with a wide assortment of restaurants covering mostly the East Bay (including Chamber members The Baltic, Hotel Mac, La Strada and J.R. Muggs in El Cerrito) as well as services (home, auto, garden), travel (hotels, airlines, rental cars) and recreation.

Once you register your membership, you can find more bargains online. The book with all benefits costs only \$30; proceeds to benefit the Richmond Chamber. Get yours now!

**All Aboard cont.**

staff assistance to keep it organized.

These committees can also be organized by issue like the Education Committee, or by function like the Ambassador's committee, whose job it is to welcome new members into the Chamber community.

Yes, I know that nobody wants to go to another committee meeting, so I want to encourage the meetings to be virtual when possible. I am sure all of you have seen a long email that has bounced around within a group as they discussed a common problem. A by-product of this type of meeting is the written chronicle of participants' opinions, which can provide the basis for an article on the subject in our newsletter. I cannot overemphasize how important it is to chronicle the issues that our segments feel passionately about. I think as a general rule we should think, "if we can't write about it we can't solve it."

In fact this new organizational structure is already well underway with the hospitality industry. Our Convention and Visitors Bureau/Business Improvement District (BID) has been approved by the finance subcommittee of the Richmond City Council and is expected to be approved by the full council. The CVB is in a generic sense a segmented industry group like I am proposing for other industries within our jurisdiction. It is important to remember that the hospitality industry unanimously supported this BID which will require them to charge their hotel guests \$1.50 per room night.

This industry specific group passes the black and white test. If it is successful in its mission, hotel room occupancy will increase, the restaurants will get more business and this business segment will be directly aware of the benefits the Chamber provides.

Industry specific groups want leadership and are even willing to pay for it!

A critical tool in this new focus of the Chamber will be our website. It needs to be overhauled. This is the tool that we will use to collect information, communicate with our members, publish their ideas and it will be the location of CVB tourist information. Clear and easy access to this information will be critical to the CVB's success. In fact, I want to eliminate our paper-based newsletter and convert it to a web-based document. This would allow us to use exciting color pictures; it would allow an issue of unlimited length; it would save us about \$500 a month and could be sent to more than just our membership as a development tool at no extra cost.

Many people who would like to attend chamber functions cannot because of time conflicts. Information is one of the key member values of the Chamber and we are not doing a good job getting this valuable information out to our members. An overhauled website including a written document of the events we sponsor, is the answer to this problem. Some will say this cannot be done; they are wrong. It can be done!

None of these ideas will succeed without board and membership support. I am asking you to get enthusiastic about our new direction and help. There are many specific industry issues that are fascinating and not well documented. We want your issues to be featured in our showcase website for all to see. Since the Chamber's product is intangible (i.e. information), there is no reason to think that in some years the Chamber's virtual presence will be more important than its physical one.

I am proposing a significant course change for the Chamber and the job will not likely be finished for some years. I hope you see my vision because I need your help.



photo by Ellen Grating

Former Assemblyman Bob Campbell was the guest speaker at the RichPAC reception in December.

**RICHPAC READY FOR THE CAMPAIGN AHEAD**

by John Ziesenhenn, Chair, RichPAC

January 1, 2004 starts the election year campaign for 5 of the 9 Richmond City Council Members as well as a number of other candidates. RichPAC has already started its campaign drive with a very successful Holiday Fundraiser on December 4, 2004, hosted by business developers Bert & Muriel Clausen.

As a business in Richmond, it is very important for you and your employees to support candidates that are business-friendly. From now until election day - November 2, 2004 - RichPAC will be aggressively raising awareness and money to strongly support business-friendly incumbents and/or candidates. It does not matter how big or small your business is, you can help by contributing to the Political Action Committee, displaying the endorsements of the RichPAC candidates at your business, and attending chamber mixers while meeting your fellow business owners who share the same ideas and concerns about the business climate in Richmond.

The Chamber is your organization. Working together with other chamber members will increase our degree of success between now and election day. Stay tuned for future RichPAC events and we look forward to your participation.

**WHAT'S ON RICHMOND'S PLATE?**

by Gretchen Grover, Chair, Government Relations Committee

Jay Corey, Assistant City Manager, spent time with the Chamber Government Relations Committee on the eve of becoming the interim City Manager. He brought good news and bad news.

**First, the bad news.** He described top management as beleaguered - but between changes, retirements, and health concerns they have been hanging together to tackle the many problems facing the City.

Financially, the city faces a \$9-12 million deficit. They laid off 42 people in April, and a new round of cuts (100+ personnel and cuts in departments and services) takes affect January 1<sup>st</sup>. Even with these cuts, more may need to be done, particularly in light of the loss of the Vehicle Licensing Fees from the State. While dealing with the realities of trying to make payroll, he explained, they have not had time to look at the fundamental changes needed to prevent this kind of financial crisis from happening again.

Expect the City to be leaner and more targeted. He's trying to put processes in place to make things run more efficiently. Cost Recovery will continue to be emphasized, where possible. Abatement is being placed on Cost Recovery, and he's even looking at Park and Rec.

**Now for the good news.** He's excited about the future for the City. There are a number of projects on the table that he sees as proof that things are happening in Richmond: While there is a \$400-600 million "deficit" in infrastructure citywide, there is a lot of development going on and being planned:

- ◆ The Zeneca project (south of I-580), when built out, will return \$50 million to redevelopment.
- ◆ Point Molate is moving forward. Under consideration here is a casino which could return \$5-10 million annually to the City.
- ◆ The former Wards building has been sold, and talks are moving forward that may have that property redeveloped within the next 18-24 months.
- ◆ There are contracts being negotiated that will expand Port operations, and bring revenue into the City.

He also talked about Civic Center. Based on the City Council's priority of redeveloping downtown (Macdonald between 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>), there have been some ideas floated about moving some of the offices from the City Hall area downtown and redeveloping some of the current site. He explained that it would cost about \$116 million just to get City Hall back to where it should be, and that, given the City's financial condition, it may take some time. He feels that if the Hall of Justice and some of the administrative functions were moved downtown (leaving arts and the library), the current site could be redeveloped more quickly by a commercial developer. This is a topic where there will be more discussion, or, as he says, "we want to take time, do it right."

The City is about to begin a search for a permanent replacement for retiring City Manager Isiah Turner. When asked if he was going to apply for it, Corey indicated he probably would not. "I've been there, done that," he explained. He sounds like he'd be content to work on the fun projects - the redevelopment of the City. That's where he sees a bright future for Richmond.

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**STREET TECH'S NEW BUSINESS:  
INTRODUCING RELIATEC**

BY KOILIN SAEYANG

If you want to know where Street Tech is heading, you need to find out about **ReliaTech** – a new Street Tech-run technical support business serving consumers, small businesses, non-profit organizations and schools. With the aim of putting Street Tech graduates directly to work, ReliaTech's mission is to offer extremely reliable computer services to its customers at very affordable prices, building in exceptional ongoing support. ReliaTech's CEO, Jessy Gonzalez, is determined that ReliaTech will revolutionize the technical support and PC repair field.

Street Tech received a grant from the Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund to start this project. The Goldman support will help ReliaTech setup the business and hire and train Street Tech graduates who are certified technicians. ReliaTech will offer a wide range of services to individuals and organizations around the Bay Area, including PC repair and maintenance, computer network set-up and maintenance, and desktop deployment.

Although ReliaTech will officially launch on January 1, 2004, ReliaTech technicians are already hard at work supporting two contracts with the West Contra Costa County Unified School District. We hope to employ at least two additional part-time workers and one part-time technical supervisor during the first quarter of 2004. ReliaTech will initially be based at the Street Tech site in San Pablo, and technicians will be dispatched for work around the Bay Area. For more information on ReliaTech, or for business referrals, please contact Jessy Gonzalez, jessy@streettech.org or (510) 815-6089.

Come join us for ReliaTech's Grand Opening Event, scheduled for January 17, 2004, at 10:00 a.m. at the address below. Grand Opening will include prizes, free Computer Services, computer information every computer user should know and much more.

**NEED ADDRESS**

Some of ReliaTech's Affordable Technology Services Include:

**Business Services:**

- Technical Assessments
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- Disaster Recovery Planning
- Many more.....

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- Home Computer Installations
- Wireless Home Networking Installations
- Internet DSL Installations
- Data Migration & Backups
- Operating System & Application Installations
- Scanner, Printer, Camera Installations
- Parental Internet Filter Installations (for households with children who surf the internet)
- Many more.....



Business of the Month: Ellen Gailing Photography

chamber  
**ANNIVERSARIES**

**Congratulations!**

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

**11/03/03 to 12/03/03**

**36 TO 40**

Civic Center Pharmacy  
Graham Packaging Company

**31 TO 35**

Loren E. Straughn, Attorney-at-Law

**26 TO 30**

Tradeway Stores

**16 TO 20**

Contra Costa Child Care Council  
Costco Wholesale

**11 TO 15**

Hilltop Bayview Apartments  
Wareham Development

**6 TO 10**

Bay Area Rescue Mission  
Energy Works  
Kiwanis Club of Richmond  
Richmond Museum of History  
Virtual Development Corporation

**1 TO 5**

Aquatic Outreach Institute  
Budget Self Storage  
Carter's - James Glass & Design  
Cazuelas Grill  
Ginger Springs Spa  
La Strada Ristorante  
Protection Service Industries, L.P.  
Redwood Painting Co., Inc.  
Richmond Friends of Recreation  
Safeway Beverage Plant  
Street Tech

*Please patronize these businesses*



Myron King won a new watch from Oscar Lugo at November's mixer.



**Chamber Crab Feed**

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

**Richmond Chamber of Commerce Board Members**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Michel Buleson / Doctors Medical Center          | Richard McCombs / MBA Polymers, Inc.   |
| Helen Carr / Contra Costa College                | Judy Morgan / Richmond Chamber         |
| Carla Della Zoppa / Security Pacific Real Estate | Sue Muscarella / Kaiser Permanente     |
| Michael Fenley / Hilltop Mall                    | Peter Nuti / Richmond Sanitary Service |
| Virginia Finlay /Signature Realty                | Carl Overaa / C. Overaa & Company      |
| Joshua G. Genser / Attorney-at-Law               | Mark Quilici / California Casting Inc. |
| Barry J. Gordon / The Mechanics Bank             | Will Rigney / SBC                      |
| Gretchen G. Grover / EBMUD                       | Melanie Shelby / P.G. & E.             |
| Peter A. Hass / Watson, Hoffe & Hass             | John Ziesenhenn / M.A. Hays Co.        |
| Jerrold Hatchett / SimsMetal                     |  |
| Mark Howe / MSH Management                       | Ex Officio                             |
| Larry Landry / General Chemical                  | Gloria Johnston Ph.D. / WCCUSD         |