

Richmond CHAMBER NEWS

A Richmond Chamber of Commerce Publication
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1924

80th Year

2004

AS LONG AS YOU'RE HERE...

Opinion by Josh Genser

California has the nation's highest housing and energy prices, the most broken-down infrastructure, the most troubled schools, the most expensive insurance, the most dysfunctional legislature and the most draconian regulations. Richmond has a severe municipal financial crisis, a dysfunctional City Council, pot-holed streets, closed libraries, challenged schools, high fees, and long waiting times. So why are we still doing business here? I suppose we stay either because we like the weather...or because it's home.

Since we're not moving away, we'd better make sure things get better. Take warning, though: unless we're vigilant, things could get even worse, because powerful political forces want to impose new regulations and costs on business.

The Richmond City Council will be asked to enact rent control and to approve an ordinance requiring "just cause" before a renter may be evicted. The justification for such an ordinance is slight anecdotal evidence of renters being evicted in retaliation for exercising their rights, such as complaining about unhealthy conditions, and a perception contrary to

See Genser, p. 4

ACCOUNTING FOCUS

by Mark Howe, Chair

I am probably writing this article three years late, but for those who are not aware of it, computer accounting programs have undergone a revolution since I was an accountant ages ago. I want to review this trend and make sure our members are taking full advantage of all the improvements available to them.

At the CPA firm I worked for, I was in charge of installing computer accounting programs for small to medium size businesses. The computers back then were slow, expensive, had minimal memory and the software was horrible. Today the software and hardware are so much better that it presents competitive advantages to those

see Howe, Page 3



CANDIDATES MAY SAVE CITY

by John Ziesenhenn, Chair, RichPAC

With the November City Council race only two months ahead, RichPAC has interviewed all known incumbents and candidates for the 5 available council seats. These 5 seats represent the majority of the 9 council seats that are elected every every two years for 4-year terms. The terrible financial situation that the Richmond Council has worked its way into over the past four years, with the help of City Staff, has been at the forefront of questions that were asked of all candidates.



The community of Richmond, which includes the residents and the businesses, are paying the debt that the City Leadership (both elected and employed) has created as we have been forced to see the maintenance of our city parks, streets, library, recreation centers and auditorium decrease to almost nil.

Now is the time for the strongest leadership possible to be elected to manage our City and rebuild it from the ground up. Lack of leadership at the council level and incompetent staff and staff advice have led to the current pathetic state of Richmond. The Pride and Purpose of Richmond's motto is almost non-existent.

If you have not attended a City Council meeting lately, please go before the November 2nd election and you will see for yourself the lack of teamwork and support between City Staff and your elected officials that creates a type of circus atmosphere in an arena that should be an honored working environment for the betterment of the community, not just a job as one works towards a higher PERS retirement. RichPAC, along with other important neighborhood groups, is working to support the very best available candidates possible for the November election.

The slate that RichPAC supports for City Council will be one that all residents and businesses will be proud of and hopefully will support at the polls on election day.

Save These Dates:

- Chamber Golf Tournament
Monday, Oct. 4
- Chamber 80th Anniversary
Diamond Dinner
Friday, Nov. 12

events

CALENDAR

September

Sept. 6 -- all day
Office closed
Labor Day

Sept. 9 -- 5 to 7 pm
Mixer
Old Bank of Richmond

Sept. 22 -- 7:45 am
Networking Breakfast
Courtyard by Marriott

October

Oct. 4 -- 11 a.m.
Golf Tournament
Richmond Country Club

Oct. 14 -- 5 to 7 pm
Mixer,

Oct. 27 -- 7:45 am
Networking Breakfast
Courtyard by Marriott

chamber

MEETINGS

September

Aug. 31 -- 8 am
Government Relations

Aug. 31 -- noon
Ambassadors

Sept. 2 -- 7:30 am
Board of Directors

Sept. 9 - 9 am
Website Task Force

Sept. 14 -- 7:30 am
Education Committee

Sept. 15 -- 7:30 am
Executive Committee

Sept. 15 -- 3 pm
C V B

Sept. 16 Leadership
Day

October

Oct. 5 -- 8 am
Government Relations

Oct. 5 -- noon
Ambassadors

Oct. 7 -- 7:30 am
Board of Directors

Oct. 12 -- 7:30 am
Education Committee

Oct. 14 -- 9 am
Website Task Force

Oct. 20 -- 7:30 am
Executive Committee

Oct. 20 -- 3 pm
CVB

Oct. 21 Leadership Day

The Leads Club meets the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 7:30 am.

Toastmasters meets every Monday at noon in the Chamber Boardroom.

flyer deadline!

The flyer deadline for inclusion in the October issue is Sept. 13. Reach almost 800 businesses! Call (510) 234-3512 or email: newsletter@rcoc.com

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6/04/04 to 7/28/04

WHAT WILL WE DO WITHOUT THEM???

by Judy Morgan, President

My job is harder now. I (we) lost two members of our community that I depended on; two who volunteered above and beyond. I am saddened by their passing.

A major part of my job is recruiting volunteers. I encourage people to serve on Chamber committees, everything from the Board of Directors and Ambassadors to special project task forces. I help the City look for volunteers for commissions and committees and non-profits look for board members. I look for role models. Recruiting a good volunteer is not an overnight project. It takes time to find the right person. I have found that if that time is taken, the final result is that there is a better organization capable of doing the things it takes to carry out the goals of the organization. These two were the role models of a dedicated volunteer.

I tell people that the Chamber is a good place to make business contacts, but it is also a good place to meet people who give of themselves on a regular basis in order to improve their community and enhance the quality of life for friends, residents and strangers. Financial gain is not part of a volunteer's lexicon. These two were examples of that.

City Hall and the City Council may run and manage our city, but it is the volunteers who contribute their time and money that make this a community. Volunteers who, instead of letting someone else do it, step forward to make things better for our community. That is what these two gentlemen did.

Our extended community lost **Mr. Robert N. Sharp**, an attorney in El Sobrante who tirelessly worked for his community. He was called Mr. El Sobrante. His work with the El Sobrante Chamber is what kept the Chamber viable and more recently it was he who headed redevelopment efforts along the Dam Road that will ultimately make a big difference. These two efforts brought us in close contact. I have known Bob for over 30 years. He, along with his wife Shirley, had been volunteering and organiz-

ing all that time. He made a difference by bringing the community together. Whenever an organization in the valley was formed, he was part of it. He was a great friend to the small business community; his volunteer expertise helped many stay in business. Whenever I had a question about issues in the Richmond/El Sobrante Valley, I would call Bob.

Mr. Richard John King. We called him King King. What a role model. While Dick was not a resident of our community, he gave more than most residents. He joined the Chamber Board of Directors, serving as Chair of the Government Relations committee, a founding member of RichPAC and then as Chairman of the Board. He was constantly speaking out and writing letters representing the business perspective. He was President of A-N West, an engineering firm that brought in many students for job training and mentoring. He served on the WCCUSD Bond oversight committee. He was our Business of the Year and was also recognized as such by the Contra Costa Council. He served on the Save the Richmond Plunge Trust and the Richmond Public Art Advisory Committee. He was involved in many charitable and community service programs for high school and college students. I could always call on him.

In common, both gave tirelessly and both were graduates of the University of California and great Bears fans. It is with respect and affection that we say goodbye to these two favorite volunteers. Even if you didn't know either of these gentlemen personally, you have benefited by the work they did. So it isn't just I who will miss them. We will all miss them.



BAY TRAIL 5-YEAR REPORT

TRAC, the Trails for Richmond Action Committee, has celebrated its fifth anniversary by publishing a Richmond Bay Trail Mid Year 2004 Report. Eight miles of new Bay Trail have been built in Richmond since TRAC was founded, with an additional 2-1/2 miles in the pipeline to be built by year's end. The report describes plans for Bay Trail access to Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, a new trail around the West County Landfill, the scenic 4.75-mile Ferry Point Loop and many other new segments of Bay Trail being developed in Richmond. The full report and color map of Richmond's Bay trail may be viewed at <http://www.pointrichmond.com/baytrails/report.htm>.

GENSER-MAACK GRADUATES; RECEIVES IOM RECOGNITION

Sandi Genser-Maack, Director of Communication and Events for the Richmond Chamber, was recently graduated from Institute for Organization Management, a four-year professional development program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, held at the Colorado Springs College.

For more than 80 years, chambers and associations have used Institute as a training platform for the professional development of their future leaders. Participants receive training in leadership, chamber and association management competencies, as well as targeted curriculum in membership, technology, and financial management.

Graduates of Institute receive the IOM recognition, signifying completion of more than 90 hours of non-profit study and dedication to the nonprofit profession. Institute students also earn points toward the Certified Chamber Executive (CCE) or Certified Association Executive (CAE) designations.

Chamber President Judy Morgan and General Manager Barbara Obele are previous graduates of Institute.



Chamber Ambassadors recently attended the annual Ambassador Rally in Santa Rosa. Pictured are Doris Grant, Name the Occasion, Chris Phipps, Bay Area Rescue Mission, Tom Waller, Y2 Marketing and Tim Meese, WCC Volunteer & Emergency Services Program. Also attending, Melissa Sylver of the Courtyard by Marriott.

Don't miss the next
Networking Breakfast...
held monthly at the
Courtyard by Marriott.

Wednesday, Sept. 22, 2004
7:45 a.m.

NEW!


**Featured Chamber Benefit:
Member-to-Member Alerts**

Your Chamber of Commerce announces a new member benefit: Member-to-Member Alerts.






Every Tuesday we will email the Member-to-Member Alert and it could include your special event, be it a sale, a fundraiser or whatever.

For \$50 you get 50 words. Send it to us by email, mail, phone or Pony Express (including check or credit card info, please), and we will share it with our membership. But only 3 members a week can use this service, so let us know as soon as you can what the news is and when you want it out.

*Sandi Genser-Maack
Director of Communication*



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

Thank You!

BRIEF UPDATE ON MEASURE C RENEWAL

The Transportation Expenditure Plan for the extension of the Measure C transportation sales tax has been approved by all 19 cities in the County and the Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors will now place the item on the November 2, 2004 ballot.

The West County projects in the final Expenditure Plan include: The Capitol Corridor rail station in Hercules; interchange improvements at I-80/San Pablo Dam Road and I-80/Central Avenue; upgrades/maintenance on the Richmond Parkway; BART access and parking improvements; local street and road maintenance (tied to the Growth Management Program); funds for Transportation for Livable Communities projects and senior/disabled transportation; bike/ped/trail facilities; local and express bus improvements; and ferry service in West County. Additionally, there is a \$6 Million category in West County for subregional transportation needs, which could include: traffic calming, planning and/or environmental studies for projects, implementing recommendations in regional plans (for example, the Richmond-Area Community Based Transportation Plan), transit information in languages other than English, etc.

The extension requires a 2/3 vote in order to pass in November.

The West Contra Costa Transportation Advisory Committee held twenty outreach meetings in the Spring to present information about Measure C and the extension. WCCTAC staff will be following up with each host agency in the next few months. The Contra Costa Transportation Authority is in the process of producing an informational mailer and an informational brochure for distribution throughout the county.

Questions?? Call or email Lisa Hammon at (510) 215-3044 or lisah@ci.san-pablo.ca.us.

MIXER PIX: RICHMOND MAIN STREET



photos courtesy of Ellen Gailing

COHN-STONE STUDIOS



photos courtesy of Bryan Delaney

THE RICHMOND CHAMBER IS WORKING FOR YOU.

By the time you read this, we will have had two very productive meetings of our "Leads" group.

The meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month at 7:30 a.m. at the Chamber office at 3925 Macdonald Avenue.

If you missed the first two, then you missed some very nice new business opportunities from others in the Richmond and West Contra Costa County business community.

Not to worry. We will be having more.

Join us for our next 2 meetings, 7:30 a.m. Thursday mornings on September 9 and September 23.

Call me, Jack Mormon, at (510) 232-7800 or Sandi at the Chamber at (510) 234-3512 for more information or to say you're coming.

Hope to see you soon!

HOWE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

businesses which take full advantage of all the capabilities the new accounting software technology offers.

In my opinion, the start of this new trend in accounting software can be summed up in one word: Intuit. This company makes a line of accounting software products called Quicken. The software is not a toy as many people think. My company uses the Quicken Pro version of the software. It costs only \$250 and is so much easier to use than a standard system that it is hard to understand why anybody uses a conventional accounting program anymore. The accounting program that Quicken Pro replaced cost over \$10,000 and Quicken does a better job. It is certainly easier for my employees to understand. In fact I can train a non-accounting person to use it competently – a real cost advantage.

Conventional accounting program -- what does that mean? Quicken is not without its critics. Many CPAs complain that since you never close the books as you do with a conventional set of books, it is very easy to make a prior period adjustment without knowing it, which drives accountants crazy at tax time. This is true and it is a drawback. When you use this type of accounting program you need to be especially aware of the dates you use when inputting transactions, otherwise you end up making entries into prior years whose tax returns have already been filed.

Intuit is short for intuitive which is exactly what this software is. It has drill-down features that help you locate the original document that created an entry. Its search features are also easy to use and remember.

For years I have struggled with formatting financial statements. What used to take me hours to do using my old system, I can do with this system in minutes. I am a believer.

For those of you who need multiple computers running the software, you will have to buy multiple copies of the software. The multi-user features are somewhat difficult to install but we completed it and it works well.

In our fast-paced, cost-conscious, knowledge-based, competitive world, I encourage you to try this software. Quick and easy-to-access accounting information is a competitive advantage that you cannot afford to ignore.

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 or mail to 3925 Macdonald Ave., Richmond, 94805, c/o Business Speaks.

GENSER, CONTINUED FROM P. 1

reality, that rents are increasing rapidly.

The truth is that, if there were retaliatory evictions, those tenants already have legal remedies. That some of those tenants might have been unable to take advantage of those remedies is no justification for imposing a whole new set of regulations, and costs, on law-abiding landlords.

Moreover, if a landlord must prove a just cause for evicting a tenant, then it will prove impossible to get rid of drug-dealing tenants or those tenants who are disruptive and destructive. Proof that a certain tenant is dealing drugs or is responsible for vandalism is difficult to obtain, even if such activity is common knowledge. Current law permitting a landlord to evict for no cause on 60 days' notice at least permits a landlord to get rid of problem tenants, although, as a practical matter, such evictions can take many months.

As for rent controls, on what basis can we believe that the government is any good at regulating markets? At a time when our municipalities cannot even take care of their parks, should we be adding to their burdens by forcing them to administer new bureaucratic programs?

Wait, there's more. Have you heard of the "Precautionary Principle"? It has arisen from frustration at science's inability to prove, or disprove, that new technologies are harmful to the environment. That is, the environmental movement perceives that technologies and developments are "innocent until proven guilty," or permitted unless science can prove that they are harmful. Often, such proof comes only years later, when the harm has already occurred. The Precautionary Principle would examine alternatives to the proposed development or technology up front, hoping to identify those with the lowest risks even in the absence of scientific certainty.

Laudable goals, but the reality is different. The reality is that crackpot science is given a veneer of respectability, and opponents of any project or technology can stop or delay it merely by raising the specter of alternatives that have not yet been studied, no matter how ridiculous.

San Francisco has adopted the Precautionary Principle as policy, and its sponsors will be promoting such ordinances statewide.

What can we do about these and other proposals that make it even more difficult to do business here? We can, and must, become politically active. At the very least, we businesses must contribute money to local political campaigns. Your political action committee, RichPAC, is even now interviewing candidates for City Council and School Board, and will recommend and endorse candidates. Please, contribute generously to RichPAC and to the candidates it endorses.

If business isn't a player in local politics, it'll lose. Be a player.

WINE FROM TOUR DE RICHMOND?

Three different wines featuring the best images from past Tour de France competitions taken by famed cycling photographer Graham Watson grace a three-bottle set by Draper & Esquin Wine & Spirits LLC, one of the Chamber's newest members. Draper and Esquin, which recently moved from San Francisco to Pt. Richmond, is a small business whose predecessor namesake has been on the Bay Area wine scene since 1951. Not only is the commute easier for new proprietor Barbara Medwadowski and her husband Gary Gebhard, who live in El Cerrito, Draper & Esquin's presence here gives Richmond boasting rights as host to the only wine business in the U.S. with Women Business Enterprise certification. The company produces wine under two labels, Draper & Esquin and Chestnut Hill, but that's not all. Barbara and Gary are avid sports fans and teamed up with a number of sports figures to produce specially labeled editions of Draper & Esquin wines.

Taking advantage of cutting-edge printing technology, Draper & Esquin purchased their own label-printing machine to produce relatively small quantities of special labels at economical prices and teamed up with Point Richmond artist Jim DeWitt who supplied the artwork for labels for the Oakland A's and Rick Barry editions. Sports fans' enthusiasms for the wines got them thinking, and soon they created specially labeled wines commemorating other sports events and people. Barbara even made a special Chestnut Hill label just for Pt. Richmond, home of the last "wig-wag" railroad crossing in California. Naturally, Richmond residents love it.

Draper & Esquin's latest offer to the cycling public, features the Tour de France. The Chardonnay label shows a group of cyclists speeding through the middle of a spectacular field of sunflowers. The Merlot label has a dramatic shot of cyclists racing past the Eiffel Tower, and the Pinot shows the final stretch to the finish, up Champs-Élysées to the Arc de

chamber

ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations!

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

6/04/04 to 7/28/04

41 TO 45

San Rafael Rock Quarry, Inc.

36 TO 40

Allied Propane Service

21 TO 25

Frank Commercial Real Estate Services, Inc.

16 TO 20

Archer Norris
Security Pacific Real Estate, Jack Burns

11 TO 15

Berlex Biosciences * SimsMetal
Courtyard by Marriott

6 TO 10

Dr. Paula C. Asmus, O.D.
Boddie's Electrical Improvements
D.P. Security * Hotel Mac (Hotel)
Marine Turbo & Diesel Inc. * METRO 1 Credit
Union * NIAD - National Institute of Art &
Disabilities * On The Move Cruises & Tours
Plant Reclamation * Support Systems
International Corp. * U.S. Postal Service
WCC Health Care District * Westwind Foster
Family Agency

1 TO 5

Bay Area Rapid Transit District, S.F. (BART)
Brand Design * Christie Constructors, Inc.
Dr. Herbert M. Cole, Jr. * Doubletree Hotel &
Executive Meeting Center * Edwards Jones
Investments * Extra Space Storage * Indepth
Financial Solutions, Inc. * Kaiser School of Allied
Health * Marc's Auto Repair, Inc. * MBA Polymers,
Inc. * Sydney Barbara Metrick, Ph.D, CPCC * Nova
Abatement & Construction Services * Olson Co.
Panattoni Development Co. * Portumex
Restaurant, Inc. * Richmond Childrens's Academy
Snazz Enterprises * Spokewise (formerly
DESIGNinhouse) * State Farm Insurance, Linda
O'Neal * The Urban Farmer Store

Please patronize these businesses



Leadership Richmond begins its third year this month. There are a few seats left -- make sure you are in one of them.

For a brochure, call (510) 234-3512 or email staff@rcoc.com

Triomphe. These are sold to cycling fans across the country via the internet with links from Graham Watson's and Lance Armstrong's websites to www.draperandesquin.com. Lance Armstrong's spectacular win will be commemorated by a special offering to be announced in the fall for a holiday release.

For more information, call Barbara Fortini Medwadowski at (510) 525-7716 or dandewines@sbcglobal.net. Check them out at www.draperandesquin.com

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