

Richmond CHAMBER NEWS

A Richmond Chamber of Commerce Publication
Richmond, California • February 2005

HEAR IT FROM THE CHAMBER FIRST

by Gretchen Grover, Chair

This year the Chamber Board will be focusing on member support – the things that we can do to help you in your businesses. As seen in previous articles, we monitor what's going on at City Hall and represent the business community's interests through testimony before the Council or in working with various City Departments. We try to provide you with direct services like maps, the Chamber web page, the new Convention and Visitors Bureau, meeting spaces, and training opportunities.

We also take on issues that directly affect businesses. We take positions on legislation or ballot measures. We take positions and write letters in support of businesses who are having difficulty dealing with local bureaucracies.

GOT BAD CHECKS?

Sometimes we just run across things that can help businesses, and we try to share them with our members. Such is the case today with the County DA's Office Bad Check Diversion Restitution Program. If your business has lost money from NSF checks, did you know that the DA's Office will work with you to get back not only the amount of the check (up to \$5,000) but any fees you were charged by your bank? This is a program that started last summer, and in the first six months returned more than \$77,000 to county businesses from bad checks.

First time bad check offenders are given the opportunity to avoid criminal prosecution by paying restitution and attending a mandatory 8-hour interven-

tion class. This service is free to businesses – it's paid for by the offenders. And it seems to work – so far only 5% of those who've taken the class have passed additional bad checks.



The program does not apply to postdated checks, two-party checks, out-of-state checks, stolen checks, or ID theft situations. It also won't help with the person who chronically overdraws their account – but you know who those are and can put them on your “do not accept checks from” list. The DA's Office will even work with the offender to set up payment plans if needed. And you get the money as soon as they collect it.

Interested? To participate in the program you have to file an incident report with the county. The DA's Office does the rest. If you'd like more details, check out their web page at www.checkprogram.com/contracostacountyca or call 1-866-639-8093. Program Representative Debbie Brown can provide more details, and she can also provide tips about screening checks to prevent future problems. She has “We report bad checks” stickers for your window or cash register that warn people you're serious.

This is a service the County is providing for the business community. Take advantage of it, and tell others about it. And remember, you heard it from the Chamber!



photo by Ellen Galling

A Better Chance School, operated by the California Autism Foundation, opens its new site.



Reserve your tickets now!
See flyer inside or
call 234-3512.
• Crab Feed -- Friday,
Feb. 11, 2004

events CALENDAR

February

Feb. 11 - 6 pm
Crab Feed
Auditorium

Feb. 23 - 7:45 am
Breakfast For Business
Council Member
Gayle McLaughlin
Courtyard by Marriott

Feb. 21 Office Closed

March

Mar. 10 - 5 to 7 pm
Mixer
Wells Fargo Home
Mortgage

Mar. 22 - 7:45 am
Breakfast for Business
Courtyard by Marriott
see flyer

chamber MEETINGS

February

Feb. 1 - 8 am
Government Relations

Feb. 1 - noon
Ambassadors

Feb. 3 - 7:30 am
Board

Feb. 15 - 8 am
Education Committee

Feb. 16 - 8 am
Executive Committee

Feb. 16 - noon
CVB

Feb. 17
Leadership Day

Toastmasters meets
every Monday at
noon in the Chamber
Boardroom.

March

Mar. 1 - 8 am
Government Relations

Mar. 1 - noon
Ambassadors

Mar. 3 - 7:30 am
Board

Mar. 15 -- 8 am
Education Committee

Mar. 16 -- 8 am
Executive Committee

Mar. 16 - noon
CVB

Mar. 17
Leadership Day

flyer deadline!

The flyer deadline for inclusion in the March issue is February 18. Reach almost 800 businesses! Call (510) 234-3512 or email: newsletter@rcoc.com

Presorted Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit. No. 62
Richmond, California



3925 Macdonald Avenue, Richmond, CA 94805
P (510) 234-3512 F (510) 234-3540

www.rcoc.com

WELCOME **NEW** MEMBERS

Ms. Kathy Scott
Art Lounge
 145 Park Place
 Richmond, CA 94801
 (510) 232-0084
 kathyscottlicensing@comcast.net

Dr. Maria Rodriguez
Maria Rodriguez Dental Office
 315 40th Street
 Richmond, CA 94805
 (510) 232-4403

Ms. Bahia Gastaldello
The Shores at Marina Bay
 1 Shoreline Court
 Richmond, CA 94804
 (510) 232-6565
 shoresmanager@rafnah.com

12/9/04 to 1/14/05

How Do We Communicate

by Judy Morgan, President

Just how do we communicate our thanks to someone who leads the Chamber successfully for over a year? This past year was a very rewarding and effective one for our Chamber. Effectiveness of a leader is judged by the degree in which the leader is able to influence other Board members to respond in a positive way. Our immediate past chair, Mr. **Mark Howe**, was a good leader for the Chamber. Committees met their goals. The membership increased. He was very effective at representing the Chamber at City Hall. His great ideas, along with his entrepreneurial spirit, kept us busy. We have started focusing on different business sectors. Our first is, of course, the Hospitality sector. Our Convention and Visitors Bureau is forming, thanks in large part to his vision. The next two sectors we will focus on are the Marine/boating sector and the recycling sector.

I am sure you have all enjoyed Mr. Howe's column in this newspaper. He has promised us he will continue to offer his insights. Copies of our newsletter are sent to other chambers and I have received many comments from them praising Mr. Howe's column. Many of you, too, have commented that he is a very colorful guy, always telling it like it is. We look forward to receiving future articles. What is it that causes us to respond favorably to a business leader when he proposes his ideas? The answer lies in large part in confidence, respect and trust in the leader. It has been a great pleasure to work with him. Thank you, Mr. Howe.

Gretchen Grover, our new chair, is a great friend of Chambers. She sits on the Board of every chamber in West County. She is now head of the Richmond Chamber. She knows the Chamber world, its goals and its values. We are very lucky that Gretchen has made this commitment to us. I look forward to working closely with her; she is a very dedicated individual and expects the same from her fellow Board Members. We look forward to a year of many accomplishments.

So the old adage of "The more things *change* the more they stay the same" will not happen here. We are making *change happen*. As our leadership on the Board changes, we are adding two new Board members: **Gary Bell** of FBM Financial Services and **Jane Del Simone** of the West Contra Costa Adult School. Welcome aboard.



We have also added two new staff members:


Gail Sepanek is heading up our new Convention and Visitors Bureau. Gail has many years of experience in this field, and has worked in many cities including Detroit, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, PA, Napa and here in Richmond. Drawing on accomplishments with Westin Hotels, a major theme park and the Napa Valley Wine Train, among others, she is eager to help Richmond change its image and bring visitors to our city.

Chris Phipps is our new Director of Membership Services. She will be working with new members, our Ambassador program and will staff our Education committee. Chris was lately with the Bay Area Rescue Mission and is a former elementary school teacher.

We welcome Gail and Chris to the Chamber.



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




Thank You!



Business Speaks

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

Featured Chamber Benefit:

Toast of Richmond: Toastmasters

Good public speaking is one of the most important business and leadership skills, and it's also one of the most feared.

It's a new year and a great time to conquer that fear or to further develop your public speaking skills in a friendly, supportive atmosphere. The Chamber of Commerce sponsors The Toast of Richmond Toastmasters, a chapter of Toastmasters International. Through use of workbooks and a variety of speaking exercises, members will be speaking like pros in no time and having fun doing it.

The Club meets Mondays from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. in the Richmond Chamber's conference room. All ages and speaking levels are welcome. For more information about the Toast of Richmond, call Club President K. Hubbard at 510-262-9289.

Deirdre Cerkanowicz
 Director of Member Services

MARKETING ALERT!

MARKET YOUR BUSINESS TO GET MORE CUSTOMERS ... GROW YOUR BUSINESS ... STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT WAYS TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS?

Small businesses don't always have the money to launch huge advertising campaigns in different media. In fact, you may have tried different advertising approaches and vehicles and you may not have hit on a really successful campaign yet. While advertising can be very expensive, the right media mix can really pay off and deliver results. It is important to be creative and look for different options – Radio, Newspaper, Television, Outdoor, Coupons, Contests, Gifts, Events, Cross-promotions. Remember these three rules:

1. Consider your budget (don't spread yourself too thin)
2. Focus on your goals and objectives, measure results (what has worked in the past), have fun with it (marketing is an art and a science)
3. Be consistent - do something every month!!

We will focus on Cable Television for this issue and explore other options for the future.

HOW CAN YOUR BUSINESS BENEFIT FROM CABLE TELEVISION?

Local cable advertising offers **affordable commercial breaks in high-quality programming** on networks such as CNN, TBS, Discovery, ESPN, BET, and Lifetime! Local cable is an affordable advertising vehicle and it offers a variety of programming: sports, specials, etc.

CABLE TELEVISION IS POWERFUL!

- Use television's sense of urgency to get your message across in a memorable way!
- Find your best customers; concentrate frequency to them.
- Use **targeted** frequency to rise above the clutter and increase sales!

“SELL” ADVERTISING: MOTIVATE UNDECIDED CONSUMERS TO BUY

- Ability to sell consumers into the market with the use of sight, sound, and motion.
- Reach many different people with a focus on price and item content.

“IN THE MARKET” ADVERTISING: TARGET PRE-SOLD CONSUMERS

- Ability to get sales from “pre-sold” consumers who are actively shopping.
- Provide high frequency with a focus on features and benefits.

GEOGRAPHIC TARGETING

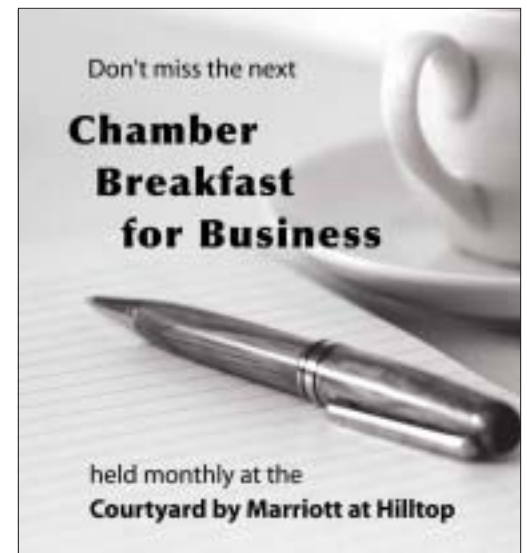
- Geographic **targeted advertising** allows you to concentrate your dollars to those consumers in your sales area. **Less waste...** Save money and make every \$ count!

CABLE TV WORKS WITH OTHER MEDIA AND TAKES THE BEST FROM EACH MEDIUM!

- Geographic targeting of outdoor, direct mail and newspapers
- Demographic targeting of magazines
- Frequency of radio
- Impact of television

Maria Costen is a Senior Account Executive at Comcast Spotlight with more than 20 years of experience in marketing. She will write about other forms of marketing in future issues of Richmond Business.

Call Maria at (925) 288-3246 or email her at maria_costen@cable.comcast.com



March 23

Invited Speaker:
Richmond Councilmember
Gayle McLaughlin
Limited to 40 with
Reservations

2005 CHANGES IN LABOR LAWS

Major changes in California labor laws went into effect January 1. Some you might be interested in include:

MEDIATION

AB 2870 (Mullin) authorizes the Fair Employment and Housing Commission (FEHC) to conduct mediations at the request of FEHC any time after a complaint is filed. The legislation authorizes the FEHC to adopt its own procedural regulations for hearings it conducts or to follow the Administrative Procedures Act.

PAYROLL DATA

SB 1618 (Battin) requires an employer, by January 1, 2008, to furnish each employee with an accurate itemized statement at the time of each wage payment that shows no more than the last four digits of the employee's Social Security number, or an employee identification number other than a Social Security number.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION

AB 1825 (Reyes) requires employers with 50 or more employees (including temporary workers and independent contractors) to provide two hours of sexual harassment prevention training by January 1, 2006 to all supervisory employees employed as of July 1, 2005.

The training must be provided in a classroom or other interactive setting by educators with expertise in harassment prevention. It must include information and practical guidance about federal and state laws concerning sexual harassment, information about correction of sexual harassment and remedies available to victims of employee sexual harassment, and practical examples regarding prevention of harassment, discrimination and retaliation.

LABOR LAW CHANGES THAT WENT INTO EFFECT BEFORE JANUARY 1 INCLUDE:

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

SB 899 (Poochigian) changes the manner in which the level of injury is determined and the amount of disability assigned to an injury. Regulations governing the implementation of new medical provider networks went into effect in November.

THE “SUE YOUR BOSS” LAW

SB 1809 (Dunn) reforms include a bar on penalties for posting, filing or reporting requirements except mandatory payroll and workplace injury reporting retroactive for cases filed since January 1, 2004; court review of all settlements; and procedures to follow before filing a lawsuit.

Information in this article provided by the California Chamber of Commerce.

THANK YOU TO



SPONSOR OF THE 5TH ANNUAL CHAMBER CRAB FEED



Reserve your tickets now!
See flyer inside or
call 234-3512.
• Crab Feed -- Friday,
Feb. 11, 2004

CHAMBER EVENTS



photo by Ellen Gailing

A nice crowd came to the January Mixer at Hacienda Grill. The food was great and the Sangria was a treat.



photo by Sandi Genser-Maack

Richmond's Interim City Manager Phil Batchelor was the guest at December's Breakfast for Business, here with West Contra Costa Adult School's Jane Del Simone, Chair of the Breakfast Committee.

WHERE TO GET REQUIRED HR MATERIALS

Required 2005 California Human Resources publications, including all required notices, are available from the California Chamber of Commerce.

Visit their website at www.calchamberstore.com to find:

2005 *California Human Resources Essentials*, bound into a book with color-coded easy reference sections. It includes all California business forms on CD. (\$79)

2005 *Required Notices Kit*, includes all 13 required employer notices on one 26' x 39' poster. The kit also includes pamphlets on the Mandatory Paid Family Leave, Workers' Comp Rights and Benefits, UI/SDI and the required California Sexual Harassment Information Sheets. (\$81)

2005 *California Employer Poster*, includes all 13 required notices and is available in English and Spanish. (\$21)

2005 *California Labor Law Digest*. Updated for 2005, this puts answers to labor law questions at your fingertips. (\$149)

Find lots of other tools on the website or call (800) 331-8877.

chamber **ANNIVERSARIES**

Congratulations!

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

12/9/04 to 1/12/05

- Over 50** Donald Hardison
WCC Association of Realtors
- 41 TO 45** SBC
- 36 TO 40** Civic Center Pharmacy
- 26 TO 30** Interactive Resources, Inc.
Tradeway Stores
- 16 TO 20** Bowser Construction Co., Inc.
Zell & Associates
- 11 TO 15** McCloskey Painting
Morrison O'Hara
Project SEED, Inc.
- 6 TO 10** Creative Sign Co.
Diversity & Leadership, Clark Research Associates
Sydney Barbara Metrick Ph.D, CPCC
Safeway Beverage Plant
Shields/Richmond Nursing Center
Vallier Design Associates
- 1 TO 5** Cazuelas Grill
Margi Cellucci Real Estate
Hudson and Quinn Janitorial Service
Protection Service Industries, L.P.
Rafanelli, Nahas and Ambrose
Richmond Main Street Initiative Inc.
Stewart's Rose Manor Funeral Service
The Watershed Project
West Contra Costa Adult Education

Please patronize these businesses

Richmond Chamber of Commerce Board Members

- | | |
|--|---|
| Gary Bell / FMB Financial Services | Sherie Hickman / Kaiser Permanente |
| Helen Carr / Contra Costa College | Mark Howe / MSH Management |
| Sharon Craig-Carter / Chevron Richmond | Ivonne Inurritegui-Folster / Orton Develop. |
| Carla Della Zoppa / Security Pacific Real Estate | Larry Landry / General Chemical |
| Jane Del Simone / WCC Adult School | Richard McCombs / MBA Polymers, Inc. |
| Michael Fenley / Hilltop Mall | Judy Morgan / Richmond Chamber |
| Virginia Finlay /Signature Realty | Peter Nuti / Richmond Sanitary Service |
| Joshua G. Genser / Attorney-at-Law | Carl Overaa / C. Overaa & Company |
| Barry J. Gordon / The Mechanics Bank | Mark Quilici / California Casting Inc. |
| Karl Gramm / UPS | Will Rigney / SBC |
| Gretchen G. Grover / EBMUD | John Zieshenne / M.A. Hays Co. |
| Peter A. Hass / Watson, Hoffe & Hass | Ex Officio |
| Jerrold Hatchett / SimsMetal | Gloria Johnston, Ph.D / WCCUSD |