

# Richmond CHAMBER NEWS

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

## AN INVITATION

by Gretchen Grover, Chair

By the time you read this, there will be a change at the top – a new Chair of the Richmond Chamber Board. I am retiring from EBMUD and moving to Talkeetna, Alaska. My new business is called The Laughing Moose, and my husband and I rent cabins to folks visiting south central Alaska. The area is famous for its mountains, fishing, rafting, hiking, cross country skiing, dog sledging, and snowmobiling – we even have wild-life in our own backyard!

The name came about because when we were looking at the property we spooked a moose at the edge of a grove of birch trees. She went off about 10 yards and looked back at us strangely. We felt like the moose was laughing at our naiveté – questioning how two novices from Outside (what Alaskans call the lower 48) could possibly think that they could take on a project to build a home or a business in Alaska.

Here it is seven years later and we have the log cabin we built ourselves (all 3000 square feet of it), two rental cabins, and, as I pen this, 21 sled dogs (belonging to our winter tenant). Building this dream project has been a series of adventures for the two of us, and retirement promises many more opportunities to explore an incredible place and just enjoy life.

You may wonder why I'm telling you about my new business. Isn't that what being in the Chamber is all about? Every mixer we have is a chance for a business to promote itself. Our networking breakfasts and trade shows give everyone the opportunity to meet others, talk about business, offer special deals to Chamber members.

So as my parting shot, I invite you all to a mixer at my place – on a date of your choice. Look us up on the web, and mention the Chamber when you make your reservation, and I'll give you \$25 off your first night's rental.



Between June and August, we have 20+ hours of daylight, the fishing is great (five different runs of salmon), and the six million acres of Denali National Park are just a couple of hours drive or train ride away. It is a different world. There are only 600,000 people in the entire state – that's about one person per square mile, and almost half live 100 miles south of us in Anchorage.

Just a reminder if you're coming to visit – the nearest grocery store is 60 miles away, so stop and get supplies before you drive up from Anchorage. The good news is gas is about 35-40 cents per gallon cheaper in Alaska.

For now, it's north to Alaska for me! It has been a pleasure to be on the Board of the Chamber and to serve, albeit briefly, as Chair. I hope you'll give my successor the same support you have given me.

Keep supporting your fellow Chamber members!



For more information on events listed in the calendar (above) call:

For Point Richmond Music -- 223-3882

For Music on the Main -- 236-4049

For Museum Exhibit: "This is Your Life, Richmond, Calif.", -- 235-7387

For more Centennial event information, see [www.richmondcelebration.com](http://www.richmondcelebration.com)

## events

### CALENDAR

#### June

June 9 - 5 to 7 pm  
Mixer - A-N West

June 10 - 5:30 to 8 pm  
Pt. Richmond Music  
Festival -- Free

June 16 - 5:30 pm  
Music on the Main  
Harbour Way at  
Macdonald Ave.

June 28 - 7:45 am  
Breakfast for Business  
Courtyard by Marriott  
Guest: Glen Price

#### July

July 3 - dusk  
Fireworks  
Marina Bay

July 8 - 5:30 to 8 pm  
Pt. Richmond  
Music Festival

July 14 - 5 to 7 pm  
Mixer - Richmond  
Country Club

July 27 - 7:45 am  
Breakfast for Business  
Courtyard by Marriott

July 30 - 2 pm  
Exhibit Reception  
Richmond Museum

## chamber

### MEETINGS

#### June

June 2 - 7:30 am  
Board of Directors

June 15 - 8 am  
Executive Committee

June 15 - noon  
CVB

June 16  
Leadership Day  
Graduation

June 21 - 8 am  
Education Committee

Toastmasters meets  
every Monday at  
noon in the Chamber  
Boardroom.

#### July

July 5 - 8 am  
Government  
Relations

July 5 - noon  
Ambassadors

July 7 - 7:30 am  
Board of Directors

July 19 - 8 am  
Education Committee

July 20 - noon  
CVB

July 21 - 8 am  
Executive Committee



photo by Ellen Galling

Chamber Chair Gretchen Grover pulls a lucky member's business card at the April Mixer at La Strada Ristorante. Manager Martin Gonzales gave away Gift Certificates.

## flyer deadline!

The flyer deadline for inclusion in the July issue is June 17. Reach almost 800 businesses! Call (510) 234-3512 or email: [newsletter@rcoc.com](mailto:newsletter@rcoc.com)

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[www.rcoc.com](http://www.rcoc.com)

WELCOME **NEW** MEMBERS

Mr. Gary Ford, Vice President and  
Business Development Officer

**Bank of Marin**  
999 Anderson Drive  
San Rafael, CA 94901  
(415) 259-0375  
garyford@bankofmarin.com  
www.bankofmarin.com

Mr. Larry Sly, Executive Director  
**Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano**  
P.O. Box 271966  
Concord, CA 94527  
(925) 771-1300

Mr. Peter DeFabio  
Recreation Program Coordinator  
Mr. Bryan Harris  
MSG/CSA  
**Richmond Senior Center**  
2525 Macdonald Avenue  
Richmond, CA 94804  
(510) 307-8087

4/08/05 to 5/05/05

**SHE WAS OUR GOOGLE**

by Judy Morgan, President

It is not often you get the perfect Board Member. Someone who knows practically everything about government. Someone who understands the issues a Chamber faces, who is consistently supportive of Chamber events and projects. Someone who knows the political process and politics of our city, county and state. She knows every bill and amendment that affect business. She is someone who lives in our community and because of that, takes a personal interest in learning all she can about an issue, wanting the best outcome for all of us.

Our Gretchen Grover has been quite a force in West County. Representing EBMUD, Gretchen has done a great job of making connections and through those connections making things happen. Did you know Gretchen was involved in **eight** Chambers in West County, serving on the Board of three of those Chambers? She often carried the message from one to another. It was her involvement, dedication and connections that made things happen for West County Chambers. In addition to chairing the Richmond Chamber Board of Directors for the past five months, she was Chair of the Government Relations Committee for two years, keeping us informed on local, state and federal issues. She was a walking encyclopedia. She was our google when it came to issues affecting business.

It was Gretchen who developed the presentation "The ABC's of Regional Government" for our **Leadership Richmond** class. The presentation is very educational and will live on and be used

for years to come. We thank her, we will miss her, and we wish her the best of luck. As you have read in her column, we are all invited to the Laughing Moose. I will see you there.

So what is the Chamber to do for leadership for the next six months? It wasn't fair to bring in a new Chair for just six months and throw him/her into the mix of the Chamber world without any training. So we reached back and found Mr. Richmond! Any one of our past Chairs would have made an excellent choice. When the decision was made to ask a past Chair, I knew I could gladly work with any one of them. But Mr. Ziesenhenne, John Z, is a perfect choice. He understands the role of the Chamber, what it is like to run a small business, what the issues are for our manufacturing base, what our housing stock and neighborhoods are like and, as a former Councilmember for the City of Richmond, he certainly has his finger on the pulse of the political world.

In the next six months, the City of Richmond will be submitting our General Plan — the most important document for a city. It requires a very public process. It is where we set the course for our city for at least the next decade. So it is appropriate that our Mr. Richmond is at the helm of the Chamber to help oversee this process.



**May 25**  
Guest Speaker:  
**Glen Price**  
President  
**WCCUSD School Board**  
Limited to 40 with  
Reservations  
Sponsored by  
**YMCA**



**Leadership Richmond** Class of 2005 is nearing completion. Participants have been to multiple locations including City Hall, Richmond Police Department, Kaiser and Doctors Hospitals and they've toured the Landfill. They have learned recycling from green waste and plastics to steel; legal issues affecting business; which regulatory agencies affect the Bay Area, and have formed business relationships. They've seen the results of the school rebuilding bonds.

Graduating in the current class are Adan Alonzo, Republic Services - West Contra Costa Sanitary Landfill, Sean Brooks, SFPD, Richmond Police Activities League volunteer, Sandra Castillo, Contra Costa College, John Christensen, Contra Costa College, Betty Cockayne, West County Times, Rhonda Harris, R. Harris & Associates, Jerrold Hatchett, SimsMetal, Gisela Hernandez, Doctors Medical Center San Pablo & Pinole, Tony Kallingal, The Mechanics Bank, Jeff Lee, Pt. Richmond Neighborhood Council, Susan Lindheim, Kaiser Permanente, Fred Lucero, RichmondWORKS, Carlos Murillo-Martinez, Contra Costa College, Deborah Rangel, Kaiser



Permenente, Ramona Samuels, Richmond Main Street Initiative, Trish Snowden, Courtyard by Marriott Richmond/Berkeley, and Karen Whitcomb, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, Inc.

We are now accepting applications for the next class, which starts in September. Participation is open to Chamber members. We meet one full day a month from September through June. There is no class in December. The class is valuable to persons new to the area as well as old timers.

Call the Chamber now at (510) 234-3512 to sign up or for more information.

## GOOD NEWS FROM THE FIELD OF EDUCATION IN WEST CONTRA COSTA

Project SEED offers algebra, analytic geometry and precalculus to elementary and middle school classes in public and other schools nationwide. Its math teaching specialists all hold a bachelor's or higher degree in mathematics, engineering or a math-based science, and they use highly interactive techniques to permit virtually every student to respond to virtually every question posed in class. Recent kudos follow:

- A panel chaired by Shirley Malcom of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) announced the results of their Congressional charge to assess best practices in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 math and science education. **Based on the results of their extensive evaluations, Project SEED and one other mathematics education program were given the highest BEST rating out of 200 math and science programs screened and 34 given detailed examination.**

- David Grant, executive director of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, wrote "Thank you for your extraordinary work on behalf of children and their learning... We were thrilled to report to our Trustees that of the 24 students in Camden City Schools who scored "advanced proficient" in mathematics, as measured by the Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment, 17 of them were former Project SEED students.

- WCCUSD administrators have urged Project SEED to work with students who must take algebra soon and aren't expected to succeed. Regular Algebra I students at one of these schools were incensed to learn that SEED students were discussing pre-calculus topics, topics the "able" students had never encountered. Several supposed "at-risk" students gave the known-capable students a lesson about summations — calculus subject matter — creating an inspiring moment for all concerned.

Seeing is believing. Call 510-644-3422 to arrange to visit a class.



photo by Don Phipps

Cindy Howell and Balloons From Heaven receive the Richmond Chamber's Small Business Award for 2004 at the Contra Costa Council's 5th Annual Small Business Awards Luncheon in April. The award was presented by Chamber Chair Gretchen Grover with MC Kevin Pitts, Publisher, East Bay Business Times.

## MEET THE RICHMOND CVB

By Gail Sepanek,  
Director, RCVB



As this is the Richmond Convention & Visitors Bureau's (CVB) first column, you might like to know the story of how our RCVB came to be. In their wisdom, the Richmond Chamber Board of Directors requested RCOC President Judith Morgan to investigate setting up a CVB for Richmond. She hired a consultant to create a Proposal, Marketing Plan and Budget for a potential RCVB. Judy relentlessly pursued ways to fund this project and finally learned of a Business Improvement District tax for tourism called a BID. She then lobbied the City Council for support and they finally passed an Ordinance in spring of 2004, creating what is now known as the RTBID. The ordinance provides for monthly payments of occupied rooms in all Richmond hotels of \$1.50 per occupied room per night from hotels with 50 or more rooms and \$1 per occupied room per night from hotels with fewer than 50 rooms. This money is the base funding for the RCVB together with memberships and advertising revenues. So only the visitor is taxed, not local residents, unless they happen to be renting a hotel guest room.

FYI, most CVBs are funded by the local city general fund or by a TOT tax on occupied hotel rooms. A TOT tax is shorthand for Tourism Occupancy Tax which, in the case of Richmond, goes directly into the general fund. Interestingly, the TOT was founded by my hometown of Detroit, Michigan, way back in the early 1900s. It was intended to generate

monies to promote the city or area in general, so that tourism would be a revenue-producing entity for the community. You should also know that each tourism dollar replicates itself more than seven times in the community. For example, a dollar spent in a restaurant goes on to fund employee wages, laundry services, food suppliers, space rental/mortgage, beverage suppliers, cleaning services, etc. which in turn passes those dollars onward, to their employees and suppliers, as well. This process continues to repeat itself.

As far as membership is concerned, some of you are asking why you need to be a member of the RCVB as well as the Chamber. Well, we have different focuses and while the Chamber is a business-to-business networking and information tool, the RCVB has the emphasis on soliciting and attracting tourists and business travelers to Richmond so they can spend their discretionary dollars here instead of elsewhere. I hope to continue what I began when I was with what is now the Courtyard by Marriott. That is to bring tourists to make Richmond their home base while they visit the entire Bay Area including Richmond, San Francisco, Yosemite, the Wine Country, Muir Woods, etc. So, BECOME A RCVB MEMBER and support the tourism effort. It is inexpensive and will return to you manyfold. Just call me at (510) 307-4470 for more information.

## NEW MEMBER UTILIZES RESOURCES

I just started my new business in December of 2004. I had always heard of the Chamber of Commerce, but never really had cause to look into it. Once I started my business, I figured I should join. That's just what you do, right? You can then hang a plaque on your wall and impress your customers.

That may be true, but the Chamber is much more than that. Looking through the member directory, I began to realize what a great resource for services, products and contacts I had found. What better way to support other local small businesses?

I needed to put lettering on my car, so I contacted Same Day Signs. When I went to my first Mixer I met a potential advertising source, Kimberly Palmer, who represents KDYA and KDIA radio stations. I also met two potential business contacts, Deb Allen of Bay Area Real Estate Ladies and Ivonne Inurritegui-Folster of Orton Development. Not to mention that the food was good and it was a fun time! What a great way to build my business while supporting the community.

Julie Pledger

Velocity Lock and Key Mobile Locksmith Service

Julie has become a Chamber Ambassador which gives her lots more opportunity to meet other Chamber member businesses, and to have more fun! Call Chris at (510) 234-3512 to talk about being an Ambassador.

## 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.



# Thank You!

**President Circle members for your continued support of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce.**



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## Adopt A School



A column to recognize supporters of our schools

### SAVE OUR SPORTS

Dear Friends,

Business and education have become partners of necessity because America cannot continue to compete and prosper in the global arena if the business community does not embrace its young people. Education today is a task requiring total community involvement. If we are to widen the doorway of opportunity to quality education for our youth, it cannot be left solely to the public schools.

On Monday, June 27, 2005, the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) is hosting its second annual "Save Our Sports Golf Classic" at the Richmond Country Club.

Proceeds raised will benefit the District Sports programs that have been cut due to a severe budget deficit. Thousands of students have been affected because these cuts have forced the cancellation of many athletic programs. Please support this worthy cause! If you need further information, feel free to contact me at 510.620.2206.

Sincerely,

Vince Kilmartin

Associate Superintendent for Operations  
West Contra Costa Unified School District



# chamber

**Congratulations!**

## ANNIVERSARIES

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

4/6/05 to 5/3/05

### Over 50

Chevron Richmond Refinery

### 41 TO 45

San Rafael Rock Quarry, Inc.

### 21 TO 25

Party Time Catering Corp./Rockefeller Lodge

### 16 TO 20

Courtyard by Marriott Richmond/Berkeley

### 11 TO 16

Bowlers Mart Sporting Goods  
East Bay Center for the Performing Arts  
Professional Finishing  
Safeguard - Jackforms  
Santa Fe Market

### 6 TO 10

AAA (California State Automobile Association)  
American Medical Response  
Clothing Broker  
Coldwell Banker / Bartels Real Estate  
Early Childhood Mental Health Program  
Exchange Club of Richmond & San Pablo  
Hilltop Commons  
Laner Electric Supply Co., Inc.  
Marvin Gardens Real Estate  
Sydney Barbara Metrick PhD, CPCC  
Pacific Academy  
Quality Inn & Suites  
Richmond Development Company, LLC  
Signature Realty

### 1 TO 5

Amigo Environmental Inc.  
Center for Integrated Wellness  
Community Housing Development Corporation  
Copy Central  
The Cove at Marina Bay  
Davillier-Sloan  
Just Fencing, Inc.  
Kaiser Permanente Optical Services  
Kaiser Permanente School of Allied Health Care  
Mt. Diablo National Bank  
Tech Futures  
Valley Yellow Pages  
West Coast Motors  
West County Housing Corporation

*Please patronize these businesses*



Steve Duran, (2nd from left), Director of the Economic & Community Development Dept. for the City of Richmond, was the Guest Speaker at the April Breakfast for Business. With Duran, from left to right, Tom Mitchell, Susan Poe, President, and Jeff Hansen of Virtual Development, sponsor of the event.



## THE AMBASSADOR ADVANTAGE

What is an Ambassador?

Our Ambassadors are the first to come in contact with new members, having enhanced networking opportunities with professional contacts on a social level, who get to meet the movers and shakers, and stand out in the (mixer) crowd with formal nametags and ribbons.

One Ambassador is quoted as saying, "First and foremost, I like to have fun and be helpful. I like meeting new people and having new experiences."

### Richmond Chamber of Commerce Board Members

Gary Bell / First Bankers Mortgage  
Jim Brumfield / Chevron Richmond Refinery  
Helen Carr / Contra Costa College  
Carla Della Zoppa / Security Pacific Real Estate  
Jane Del Simone / WCC Adult School  
Virginia Finlay / Signature Realty  
Joshua G. Genser / Genser & Watkins  
Barry J. Gordon / The Mechanics Bank  
Karl Gramm / UPS  
Gretchen G. Grover / EBMUD  
Peter A. Hass / Watson, Hoffe & Hass  
Jerrold Hatchett / SimsMetal  
Sherie Hickman / Kaiser Permanente

Mark Howe / MSH Management  
Ivonne Inurritegui-Folster / Orton Develop.  
Gloria Johnston, Ph.D / WCCUSD  
Bill Lindsay / City of Richmond  
Richard McCombs / MBA Polymers, Inc.  
Judy Morgan / Richmond Chamber  
Peter Nuti / Richmond Sanitary Service  
Carl Overaa / C. Overaa & Company  
Susan Poe / Virtual Development  
Mark Quilici / California Casting Inc.  
Will Rigney / SBC  
John Ziesenhenné / M.A. Hays Co.