



The Lark

Bringing Business & the Community Together!

Volume XI Issue 4

April 2007

Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce

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Office Hours: M-Th 1-4 pm

Our Mission:

The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce is organized to advance the economic well-being and uniqueness of the Mark West Area so that its citizens and all areas of its business community shall prosper.

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After Hours Business Social

April 12, 2007

5:30pm - 7:30pm

Hosted by:

**Benjamin
Tire & Brake
250 Airport Blvd.
Santa Rosa**

2007 Directory

2007 Membership Directories have been distributed to our members. Did you receive your copy? If you haven't received yours or if you need additional copies, you can pick them up at the chamber office.

The **Wine Country Harvest Faire & Business Showcase** and **Silent Auction** has started gearing up for it's 18th year. This will be held at the **Wells Fargo Center for the Arts**. Booths are being spoken for so if you'd like to call to reserve your favorite booth, **now isn't too early!**

Chamber members are invited to **Redwood Credit Union's Corporate Facility Grand Opening**
3033 Cleveland Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

April 19th, 2007 6:00pm - 8:00pm

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.redwoodcu.org> or call (800) 479-7928

FYI: Business Environmental Alliance's "Best Practices Report"

We encourage you to take this 5-minute survey to help publicize your company's best environmental practices! A special report is being prepared that highlights the steps local businesses have taken to improve their bottom line through voluntary sound environmental practices, and we hope you'll participate.

The **Business Environmental Alliance's "Best Practices Report"** aims to quantify the ways in which local businesses have improved their environmental practices to help save money. It is confidential for your company, and will inform the Sonoma County community of the voluntary steps that local employers have taken to implement good environmental practices.

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**Visit your Chamber's office, or call 578-7975:
642 Larkfield Shopping Center, Santa Rosa, CA 95403**



*Sue Larson of
Sue Larson
Financial Services,
New Member*

Join Us on April 12:

Chamber members and their guests are invited to the **Business After Hours Social** hosted by **Benjamin Tire & Brake**
250 Airport Blvd.

Raffle tickets are available at the **April Social** for a brand new **Zappy 3 Pro** valued at **\$860**.

Tickets are **\$1** or **6 for \$5**



FYI: Business Environmental Alliance's "Best Practices Report"

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If you would like, your business will be added to the list of survey participants, which will provide short descriptions of the projects that various Sonoma County businesses are undertaking.

Your time is extremely valuable and we appreciate your assistance. The survey will take less than five minutes to complete; to fill out the survey, simply go to www.sonomabea.org. **Please respond by April 20, 2007.**

Thank you for your time!
Ben Stone, Director
Sonoma County Economic Development Board

FYI: Job Growth Strong

Newly revised data from the State Employment Development Dept. (EDD) indicates that Sonoma County job growth is much stronger than previously reported. Total employment is up 3.4% on a year-over basis, according to EDD.

Across the board, employment is up in virtually all sectors (and up in every "super sector", meaning construction, etc., that encompass all others). Here are some key points:

- Nonfarm employment is up 3.5% on a year-over basis
- The adjustments pushed December's total employment figures up 2.8% and non-farm figures up 2.2% (unemployment was readjusted down to 3.6% from 3.7% for December as well)
- The unemployment rate (4.3%) is a full 1% lower than California's (5.3%) and 0.7% lower than United States (5.0%)

Separately, Moody's Economy.com, which prepares forecasts for the Economic Development Board (EDB) predicts that Sonoma County will outperform the Nation in job creation over the next five years.

Ben Stone, Director
Sonoma County Economic Development Board

FYI: 4-Day Workweek Push

CalChamber Renews Push for 4-Day Workweek Option

Individual Flexibility If Worker/Employer Both Agree

(March 12, 2007) The California Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring legislation to permit individual workers and their employers to mutually agree to a four-day workweek.

The bill, AB 510 (Benoit; R-Bermuda Dunes), will help individual employees achieve greater flexibility in work schedules — something survey after survey shows employees want in a job.

The CalChamber sponsored similar legislation during the 2005-06 legislative session: AB 640 (Tran; R-Garden Grove), SB 1254 (Ackerman; R-Tustin) and AB 2217 (Villines; R-Clovis). The bills all failed in Assembly and Senate policy committees on party-line votes.

"Permitting individual flexibility is one way employers can help workers find some relief from hectic days, long commutes, high gasoline prices and conflicting work and personal schedules," said Marti Fisher, CalChamber policy advocate for labor and employment, health care and small business.

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March Social
Hosted by
Sue Larson Financial Services

The March Social was hosted by **Sue Larson**, and her daughter **Dana M. Larson-High** of **Sue Larson Financial Services**. It served as an early 'open house' to show off their new office at 194 Wikiup Drive Suite "B" in the **Wikiup Professional Park**.

It was a great success as they had a large turnout of chamber members as well as some of their clients. The Social was catered by **Roger Praplan** of **La Gare Restaurant**. The food was wonderful, as were the desserts.

A special recognition, plaque was given to **Les Garzini** of **Garzini Floors** for his great work and help with the chamber office relocation to the **Larkfield Shopping Center**. Door prizes were also given by a drawing. Sue & Dana awarded a nice orchid plant to **Doug Williams** (our fire District Chief) and another door prize of a bottle of wine donated by **Allstate Insurance** (located next door to Larson Financial) owned by **Mark and Mike Scheuer**, and won by **Attorney Charles Holzhauser** and his wife **Christine**.

Don't forget to attend these socials as they are a great place to market your business and services. Just one of the many ways to make your membership work and give back to your community. Bring your friends and/or employees too! The more the better for everyone. Check your newsletter for the dates of upcoming socials.

Raffle tickets are available at the **April Social** for a brand new **Zappy 3 Pro** valued at **\$860**.



Walt Smith presents a new member plaque to Dana M. Larson-High & Sue Larson of Sue Larson Financial Services

Walt presents Les Garzini of Garzini Floors with a special recognition plaque for his work on the Chamber office.

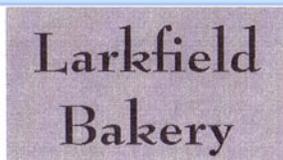


photos by Sonoma CONNECTION



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Sunday 6 am - 12 pm
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707-579-4991

We serve  espresso.

President's Message

Our Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce needs to establish goals for the next four years. Here are my recommendations for a few achievable goals for our Community:

First, the Chamber needs to relocate to a new location, one where there is street frontage with the ability to hang our sign, something around 1,000 sq. ft.

Second, with the updating of our equipment and computer programs, we need to update our printers to handle a greater capacity.

Third, we recognize that staff, through improving communication with the community, is very important. Thus we need to "adopt and implement a comprehensive communication plan for our members and the community." By lending our support to civic and fraternal organizations we would see greater community involvement. Perhaps by inviting and supporting a local newspaper to keep abreast of community activities news and crime!

Forth, support and encourage a desire to "acquire and retain greenbelts and open space. This will keep our community "GREEN."

Fifth, support the continuation of a comprehensive transportation plan to encourage public transport by the addition of new routes and additional stops, plus the addition of continuous sidewalks along Old Redwood Hwy. rather than the missing links that exist today.

Sixth, create a comprehensive human resources (policy), work on organizational development, and expand technologies that address this area's current and projected needs such as a "service district" that locally controls trash rates, lighting, etc.

Seventh, we could ask the County Library to convenience our area by having the bookmobile visit once a week!

Eighth, "create new and improving existing recreational amenities." We should petition the County Parks Department to expand Tom Schopflin Field so it is more accessible to the majority of our community, rather than only little league, soccer and a few RC model flyers. With two high schools and a multitude of elementary and middle schools, wouldn't this community be better served if a County Skate Park were available to our children, Wouldn't equestrian trails over some of the greenbelts be a recreational improvements?

Ninth, provide an updated community directory on a yearly basis to avail information on local business to the community.

Tenth, Support the formation of a locally controlled **Community Services District**.

Give some serious thought to each of the above suggested goals, and let your chamber know by calling 707-578-7975 or e-mailing expressing your opinions and desires.

Sincerely,
James J. Bajgrowicz
President

Promote your business by having your flyers inserted in the Chamber newsletter.
You supply the flyers - We do the work!

The next Board of Director's meeting is April 10 at the Mark West Unified School District Office from 11:30 am - 1:00 pm.



David Hartman

15 Lark Center Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

707-546-5717
FAX 707-546-0902



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New Member



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Erika Klohe and Theresa Rousset of Klohe Insurance Group receive a new member plaque from Walt Smith

FYI: 4-Day Workweek Push

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“To help employers provide that flexibility, California needs to change the law enough to permit four-day workweeks for individual workers who want to find a balance between their work and personal lives,” she said.

AB 510 will permit an individual employee, with the consent of his/her employer, to work up to 10 hours per day within a 40-hour workweek without overtime pay. Overtime premium pay still would be required for more than 10 hours of work in a workday or 40 hours in a workweek, as would double-time after 12 work hours in a day.

Union Practice

The legislation notes that unionized workplaces already allow workers to choose to work four 10-hour days, but that it is virtually impossible for workers at non-unionized workplaces to enjoy the benefit.

“No compelling public policy reason exists for this discrepancy in the flexibility of work schedules between unionized and non-unionized workers,” the legislation states.

Current Law

California law requires that overtime compensation be paid for work performed by an employee in excess of eight hours in a single day, regardless of whether the employee works fewer than 40 hours in that week.

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Renewing Members

AutoBahn

Cal American Water Co.

Pete Henderson, Individual

Larkfield Body & Paint

North Coast Bank/Windsor

2007 – Pick a month to hold your Business Social.

<i>upcoming</i>	
Business-After-Hours-Socials	
Apr 12	Benjamin Tire & Brake
May 10	Rincon Valley Fire District
Jun 14	Golden Bear Financial
Jul 12	Klohe Insurance Group
Aug 9	Open - call to schedule!
Sep 13	Open - call to schedule!
Oct 11	Cal American Water Co.

FYI: 4-Day Workweek Push

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California is one of only four states that do not conform wage laws to the national Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA bases its overtime compensation requirements for salaried, non-exempt employees on total hours worked per week, rather than total hours worked per day.

Under current and very detailed California Industrial Welfare Commission wage orders, employers may institute alternative work schedules only if the affected employees agree to the arrangement in writing and by secret ballot.

Employers must hold discussion meetings at least 14 days before voting. Two-thirds of the company's employees must agree to the change. Any deviation from the rigidly controlled process voids the election.

The rules also state that daily work schedules are limited to a maximum of 10 hours per day, with a four-hour daily minimum. Variances in schedules or the use of more than one schedule is prohibited without repeating the voting process.

Of the three states with overtime requirements, the state of Alaska has substantially similar overtime payment requirements as California. Nevada has an eight-hour requirement but also permits 10-hour days when a worker and employer have a specific agreement. Wyoming applies eight-hour overtime rules only to businesses not covered by the FLSA.

Few Use Complex Process

California's complex process in effect eliminates

most employers and employees from choosing schedule options such as flextime, part-time, job sharing, telecommuting and compressed workweeks. Only a handful of California employers are trying to operate under the restrictive provisions in the Labor Code.

Employers that are offering a staggered work schedule without going through an election process are operating in violation of the law.

Exempt from daily overtime are employees covered by collective bargaining agreements — these include all state, county and city employees, such as those employed by school districts, water districts and a multitude of other governmental agencies.

Surrounding States

The states bordering California have more flexible rules.

- In Oregon, employees working overtime must be paid at 1.5 times their regular rate of pay after working 40 hours in a single week.

- In Washington, most employees paid hourly are entitled to 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for any time worked over 40 hours in a seven-day workweek. Some salary- or commission-based employees also must be paid overtime.

- Arizona does not have state-set overtime rules and instead requires employers to use the 40-hour requirements set out in the federal FLSA.

- In Nevada, an employer must pay 1.5 times an employee's regular rate of pay whenever an employee works more than 40 hours in a week or more than eight hours in any workday, unless the employee and employer have made a specific agreement providing for a scheduled 10-hour day with a four-day workweek.

CalChamber Position

The CalChamber strongly believes that permitting individual workers and their employers to arrange and use a four-day workweek will give employees more flexibility and employers the ability to be more responsive to employee work/life needs.

AB 510 awaits a hearing date in the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee.

*from the California Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.calchamber.com>*

Chamber Membership Dues		
<i>Effective May 1</i>		
Standard Dues		Non-Profit Dues
\$125.00	Business (1-5 Personnel)	\$110.00
\$175.00	Business (6-10 Personnel)	\$155.00
\$245.00	Business (11+ Personnel)	\$215.00
\$625.00	Corporate Sponsor	
\$ 95.00	Individual (no plaque or voting)	

Mark West Area Community Information

AREA POPULATION - within a 3 mile radius - 20,000
ELEVATION - 160 feet above sea level
BOUNDARIES - Area approximately bounded by:
Shiloh Road - North
Piner Road - South
Mark West Lodge on Mark West Springs Rd - East
West Olivet Road - West

About the Newsletter

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The Lark is published monthly under the direction of:

The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce

642 Larkfield Shopping Center
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 578-7975

Deadline for publication is the
3rd Wednesday of each month.

ADVERTISING

**Monthly \$25; 3 Months \$60
6 months \$107.50; 1 year \$200**

FLYER INSERTION: \$35 per issue. You supply 200 copies of your 8.5" x 11" flyer on 20# paper. If you would like to have your flyer typeset and printed by the Chamber, the cost is \$75.

The Lark Newsletter is mailed to member businesses each month. For more information, please contact Office Manager Patricia Morelli, at 578-7975.

THE DEADLINE FOR LARK PUBLICATION

The deadline for all articles, pictures, and flyers for the Lark is the third Wednesday of each month, following our Monthly After Hours Business Social.

The Deadline for the May Lark
is **April 18.**

Please email your materials to info@markwest.org

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VP Public Relations - Pro Tem

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Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce
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