

Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and VISITORS CENTER



BRINGING BUSINESS & THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER!

4787 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Visitors Center: Mon. - Fri. 9 am - 4 pm www.markwest.org

707-578-7975
office@markwest.org

The Lark

January 2019
Volume XXXIII Issue 1

A LETTER FROM THE MARK WEST EDUCATION FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

Dearest Community Member,

On October 8, 2017, the most destructive fire in California history burned through Sonoma County, destroying the heart of our Mark West and Larkfield communities and swallowing more than 2,800 homes. Roughly one-third of our students lost their homes to the Tubbs Fire. In the face of this devastating loss, our students have returned, more eager than ever to resume their studies.

I am writing to ask for your pledge of financial support. The Mark West Education Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality music and art education to the students of the Mark West school district.

Now more than ever, our children need the support of music programs. The Mark West Education Foundation relies 100% on the generosity of contributions from donors like you to provide or maintain instruments, purchase materials, pay for class instruction, and facilitate opportunities for our students to proudly perform for their community.

Our goal is to raise \$25,000 for MWEF's musical program. We are specifically looking for contributions in the amount of \$500, \$1000 and above, whatever best fits your budget! Of course, contributions of any size are both deeply appreciated and graciously accepted—not to mention, tax deductible.

Donations are accepted through PayPal using either a debit or credit card, or can be directly connected to a bank account. We also accept checks made out to [Mark West Education Foundation] and sent to 305 Mark West Springs Road Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

Your donation may be tax deductible. For your records, our tax ID number is 56-2331535 . If you cannot give for us at this time but still wish to support our cause, please consider sharing our information with friends, family members and colleagues.

Thank you for your time and consideration of support.

Sincerely,

Shannon Duffy, Mark West Education Foundation President

707-217-2177 or mwef@mwusd.org

For more information, visit www.mwef.org or <https://www.facebook.com/MarkWestEducationFoundation>



Students from Mark West area schools need your help if they are to continue studying music! Here are some of them, entertaining the crowd at the December 2018 Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony.

January Social hosted by
Extended Child Care Coalition
See p3

UPCOMING EVENTS: next AFTER HOURS BUSINESS SOCIAL

Co-Hosted by
Rodan + Fields Independent Consultants
and **Bisordi Ranch and Vineyards, LLC**
870 Hopper Avenue, Santa Rosa

Thursday February 14, 2019
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Steve Plamann
Aaction Rents
President

*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.*

CHAMBER MEETINGS

Board of Directors

Second Tuesday
Of Each Month
11:30 am - 1:00 pm at
Best Western Plus Wine
Country Inn & Suites
870 Hopper Av. S.R.

Ambassadors Mtg.

Second Thursday
Of Each Month
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
At the Chamber offices

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year!

I would like to take a moment and thank all of our members for their continued support of the Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and the community, with a special thanks to the members who hosted a Business After Hours Social last year.

I also want to express my appreciation to all the members of our Board of Directors and to our Ambassadors. Without their efforts we would not be the well managed and "fun chamber" that we are known to be. And an additional thanks to Todd Anderson at the Best Western Plus Wine Country Inn and Suites on Hopper Avenue for hosting our luncheons and our monthly board meetings. And a special thanks to Brian Molsberry of Molsberry Markets, Inc. for providing the food for both.

We added many new members last year, thirteen regular business members to be exact and three new corporate sponsors. We also hosted the largest attended community event supporting the victims of the Tubbs Fire.

There are many good things on the horizon for 2019. Besides our monthly Business After Hours Socials, look for our informative luncheons, each of which features a guest speaker who plays an important role in our community. We also host a yearly Installation Dinner where our officers are sworn in. It's a very fun event and always features the current Miss Sonoma County as a special guest. Finally, there's our very famous Wine Country Harvest Faire and Business Showcase that attracts lots of people from all over the county. There has never been a time more important to the Mark West area and more beneficial to you and your business than right now for you to get involved with the Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce.

I would like to thank Jason and his fine crew at Extended Child Care for doing a great job hosting our January Social and New Year Party. It was held in their newly rebuilt facility on the Riebli Elementary School campus. Their old buildings were a total loss as a result of the Tubbs Fire. We had a great turnout, excellent food, and many valuable prizes for attending members and guests. We gave away five gifts through our business card drawing and \$82.00 through our 50/50 drawing. So many people came to the social that several had to mingle outside on the new deck. We were also given a tour of the whole new facility. Every attendee had many opportunities to network.

We also had a huge joint chamber mixer at Accent Printing in Santa Rosa. This event included members from and was supported by the Windsor Chamber, the Sonoma County Hispanic Chamber, The North Bay Black Chamber, and the Mark West Area Chamber. Owner Dave Mohle of Accent Printing hosted the event, which was co-sponsored by Poppy Bank. Aaction Rents donated the light towers to light the parking lots. The event included live and silent auctions

Continued on page 5



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JANUARY 10 SOCIAL

On January 10th, Chamber members and guests were treated to a visit and tours of Extended Child Care Coalition’s new facility at the John B. Riebli School on Mark West Springs Road. Their old facility had burned in the October 2017 firestorm. Although closed for three months after the fire, with 500 students relocated, this was the first site cleared by the Army Corps of Engineers, and rebuilt with help from a \$300,000 grant provided by the North Bay Fire Relief Fund.

Frank Ruggirello, from FRC, Inc., the general contractor from Windsor, was on hand, along with his staff and architect, to answer our questions and celebrate the reopening of the facility. FRC specializes in school building construction.

Currently, Extended Child Care Coalition operates ten centers in the Santa Rosa to Windsor area, and has 600 kids enrolled, with a waiting list of 170. Jason Riggs, the Executive Director, stated that maintaining staffing levels was now his biggest challenge, having lost 26 staff members to relocations after the fires.

In addition to introducing the construction folks, Jason introduced several board members and staff, and told us that some of them started as customers (they were parents with kids in the program). 2019 marks the 41st year for their program in Sonoma County, 30 of which have been in the Mark West USD area.

Following the prize drawings, Jason took us on a tour through their new three unit facility. We were all impressed.

Donors & Winners

The pot of gold was \$80 and the winning business was not present. And so, it will grow to \$100 for our Valentine’s Day social on February 14th.

The 50/50 drawing, a whopping \$82.00, was won by Paul Peck.

Holly Hansen, representing Carlton Senior Living Santa Rosa, won a skincare gift bag donated by Scott & Tracey Mitchell, Independent Consultants of Rodan+Fields. Guest Todd Walling, Broker Associate at Keller Williams Realty, won a San Francisco 49ers wine(+) gift bag donated by Extended Child Care Coalition. Guests Missy Danneberg (a past Executive Director of Extended Child Care Coalition) and Carlo Rossi won a bottle of delicious wine donated by Extended Child Care Coalition. Katherine Phillips of Key Properties won a beautiful birdhouse donated by Bisordi Ranch and Vineyards. And Frank Ruggirello from FRC, Inc. won a grocery bag filled with healthy organic nuts donated by Bisordi Ranch and Vineyards.

Our host generously provided a delicious buffet and a variety of beverages; and we welcomed in the new year in a festive mood.

Contributed by John Essman, Sonoma CONNECTION



Jason Riggs (center) is Executive Director of Extended Child Care Coalition, and our host for the evening. With him is his predecessor in that position, Missy Danneberg (left) and Marlee Patereau (right) who has been with ECC since 2001 and is now their newest Center Director.



At center is Steve Plamann, of Aaction Rents, awarding the bird house door prize to Katherine Phillips of Key Properties. The prize was donated by Bisordi Ranch and Vineyards, represented by Lori Bisordi (left) and Robbie Bisordi (right).



Jason Riggs of ECC gave a tour of the new facility. It’s modern, efficient, and designed exactly for the needs of ECC and most importantly, the kids and parents who rely on ECC services.



Steve Plamann, Aaction Rents (left) awards guest Todd Walling of Keller Williams Realty with a 49ers gift bag.



One of the classrooms in the new ECC facility. Those with sharp eyes will spot the air hockey table and the fusbball table. ECC provides recreation and socialization in addiiton to extended educational opportunities!

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT**ANYTIME FITNESS: HERE AND THERE**

When thinking about businesses in local communities, the natural inclination is to think about businesses that are entirely locally owned and operated. The businesses that our friends and neighbors own, not the corporations that are owned by executives living halfway across the country. But national and international businesses, such as Anytime Fitness, have a say in the local community as well, and as such should not be ignored.

The Anytime Fitness brand can be found all across the world, with over 4,000 locations on all six of the populated continents. In the Larkfield Shopping Center, the Anytime Fitness location is owned and operated by Brett Livingstone, and has a strong presence in its local community despite the brand's international status.

While Brett currently owns several Anytime Fitness locations, including as far south as Berkeley, Larkfield was his first location. However, the club did not open immediately, as it required heavy work from Brett in order to meet expectations. Despite this, Brett was able to join the Mark West Chamber of Commerce with a provisional license before opening the store. Among the first few employees was personal trainer Josh Tamba, who remains with the club to this day.

A successful business knows that it needs the support of the community around it, and Anytime Fitness is no exception. The Larkfield club has seen enormous benefit from being located in the Shopping Center. Frequent customers of other businesses have also become customers of Anytime Fitness, and Brett and the rest of his staff have done their best to welcome them into the fold. The community has been supportive in return and, according to Brett, this is the reason Anytime Fitness remains open today.

However, without proper knowledge and continuous learning, it can be easy for a business to stagnate. Fortunately for the Larkfield community, Brett has not allowed that to happen. As Brett has continued to acquire ownership of other Anytime Fitness locations, he has learned more about the best ways to run each club. Rather than attempt to have several cookie-cutter locations, each club has been set up to meet the needs of its community. Brett has also seen more flexibility in how he runs each club, and it is with this knowledge and flexibility that Brett made the difficult decision to relocate the Larkfield Anytime Fitness to a different spot within the Shopping Center. After some deliberation, the move began in late 2017.

Then, three weeks later, the Tubbs fire happened.

The great test of Sonoma County's community was also endured by Anytime Fitness. In a single night, what Brett describes as a "perfect storm," the Larkfield and Epicenter clubs lost 500 members. Employees and members alike lost their homes, and Anytime Fitness responded to its greatest task to the best of its ability. Brett and his staff chose to open the doors of both the Larkfield and Epicenter locations, collaborating with other health clubs located throughout Sonoma County. "We felt the community would survive, and that we could be part of that," Brett says.

Continued on page 6



Brett Livingstone (left) leads Mark West Area Chamber members on a tour of the new Larkfield Anytime Fitness facility, during a recent Business After Hours Social.

Interested in joining our Ambassador Club?
Contact the Chamber at
office@markwest.org
707-578-7975



To host a Ribbon Cutting,
contact...
Aggie Maggio
aggiemaggio@icloud.com



Keep abreast of important information pertinent to local business issues: <http://edb.sonoma-county.org/>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, February 14, 2019
 Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Co-Hosted by Rodan + Fields Independent Consultants, and
Bisordi Ranch and Vineyards, LLC at
Best Western Plus Wine Country Inn & Suites,
 870 Hopper Avenue, Santa Rosa

Thursday, July 11, 2019
 Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
 Co-hosted by **A M Maggio & Associates** and
Aggie Maggio, Realtor, Coldwell Banker
 345 Mayfield Drive, Santa Rosa

HERE ARE IMPORTANT CALIFORNIA LABOR LAW CHANGES FOR 2019

Adapted from a story by Cheryl Sarfaty on the North Bay Business Journal website, November 20, 2018

With the new year around the corner, now is the time to prepare for new labor laws that will impact North Bay businesses in 2019.

Among those includes a law, signed in 2016, which raises the minimum wage incrementally, boosting it on Jan. 1 to \$11 per hour for employers with 25 or fewer employees, and \$12 per hour for businesses staffing more than 26 employees.

Also on the wage-and-hour-increase front, agricultural employers with 26 or more employees will see the first in a series of phased-in overtime charges. And Look for tighter laws around sexual harassment as of January 1.

Read the entire story on the North Bay Business Journal website at <https://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/northbay/sonomacounty/8947388-181/california-employment-law-2019>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, *Cont. from page 2*

to benefit Green Dog Rescue. The food and wine was plentiful and of great quality. There were about 175 people attending. We all had many great opportunities for business-to-business networking.

Please support your local merchants whenever you can. With the effects of the fires still haunting us, your local merchants really need your support. Check out the Chamber's online business directory to find your fellow Chamber member who provides the product or service you need. <http://www.markwest.org>.

And please remember to shop local!
 Steve Plamann, President

STATE OF THE COUNTY

PRESENTED BY
SONOMA COUNTY
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
BOARD

February 1, 2019

The 2019 State of the County Address includes incoming Board Chair, Supervisor David Rabbitt, and keynote speaker, Jerry Nickelsburg, Senior Economist from UCLA Anderson Forecast, providing the special analysis and forecast for the California economy, as well as the prospects for Sonoma County.

For full details visit <http://sonomaedb.org/Calendar/2019-State-of-the-County/>

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT, ANYTIME FITNESS MESSAGE, *Cont. from page 4*

After the Tubbs fire was put out, Brett and his staff held a meeting to figure out what they could do now that the danger had passed. Five employees had lost their homes, and the question was raised as to whether moving the Larkfield club was worthwhile or not. Brett and his team decided to rally to the community in Sonoma County and Larkfield, and now, over one year later, the move is complete, and the club is back to its pre-fire revenue.

While Brett has worked with many different chambers of commerce at his various locations, he feels that the Mark West Area Chamber is the most immersive of them. Specifically, Brett feels that the Mark West Area Chamber stands strong because of its self-supporting community. "I am so proud of the Chamber and their efforts," Brett says.

Though Anytime Fitness is an international brand, and even though its local owner owns several other locations scattered across a broad region, the club has made its mark here in Larkfield. Before and after the fires, Anytime Fitness continues to support and love the community it has found in the Mark West Springs area with everything it has. "We will be here to help this community recover," Brett says.

Whether a locally owned business or an international corporation, businesses must do their best to support their local communities. Anytime Fitness has more than passed the test.

If you would like to learn more about the services provided by the Anytime Fitness located in the Larkfield Shopping Center, the club can be reached at 707-578-4900, or visited in person at 620 Larkfield Center.

Contributed by Jonathan Williams, Freelance Writer

ACCENT PRINTING MULTI-CHAMBER EVENT

On January 15, Accent Printing & Design hosted its annual Multi Chamber Event, along with Poppy Bank in Windsor. It was more than just a fun-filled social gathering. Many members of the Mark West Area, Hispanic, and Black Chambers of Commerce attended and we all enjoyed each other's company, but that was a side benefit.

I had heard that the spread of food would be great and it far exceeded my expectations. There were delicious warm and cold hors d'oeuvres presenting a real festive and party atmosphere. Everyone was raving about them, along with the variety of choices of wine and Dave's gourmet ice cream.

The annual event is a combination "Thank you for a wonderful year!" from Dave, and a fundraiser for one lucky organization. This year they raised money for Green Dog Rescue Project, a non-shelter based dog rescue service. The majority of dogs are transferred from shelters as an option to being euthanized. The folks at Green Dog work with the dogs, using behavior training to rehabilitate them. There were several very sweet little dogs at the event, each with their human companions, showing us just how precious they can be.

The funds were raised via a really popular auction with many great prizes, ranging from a helicopter trip, to dinners, to magnum bottles of wine. We were entertained by a very gregariously fun announcer as he called out the winners and kept the audience on their toes.

Accent Printing & Design has been serving customers in the North Bay and beyond since 1978 with award-winning quality printing, timely service, and outstanding customer support. They are a full-service printing and graphic design company.

Contributed by Aggie Maggio, Realtor @ Coldwell Banker



The Accent Printing multi-chamber event drew a large crowd. An auction led by a dynamic and entertaining auctioneer raised a bunch of money to benefit the Green Dog Rescue Project.

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
 West Olivet Road - West Lodge on Mark West Springs Rd - East

The Lark Newsletter is published monthly under the direction of:
 The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center
 4787 Old Redwood Hiwy, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

ADVERTISING: 6 months \$107.50; 1 year \$200
 FLYER INSERTION: \$35 per issue.
 You supply a .pdf version of your 8.5" x 11" flyer to info@markwest.org
 You can pay online at <http://markwest.org/payment>

The Lark Newsletter is emailed to member businesses each month.
 For more information, contact the Chamber office at 578-7975.

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Deadline for publication is the 3rd Wednesday of the month.
 Please email your materials to info@markwest.org

*Promote your business with
 your flyer in the Chamber newsletter.
 You supply the flyers - We do the work!*

CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP DUES
 Effective May 1, 2006

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 business affiliation)	

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