

# Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and VISITORS CENTER



*BRINGING BUSINESS & THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER!*

4787 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

707.578.7975

Office Hours: Mon - Thurs 1 - 4pm

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[markwest@markwest.org](mailto:markwest@markwest.org)

**The Lark**

**September 2008**

Volume XII Issue 9

## THE WINE COUNTRY HARVEST FAIRE & BUSINESS SHOWCASE & GRAND RAFFLE

**OCTOBER 9, 2008 4 - 8 PM**

FREE food, wine, beer and other beverages to enjoy - provided by Chamber members to the public during our annual Tradeshow! It is fun for adults *and* kids - families are welcome! Bring your family and tell your friends! This year, we will have a Grand Raffle every hour with gifts donated by Chamber members and tradeshow sponsors.

Register your business now for booth space and advertising for the upcoming tradeshow at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts. Our tradeshow is a wonderful way to introduce your business to the Mark West community. Donations to Grand Raffle are needed, too! Your participation or donation helps the Chamber earn funds for the coming year.

*Call or email the Chamber for more info, or online at [markwest.org](http://markwest.org)*

### EXCHANGE BANK NAMED BEST IN 2008

Laura Buhner, VP & Branch Manager, at the Larkfield Branch of Exchange Bank and staff are fully committed to superior customer service -- just like all of the bank's 21 branches. That's reflected in the fact that this year, readers of local business publications named the 118 year old institution the Best Business Bank, Best Local Bank and One of the Best Places To Work in Sonoma County.

The friendly service customers receive is a keystone of Exchange Bank's culture of commitment to customers and to the community. Serving Sonoma County since 1890, Exchange Bank has the opportunity to provide community members with products and services for all of their banking needs. From checking and savings, to Wealth Management and home loans, Exchange Bank is your one-stop shop.



Laura Buhner,  
VP & Branch Mgr,  
Exchange Bank Larkfield

*continued on page 6*



*Chamber Installation Dinner  
more on page 3*

### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

#### AFTER HOURS BUSINESS SOCIAL

hosted by **DAVIS CARPETS**

at the Chamber Offices 4787 ORH

*Davis Carpets will have a Demonstration of the Flat Wire and Kool Glide Microwave Carpet and Seaming System.*

The Wine Country Harvest Faire  
and Business Showcase

**Booth space still available - contact the Chamber or visit [markwest.org](http://markwest.org)**

*This FREE event showcases businesses while guests enjoy complimentary food and Sonoma County wines and beverages. The public is welcome!*

Thursday, Sept 11, 2008

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

*Bring your business cards!*

October 9, 2008

4:00 pm - 8:00 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.



Jim Bajgrowicz,  
President

The next Board of Director's meeting is September 9 at Grace Fellowship, 608 Larkfield Center 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Want to keep abreast of important information pertinent to business and legislative items??

Go to: [calchamber.com](http://calchamber.com)

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

The Benefits of Exposure!

If you didn't attend, you missed a great Business After Hours gathering at the FINAL EDITION. New members Johnson Pools, Mariposa Seamstress, C. Gary Landscaping, Essner Tree Service and Verdin's Restoration Service were introduced, circulated with the crowd and even generated business! Great exposure for them and the other members and guests who attended.

We know that we're in a period of recession, with costs rising and business lagging. This makes for the perfect opportunity for greater exposure of your business/service. The Chamber's Wine Country Harvest Faire and Business Showcase on October 9th from 4 to 8 pm is the chance to mingle with several thousand business prospects that don't even know they need you!

But there are some tricks to the trade that will ensure greater exposure and remembrance by all you meet.

First, plan an attractive table and be sure it is manned for responding to questions for the entire time of the business showcase; be sure to have informational handouts, business cards, inexpensive giveaways (with name address & phone #) that last (*see member [www.PromosOnCall.com](http://www.PromosOnCall.com)*), blank contact slips & pens, and a container in which to deposit them. Also have a basket or prize to raffle off using the contact slips.

Save the CONTACT SLIPS! They now become your contact list for after the trade show. After all, they indicated interest by having deposited a contact slip! Make it a point to contact each after the show. That's how you develop new business!

*Respectfully, Jim Bajgrowicz, President*



The Chamber held its 27th Annual Installation Dinner in the ballroom of Chamber member Flamingo Conference Resort & Spa. The event was attended by 60 members. The food was delicious, as promised!

Our new board of directors was officially installed by Supervisor Paul Kelley. Our speaker Dorothea Logan of Logan Investigations discussed "How to properly screen an employment application", "Company Security" and "Home Security".

Outgoing President Walt Smith honored Pat Dearmin as Director of the Year, and Aaction Rents as Business of the Year.

*continued on page 6*

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**AUGUST SOCIAL & MWCSO FUNDRAISER**

hosted by: **FINAL EDITION**

The Final Edition Bar and Cocktail Lounge hosted the August 14th social. Many of our members and guests including the majority of our newest members showed up for this most enjoyable evening. Owners Carol and Andy Divodi treated everyone to some delicious cheeses, meat balls in a special sauce, buffalo wings and artichoke dip with crackers.

Chamber ambassador Don Wilson served as Master of Ceremonies for the gathering and gave a very nice introduction to Carol and Andy. Carol told how she and Andy had previously owned another cocktail lounge in Petaluma named "First Edition". After retiring and relocating to Santa Rosa they found they had too much time on their hands. They had the opportunity to purchase the former "Eddies" in the Larkfield Shopping Center and reopened it as the Final Edition. Carol said she and Andy are very proud to be part of our community and are equally proud to be members of our chamber.

Besides thanking everyone for attending the evening's social, Chamber President Jim Bajgrowicz from the Office of James Bajgrowicz said a few words pertaining to the Mark West Chamber Business Showcase and Trade Show taking place October 9th at the Wells Fargo Center for the Performing Arts, and PCAM's Airshow. New member plaques were then presented to Carlos Gray with C. Gray Landscaping, Chuck and David Verdin with Verdin's Mobile Auto Lens Restoration Service, Rebecca White with Rebecca Graphics, Amparo Chavez from Mariposa Seamstress, and Phil Essner with Essner Tree Service.

Our 50/50 raffle awarded \$68.00 to Chuck Verdin of Verdin's Mobile Auto Lens Restoration with another \$67.00 going to help support chamber functions. Our Pot of Gold drawing (with a \$50.00 pot) went unclaimed for the second month in a row as neither David or Carol Soderstrom or any of their staff from So. Pro., Soderstrom Properties were in attendance when their business was drawn. The pot grows another \$10.00 to a total of \$60.00 - up for grabs at our September 11th Social which is sponsored by Davis Carpets and will be held at the Chamber Offices and Visitors Center.

Door prizes donated by the Final Edition, Pacific Coast Air Museum and Airport Express were given out to conclude the evening's festivities. Thanks again to Carol and Andy Divodi and their employees at the the Final Edition for a wonderful gathering!

*Submitted by Anthony Geraldi, Head Ambassador*



*Dawn "Cookie" Fields,  
Head Chef  
Carol & Andy Divodi,  
Owners  
Vivian Hornady,  
Bar Mgr.*

*Visit [www.MarkWest.org/](http://www.MarkWest.org/)  
August2008Social  
for more photos*



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www.sonomacconnection.com

Web Site Design • Search Engine Optimization  
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**BUSINESS-AFTER-HOURS-SOCIALS**

- SEP 11 DAVIS CARPETS**
- OCT 9 WINE COUNTRY HARVEST FAIRE**
- NOV 13 NORTH BAY CORPORATION**
- DEC 11 CAL AMERICAN WATER**
- JAN 8 AKEENA SOLAR**
- FEB 12 CELLULARWORLD**
- SEP 10 SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT**
- 2009 EXPRESS/ACTION RENTS**

**RESOURCE FOR BUSINESSES SEEKING TO HELP SCHOOLS IMPROVE**

Survey after survey has shown that business executives consider education of prime importance, but believe California schools are doing a poor job of teaching students the basics or preparing them for the working world.

Now, two non-profit groups made up of business and education leaders are providing online information that businesses can use in supporting school achievement in their local communities.

An honor roll of schools that are succeeding using current funding levels is being generated each year by the California Business for Education Excellence (CBEE) Foundation. The test data supporting the honor roll selection is provided by Just for the Kids-California. The website for the latter — [www.jftk-ca.org](http://www.jftk-ca.org) — links to the list of honor roll schools and enables visitors to look up and compare school achievement test results.

The common-sense thought that success in elementary school is important to a student’s performance later in life is being confirmed by test data. A study by the Public Policy Institute of California found that children at risk of failing the California High School Exit Exam can be identified accurately as early as the fourth grade. Other comparisons of test data have found that if students aren’t proficient when they leave sixth grade, they are not going to be successful in their high school work. The data underscores the importance of helping students boost their proficiency in the earlier grades, rather than waiting until high school.

More important, the same information can be used to nudge the less-successful schools to learn from the best practices of their colleagues. The Just for the Kids website permits visitors to compare schools with similar socioeconomic demographics, which helps counter arguments that the makeup of the student body is the reason for different results.

The CalChamber is encouraging business people to help point struggling schools in their areas to the best practices that are working for other similar schools. Given that the workforce comes from the community, investing time and effort on improving the schools ultimately amounts to enhancing the skills of future employees.

“We can’t wait for education reform to come from the state capital,” says Raymond W. Holdsworth, chair of the CalChamber Education Committee. “Education reform will come from the community when business, parents and educators join forces to help policymakers see how accountability and perseverance can produce results.”

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*Interested in joining our Ambassador Club?  
Contact  
Tony Geraldj,  
837-8700  
tony@airportexpressinc.com*

**Serving Larkfield**



Our Larkfield team works hard each day to make sure you receive high-quality water. Please do your part in conserving this valuable resource. To learn more about your water quality and ways to conserve, visit our Web site at [www.calamwater.com](http://www.calamwater.com).



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How Business Can Help

- Get involved with your schools locally.
- Go to [www.jftk-ca.org](http://www.jftk-ca.org) to find info about how schools in your area are performing.
- If a school in your area is doing well, make sure state and local opinion leaders (elected officials, media representatives, community groups) know that schools in your community are honor roll schools being recognized for significant student academic achievement.
- Encourage those opinion leaders to find out more about these schools by visiting and talking to school leaders and faculty.
- Help give honor roll schools a voice in your region and help them share their “best practices” with other schools in your community.
- If schools in your area need to improve, encourage school leaders to tap into the experience of their peers at the nearest honor roll school. *calchamber.org*

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB), in partnership with the Sonoma County Workforce Investment Board, is pleased to bring you the Summer 2008 Business Confidence Report. The purpose of the Business Confidence Report is to gauge executives’ perceptions of current and future economic conditions both within the county and the country.

Highlights from the Summer Business Confidence Report include:

- Sonoma County executives perceive some challenges to current economic conditions and forecast greater challenges for the next few months.
- Those surveyed from the Technology industry reported the highest level of confidence, while those from the the Real Estate/Construction industries reported the lowest.
- Sonoma County’s manufacturing and purchasing trends indicate economic contraction.
- More than 71% of Sonoma County executives said that the recent increase in gas prices had impacts on their company’s/organization’s operations.

*If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at (707) 565-7170.  
Ben Stone, Executive Director, Economic Development Board  
[http://www.sonoma-county.org/edb/pdf/2008/annual\\_tourism\\_report\\_2008.pdf](http://www.sonoma-county.org/edb/pdf/2008/annual_tourism_report_2008.pdf)*

**RESOURCE FOR  
BUSINESSES  
SEEKING  
TO HELP  
SCHOOLS  
IMPROVE**

**SUMMER  
BUSINESS  
CONFIDENCE  
2008**

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**NEW MEMBERS**

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autolensrestoration@comcast.net

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Carolyn Finley  
422 Larkfield Center  
528-6400 (F) 528-6432  
jbogoue77@att.net

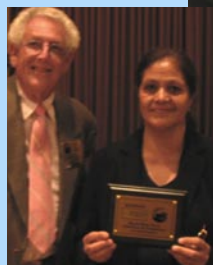
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George Fiori  
Greg Jones  
406 Larkfield Center  
546-6835 (C) 849-2036  
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837-8785 (F) 837-8790  
sgorelczenko@brookdaleliving.com  
Brookdaleliving.com

**RENEWING MEMBERS**

Airport Health Club (1990)  
Sonoma Eyeworks (2003)  
Pacific Union College (2006)  
Patricia Dearmin (2007)  
Guy's Barber Shop (2007)

Carlos Gray  
of C. Gray  
Landscaping



Amparo Chavez  
of Mariposa Seamstress

**EXCHANGE BANK NAMED BEST IN 2008**

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The Larkfield Branch has been serving the community since 1964. The branch is open Monday – Friday 9am – 6pm; and Saturday 9am – 2pm. You can contact the branch by calling 524-3077 or visiting at 500 Larkfield Center.

**27TH ANNUAL INSTALLATION DINNER**

*continued from page 2*

Daryl Anderson of Wikiup Properties received a special acknowledgement for his many years of service on the Chamber Board. In addition to leading the Tradeshow Committee, Daryl has served as President of the Board twice, and he was responsible for the installation of the Hwy 101 directional signs leading visitors to the area: "Entering the Mark West Area Larkfield and Wikiup Next Exit". He led the project to lease and remodel the Chamber's new offices and Visitors Center, providing us a great location and income!



Pat with Daryl Anderson  
of Wikiup Properties.

While Daryl has "retired" from serving on the Board, he is very active on this years' Tradeshow Committee, helping us to achieve another successful Wine Country Harvest Faire!



Skip Graham, retired,  
John Essman of Sonoma  
CONNECTION, Brad  
Pighin of GRP Wealth  
Strategies, Anthony  
Gerald of SC Airport  
Express



Walt Smith of Just  
Transportation  
congratulates  
Ignacio Jacinto  
of Aaction Rents,  
Business of  
the Year

Dee Gutman  
Dana & Sue Larson  
of Sue Larson  
Financial Services,  
Susan Lindstrom,  
Paralegal, Anthony  
Lindstrom of Cal-Am



Office Volunteer Joyce Partington of Stoke Ranch,  
Office Manager Pat Morelli, Office Volunteers Pat  
Dearmin and Dee Gutman



Pat Dearmin also serves as  
Board Secretary and was  
named Director of the Year.

**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 Hwy, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

ADVERTISING: 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.

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

Editors: Kathleen Palmer & John Essman (707) 433-8774  
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Printing: Clone Digital Printing & Copying (707) 527-6565

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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Chamber of Commerce  
and VISITORS CENTER**



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**AFTER HOURS  
BUSINESS SOCIAL**

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at the Chamber Offices  
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