



VALLEJO BUSINESS

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Chip Carter of North Bay Cabinets and Countertops, seen here with Past Chair Verna Mustico, was inducted into the Vallejo Chamber Merchants Hall of Fame in May (see page 4).



Shop Vallejo-Opoly Is Here: Get in the Game!

Shop Vallejo-opoly, the Chamber's new version of the Classic Game, is now in development for delivery this holiday season. This clever adaptation of the famous game allows our members to put "Your Business" in the middle of the action where everyone can see it.

You can choose to become a Major Sponsor, a Property Owner, a "Fate" card sponsor, a "Chamber" card sponsor or even the sponsor of the "Money" used in the game. You can own any space on the familiar rectangular game board including the coveted Corner Spots, or have your business name on the place where all the Players "Start".

This is an opportunity to buy permanent advertising and get real value from continuous exposure whenever the game gets played.

And your investment in advertising on the Shop Vallejo-opoly game board or cards will support the Shop Vallejo First program, as all proceeds from advertising and game sales will go towards supporting this chamber program.

Get in the Game today. Support our Shop Vallejo First Program by reserving your space for Shop Vallejo-opoly. Space is limited, so please contact Rich Geist at the Chamber at 644-5551 or richgeist@vallejochamber.com to reserve the best spot for you on the game board. **BO**

Chamber Permit Survey Shows Changes Needed at City

The Vallejo Chamber of Commerce has completed an online and mail survey on the City's permit process, conducted from June 1st through July 9th. The comprehensive survey was developed by the Chamber's City of Vallejo Areas of Focus Task Force with the help of the chamber staff member Rich Geist.

Results of the survey indicate that respondents are dissatisfied with the Building & Planning Departments' customer service, plan checking and communication. Respondents also indicated that they believe the fees charged by these departments are not reasonable. When asked to compare their experience with that of other

cities, 66% rated their experience with the City of Vallejo Building and Planning Departments worse than that of other cities, and 68% rated fees charged greater than other cities. On a positive note, more than 70% of respondents rated inspections favorably.

Surveys were mailed directly to 60 recent users of the City's permit process, as well as to 60 targeted Chamber members. The survey was also promoted in 3 *Vallejo BusinessWires* and at www.vallejochamber.com. 45 different users responded to the survey. All were guaranteed anonymity.

For a further summary of the survey results, see page 5. **BO**

2009 PINNACLE CORNERSTONE SPONSORS



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REPORT FROM 2009 BOARD CHAIR FREDA DILL

The Good Business News Around Town



There is plenty of good business news happening in Vallejo. The following are a few of some of the current

commercial business and development highlights in our local economy:

Commercial Development

1. The first phase of the Vallejo Transit Center, downtown Vallejo, has been received design review approval. Bids for Construction were requested and submitted and construction is expected to begin in late July/early August. (For more information, call Callahan Property Company* at 925-463-9205.)
2. Phase I Construction of the redevelopment of the Solano 80 Rite-Aid Center* has begun with the construction of Phase I.. (For more information, visit www.jayphares.com or call 510-562-9500.)
3. Solano County Fairgrounds* – Both the City and the County have approved the Memorandum of Understanding and the Project Vision. (For more information visit www.solano360.org or call 558-0222.)
4. Lennar Mare Island* – Alstom Transportation, which will re-build rail cars, and Murigenics, Vallejo's first biotech company, have signed leases for buildings on Mare Island and will be up and running this summer.

Now Open for Business

1. The Granite Store*, 724 Lincoln Road (Home Improvement Retail)
2. Havana Sol, 324 Virginia Street (Restaurant)
3. Vic's Wheelhouse, 295-A Mare Island Way (Restaurant)

Soon To Be Open

1. Vargas Market – Sonoma Boulevard & Mini Drive
2. Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse – Columbus Parkway

I am very pleased to announce that Jerry Wilkerson of Umpqua Bank will be the next Board Chair in 2010.

and Ascot Parkway.

3. State Farm Agency at Target Center

*Vallejo Chamber of Commerce Member

Education Initiative Externship Program

As part of the Education Initiative Board Objectives for 2009, the Board had recommended that the new Education Initiative Task Force develop a partnership with the Vallejo City Unified School District (VCUSD) to facilitate the

recruiting of mentors for Vallejo schools from our membership.

At the instigation of Task Force Chairman Ian Kaiser, a proposal for an Externship Program was developed. The proposal was jointly developed by Ian Kaiser and committee member Kay Hartley, principal of the Vallejo Adult School.

The pilot program, which will begin this Fall, calls for the initial placement of 2-3 Vallejo Adult School Accounting Students to be matched with interested Chamber businesses and/or organizations to work in a mentoring/job shadowing environment at the at the member's office for approximately 60 hours over a designated period of time.

If your business is interested in participating in this program, please contact Rich Geist at the Chamber at 644-5551.

Chamber Board News

We will hold a mid-year Board Planning Review at the Chamber in July to assess our goals and objectives for the year. Additionally, I am very pleased to announce that Jerry Wilkerson of Umpqua Bank will be the next Board Chair in 2010. Last, but certainly not least, on a personal note, I would like to thank my husband Duane for 20 wonderful years of marriage – we celebrated our 20th anniversary in July! Thanks for all your support without which I would not be able to volunteer for leadership roles. *SD*

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

General Manager Bobbie Freeman of the new SpringHill Suites in Napa celebrated the hotel's Grand Opening with the Vallejo Chamber Ambassadors.



REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

What Does Computer Technology Mean To Your Small Business?



Earlier this year the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce experienced an unexpected ‘catastrophic’ crash

of our computer network server. Fortunately, none of our membership data was compromised.

Unfortunately, the crash set off a chain of events that were costly, time consuming, and downright frustrating - all of which could have been prevented. Our office was completely ‘offline’ for nearly 48 hours and had limited access to information for several weeks. The entire process sapped hundreds of hours of valuable staff time and several thousand dollars in equipment costs.

How Can We Prevent This In The Future – 5 Easy Steps

First, we now schedule regular maintenance and diagnostics of our computer equipment and workstations. Second, we are consulting with our IT vendor(s) to conduct routine maintenance and updates on all of our machines.

Third, we are developing a long-term phased replacement plan for all of our equipment. Computers have a “useful life” of 3-5 years. If you have IT equipment that has been in the office for 5+ years, it’s time to consider a replacement.

Fourth, we now have a central

location for our software. We’ve collected all of our licensed software systems and programs disks and organized them for storage in a fire-proof safe. This way, if we ever have to re-install in case of failure, they are easy to access.

Fifth, and perhaps most importantly, we’re BACKING-UP our Data. Data back-up is the easiest way to avoid a headache turning into a catastrophe. External back-up drives are available almost everywhere computer equipment

...it will ensure that we’ve done everything in our power to prevent this from ever happening again.

is sold and are affordable, easy to operate, and worth their weight in gold should you ever need them. They also provide great piece-of-mind in knowing that your data is safe. (There are other back-up options available - off-site, online, etc - that are worth consideration.

Additionally, as technology becomes more sophisticated we’ve ‘beefed- up’ our virus protection and spam filtering programs as one way to help secure the integrity of our network.

Prevention + Planning = Cost Savings

Ultimately, we’ve discovered that proper planning, diligent attention, and making a small investment each year in our computer network will save us time and money and protect our investment in our computer network over the long-term. Not to mention, it will ensure that we’ve done everything in our power to prevent this from ever happening again.

For Questions about your IT Network please consult your fellow Chamber members by clicking on Computers & Telecommunications in the Business Directory at vallejochamber.com

ValPAC Lights Out Golf Tournament A Great Success

We held our first-ever Night Golf Tournament to raise funds for ValPAC, the Vallejo Chamber Political Action Committee on Friday, June 19th at Mare Island Golf Club. The ValPAC Lights Out 9-hole tournament was fun and fantastic – we had more than 40 golfers and raised nearly \$3,000 for ValPAC. Thanks to all who participated and especially to Angela Rundles and Matt Sullivan of Mare Island Golf Club, our hosts for the evening. ☺

Did You Know?
vallejochamber.com had over 7,500 visitors in the 2nd Quarter of 2009?

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Vallejo Chamber Honors Merchants Merchants Hall of Fame Awards Honor Chip Carter and Ed Schwafel

The Vallejo Chamber of Commerce honored long-time Vallejoans and Chamber Members Chip Carter of North Bay Cabinets and the late Ed Schwafel of Edward P. Schwafel Engineer, Inc. as the 2009 inductees into the Vallejo Chamber Merchants Hall of Fame at the Chamber Business Mixer on May 28th at Belvedere Luxury Condominiums.

Mr. Carter and Mr. Schwafel were chosen for their active participation in the promotion of business in Vallejo, their significant contributions that have affected positive change for the Vallejo business community, and their commitment to local community activities and organizations.

About Chip Carter:

Chip Carter began North Bay Cabinets & Countertops in Vallejo in 1978, after working for a company that manufactured laminate countertops. He is a licensed general contractor, millwork contractor and also a State of California certified pipefitter.

Chip is very active in the community. He is a past president and

lifetime member of the Vallejo Jr. Chamber of Commerce, on the Board of Directors of the Executive Lions Club of Vallejo and the Vallejo Elks Lodge, and is a founding member of the Boys Under the Hood Car Club in Vallejo.



He has been an active member of the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce since 1994, and previously served on the Chamber Board of Directors. Chip and his company support countless community organizations as volunteers and donors, including Vallejo Senior Center, VCAT, Foster-A-Dream, Fighting Back Partnership, Toys for Tots,


Solano Food Bank, Christian Help Center, and the Benicia Vallejo Humane Society.

About Edward P. Schwafel:

Edward P. "Ed" Schwafel arrived in Vallejo in 1946 and two years

later started Edward P. Schwafel Engineer, Inc. From 1949 through 1981 Ed and his staff worked diligently for the development and expansion of Vallejo and his firm was in charge of major Vallejo projects, including housing developments totaling over 3000 residential lots and commercial properties.

Ed always supported business in Vallejo and the surrounding communities and was a 40 year plus member of the Vallejo and Benicia Chambers of Commerce. In his role with the Vallejo Chamber he served on numerous committees and the Board of Directors. However, he felt the most important work he did was through his 20 year plus membership on the Chamber Economic Development Committee. He also served as a member of the Board of the Solano Economic Development Corporation.

In his business affiliations Ed also was associated with the following: City Engineer of Benicia, City Engineer of Rio Vista, Napa Valley Stanford Club, Vallejo Elks Lodge No. 559, SIRS (Branch #75), the Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum, and Member of various engineering organizations including the Napa-Solano Chapter of ASCELS. In his desire to participate and contribute as much as possible to the Vallejo community, Ed joined Vallejo Rotary in November 1952 and was a member for nearly 50 years. 

13th Annual Ducky Derby Delivers Many Winners

The 13th Annual Great Vallejo Ducky Derby once again drew hundreds to the waterfront on a bright and sunny July 4th afternoon. The frolicking faux fowl returned to the Straits of Mare Island to the delight of a boisterous crowd of children and adults. As the crush of yellow "quackers" jockeyed for position, anxious ticket holders cheered on the ducks, hoping that they held the winning number of the strongest and swiftest.

The lucky prize winners were: Bill Bissett of Fairfield, who won the first prize, a 2009 Toyota Scion donated by CC & Amber Sabathia; Jan Mitchell of Carmichael, who won the second prize, \$2,500 Cash donated by the Individual Vallejo Chamber Board Members; Daryl Boyanich of Vallejo, who won the

third prize, Trainer for a Day for 4 donated by Six Flags Discovery Kingdom; Stacy Potoczny of Vallejo, who won the fourth prize, a \$1,500 Shopping Spree donated by Victory Stores of Vallejo; Suzie Dike of Benicia, who won the fifth prize, a \$1,500 Shopping Spree donated by Costco Vallejo; And Michael Seyler of Vallejo, who won the sixth prize, Unlimited Ultimate Car Washes for One Car for a Year donated by 7 Flags Car Wash, Vallejo.

Everyone who purchased Ducky Derby tickets, sold Ducky Derby tickets, and/or helped organize the Great Vallejo Ducky Derby event were winners as well. That is because the Vallejo Rotary Club and the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce sold more than 7,000 tickets and raised over \$35,000 in

their efforts to provide dictionaries for every third-grade student in Vallejo. And that means that over 1,800 Vallejo children and their families are the most important winners of all!

The Vallejo Chamber of Commerce and the Vallejo Rotary Club would like to thank the following organizations for their incredible efforts and support of the 13th Annual Great Vallejo Ducky Derby:

13th Annual Great Vallejo Ducky Derby Prize Sponsors:

CC & Amber Sabathia
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 Victory Stores of Vallejo
 Costco Vallejo
 Jack Anthony's 7 Flags Car Wash

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Survey Cont. from page 1

Chamber Permit Survey Results Summary

The survey was 18 questions, with a 19th reserved for general comments. In the first 13 questions, survey respondents were asked to strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the question about the City Of Vallejo Permit Process. Questions 14-18 asked about the respondent as well as their experiences with other cities.

Summary of Results

1. General Customer Service was Helpful, Courteous (Questions 1,2, 4)
 - a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 51-60%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 35-42%
2. Fees are Reasonable (Question 3)
 - a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 25%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 73%
3. Materials & Requirements Useful, Clear and Easy To Use (Questions 5, 6)
 - a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 34-38%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 51-56%
4. Building Permit Plan Checking Complete & Accurate (Question 7)
 - a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 42%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 51%
5. Building Permit Plan Turnaround

- Timely (Question 8)
- a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 27%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 67%
6. Good Communication of Problems/ Issues by Staff (Question 9)
- a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 40%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 53%
7. Inspections Easy to Schedule, Inspectors Competent (Questions 10-11)
- a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 74-80%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 13-25%
8. Interdepartmental Relationships work well (Question 12)
- a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 18%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 71%
9. City's Online Permitting Tools Helpful & Useful (Question 13)
- a. Strongly Agree or Agree – 19%
 - b. Strongly Disagree or Disagree – 24%
 - c. Not Applicable – 57%
10. Overall Experience (Question 15)
- a. What I Expected – 37%
 - b. Better Than Expected – 5%
 - c. Worse Than Expected – 49%
11. Overall Experience (Question 16)
- a. Same as Other Cities – 17%
 - b. Better than Other Cities – 15%
 - c. Worse than Other Cities – 66%
12. Overall Fees (Question 17)
- a. Comparable to Other Cities – 23%
 - b. Greater than Other Cities – 68%
 - c. Less than Other Cities – 2% ~~80~~

BUSINESS ADVOCACY CORNER

Chamber Political Advocacy Your Business Advocate

The Chamber Board of Directors has taken the following positions recently:

The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors voted at its June meeting to support the Solano 360 Project Vision for the redevelopment of the Solano County Fairgrounds and recommended to the Vallejo City Council and the Solano County Board of Supervisors to accept the Project Vision. *Action Taken: On June 9th both the Vallejo City Council and the Solano County Board of Supervisors approved the acceptance of the Project Vision.*

Pending Issues:

The Chamber Board voted at its April board meeting to oppose the following legislation:

AB178 - Affiliate Sales Tax

This proposed new Internet taxation would harm California online marketplaces, web-service providers, and websites of small businesses and non-profits by changing California's sales tax law in a way that will encourage out-of-state retailers to instead do business with out-of-state counterparts. *State Action: Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed this legislation.*

SB789 - California Employee Free Choice Act for Farm Workers

No Action Taken Yet by the State.

HR1409 - Employee Free Choice Act of 2009 and SB560 - Employee Free Choice Act of 2009

No Action Taken Yet by the Federal Government.

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Derik A. Calhoun MV Transportation



Description of Business/Organization: MV Transportation (MV), and its subsidiary, Vallejo Citizen's Transit Corporation (VCTC), has provided transportation to the citizens of Vallejo for more than 53 years. MV/Vallejo Transit has demonstrated an excellent record of safe and reliable customer service, and has also been designated as a Emergency Operations Center (E.O.C.) regarding disaster and emergency response, in conjunction with other Bay Area communities and transit services.

Description of Job/Duties: Overall responsibility for managing and controlling Fixed Route transportation and financial cost for MV Transportation/Vallejo Transit. Currently oversees 120 employees (Maintenance, Drivers, Supervisors, Customer Service and Managers). Other responsibilities include providing the most secure, safe, reliable transportation for the customers of Vallejo. This service is provided in the most efficient manner practicable through optimization programs and partnerships with the city of Vallejo's Transportation staff, vehicle maintenance support, recruitment strategies, work place practices, and other field operating groups.

Community Involvement: Member of Leadership Vallejo alumni, Active Vallejo Chamber member. Employees are active volunteers in all types of Vallejo community activities and organizations, including the Red Cross, Little League, and volunteering at local senior centers.

Personal Information: Married to Jennifer Calhoun; six (6) children: Deanna (15), DJ (12), Kevin (12), Bella (5), Dedric (5) and Dominik (2). BA in Sociology, Youth Development (Pop Warner Football), High School Assistant Coach (Albany High), and avid Raider fan. 

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MEMBER NEWS

Jack Anthony's 7 Flags Car Wash has launched a new, customer Rewards Club featuring free washes, exclusive discounts, and more. Some of the benefits of this free club include: Buy 6 washes, receive the 7th wash free, 24 hour clean car guarantee, free rainy day rewash, free birthday wash and a 15% discount on all full service washes within 30 days. To join 7 Flags Rewards Club or find out more, visit www.7flagscarwash.com.

Alkar Human Resources is proud to announce it has become WRC certified and its Staffing Consultants have all earned their CSP Certification. The WRC certification signifies a commitment to best hiring practices, safety and risk management while the CSP certification enhances the competency and knowledge of labor and employment law. These two certifications allow Alkar to provide expert advice and superior service to clients and employees. Alkar Human Resources has successfully provided temporary and full time staffing in Professional, Administrative, Accounting, Light Industrial, Winery and Hospitality positions for Napa and Solano County businesses since 1985. For more information, visit www.alkar.com or call 224-5468.

Travis Credit Union has expanded its support of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano to a year round program. The food barrels will remain in Solano and Contra Costa branches throughout the year and will be highlighted again during their annual holiday food drive in November. Each year, Travis Credit Union employees, members and the general public are encouraged to bring non-perishable foods to all Travis Credit Union branches in Solano, and Contra Costa Counties. Donations will go directly to the Food Bank of Solano and Contra Costa and will be distributed in the counties that they are received.

Ken Paulk of Twin Oaks Real Estate has earned the prestigious Certified Distressed Property Expert (CDPE) designation, having completed extensive training in foreclosure avoidance and short sales. Alex Charfen, founder of the Distressed Property Institute in Boca Raton, Fla., said that Realtors such as Ken Paulk with the CDPE designation have valuable training in short sales that can offer the homeowner much better alternatives to foreclosure, which virtually destroys the credit rating. For more information, contact Ken Paulk at 334-0002. ☎

Chamber TV Show Premieres on VCAT Channel 27

The premier edition of Vallejo Business Today, the chamber-produced TV Show about business and community in Vallejo, premieres this month on Vallejo Community Access Television Channel 27.

- Scheduled show times are:
- Mondays at 7:32 p.m.
 - Fridays at 3:05 p.m.
 - Saturdays at 8:48 p.m.

The half-hour first show features interviews with Chamber members Cooper Crane & Rigging, Meyer Corporation and Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, and will air throughout the summer on VCAT Channel 27.

"We put together a show we feel represents a good cross section of the business community," said Vallejo Chamber President and CEO Rick Wells, who hosts the show. "We featured a manufacturer/retailer, an entertainment/leisure business and a construction/environmental company."

The main idea of the program is to highlight Vallejo-based businesses and educate viewers about the diversity of businesses in Vallejo. The Chamber is considering making Vallejo Business Today a quarterly program if enough money can be raised to offset production costs. ☎

UPCOMING EVENTS

BUSINESS MEETINGS (MONTHLY)

Executive Committee	1 st Tuesday - noon
Ambassadors	1 st Tuesday - 5:30 p.m.
Political Advocacy	1 st Wednesday - 9:00 a.m.
Vallejo Business Alliance	2 nd Tuesday - 9:00 a.m.
Economic Development	2 nd Wednesday - noon
Board of Directors	3 rd Tuesday - noon
ValNet	Wednesdays - noon

AROUND THE CORNER

August Networking @ 5

USA World Classics Event Center

Hosted by Skyview Memorial Lawn & Benicia Vallejo Humane Society
1525 Sonoma Blvd.

Thursday, August 27 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Vallejo Business Alliance

September Networking @ 5

US Bank

1200 Tennessee St.

Thursday, September 24 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Teachers Recognition

October Networking @ 5


Vallejo Elks Lodge #559

Co-Hosted by 1st Pacific Credit Union

2850 Redwood Parkway

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For an updated listing of all Chamber and Community events please check out www.vallejochamber.com



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Vallejo Business

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