



Riverbank

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2009?

During the annual planning session held on Feb. 11, the board took a serious look at setting goals for 2009. Doug Sweetland, Director for The Alliance of Stanislaus County again facilitated the planning session.

"Doug has made this journey with the board for three years and continues to be a valuable part of the chamber's success," said Carla Strong. "We have renewed some commitments and made new ones, all of which we believe will benefit the business community as a whole."

With a positive outlook, planning for 2009 began in earnest. Four major areas were identified: organization, budget, membership and programs.

The main topic under organization is the ability to locate a site for a Chamber office.

"The importance of a Chamber office, even one open on a part-time basis, is seen as paramount to our success," said Director Hansen.

To that end, if any chamber member who has a corner of their location that could be used as a part-time office, please contact Director John Cox or Director Maribeth Reese. The budget will not allow for a rent payment, however it could bring indi-

viduals into a business, perhaps establishing new clientele. Once a location can be found there is a strong push to develop a welcome package, not only for new members but also for visitors to the city. The other topics under organization were to have greater involvement with the City of Riverbank; refining the chamber's focus of bringing value to member businesses.

In order to accomplish the goals for 2009 there must be a focus on membership which folds directly into the budget. Membership and involvement is the key to a healthy, vibrant chamber. An overhaul of the dues structure is in the works, not only for simplification, but to keep it affordable for more companies. A revamp of the dues formula will now allow semi-annual payments while giving a discount for an annual payment. The goal is (of course) to increase services and membership.

One of the most exciting plans is an overhaul of the Chamber web site. Membership will now include the opportunity for businesses to have direct links from the Chamber site to their company web sites. Work is under way to make the Chamber web site the community calendar for Riverbank; the eventual goal is making the

Chamber site the place to go for information about our city. The more visitors there are to our web site; the better chance someone will see your business listed there. Future plans could include the opportunity for a minimal number of advertisements on the Chamber web site. Again, the entire focus is to make the chamber site the place to go for our city, increasing the likelihood that your business will be seen.

Programs and activities seem to be in the forefront for members. They are seen as a way to increase visibility with far less cost than advertising in local publications. While celebrating new or relocated businesses is a fantastic opportunity, the more intimate coffee hour or mixer sometimes lends a greater opportunity to really tell people about your business. It is also in the works to plan for no less than four annual events in the community with consideration to each sector of our city, i.e. downtown, Cross Roads, and Highway 108 area. The most anticipation is of course for a downtown street faire to celebrate the completion of construction downtown and continuing the Blues and Bibs and Green Ride Saturday that were started last year.

Buy Local, Buy Chamber!



Bell Family Dentistry Proud To Serve Community

Bell Family Dentistry opened their first office in Riverbank in 1997 in the downtown area. They outgrew their facilities there in a few years and built their new office in 2004 at the current location at 2754 Topeka Street. That move enabled them to incorporate many state-of-the-art advances in dentistry. The newest acquisition is a Cerec one-visit crown system, which allows them to create most crowns, veneers, onlays and inlays

during the patient's office visit. They have also added a digital panograph. Many of their patients prefer the ease and quickness this new technology provides in taking x-rays.

More important than the technology they offer is their staff. They try to make their visit with them as comfortable and stress free as possible. Two of their assistants have been with them since the beginning. In the years since then they have added two

hygienists and several more office staff. Most of their patients will say that Dr. Bell provides gentle and compassionate care. They view their office as a family, and strive to provide the best care possible.

Bell Family Dentistry has enjoyed providing care to Riverbank for the past 12 years, and hope to continue for many years to come. Call Bell Family Dentistry at 869-4505 to schedule your appointment, or for more information.

Strong Elected To Head Riverbank Chamber

By unanimous vote, Carla Strong, vice-chairperson/finance director for the Chamber, was elected to take over the duties of Board Chairperson for 2009. Strong has served in her present position on the board for the last two years and was recently reelected to the board by the membership for a three-year term.

"Carla has been a very large part of the successful rebuilding of the Chamber," said director John Cox.

With great reluctance the Board of Directors accepted the resignation of Vikki Peters, who has served

as Chairperson for the last three years.

"Vikki has been a driving force for the chamber and has contributed a great deal to the community," said director Leonard Hansen. "It is with sadness that we move on this motion. We appreciate everything Vikki has given to the efforts of building a strong Chamber for the City of Riverbank."

Peters submitted her resignation as chairperson to the board during the annual planning session; however she will continue to serve as a board member.

With the election of Strong

as chairperson, director Hansen made a motion for director John Cox to replace Strong as the vice-chairperson/finance director. That motion was also passed on a unanimous vote of the board.

Strong explained, "John and Vikki were the catalysts for change. Three years ago, they believed in our business community in Riverbank and invested time and effort, with the help of others, that was needed to move us forward. I am honored to have been elected and look forward to continuing the work we started."



Far West Laboratories, Inc. Passes The Test

Although Far West Laboratories, Inc. has been on the same corner at Second Street and Stanislaus in Riverbank for the last 20 years, many people are surprised when they hear of a water-testing lab in our small city.

Owners David and Angela Adams had the unique opportunity of starting a water-testing laboratory in their hometown of Riverbank. With the experience they gained from previous water testing positions, they acquired the current building and began their dream of owning their own independent

business. From that humble beginning emerged the now successful and competitive business with eight employees, and three sample courier driving routes. They are still in their original building and although they appear small, customer service is their first priority.

Their customers include cities, irrigation districts, community service districts, schools and restaurants. Additional customers include real estate property owners and private well owners. They serve the Central Valley from Galt to Don Pedro,

and the coastal range to the Sierra foothills.

Water quality has become a high priority in recent years, and water testing is an integral part of the monitoring process. Accurate identification of known contaminants is critical to assure water quality and the detection of potential contaminants that may be present. As a state-certified laboratory, they are able to meet the needs of their customers.

For your water testing needs, call Far West Labs at 869-9260, or stop by 6602 Second St., Riverbank.

Coffee Hours And Mixers Valuable Tool

Many of the members have been contacted in recent weeks with a request to host a coffee hour or mixer. This is part of an ongoing effort to assist members in advertising their business with little cost to them. Here's how the program works: each month, in the community page, two member businesses are put in the spotlight. This is an opportunity to talk

about your business; tell people what you do best. At the same time, during that month you invite the membership to join you for light refreshments in either the morning or after hours. Now they have the chance to meet you and your staff. Those face-to-face meetings are very instrumental to gaining new market share.

Maribeth Reece, Cham-

ber Secretary, is coordinating these opportunities. She will assist you in getting the newspaper article together; she will visit your business for photographs to be included in the paper. Be sure to contact her at mbreece@riverbankchamber.org or call 869-4541.

Scheduling is 45-days in advance so don't wait, email her today.

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What Did We Accomplish In 2008?

January of 2008 saw the first Chamber newsletter in several years. While this was well received, after looking at the budget and the cost associated with publishing a hard copy newsletter, the board was faced with a difficult decision. The newsletter was refined into the Chamber community page in the Riverbank News with a PDF copy being sent by

email to all the membership. The goal of increasing contact with our membership was very important and led to meeting a second goal. With the hiring of an administrative assistant on a part-time basis, working off site, more routine contact with our membership has become a reality. We are able to keep membership informed about all commu-

nity events, seminars and socials that could benefit business relationships. We also continue to communicate by email as much as possible to control cost, thereby keeping membership dues minimal. Increasing the visibility for the organization and its members was greatly increased in 2008 with six ribbon cuttings for new or relocating businesses.