

Bring Your Business Cards!

The next Eureka Chamber Mixer will be Thursday, February 19, 5:30 at George Petersen Insurance/ Cochrane & Associates, 416 E Street, Eureka

MIXER



FUN!

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The Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce

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R E V I E W

FEBRUARY 2009

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE GREATER EUREKA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Chamber Ambassador Kimberly Best Promoted to General Manager at Red Lion Hotel

Long time Chamber Ambassador Kimberly Best was recently promoted to the position of General Manager at Eureka's Red Lion Hotel. Best was formerly the Sales and Catering Manager. Following an exhaustive search, Red Lion officials tapped the local candidate.

"Kimberly brings a strong appreciation for the dynamics of the local area. Her appointment is great news for the Red Lion and the local business community," said Chamber CEO, J Warren Hockaday."

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CHAMBER BRIEFS

North Coast Technology Conference Slated for March

The Redwood Technology Consortium will hold the first Annual North Coast Technology Conference in March 2009.

The Saturday, March 14, 2009 event will bring together regional technology experts to highlight local expertise and share experiences and knowledge. The conference hosts expect to include such topics as the following:

- Search engine optimization
- Broadband technology and infrastructure
- Open source tools
- Web-based marketing
- Web 2.0 technologies
- Social Media/Networking (such as Facebook, LinkedIn & Twitter)
- Green IT/sustainable technology

Speakers and subject matter experts will present a broad array of subjects. In addition to local speakers, the conference will also feature a follow-up to the popular Technology Boot Camp offered in 2008. The follow-up will cover use of technology for marketing your business, including email marketing, search engine optimization, use of Google tools, etc.

The conference will take place on Saturday, March 14, 2009 from 9AM - 4PM at the Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center in Eureka. For more information, please contact the RTC board, at board@redwoodtech.org.

Annual Chamber Meeting Unifies Members

More than 200 Chamber members gathered at the 119th Annual Chamber Membership Dinner. The yearly event has become an important opportunity for members of the local business community to come together and celebrate the successes and join forces against the challenges.

Chamber CEO, J Warren Hockaday told the assembly, "This meeting is about saying thanks and how fortunate are we to have so many here to recognize?" Hockaday introduced the many business leaders and dignitaries who have become an integral part of the Chamber's efforts to improve business conditions and promote economic development. "From elected officials in Sacramento to local service providers, the work of the chamber is performed by many hands," Hockaday said.

I am proud and I am humbled to be a part of this dynamic organization of volunteers and dedicated members that seek to create jobs, promote economic growth and work very hard to make this community a better place for businesses, employees and families to thrive.
—J Warren Hockaday

2008 Chamber Board Chair, Dennis Hunter reflected on the year that had just passed and noted the important progress that is being made in critical infrastructure enhancements such as improved highways and air service facilities. The outgoing Chairman also presented the winners of the Chamber business awards program for 2008. The capacity crowd heartily congratulated the winners:

Continued on page 6



Above: Rick Littlefield of Eureka Natural Foods, Customer Service Award | Ralph Gianini of Humboldt Creamery, Business of the Year | Carol Rische, General Manager of the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District, Tom Cooke Award | J Warren Hockaday congratulates Tomas Chavez from Sequoia Personnel Service, Small Business of the Year | Dan Heimen of Express Employment Professionals, Business Person of the Year. Below: J Warren Hockaday, Chamber CEO



2009 Chamber Mixer Calendar

FEBRUARY 19

George Petersen Insurance/Cochrane & Associates

MARCH 19

St. Joseph Hospital

APRIL 16

Red Lion Hotel

MAY 21

Best Western Bayshore Inn

JUNE 18

US Bank

JULY 16

Sequoia Park Zoo/Healthsport

AUGUST 20

Leon's Car Care Center

SEPTEMBER 17

Security National

OCTOBER 15

Coast Central Credit Union

NOVEMBER 19

Best Western Humboldt Bay Inn

DECEMBER 17

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Chairman's Message

by Chris Crawford

In a rare display of unanimity in the period leading up to 2003, a wide spectrum of community groups worked in concert to promote the completion of a then-SBC (now AT&T) fiber optic connection that brought improved telecommunications to the North Coast. Until then, every phone call, email and Internet connection leading into and out of Humboldt County was transmitted on a microwave connection that had reached the saturation point.

Despite AT&T's significant investment in this infrastructure improvement, and their willingness to set aside legal principles to bring better broadband coverage to the community, we still need a back-up system in case the fiber optic line is accidentally cut. Unfortunately, we had four instances of interrupted service since 2003 and each time we were starkly reminded of how dependent we have become on internet connectivity.

This Chamber and many other local stakeholders have pushed for a redundant fiber connection to serve as a back up to avoid future interruptions. In a hugely positive development, the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has tentatively approved a grant award of \$7.8 million from the California Advanced Services Fund (CASF) to a company called Broadband Associates to build a second fiber optic line along Highway 299 to the Redding area. The CASF was established to promote broadband access in un-and-under-served communities, and this project is perfectly suited for this purpose because along with serving as a back up, this connection will also spread broadband connections to the 18 communities in its path.

In keeping with our established priority of advocating for transportation and infrastructure improvements, the Chamber is supporting this positive development and urges the PUC to fund this critical project. We also wish Broadband Associates the best of luck in funding and completing this estimated \$19 million project.

While some have said that less expensive alternatives may exist such as microwave and wireless connections, we will need to re-route all phone and Internet traffic in case of another future outage. The reason we needed the first fiber optic line is that these other technologies lack the capacity to carry all of our traffic in such an outage.

Think about it ... the first fiber optic line is smaller than the thickness of your index finger, yet it is able to carry the bulk of our current and future connections into the foreseeable future. And in today's economy, Internet connectivity is just as important as highways, roads and seaports. We need them all, and thankfully we have a strong prospect on the table to improve one. The Chamber says *go for it!*



Chris Crawford, Chairman of the Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

What's NEW?

Eureka Chamber Membership News

Send submissions to susan@eurekachamber.com

Musical Instrument Drive Give the Gift of Music

Redwood Coast Music Festivals and The Pointe radio station are conducting a county-wide used music instrument drive. We are asking everyone to check their closets, attics and basements for music instruments not being used and to donate them to this drive.

The instruments will be refurbished and then donated to several different music programs through out the county. Drop off sites are the Jazz Office 523 5th St. Eureka, all Umpqua Banks, the Eureka and Arcata Co-ops and the Fortuna Music Mart.

Help us give the "gift of music" to our students for many years to come.



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Two Local Programs on China Trade

A local nonprofit organization called Consultants for Global Programs is conducting two programs on China, as follows:

Bridging China Business and Education Opportunities

Wednesday, February 25, 6:30 – 9:00 PM, at the Humboldt County Office of Education, 901 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka, in the Madrone Room.

Education and Culture: China Opportunities and Exchange

Wednesday, March 4, 6:30 – 9:00 PM, at Arcata High School multi-purpose room.

The format for both programs will be a panel discussion of experts and those familiar with Chinese business and culture. Attendance is free, but a reservation is requested by contacting Dr. Larry Kavich, Consultants for Global Programs (CGP), 2037 Harrison Avenue, Eureka 95501, Tel: (707) 442-7704, Fax: (707) 445-3028 or Email: cgpusa@aol.com. For more information about CGP, visit www.globalprograms.com

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Member Legislative Briefing

I wish I could report that everything is going smoothly in the halls of the State Capitol. Unfortunately, there is still no agreement on mid-year budget reductions/revenue enhancements for California as the first week of February has come to a close. This has triggered several actions from the State, which includes preparing IOUs instead of cash for California tax refunds, preparing to shut down highway and other infrastructure projects as well furloughs for many California State employees. The furlough program will close non-essential California state offices most notably the DMV. As news of our demise was broadcast on network news, I wasn't completely surprised when I received a call from a colleague who works in Texas. He informed me that California has finally become that crazy Uncle living under the bridge that nobody wants to talk about at Thanksgiving. It was tough to argue with him.



How did we get here? Didn't we recall Governor Gray Davis to fix this problem he asked? There have been several investigations into the current budget issue and here is a compilation of the growth in government spending under Governor Schwarzenegger's watch. The most telling numbers came courtesy of the San Jose Mercury News who found that California's general fund under Schwarzenegger's tenure has grown a whopping 34.9 percent, an increase from \$76.3 billion when he took office to almost \$102.9 billion last year. The important number to compare this growth in government is with the population growth and rate of inflation which combined over the years increased by 21.5 percent. If state spending had grown only at that rate, it would have reached \$92.7 billion last year. Instead, Schwarzenegger and the Legislature spent \$10.2 billion more than population and inflation combined.

So where did that "extra" \$10.2 billion of state spending above the rate of inflation and population growth go? According to the San Jose Mercury News, the state prison system received the biggest share, about \$4.1 billion.



by Keith Dunn
EUREKA CHAMBER LOBBYIST
Dunn Consulting, Sacramento

Specifically, California spent \$13 billion last year on our prison system, even more than higher education. In close second was Public Health spending which grew by \$2.9 billion above the rate of inflation and population growth.

“California has finally become that crazy Uncle living under the bridge that nobody wants to talk about at Thanksgiving”

These increased costs in addition to Schwarzenegger's first act as governor, which was to sign an executive order to cut the vehicle license fee (VLF) by two-thirds was bound to lead to a budget deficit without spending restraint. While the VLF saved the average motorist about \$200 a year, it cost the cities and counties that had been receiving the money billions. The Governor agreed to repay the locals every year with state funds which some say has cost the state general fund as much as \$6 billion.

California legislators are faced with some very difficult decisions when it comes to prioritizing state services and how we all will pay for them. It is clear that as of today, they have been unsuccessful in efforts to reach a compromise spending plan that accounts for the services we as citizens demand and the reality of what we are willing to pay to receive them.

Annual Meeting from page 1

- Business of the Year: Humboldt Creamery
- Business Person of the Year: Dan Heinen, Express Employment Professionals
- Customer Service Award: Rick Littlefield, Eureka Natural Foods
- Small Business of the Year: Sequoia Personnel Service
- Tom Cooke Award, for the public sector official who best understands how to balance the needs of business with the interests of government: Carol Rische, General Manager - Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District.

Hunter also thanked the outgoing members of the Chamber Board who had completed their terms of office. They are Jennifer Budwig from Redwood Capital Bank, Dave Edmonds from AT&T, John Fullerton CPA, Russ Harris of North Valley Bank, Rob McBeth owner of O&M Industries and former Eureka Reporter Publisher, Judi Pollace.

Hunter then introduced the incoming, 2009 Board Chair, Chris Crawford and the gavel was passed beginning a new year for the Chamber and its members. Crawford outlined his strategies and the Board's priorities for the upcoming year. The new Chairman's BAG (Big Audacious Goals) includes working to bring about local campaign finance reform, solutions to local homelessness, strengthening the working partnership with the education community and organizing a *Business Expo* in the Fall of 2009.

Crawford also introduced the newly elected members of the Board. He welcomed, Ian Caliendo, the Government Affairs Manager for PG&E, John Dalby, CEO of Redwood Capital Bank, Roy Frostenson, the new General Manager of KIEM News Channel 3, Dave Kuta, Publisher of the Times Standard, Dr. Jeff Marsee, President and Superintendent of College of the Redwoods and Carleton Neilson, owner of Nylex.net.

Also featured this year was an upscale silent auction of goods, services and products provided by Chamber members. Among the highlights of the evening was a live auction for a dinner for six at the home of local celebrity, Rex Bohn, with service by Eureka Mayor, Virginia Bass and an assist by Police Chief, Garr Nielsen and City Manager, David Tyson.

In closing, CEO Hockaday stated, "I am proud and I am humbled to be a part of this dynamic organization of volunteers and dedicated members that seek to create jobs, promote economic growth and work very hard to make this community a better place for businesses, employees and families to thrive."

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A Family Affair.... and the Chairman's Brand New Bag



by **J Warren Hockaday**
CEO

The feeling is hard to describe. It is an equal measure of pride, humility and excitement to have the honor of addressing a crowd of 230 or so and to be a part of a collective effort aimed at improving business conditions, protecting workers and making this community a better place.

The Eureka Chamber's 119th anniversary was a celebration of the strength and resiliency of local businesses even in a very challenging economy. Truly, businesses are at their best when times are tough. And to come together in the spirit of the common bond that we all share, was truly an inspiration. At a time when it would be easy to give up to the incessant, daily national news that barrages us with the 'economic disaster du jour,' the assembled members of the Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce would have none of it.

Even though we also share the frustration of problems that are far beyond our reach and ability to remedy, our members understand that focusing on solutions when times are difficult is a better way to go. So the 2009 Annual Membership Dinner was a time to say thank you, to recognize the many, many partners in this effort and indeed to celebrate success. There were many to thank.

As a volunteer organization, the Chamber absolutely depends on the strength, expertise and strong support of its members. Indeed, the Chamber is not a separate entity that works independently to further its mission; it is instead a focal point for the dedication and defined purpose of its members. To look around the room at the annual meeting and see the strength, determination and camaraderie that exists among the membership, is a truly humbling experience.

It is hard not to think of it as a family. Well, it is a family. From the business leaders of all of the local sectors to the governmental officials with whom we have developed strong business relationships, to the agencies that provide important infrastructure for commerce, we have an abundance of resources among the members of this family. And that is why we can succeed when the economy is troubled because we are all in this together.

Among the high points of the evening's many high points, were the remarks of incoming Chamber Board Chairman, Chris Crawford. Chris relayed his brand new BAG to the members and friends of the organization. BAG being, *Big Audacious Goals*. While the goals themselves are not entirely new the recharged energy behind them is. Following a number of Board-level discussions about the scope and mission of the Chamber program of work, there emerged four efforts that will be pursued in keeping with the best interest of the members. Campaign finance reform is sorely needed to reduce the high costs of running for local office, a proactive approach to the multi-dimensional issue of homelessness, a more comprehensive, productive association with educators aimed at a better prepared workforce for employers and an opportunity to provide meaningful technical assistance utilizing the expertise of Chamber members themselves in a Local Business Expo later in the year.

The Chamber's Annual Dinner is about the members and it is about saying thanks to the many volunteers, partners and friends whose efforts combine to improve life for businesses, employees and families. There is never enough time to thank everyone individually so let me attempt to get it done here.

So to all of you, please accept my sincere thanks for what you do and for allowing me the great honor of standing before you each year.



Changes Mean Employers Must Display New Posters

Mandatory changes have been made to three of the notices California employers are required to display to explain workers' rights to employees.



- New federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) rules published on November 17 include new poster and notice requirements.
- The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) workplace poster includes required changes, according to the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.
- The state Employment Development Department (EDD) notice to employees has changed for 2009.

Family Leave

The FMLA rules going into effect on January 16, 2009 cover:

- the new poster and notice requirements;

- eligibility for leave if the employee has a break in service with the employer;
- when bonus payments may be denied to an employee on FMLA;
- increase in penalties for failure to post the FMLA notice;
- requirement that employers indicate how much time will be used as FMLA (if known);
- retroactive application of leave.

Required Pamphlet Changes

In addition, there are new requirements in 2009 to the following required pamphlets:

- Workers' Compensation Rights & Benefits pamphlets (required for new hires);
- State Disability Insurance pamphlets (required for new hires and employees taking non-work-related disability leave);
- Paid Family Leave (required for new hires and any employee taking a leave of absence);
- Unemployment Insurance pamphlets (required for any employee who becomes unemployed).

The 2009 Posters and pamphlets can be ordered at a members discount through the Eureka Chamber.

Financial Focus We're Still the Land of (Investment) Opportunity

Submitted by Dawn Henderson, Financial Advisor Edward Jones Investments

Over the past several months, you may have become somewhat discouraged at the prospects of investing for your future. Every day, it seems, brings another piece of bad news: stock market volatility, a decline in manufacturing, housing prices in free-fall, auto companies teetering on bankruptcy — the list goes on and on. However, despite these distressing headlines, you are still living in a country that is home to the most powerful economic engines in recorded history — and while these engines may currently be stalling a bit, they still offer the power and the potential to successfully drive your investment vehicles.

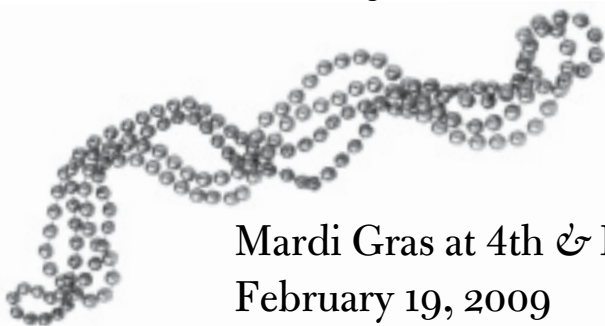
“America's future is still bright, and yours can be, too”

To get a sense of this size and strength, consider the following: If the world population of 6.7 billion people were represented by just 100 persons, only five of them would live in the United States — but these five would have some pretty big economic clout. In fact, they would own 34 percent of the world's equity market capitalization and 25 percent of the gross world product, according to Bloomberg News.

Furthermore, these five people would be responsible for technological breakthroughs that resulted in electric lights, telephones, airplanes, television, computers, the Internet and much more. And they would produce the world's largest supply of electrical energy and sit on land that contained nearly half the free world's known coal reserves, according to the Energy Information Administration. For good measure, they would account for 37 percent of all Nobel Prize winners, according to the Nobel Prize Foundation.

Taken together, these and other factors reveal a robust supply of natural resources, intellectual capacity and entrepreneurial spirit — and these assets don't melt away in any bear market. Instead, they point to the long-term expansion of our economy.

George Petersen Insurance and Cochrane & Associates present the February Chamber Mixer



Mardi Gras at 4th & E Streets
February 19, 2009
5:30–7:00 PM

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George Petersen Insurance

Continued next page

And who owns the bulk of these corporations? More than 90 million American shareholders — and more often than not, their patience, discipline and confidence has been rewarded in the long term.

What new investment opportunities lie just around the corner? Some await our focus on “green energy.” Others anticipate the reinvestment in our infrastructure, a key element of the Obama administration’s economic stimulus plans. These areas may be promising, but they won’t tell the whole story of the future of investing — because those chapters have yet to be written.

In the meantime, what should you do? Stick with these tried-and-true strategies:

- Look for quality. Seek out quality companies — those with long track records of profitability, strong management teams and competitive products.
- Think long term. We’re likely to continue seeing volatility in the markets, though perhaps not to the extremes of the past year. You’ll need to look past these short-term price movements and commit yourself to investing for the long term. Over time, quality investments usually pay off.
- Maintain adequate liquidity. If you have a short-term goal — such as paying for college in two or three years — set aside an appropriate amount of money in liquid investments that are likely to preserve your principal.
- Stay invested. Don’t take a “time out” from investing. The biggest rallies usually occur early in a bull market, and if you’re on the sidelines, you’ll miss out on these growth opportunities.

America’s future is still bright, and yours can be, too — by investing wisely and patiently and by focusing today on your goals for tomorrow.

New 10-month intensive support program comes at critical time

SBDC Launches Business Support Program

The North Coast Small Business Development Center is reaching out to retailers and nursery and landscape businesses with a new spate of free specialty business support programs to begin in February and March.

The timing for the new SBDC “flights” — intensive business support services for businesses within a like industry — is not lost on NCSBDC Director Michael Kraft. According to recent surveys by the National Federation of Independent Business, job losses, credit availability and lacking consumer confidence are painting a grim picture for businesses across the board in 2009. These flights were created to be responsive to small businesses needs, Kraft said, and in order to live to fight another day during a tough economic climate, regrouping is key.

“These programs are for the person who has a real handle on their craft, but could benefit from help in some of those wrap around services involved in running a business,” he said. “Maybe they have a tough time with bookkeeping or marketing, well we have experts who can help you with that.”

“During an economic downturn is the best time to be inventive and resourceful.”

One of the added benefits reported from past flight programs in the arts and in construction, Kraft said, is the peer-to-peer relationships that business owners form throughout the 10-month program. Julie Fulkerson, former owner of Plaza Design and SBDC contractor, is looking forward to teaching a few retail workshops for the program.

“During an economic downturn is the best time

to be inventive and resourceful,” Fulkerson said. “Pull out all of your best ideas, prioritize and take action on the no-cost actions with the greatest potential return.”

The Landscape/Nursery Flight will include: Financial issues unique to the industry, advertising and marketing, QuickBooks, effective retail space, sales in service businesses, communication and customer service and OSHA and Worker’s Compensation. For the Retail Flight, workshop subjects will include: sales training techniques, advertising and public relations, hiring and performance management, information technology for retail businesses, retail financials, motivating employees, and windows and merchandising.

Informational meetings will be held on February 5 and February 12, 6:00 PM, March 3, 12:00 PM, and March 5, 6:30 PM, at the Prosperity Center, 520 E Street in Eureka. The meetings will offer more details and answer questions about the programs for prospective participants. For more information contact Michael Kraft at 445-1163 or go online to northcoastsbdc.org.

Champion Advocates Makes a Difference

After only six months in business, Champion Advocates LLC is already making a positive impact on the local community.

Champion Advocates’ semi-annual report released this month highlights contributions to seniors, adults with disabilities and family caregivers of adults on the North coast. Success stories include: keeping an elderly couple together at home while saving them over \$12,000 in annual costs, saving a local couple over \$8,000 in health insurance and prescription costs and developing a plan to enable a disabled woman to remain independent while saving her over \$25,000 annually.

Information at www.championadvocates.com

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