









Business Update AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA



UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 11:

Visalia Young Professionals **Network Mixer**

Time: 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm Location: Ice House Theatre Cost: \$10.00 at the door RSVP: vypn@visaliachamber.org

MAY 19: Leadership Visalia Graduation

Time: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm Location: Lamp Liter Inn RSVP: info@visaliachamber.org

Business After Hours Mixer

Time: 5:30 pm

MAY 23:

Location: Walnut Park Assisted Living

MAY 23:

Young Entrepreneurs Academy Graduation

Time: 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm Location: Wyndham Hotel

MAY 25:

Ambassador Meeting 8:00 am to 9:00 am

Location: TBD

JUNE 8:

Annual Awards Celebration

Time: 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm Location: Visalia Convention Center visaliachamber.org/awards



Iceland:

Land of Fire and Ice July 26-31, 2017

Reflections of Italy September 6-15, 2017

China October 6-14, 2017

Christmas at the Galt House & Opryland Hotel December 3-10, 2017

The Legendary Blue Danube River Cruise May 7-17, 2018

Collette Vacations, Mayflower Tours, Cistlinc

For more information, go to www.visaliachamber.org/travel

Top 10 Triggers for ADA Lawsuits Recently, businesses in the Oval were

hit with ADA lawsuits. While the Visalia Chamber believes the intent of these specific lawsuits is frivolous, we still want to encourage members to look at their own ADA issues and evaluate their need to update their accessibility. David Horn, civil engineer, Certified Access Specialist (CASp) and founder of ADAhelper.com, shared at a recent ADA Workshop that many ADA fixes can be rather simple and inexpensive. The key is understanding what triggers ADA lawsuits. Horn shared with us the top 10 triggers for frivolous ADA lawsuits.

#10 - Parking Configuration

Those looking to pursue frivolous lawsuits drive by a business and examine if they'll be a good mark. Your parking lot is an exterior indicator if the rest of your business

is compliant. Tip-Van Handicapped Parking, make sure the striped access aisle in on the passenger side.

#9 - Curb Ramp

According to Horn, 21% of lawsuits include curb ramps that were non-compliant. Typically most curb ramps fall out of compliance because their slope is too steep. The rule is "1 inch of rise for every 12 inches in length" This isn't easy to spot if you are not an expert.

#8 - Van Stall Signage

Every lot must include at least one "VAN" accessible spot that includes proper signage and that stall must be 8 feet wide. This is an easy one to spot and an easy one to fix.

#7 – Interior Route Clearance

Wanting to display as much product as possible often reduces the interior route clearance. As a reminder, aisles serving both sides must be at least 44 inches wide. Watch special sales bump outs that can cause obstructions.

#6 - Exterior Route Clearance

Everyone has to have a clear access into your business. This is true whether customers enter from a parking lot or directly from a city street. Like Parking Configuration, this can be a big flag for those looking for "easy" businesses to target. Tip – make sure your path isn't too narrow.

#5 - Parking Signage

Painting stripes and logos on the actual spot is important, do not forget proper signs at the proper height signifying the proper information. Many businesses do not have the sign citing the improper use fines.

#4 – Door Hardware

This is such an easy fix but some businesses





overlook it for more complicated issues. Make sure your door handle does not require a wrist twist. Tip-Think no knobs - handles instead.

#3 - Service Counter

Many businesses assume, wrongly, that they can walk around and help a customer eliminating the need to lower a service counter. This is not the case. Service counters must be no higher than 34 inches when a wheelchair has to turn sideways. Additionally there has to be 36 inches of cleared space on the counter. This is often the most expensive fix for businesses.

#2 – Accessible Parking Stalls

Horn says the second most common trigger for law suits is Accessible Parking Stalls. With parking, one small detail can throw you completely out of compliance. One overlooked item - The painted handicap sign on the spot must be visible when the car is parked in the spot.

#1 - Restroom Accessories

The number one trigger for ADA Lawsuits, according to Horn, is restroom issues. Any restroom, including an employee restroom occasionally used by customers, must meet minimum requirements. Minor items can pull your restroom out of compliance. Be sure to watch the heights of paper towel handles, mirrors, and toilet seat covers.

David Horn has shared that many of these triggers are easily

fixed. While the thought of being sued is scary and the process to become compliant is overwhelming, do not let fear prevent you from taking simple steps to correct an issue. Hiring a Certified Access Specialist (CASp) to evaluate your business will help provide an action plan to bring your location into compliance. Additionally California law provides businesses under 50 employees who have completed the CASp inspection 120 days to complete those upgrades during which time, they cannot be sued for ADA issues. David Horn and a list of other certified CASp inspectors can be contacted through his website ADAhelper.com.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

What Does a Chamber of Commerce Do, Really?

Gail Zurek

Visalia Chamber

A couple of weeks ago I was running between appointments when fellow Chamber employee Dante Rosh, Leadership Development Coordinator, looked at me and said, "Today is a really great look into what the Chamber does". Per Dante's advice, I figured sharing my calendar might give insight into the variety of things your Chamber is doing.

 \blacksquare 7:15 am – Got into the office, answered emails and caught up on some paperwork.

 \blacksquare 9:00 am - Met with Dante. We discussed her role at the Chamber, reinstituting a Leadership Visalia Alumni group, and current systems within membership services. The reoccurring theme: how we can make this or that better for members, how we can bring even more value.

■ 9:45 am – My meeting with Dante was interrupted by ABC30 reporter Brian Johnson who called to chat about the ADA lawsuits filed against eleven businesses in the Oval neighborhood. Earlier in the week, Councilperson Phil Cox notified our office about the lawsuits and we began working on gathering resources for those businesses, pulling people together and raising awareness about the issue. These lawsuits reaffirmed the need for the proposed legislation (AB 150) Assemblymember Mathis had in committee. We reached out to Mathis' office to share what was happening with businesses in our community. We made plans to meet Brian Johnson in the Oval for an onsite interview.

■ 10:15 am – In the Oval, I was interviewed by Brian Johnson, ABC30 and Luis Hernandez, Visalia Times Delta about the ADA lawsuits. I met and began connecting with several of the business owners being sued. Those owners shared how extremely hard they work to provide for their families and couldn't understand why they were being targeted. They wanted to give everyone access and thought their businesses were in compliance with regulations. They were scared these lawsuits would cost them their businesses. We talked about how the Chamber was involved in this issue and ways we were working to help.

■ 11:45 am – I was off to the Northside of Visalia where we were hosting "12@12". The 12@12 program is new for the Chamber and is our

way of connecting members for intimate conversations about important issues. This 12@12 connected twelve business owners to discuss the unique joys and challenges of generational business. All twelve were at different points in the transitional process. The conversation was enlightening. As a Chamber, we walked away with new ideas on

how to better serve generational businesses and everyone said they took away something.

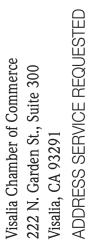
■ 1:30 pm − I had the opportunity to pop into a member's second Visalia location. They are in the final stages of construction and willingly gave me a sneak peek into something I think will be an instant success.

President & CEO ■ 2:15 pm – Back in the office, Mathis' staff called and asked if I would testify on behalf of our members about predatory ADA lawsuits in an upcoming hearing for AB150. I agreed and made plans to attend the hearing in Sacramento the following week.

> ■ 5:30 pm — I emceed the Young Entrepreneurs Academy Investor Panel. Area students, grades eighth through high school, have formed five businesses in the yearlong entrepreneur training program. This night they were competing for funds to begin their businesses. Their enthusiasm and excitement was inspiring.

> \blacksquare 7:45 pm – I called my husband on my way home to fill him in on my busy day and realized Dante was right about its larger illustrative power.

> This rather typical busy day wonderfully highlights all your Chamber does to serve as the voice for business, encouraging a strong local economy. We often tell members, "Your Chamber is a Business Consultant on Retainer". When you face challenges, the Visalia Chamber is there. When you are thriving, we want to help you celebrate. We speak for members who are busy running their business. We provide connections and training that give members a competitive advantage. We are teaching the next generation of business leaders. If you haven't become a member, join us! We need the support of the business community, the support of businesses becoming members, to continue to do our very important work on your behalf.





Business-Government



Business Relations



Promoting Community



Strong Local Economy

The Leaders of Tomorrow Student Expo

The Student Expo will showcase students from the Visalia Unified School District (VUSD) Career Pathways and Linked Learning Academies and the students from the Visalia Chamber of Commerce's Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!).

Students from VUSD Career Pathways and Linked Learning Academies will be present during the Expo to display their Career Technical Education projects completed during the 2016-2017 school

Visalia Unified School District offers two approaches to Career Technical Education in Visalia; Pathways and Academies. VUSD offers over 15 Career Pathways across the district. Pathways are a four-year sequence of career themed courses aimed at providing technical skill development in students. VUSD also offers 10 career themed Linked Learning Academies. Academies offer a four-year sequence of courses, but with the addition of two or more academic courses that combine students to create a cohort of classes and a school within a school model for students. These programs are focused on college and career readiness, depending on the needs and next steps of our students.

The students from the Visalia Chamber of Commerce YEA! program will sell products from their newly launched companies during the Expo. Be the first to purchase products from one of the five **YEA!** start-up companies during the Expo.

The YEA! companies featured at the Expo will be: Aeryal's - all natural organic and gluten

- free baked goods
- Kalifornia Kisses organic lipsticks ■ VESPR Goods - athletic backpacks
- Unknown Apparel branded street
- SlingShot online hiring resource for teens

a yearlong academic academy hosted by the Visalia Chamber of Commerce, which teaches core entrepreneurial skills to middle and high school students.

Visalia Partners in Education, Visalia Unified School District and the Visalia Chamber of Commerce work in concert to ultimately prepare students to meet needs of the 21st Century and ensure that there is a qualified workforce to support Visalia and Tulare County in the future.

"Investing in Today's Students to Create Tomorrow's Leaders"

80 New Apartment Homes Now Available in Visalia

Luxury Rental Community Montecito Apartment Homes Now Open

Visalia's newest luxury rental community Montecito Apartment Homes has officially opened and is accepting applications for rentals. Built by Paloma Development and Ginder Development, the community is managed by Fresno-based property management company Manco Abbott

This is Visalia's first solar powered apartment community and after the second phase is completed, Montecito will have 168 apartment homes. Phase 2 construction will begin in summer 2017.

Inspired by Santa Barbara-style architecture, Montecito brings chic apartment living combined with amenities commonly found in luxury communities in the Bay Area or Southern California. Montecito is located in northwest Visalia and neighbors the Visalia Country Club with direct access to the Goshen Avenue

The Montecito Clubhouse is the heart of the community, with a resort-style pool, multiple barbeques, dog parks, a 24-hour fitness facility and parcel locker room to provide residents a secure room for shipments. Montecito offers one, two and three bedroom energy efficient floor plans that include granite countertops, all appliances, ceiling fans, hardwood floors, a private balcony and garages for every home.

Residents can choose from three floor plans.

San Ysidro 1 bedroom/1bath 823 sf El Encanto 2 bedroom/2bath 1,127 sf 3 bedroom/2 bath 1,356 sf

Potential residents can get more information from the Leasing Center at 877-259-6071 or by visiting the community's leasing center (1137 N. Woodland Street).

Learn more at www.montecitoapthomes.com or follow the community

on Facebook.

About this publication ... Business Update is the official monthly publication of the

Visalia Chamber of Commerce, 222 N. Garden St., Ste. 300, Visalia, CA 93291, (559) 734-5876. Periodicals, Postage Paid at Visalia, CA 93277; Publication No. USPS 494-660. Annual Subscription rate \$15. Postmaster: Send address changes to Visalia Chamber of Commerce, 222 N. Garden St. Ste. 300, Visalia, CA 93291. Advertising information, call the Visalia Times-Delta at 559.735.3235. **Editor: Nicola** Wissler. Layout: Times-Delta Media Group.

Copyright 2009. All rights reserved. Reproduction by any means of the entire contents or any portion of this publication without written permission is prohibited. The appearance of any advertisements in the publication does not constitute support or endorsement for any product, person, cause, business or organization named therein, unless specifically noted otherwise in the advertisement.

GROUNDBREAKING • GRAND OPENING • RIBBON CUTTING • CEREMONIES



Assistance Service Dog **Educational Center**

32785 Road 212, Woodlake, 559-564-7297



Espi's Kids

3338 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, 559-909-2688



Suncrest Bank

501 W. Main Street, Visalia, 559-802-1000



Montecito Apartment Homes

1137 N. Woodland Street, Visalia, 1-877-259-6071



The Freedom House

421 N. Church Street, Visalia, 559-732-7273

COMMUNITY LOYAL MEMBERS

A thriving community starts here!

New

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome our newest members. We encourage individuals and businesses to support Chamber Member businesses.

- CENTRAL VALLEY **INSURANCE AGENCY** (559) 802-4094 Insurance
- CVMA CENTRAL VALLEY **MARTIAL ARTS** (559) 556-5747 Recreation, Hobbies & Sports
- BOULDER BOATS (559) 734-7471 Recreation, Hobbies & Sports
- SUCCESS LEARNING CENTER & VISALIA MUSIC SCHOOL (559) 627-9500 Children Educational Resources
- K-12 Education SUMMERFIELD APARTMENTS (559) 625-3706 Apartment & Home Rental

- FLEX-FIT GYMS (559) 549-6955 Health & Nutrition
- GATEWAY CHURCH (559) 732-4787 Religious

Renewing

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce thanks the Palm Occupational Medicine* following companies for renewing their commitment to the community of Visalia.

- Air Sun Solar
- Bryson Cancer Care, Inc.*
- California Business Machines*
- Carroll's Tire Warehouse

Classic Charter

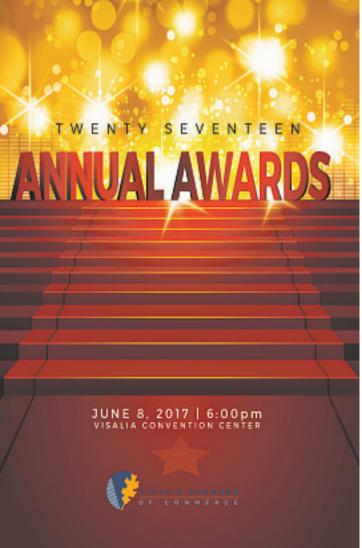
- Crescent Valley Public Charter*
- Family Builders Foster Family Agency
- Golden State Cardiac & Thoracic Surgery, Inc.

- Gunning & Gunning*
- HR Mobile Services
- J & D Lighting & Alarm*
- La Quinta Inn*
- McDonald & Associates*
- Personnel Solutions Unlimited, INC.

PROUD MEMBER

- Phil Cline Consulting
- Quail Park Retirement Village*
- ServPro
- Southern California Edison Company
- St. Paul's School
- Transitions Children's Services
- Valley Yellow Pages

*Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.





Leadership Visalia student, **Gracie** Sanchez, is Visalia Rescue Mission's new Community Engagement Coordinator. After nearly four years as VRM's Administrative Assistant, this new role will allow Gracie to use what she's

learned to help VRM

It takes many hands to

pull off an event like the

Birdhouse Auction. Habitat

for Humanity would like to

say thank you to all of their

volunteers for donating so

many hours of their time

to help Habitat with their

signature event. Hats off to

all the volunteers!

make a deeper, positive connection with Visalia's

Hispanic community. Gracie's history with VRM



Gracie Sanchez, Visalia Rescue Mission

goes back to 2012, as a graduate of their residential program.



www.Facebook.com/VisaliaChamber www.twitter.com/VisaliaBiz



Zelma Lollis, Ivanhoe's First 5 program The event recognizes heroes who have made

a difference in the lives of Tulare County children ages zero through five. Lollis has been in education

for over 17 years, and has been part of the First 5 School Readiness Program at Visalia Unified School District's Ivanhoe school for five years.

Leadership Visalia Participant, Nick Vargas was named Board Chair & President of the SOURCE LGBT+ Center. He previously served as their Treasurer and is one of their co-founders. Congratulations Nick!



Ivanhoe's First 5

program and teacher

Zelma Lollis was

recently presented

the "Outstanding

Provider 2017" award

at the First 5 Hands-

On Heroes event.

Nick Vargas, theSOURCE LGBT+ Center

VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

It Happens Every Spring

Todd Oto,

Ed.D.

Superintendent.



Nope--this isn't a piece on baseball! It's about another spring activity in school districts: goal setting. Every year at about this time the Visalia Unified Board of Trustees sets goals for the upcom-

Habitat for Humanity

ing school year. This February, the Board engaged once more in the goalsetting process for our District and came away with an approach that is very familiar but more strategic: The goals for the present year were confirmed and extended for the next five years.

Visalia Unified This is hugely important for us, for it allows us a strategic perspective that helps us in two ways. First, it allows us to take the "long view" on making progress. This is important in that it helps us focus on systems and processes instead of shorter-term results. In the early years of school accountability, the system inadvertently encouraged the focusing of activity on some subgroups of students so that annual numeric targets could be met. School efforts could fall, then, into focusing on meeting the demand to increase scores within the accountability system instead of focusing on meeting the needs of kids and increasing achievement. Clearly, this was an unintended consequence of a policy aimed at helping ensure that kids had equitable access to learning. Second, it allows our staff the knowledge that we will persist in our existing work to support students and learning. Many veteran teachers can share the experience of facing something new every school year. Typically, this felt like a change in the focus of staff development and approaches to teaching and curriculum where we tossed out what we did last year and tried

Our mission remains the same: We exist to provide students with an education that affords them limitless opportunities for the future.

something new every fall. While that was never the intent, it was

all too often true for it was tempting to chase the newest best way to

To attain that mission, we extend the five goals set for Visalia Unified into 2022:

1. Engage students in a challenging curriculum and provide them the support to be successful This goal establishes that students will have equitable and systematic access to instruction that supports learning at high levels for all. It includes also the need to ensure that each student has a path through our school system that is relevant to his or her plans for adult life.

2. Support a district-wide collaborative culture for students and adults focused on learning and results. This goal establishes that kids learn how to collaborate as a part of our instructional program, and also that adults in our organiza-

tion work together to teach, support and serve our kids better. Further, it expects that we communicate and work as partners with parents in the education of their

3. Maintain a caring and encouraging learning environment for students and adults. This goal focuses on the way that kids and adults interact with and among each other. The way that school feels to students impacts their learning greatly, and we are committed to making school feel welcoming, positive, and supportive. We have the same expectation for the work environment for adults, for we want our staff in all departments to feel that they can work in a positive and productive environ-

4. Recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified, talented, and productive staff This goal establishes the importance of having the best possible people in our organization. We are a people organization. It takes people to teach, support, and serve our kids. And having skilled and committed people is the key to helping kids achieve at the highest levels possible.

5. Align resources to support District goals, student achievement, and school sites In the simplest possible terms, this goal says that we will use all of our fiscal resources as efficiently as we can to support our mission and our goals. In the local control era, this means engaging the community in assessing our performance and in establishing priorities for our work.

I am excited to continue the work that we have started in Visalia Unified. These are good goals that speak to us clearly and that command our attention, resources, and best efforts in the service of the kids of our community. Although this particular set of goals is relatively new, it is important to know that our target has remained the same for many years: helping kids get an education that allows them to take a strong first step into adult life.





Local Students Earn More than \$3,500 to Launch New Businesses

Student Finalist Named in National Scholarship Competition

By: Nicola Wissler

YEA! Facilitator

improve our scores.

The Visalia Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) is excited to announce the results of the 2017 Investor Panel. Five local students pitched their business ideas to local Investors who awarded start-up funding and chose one business to represent Visalia at the 2017 Saunders Scholars Competition held in Rochester, New York.

Visalia YEA! students met with local investors the last week of March and gave 5 minute business pitches including

research and information regarding; target markets, marketing plans, market trends, start-up costs, monthly and yearly sales projections and as well as financing strategies. Following are the 5 businesses who participated in the

Aeryal's is a vegan food business that focuses on the health and wellness of others. The business offers snacks and treats that are both delicious and

Kalifornia Kisses is an all-natural and organic lipstick company. KK reflects California itself. Each lipstick color represents a different part of California. KK is the healthy choice for lipstick and has no chemicals in it at all. KK is a creative, fun, and unique way to let girls express themselves while contributing to environmental causes.

Unknown Apparel creates T-shirts with high quality, fit, and style, at an affordable price. The company focuses on young adults and plans to donate funds to support those that are bullied, mistreated, and made fun of for what they wear. To support this



YEA! Students pitch business ideas and show off



pitch new business idea

VESPR Goods is a

athletes whose cleats

tear their bags and don't

provide the water protection for the individual's belongings.

Slingshot is a website whose purpose is to help connect high school job seekers with local employers. Students can get resume building tips and upload completed resumes for employers to review.

The 5 YEA! student businesses earned a combined total of \$3,600 in start-up funding during the 2017 Investor Panel. The investors also chose the student business that will represent Visalia at the Saunders Scholars competition:

Aeryal Semana, a senior at Tulare Western high school. Aeryal decided to make her education a priority and due to a scheduling conflict with an AP exam, will not be attending the competition. Runner up Alekhya Rajasekaran with Kalifornia Kisses will be representing Visalia **YEA!**.

Once in Rochester, Alekhya will have the opportunity to present and network with renowned business leaders and connect with like-minded YEA! students from all over the country. More than 100 top young entrepreneurs will advance to the national competition to compete "Shark Tank" style for up to \$30,000 in college scholarships and a variety of business prize "It is truly inspirational to watch our future leaders put their learning into

action as they launch their own, real businesses and pitch their business plans to the region's top

executive leaders," says Gayle Jagel, Founder and CEO of YEA!. "We are so proud of each and every

student who participates in this competition. best and brightest YEA!



students ages 11 to 18 from across the United States will have three minutes to present their business ideas and plans to a public audience and a panel of executive judges. The Saunders Scholars competition will take place May 3-6, 2017.

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

Karen Gross

Karen Gross is an Agent with State Farm Insurance. She has been a Chamber Board member for 3 years.



Why is it important to be a Chamber member? Being a member of the Chamber is more than just putting the member sticker on your window. It means you support our local business community and want

it to more than just grow, you want it to thrive. There are so many benefits to being a member. My favorite is how the Chamber is your business advocate. Being a small business owner myself, this is a priceless benefit. Current ADA lawsuits are plaguing local small business owners and the Chamber is doing something about it.

That alone is worth your membership dues. ■ What brought you to Visalia? I was born and

■ What is your favorite thing about your job/ company? I have a unique opportunity where I get to help people in so many aspects of their lives. From car accidents and devastating house fires, to planning for college and retirement – I can help customers with just about anything having to do with their finances.

■ What do you like to do when you are not working? I love spending time with my family especially if it involves any of the following: fishing, motorcycle rides or target shooting. What is your favorite place to go in Visalia

when you are not working? Rawhide Baseball is a fun family activity for us and we also love eating out at all of the delicious restaurants Visalia has to offer. What was your favorite book that you read in the last 12 months and why? From a business

perspective, "The 4 Disciplines of Execution" is a great book for any goal oriented organization. It has help my business reach new levels of success. ■ What is your favorite charity or local cause?

Helping to maintain and preserve my Portuguese culture is an important cause for me. Therefore I volunteer countless hours at the PPAV hall. ■ What is your best advice for young professionals? Surround yourself with a team of

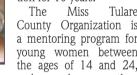
advisors that you can rely on and look to for sound wisdom.



Junann Smith

Junann Smith the Executive Director of the Miss Tulare County/Central Valley Scholar-

ship Organization. She has been with the Miss Tulare County Organization for 10 years.



and awards more than \$30,000 in cash and scholarships each year. We teach young women the value of giving back to our community. We build on their passions and teach them how to promote their thoughts, through hard work and heart! We teach them interview skills, resume writ-

ing, public speaking, marketing and sales, etc. are the local preliminary to Miss America and the four points of the crown define our mission best: "Style, Service, Scholarship, and Success". Our girls are beautiful on the inside first. They are girls who come with a "story", and have decided not to let their story define them, but instead to empower them. I am proud and blessed to be a small part of their journey.

What are some of the ways you'd recommend getting involved/working with/partnering with the Chamber? For lack of better words, this is a "No Brainer." I wish I would have done it sooner, recognizing both personal and professionally, life is about relationships. Being part of the Chamber embodies "relationship" in the Business Community. It brings the business world together for the greater good of our city and helps promote teamwork, our businesses and helps develop friendships and nurtures respect for the diversity we bring to the community.

What has Chamber Membership meant for your company? When you hear the word pageant what do you think? The Chamber has given me the opportunity to share what the Miss America Organization is really about. It's helped me change people's definition of beauty. After all, in my book, beauty is a verb; it's not what you see when you look at a person, it's what you feel when you see them. I have been able to change the minds of businesses in the community and to seek their support. Miss Tulare County is a volunteer program and it has given my titleholders the opportunity to speak, perform and volunteer their services.

The best part of Visalia is...? I love that we are a growing community, full of changes and diversity, yet with the same small town feel. Visalia is a very giving and supportive community and I am proud to be a part of it.

What is your favorite local charity/ non-profit? I was brought up God first, others second and I have a heart for so many. Everyone involved in a local charity or non-profit loves their own, because that's where they are serving. I think they are all important to someone, there's a passion behind every organization. It's the "why" we do it that makes our organizations unique. If you know me at all, I call a spade, a spade, and in all honesty, I cannot name a favorite. I have a heart for people and instead of naming one, I would rather say congratulations to all the passionate people who give back to organizations they love and believe in.

At our Annual Member Meeting on April 20, the following businesses were recognized for their 5, 10 and 15 year anniversaries as members of the Visalia Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber would like to thank them for their continued support.

MEMBERS ANNIVERSARIES

MEMBERS ANNIVERSARIES	
2Market Visuals	5 Year
Central Valley Tax Services	5 Year
County of Tulare	5 Year
Crescent Valley Public Charter	5 Year
Details Party Rentals & Sales	5 Year
Don Celillo Electric Company	5 Year
Figaro's Mexican Grill	5 Year
Golden Gate Media Group	5 Year
Golden State Family Services, Inc	5 Year
Hadley-Marcom Funeral Chapel	5 Year
Office Depot	5 Year
Peltzer & Richardson L. C.	5 Year
Priority Payment East	5 Year
Rookies Sports Bar of Visalia	5 Year
Sound N Vision Foundation	5 Year
Students International	5 Year
Surf Thru Express Car Wash	5 Year
The Orosco Group	5 Year
Transitions Children's Services	5 Year
Tulare-Kings Dental Society	5 Year
Wells Fargo Commercial Banking Office	5 Year
Yogurtland	5 Year
American Cancer Society	10 Year 10 Year
Boy Scouts of America - Sequoia Council	10 Year
Cline's Business Equipment Inc. Equity Group, Inc.	10 Year
Galante Bros Enterprises	10 Year
ImagineU Interactive Children's Museum	10 Year
Kast & Company Communications	10 Year
La Quinta Inn	10 Year
Love In the Name of Christ	10 Year
Megan Ide, DDS & Shirley Lei, DDS	10 Year
Mitchell Insurance Services	10 Year
Oral E. Micham, Inc.	10 Year
The Villas at Lovers Lane	10 Year
VF Outdoor, Inc.	10 Year
Visalia Senior Housing - Town Meadows	10 Year
Central Valley Recovery Services	15 Year
Denny's - Akers	15 Year
Executives Association of Tulare County	15 Year
Gubler & Abbott LLP	15 Year
Optimal Hospice Foundation	15 Year
Paloma Development Co.	15 Year
Rauber & Johnson	15 Year
Torian Group, Inc.	15 Year
Tropics by Design	15 Year
Tulare County Office of Education	15 Year
Visalia Fire Assoc. Local 3719	15 Year

Members celebrating 20+ year anniversaries will be honored at the Annual Awards Ceremony on June 8, 2017.

Blood Sweat and Tears to Perform at Fox

Hands in the Community announces the appearance of legendary performers BLOOD SWEAT & TEARS on Saturday, July 15th at 8:00 pm at the Visalia Fox Theatre.

With world class vocals, musicianship, and a multitude of solid gold hits BLOOD SWEAT & TEARS is at the top of their

It has been five decades since drummer/ producer Bobby Colomby and friends assembled the first group to successfully fuse rock, blues, pop music, horn arrangements and jazz improvisation into a hybrid that came to be known as "jazzrock." The band's second album, "Blood, Sweat & Tears," topped the Billboard charts for many weeks and beat out the Beatles' "Abbey Road" for the prestigious Album of the Year Grammy Award. That album produced three major hit singles: "You've Made Me So Very Happy," "Spinning Wheel," and "And When I Die." Other memorable hits include "Hi-De-Ho," "Lucretia Mac Evil," and "God Bless the Child."

Sponsoring organization, Hands in the Community, joins their volunteers and groups to help the needy. In Tulare and Kings Counties, the faith-based, government funded non-profit exists to address crisis and short term needs. The unique strategy of Hands in the Community is targeting and delivering help to those in need.

Tickets for the BLOOD SWEAT & TEARS concert are \$40, \$60, and \$80 and can be purchased at http://www. foxvisalia.org/event/1462002 or 308 W.

Main St., Visalia. Sponsor opportunities are available.

HEALTHCARE NOTE

Simplifying the Complex World of Health Care

Rick Strid

CEO

Visalia Medical Clinic

Visalia Medical Clinic



Modern medicine offers amazing technology, diagnostics and life-saving medications. We know more than ever, that lives are being improved and extended.

And yet, in some ways, the health care industry can be more confusing and frustrating than ever. Complex insurance requirements, access to providers, referrals to specialists and scheduling of imaging can cause headaches for

As a business in the business of health care, Visalia Medical Clinic determined years ago to tackle this frustration head on. Our physician owners foresaw the need and the benefits of offering as many services as possible, all under one roof. VMC today offers more than 50 providers, ranging from internal

medicine and family practice, to pediatrics, neurology, orthopedic surgery, cardiology, plastic surgery and podiatry.

Referrals take place seamlessly, and consultations happen in real time, because our providers simply walk across the hall to confer with colleagues – all for the benefit of patients.

I'm proud of the VMC laboratory staff and the high-quality work they do each day for our patients. The lab is held to a very high standard, both in terms of the accuracy of the testing

equipment and the expertise of the staff. Patients benefit from this level of excellence and the easy access - including Saturday hours.

Imaging is an expensive, and essential, aspect of health care today. VMC offers state-of-the-art imaging through our MRI, CT, mammography and bone density technology. Pro-

a patient is potentially facing a serious illness and the diagnosis is hanging on the outcome of the scan. Our radiologists understand the importance and offer both quick response and a caring heart. As different as health care may seem from other types of businesses, we face many of the same challenges as a restaurant, bank or a gym.

Each must identify a need, provide quality service and put the cus-

viding quick response is essential in all cases, but particularly so when

tomer first. VMC's team does just that, and we are pleased to have helped

Visalians "Be Well" for more than 75 years.



CITY UPDATE

Celebrating 50 Years of Friendship

Warren

Gubler

Mayor, City of Visalia

Friendship is an invaluable bond, one that can only be forged through understanding and respect. When speaking about our sister city Miki, Japan, it means over 50 years of learning and cultural exchange.

My wife and I were able to experience that exchange first hand as we were part of the Visalia delegation that visited Miki, Japan in November of this past year. Experiencing Miki was wonderful and we were delighted to reciprocate the hospitality when a delegation from Miki visited Visalia in late April.

Celebrating a "golden anniversary" is no small feat, but it was with great pleasure that we welcomed the Miki delegates to Visalia. From a walking tour of downtown and College of the Sequoias, to a visit to Sequoia National Park and a baseball game at Rawhide Stadium, our friends from Miki experienced a slice of American life, Visalia style.

On the Saturday of their stay, April 22nd, the delegation members were the guests of honor as we held the dedication and ribbon cutting of our City's newest park, Miki City Park.

Located on the northwest corner of Mineral King Avenue and Johnson Street, along Mill Creek, the 1/3 acre park features Japanese cultural touches and drought tolerant landscaping. The park's main entrance features a torii, a traditional Japanese gate, symbolically marking the transition into a sacred space. Stone features depicting lit pagodas dot the walkway, with a monument gifted from Miki in the center of it all.

The monument features the emblem of Miki, a heart shape with three arterial branches that represent the vibrancy of the Japanese city. The design of the heart, represented by an equilateral triangle, is an illustration of the harmony between heaven, earth, and man, and is a symbol of future development.

The future holds much for both Miki and Visalia. Hosting our Miki friends and celebrating 50 years of friendship was an important milestone, and the opening of Miki City Park marks the beginning of the next 50 years. Visalia and Miki share the desire for peace and understanding, while channeling the best our communities have to offer into our people, organizations and businesses.

For more information on Miki City Park, visit www.visalia.city. For more information on Miki, Japan, visit www.city.miki.lg.jp/english/.

To contact Mayor Gubler directly, email warren.gubler@visalia.city.





To Shred or Not to Shred?

Brett T.

Abbott

Gubler & Abbott LLP



Paperwork and business go hand-in-hand. Even as we march ever toward a "paperless" workplace, documentation is

essential. Employers are required to keep records for almost everything: payroll records, performance reviews, company policies, correspondence to and from clients and customers, the list goes on and on. Smart employers also know that it's wise to retain documentation in case it is needed later -- whether for an audit or a lawsuit. But eventually, the time comes when documents are no longer needed. Does the law require employers to destroy some records in a certain way? The answer is "yes

The 2003 Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA), requires all employers, regardless of size, to dispose of certain documents that contain personal information either by shredding or burning them. The purpose of this law is to protect current, past and prospective employees' personal and confidential information such as Social Security numbers, addresses, phone numbers and other information reported to an employer by a third-party consumer reporting agency.

To comply with this requirement, many employers hire shredding services or document destruction contractors. Before hiring such services, employers must be careful to conduct due diligence, which would include the following:

Reviewing an audit of the disposal company's operations and its

compliance with the rule;

Obtaining information on the disposal company from several references;

Requiring that the disposal company be certified by a legitimate trade association; and

Reviewing the disposal company's information

security policies and procedures. In addition, if personal employee information is stored on computer disks or other recordable media, it must be

destroyed before discarding the media. If the information

is stored on the hard drive of a computer or server that is being sold or donated, the data must be removed in a way that makes it unrecoverable (our firm's IT guy recommends taking a hammer to

the hard drive – don't forget your safety goggles). In this age of identity theft and cyber-crime, information such as Social Security numbers, addresses and other such information simply must be kept secure. And as outlined above, the law has

strict requirements that employers do just that. This article is for education and information purposes only; is should not be construed as legal advice. If you have an employment law question for inclusion in a future article, contact Brett T. Abbott at Gubler & Abbott LLP (bta@thecalifornialawyers.com). For specific employment law advice or other legal assistance, contact Gubler & Abbott LLP, (559) 625-9600, 1110 N. Chinowth St., Visalia,

CA 93291 (www.thecalifornialawyers.com).







LEADERSHIP VISALIA

Ag/Water Day Session

By Colin Francy

Franey's Design Center, Leadership Visalia Participant



After five years of drought conditions throughout the San Joaquin Valley and much of the state, a wet winter has left California with above average rainfall and snow pack. While there is much reason to rejoice,



we in the Central Valley are not out of the clear yet, a message heard repeatedly during Leadership Visalia's day session on Water and Agriculture.

The day kicked off hearing from Mr. Paul Hendrix with the Tulare Irrigation District. He explained some of the recent state legislation and how it was impacting local municipalities, cities, and farmers. We learned from his presentation that the basin we draw water from recharges at a faster rate and that this means more water for farmers. The system is complex with various rules and regulations dictating behavior of the water going in and out of the ground. Big changes are coming in the years ahead; something every resident should pay attention to.

We then carpooled to Rosa Brother's Dairy in Tulare. We heard first hand from Mr. Noel Rosa about how they have grown their small business, strategically expanding their distribution and offerings. We

took a tour of the bottling facility and ended with a sampling of some of their delicious milks and ice creams. Yes, root beer flavored milk exists and it is delicious.

We took a short trip to the Tulare Agri Center, the site of the yearly World Ag Expo. We heard from Mr. George Wilson about the history of the Expo, its importance now at a global level, and how sometimes the



McKellar Family Farms, Hummingbird Cottage

most important people in your organization are the volunteers. We had a tasty lunch at the Bravo Farms in Tulare.

We headed north to Ivanhoe to McKellar Family Farms where we heard from Mr. Bob McKellar. We learned about the history of the land, the trials and tribulations of citrus farming, and why Mr. McKellar now considers himself not just a farmer, but an entrepreneur. Renting his property for events and weddings, offering tourists the opportunity

to pick citrus, and live the farm life are all ways he supplements the farms income. It was fitting that while we were discussing Mr. McKellar's own solutions to the lack of water, a heavy rain started to come down. This provided a lesson, that while grateful for every inch, there are good times and bad times for it to rain. In this instance as the entire class harvested some oranges, the timing of the

rain could have been better.

We ended the day hearing from a local, fifth generation farmer J.R. Shannon. He spoke to his success and the challenges he faces as a farmer. So much so that he too recently began expanding the scope of what he grows, but also how he builds for the future. This was a theme that ran throughout the day. Water is scarce and even with more regulation, there is no guarantee there will be enough for everyone. Farmers want certainty as to the rules so they can plan, and many are already adapting and transitioning into new ventures to

> As an employee in a small business that has no direct relation to agriculture, it is important to acknowledge and remind all readers that without water there is no agriculture. Without agriculture, the entire economy of the Valley and Visalia would most likely collapse. It may sound far fetched and I hope I am never proven right. Instead, be grateful every time it rains and

say thank you to our local agricultural

Community Organizations To Benefit From Free Workshop Featuring Top Motivational Speaker



TULARE. CA-The United Way of Tulare County presenting national

motivational speaker and author, Matt Emerzian, in a special three-hour workshop especially for the staff of community-benefit organizations in Tulare, Kings, Fresno and Madera counties.

Set for May 11 from 1-4 p.m. in Visalia and offered at no charge, the workshop is part of UWTC's ongoing capacity building efforts aimed at helping nonprofit organizations become more effective, stable, and

Emerzian will be sharing his personal journey of losing himself in the world of music and Hollywood to finding meaning through service. The author and founder of "Every Monday Matters," Emerzian will take attendees through a process to strengthen their vision and bolster their ability to affect positive change within the organizations they work for and the communities they serve.

From boardrooms to classrooms to prisons, Emerzian is an in-demand public speaker with constant speaking engagements around the nation. He is committed to creating a new normal where individuals and organizations understand how much and why they matter. Emerzian's goal is to make a difference, change lives, and transform communities by connecting and unifying individuals and organizations through his "you matter" concept.

In addition to being an author and acclaimed speaker, Emerzian is the founder and CEO of Every Monday Matters, a syndicated columnist in over 400 newspapers and on Oprah Winfrey's website, a frequent TEDx Talk presenter, and also has a new book in the works.

The workshop will be held at the Visalia Marriott, and is part of UWTC's commitment to strengthen the skills of those who work in the community-benefit/nonprofit sector, while helping the organizations create positive change.

For more information, or to register for the free workshop, visit: www.unitedwaytc.org.

Trish Arnold Earns

Advisor Designation

Certified Plan Fiduciary

Trish Arnold, a Financial

Advisor at LPL Financial,

has obtained her Certified

Plan Fiduciary Advisor

(CPFA) designation.

Obtaining the designation

represents the culmination

of 13 years of experience,

the completion of a rigorous

educational program, and a commitment to

"I am proud to add the CPFA designation

to my professional credentials," said Arnold,

"The designation further demonstrates my

dedication and commitment to providing

objective retirement plan advice to my

Business Retirement Plan clients and supports

my duties as a 3(21) Fiduciary for their

■ LPL Financial

upholding a high ethical standard.

How a Passion Can Become a Dream Job

By July Hong YPN Steering Committee Member, Area Director of Operations - Sojourn Hospice



In 2008, when faced with the stark reality of losing my mother to cancer, I discovered a mission

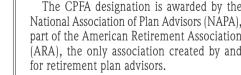
that I would commit my adult life to serving. After discovering that my mom had terminal liver cancer, we were overwhelmed with how we could best care for her at the end of her life. Do we take her to the hospital? Where else could she go? Are we even qualified to take care of her? I approached a friend of mine who was a nurse at Kaweah Delta at the time and she told me it might be best to call a hospice. So I opened the yellow pages to "Hospice" and started with the first one on the list. And for the last 5 days of my sweet Momma's life, we were able to care for her at home under the care of hospice nurses. There were no hospital monitors or dramatic flurry of action when she passed, just the peacefulness of the four walls of our home. At the age of 18, I couldn't grasp the full understanding of what hospice was or how it would impact the next eight years of my life.

I knew that in some way I wanted to give back and contribute to hospice, beyond financial donations. I knew my career wasn't going to be in nursing (I'm far too squeamish) but I knew I would talk to anyone who would listen about how amazing of a thing hospice was, so I committed to that. After starting a real estate business in 2013, I began to get involved in nonprofits and service clubs within our community. I quickly learned that networking could get me access to people who were in the medical field who knew more about hospice. And in 2014, I was approached by a Home Health and Hospice agency for a position in sales. I wasn't qualified to be a nurse, but I could certainly learn to sell this service that I was so passionate about. Additionally, I became a founding board member of The Open Arms Hospice House, a social model hospice home that will provide a home for end of life care. Today, I am the Area Director of Operations for Sojourn Hospice and every single day I get to talk about the incredible resource that hospice is and how 5 days changed the course

of my life, with the hope that I can impact some other 18 year old girl's life.

The question I get asked the most often by other young professionals is how they can get involved and give back to our community in a meaningful way. My initial response is always for them to find something that they are passionate about and interested in, because we are fortunate enough to live in a community where the ability to give back is nearly limitless. In a county with nearly 300 active nonprofits, the potential for young professionals to get engaged and connected is enormous. Don't be intimidated by involvement, the nonprofit community truly desires the input of young professionals and the skill sets we can uniquely bring to the table! Being able to find a successful career in an industry that I am wholly committed to is largely credited to my involvement in our community. So I encourage you to get involved, volunteer! Who knows, you might even be able to turn a passion into a dream job!





retirement plans."

(ARA), the only association created by and Arnold has been helping business retirement plans in the pursuit of retirement readiness for their employees for over





May 7-17, 2018

Budapest, Bratislava, Vienna, Dumstein, Passau, Regensburg, 4 course lunches & dinners, Complimentary WiFi, Concert performed onboard by local artists, Schonbrunn Palace, History of the Danube River, Culinary demonstration by the ship's chef

CALL FOR PRICING

FEATURES: ROUNDTRIP AIRFARE, AIRPORT TRANSFERS, 11 DAYS, 23 MEALS, 5 COUNTRIES, ENGLISH SPEAKING GUIDE, ACCOMMODATIONS ON THE MS EMERALD DYNASTY





BOOK YOUR TOUR BEFORE MAY 31, 2017 TO GET FREE AIRFARE

FOR PRICING OR REGISTRATION DETAILS CALL THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE at 559-734-5876 or visit



CHAMBE

VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 222 N. Garden St. Suite 300, Visalia

Visalia Rawhide

The Visalia Rawhide are excited to have kicked off their 71st season of professional baseball in downtown Visalia! The Rawhide are once again thankful to the local community for their continuous support year after year. And once again, the club has to thank the generosity of many local families who open their doors to Rawhide players as Host Families for the summer. Host Families play a critical role in the functionality of the Rawhide by giving the players a place to live while they join the community in Visalia.

Professional baseball players are always on the move, whether it be on the road to an away game or up and down the ranks of a minor league system, so it's difficult to find housing situations with leases flexible enough to fit their needs. Host Families are where the community steps in to help these young men on their journey to the Major Leagues. The bonds formed with the players are one-of-a-kind, with many host families receiving invitations to significant life events from the players later on in life.

Host families are still needed for this season! Any families interested in hosting a player are invited to contact Rawhide Assistant General Manager Charlie Saponara charlie@rawhidebaseball.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR PREMIER **INVESTORS**

CHAIRMANS SPONSOR:





PRESIDENT SPONSORS:





EXECUTIVE SPONSORS:

SinglePoint Outsourcing









DIRECTOR SPONSORS:























INVESTOR SPONSORS:

BEN-E-LECT Southern California Edison Lamp Liter Inn Central Valley Business Forms Visalia Marriott



Visalia Rescue Mission Hits the Hill

By: Ryan Stillwater **Director of Development**



"No one practices "no" politics. You either practice good politics or bad politics." This is the first nugget of wisdom we received from Al Oliver, who at the time two years ago, was the new Executive Director at Visalia Rescue Mission. Those words have rung true since then and were truer still while spending three

days last month at our nation's capital.

We had the opportunity to join representatives from 33 other rescue missions at an annual forum hosted by the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions, which has a total membership of 300. Each representative came with the same questions: "What do we need to know, and what do we need to do, to ensure we can continue to serve our guests to the best of our ability?" While the services offered vary with each mission, it was apparent our overall purpose in mission work is the same: to help the down and out in our communities. The means by which we are able to help varied greatly, with some missions accepting federal and state funding in one area or another.

Even so, in the words of AGRM president, John Ashman, "If money could fix poverty, the government would have already done that." In fact, a recent study by Baylor University, "Assessing the Faith-Based Response to Homelessness in America," revealed nearly 60% of emergency shelter beds for the homeless population in 11 major cities surveyed are provided by faith-based organizations. One mission representative said it well, "People don't become homeless when they run out of money, at least not right away. They become homeless when they run out of relationships."

We learned about a potential change to charitable deductions in the draft tax plan, and how these changes would affect non-profits like us. It's estimated those changes would reduce giving by between 4.5% and 9%, which for VRM, would result in between \$72,000 and \$144,000. If we combine that potential drop in giving with upcoming increases in our operational expenses — like minimum wage increases, as well as an additional 12-cents per gallon for gasoline, potential health care changes, and more — we could find ourselves

On our last day, we had the opportunity to communicate these concerns to our elected representatives in both houses of Congress. We did our best to practice good politics. We shared a video of our VRM graduates sharing their stories of loss and redemption, and we spoke to the potential changes in charitable deductions and their effect would on our ministries. We discussed the value of faith-based organizations and the areas where Housing and Urban Development (HUD), who we met with, and Health and Human Services (HHS) could practice good politics by collaborating more closely and seeing more of an impact in local communities — all while saving money.

There are many voices and concerns needing the attention of our nation's elected representatives, and at the end of the day we were just one small whisper in the cacophony that is DC. While VRM is intentionally increasing our involvement in these top-down conversations, we do so with the truth that while there are many resources focused on transition (homeless to housed), rescue missions like us across the country are equally focused on transformation. While an individual's spiritual and emotional wellbeing is less tangible than a roof and four walls, it is what lies beneath the surface that often requires the most attention...and resources.

Christmas at the Galt House and the Opryland Hotel

Join the Chamber Christmas at the Galt House and the Opryland Hotel tour which will take place December 3-10, 2017.

The tour will begin in Louisville where travelers will spend two nights at the beautiful Galt House Hotel. Travelers will enjoy dinner and entertainment at the Ladies for Liberty Dinner show featuring holiday swing and boogie-woogie melodies in a USO-inspired show. During the stay in Louisville, travelers will be able to stroll through the KaLightoscope Christmas display of towering luminaries depict-



ing the magic of Christmas. For those who love baseball, they will have the chance to tour the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory. Meals will also be provided at the Derby Dinner Playhouse and Patti's 1880's Settlement in Kentucky.

Next, travelers will make their way to Memphis for a "Musical Tour" where a local musician will guide them around the city. Next on the agenda is the opportunity to visit Elvis Presley's Graceland Mansion and a Memphis BBQ dinner. Travelers will also get the

chance to visit the Tennessee River Freshwater Pearl Farm. The third stop on the tour is two nights at the fabulous Opryland Resort Hotel where travelers will experience Opryland's traditional ICE! Show, featuring hand carved ice sculptures crafted by international artists, and a stroll through the hall of Christmas Trees to shop for gifts and treasures at the Holiday Craft and Art Show. The tour will be capped off by reserved seats to the Opryland's Diamond Rio

Christmas Dinner Show. Christmas at the Galt House and the Opryland Hotel includes airport shuttle service to and from the Fresno Airport and roundtrip airfare. The tour will last 8 days and includes 12 meals. All hotel accommoda-



tions are 3 and 4 star rated and the tour will have a dedicated professional tour guide. The cost for the tour is \$3,474 (double occupancy) or \$4,562 for a single traveler.

For more information about the Chamber travel program go to



We interrupt your reading for this shameless bit of self promotion:

Call us. Watch your business grow. Thank you.

For ads that get right to the point and marketing that really works, call us.



WEBSITES CORPORATE ID ADVERTISEMENTS CAMPAIGNS SIGNAGE SOCIAL MEDIA

559.739.1747 • DMIAGENCY.COM