



Business Update

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **NOV. 6:** Travel Presentation:
The Azores, Bluegrass Country & Albuquerque
Time: Noon
Location: City of Visalia Administration Building
- **NOV. 12:** Government Affairs Committee Meeting
Time: 7 a.m.
Location: Buckman-Mitchell Office
- **NOV. 14:** YPN Monthly Meet Up
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: BarrelHouse Brewing Co.
- **NOV. 19:** Business After Hours- Hosted by Prestige Assisted Living
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: Prestige Assisted Living



- **Discover Croatia, Slovenia and the Adriatic Coast**
April 23–May 4, 2020
- **The Azores: Jewels of Portugal**
Aug. 21–30, 2020
- **Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta**
Oct. 9-14, 2020
- **Israel: A Journey of Faith**
Nov. 2-10, 2020
- **Thanksgiving in New York City**
Nov. 23–27, 2020

Collette Vacations, Mayflower Tours, CistlInc

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

Visalia Chamber of Commerce
222 N. Garden St., Suite 300
Visalia, CA 93291
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



News of national store closings leads to conversations about retail as an industry dying. In the last year and a half, nearly 50 companies announced that they were closing, shutting locations, or entering bankruptcy. What follows is a panicked public trying to figure out if their local location will close, community members will lose jobs and vacant space will sit waiting for a new concept. The news adds to the idea that retail isn't healthy or a viable industry. But is that the case?

A critical look at retail in Visalia and a different picture emerges. A thriving regional commercial district, downtown retail, and a mall at record occupancy rates paint a picture different than the conversation happening on a national level. Add that many locations are ranked in the top 10 most profitable locations within California and the conversation about a dying retail industry begins to look very different on a local level. What makes Visalia different? Why does Visalia routinely prove to be a profitable location for local and national retailers?

National retailers thrive in Visalia. The publicly available sales rankings for the state of California quickly shows that many national retailers located in Visalia are among the top-grossing stores in the state. Target and Ulta are in the top 20 percent, Walmart and Starbucks in the top 15 percent, O'Reilly and Harbor Freight in the top 10 percent and our Ross and Lowes are in the top 5 percent for gross sales receipts the State of California. National chain restaurants

do well here too. Applebee's, Red Robin and the Habit are all in the top 15 percent within the state. Most native Visalians find that news surprising.

Locals often underestimate our buying power, level of disposable income and advantage the Central Valley has for national retailers. The cost of living in the Central Valley is considerably lower than in other parts of the state. As recently reported, dollars in our community go further than in other areas of the state. This allows our neighbors to go out to dinner, fund home improvement projects and buy that pair of new jeans more frequently than those in communities to the north or south. Additionally, our location gives retailers an advantage. Communities to the north or the south run together. One may live in one community but buy from another community. Retailers also have more locations north and south diffusing purchasing over various locations. Visalia is the regional shopping district for many area communities. We concentrate our buying power locally.

Rick Feder, General Manager of the Visalia Mall, knows there is more to our local retail success than our buying power and our central valley location. The Visalia Mall reports a record mid-90s percent occupancy rate, an occupancy rate that would make other retail mall locations envious. For Feder, the secret is finding brands and retailers that our local consumers demand and pairing that with innovative initiatives to drive traffic. "Today, successful retail locations utilize the live work and play model. Consumers are looking for entertainment options when shopping" Feder said about industry trends in retail real estate.

Food Truck Friday's, Taco Truck Challenge, and a host of other community events have driven traffic in new and exciting ways for the Visalia Mall. Feder knows that a consumer will come for a special event and stay to shop. Initially, restaurants within the Mall weren't sure about perceived competition from food trucks. Quickly they reported increased sales as consumers visiting food trucks wanted to come, sit down to eat, have a drink and enjoy their air conditioning. Retail outlets saw an increase in traffic too. For consumers their walk through the mall highlighted new stores and a win for Feder and his team focused on making sure to drive foot traffic.

Continued on pg. 2

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The value of shopping local

What is the real value of shopping local? In an age when buying groceries, clothes, electronic equipment, even cars can be purchased through your phone, have we lost sight of the value of local shopping?

Growing up a favorite holiday tradition was going holiday shopping with my Grandma, Aunts, and Mom. Thanksgiving meant Black Friday shopping and Christmas was a prelude to the after Christmas sales. Each holiday we'd gather to develop our "plan of attack" figuring out which store to go to first, last, and which breakfast and lunch places we'd stop at along the way. I have vivid memories of my Aunts trying on shoes and my Grandma giggling as she tried on sunglasses. My mom was a running calculator keeping track of what we'd saved. She has a nose for bargains and always seems to find diamonds in the rough. We would inevitably run into a friend and neighbor swapping tips on finding the best deals.

Beyond the memories and tradition, our family's shopping trips did something none of us really thought about at the time. Our shopping trips helped pave the local roads, literally. The sales tax on our purchases provided funding for our local fire and police services. Our purchases made sure our neighbor's shoe store stayed open and she and her employees had a job. It meant local businesses could keep their doors open and our local community thrived. Frankly, it meant that we had a local community.



Gail Zurek
Visalia Chamber
President & CEO

Buying local is more than just a phrase. It's a way of life that has ensured Visalia thrives now and well into the future. It means local businesses can be locally owned. It means local businesses can afford to reinvest in our community. Practically speaking it means sales tax funds the city's general fund allowing beautiful parks, paved roads and a first responder force that keeps everyone safe. It means a local entrepreneur can find success here. It means the American Dream is alive and well in Visalia.

Don't get me wrong, I love my phone and I've used it to go shopping. I've sat at a flag football game and ordered groceries to be picked up on the way home. And I think

I've got a personal relationship with several Grubhub drivers. Local retailers have utilized this important tool and I'm glad they have (even if my waistline isn't happy about it!). But my phone doesn't take the place of walking into my local hardware store with the latest broken do-dad and having someone know how to help me fix it. My phone doesn't help me find the perfect birthday gift for my hard-to-shop-for niece the way Michelle Wiebe and her staff do at Pacific Treasures on Main Street. I can't imagine a Visalia without local shops. The only way to ensure they're here is to support them. Spend your money here, refer a friend, and share when you have had that amazing customer experience that happens here in Visalia.

This holiday season I hope to bump into many of you as we support our local businesses and, in turn, support Visalia.

VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS YOUR



Catalyst for Change



Community Convener



Champion for Business

Continued From pg. 1

The story of retail success in Visalia is not just one of national retailers. Locally owned retail thrives in our community. Ashoori & Co Jewelers recently celebrated 40 years in business. That continued level of success comes from a deliberate and unwavering focus on customers. Michael Ashoori, Ashoori & Co Jewelers CFO and third generation gemologist says he trains new employees to focus on customer experience even over making the sale. Ashoori knows that a positive experience means a customer will return and a lousy one will cost future sales. While much of their business is the same as it was 40 years ago, Ashoori reports that because of technology, consumers now more than ever expect quick access to information, products and expect a quick turn-around time. They have responded by having 3D rendering of pieces designed in 24 hours and building pieces exactly how a consumer wants it.

Beyond customer service, Ashoori says being a locally owned company means they contribute and give back to Visalia in a deep and meaningful ways that customers recognize and appreciate. Ashoori & Co have supported many local non profit and community causes. "Strong local businesses are the back bones of the community. Anytime the community needs something, a sponsorship, donation, or a helping hand, "local businesses are the ones that step up!" Ashoori stated.

As consumers utilize smart phones to make purchases, both Feder and Ashoori were asked about the effect of online sales for local retailers. Both acknowledge that online shopping has changed retail but say it isn't the threat locally as some perceive. Feder noted that national retailers are augmenting brick and mortar sales with online channels. Now if your favorite retailer is out of an item when you visit the store, within a few clicks and a clerk will have it delivered to your house. Other retailers are utilizing brick and mortar locations as pick up spots for online purchases driving traffic to local locations. While online sales are important, they represent less than a quarter of all retail sales. As Ashoori reminds us, relationships are still key in a buying process, particularly for something as personal and important as jewelry.

While Visalia will undoubtedly face more news of national retailers reorganizing and changing, retail in Visalia will remain strong as retailers focus on customers and Visalian support our local retailers.

About this publication ...

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Aspen Dental
3221 S. Mooney Blvd | (559) 754-1901



Bello Vita Venue
4211 W. Goshen Ave | (559) 372-9822



Central Valley Regional Center
5441 W. Cypress Ave | (559) 738-2222



Visalia Mall - Hibbett Sports
2031 S. Mooney Blvd | (559) 733-3898



San Joaquin Valley Homes - Ashton Park
4908 W Flagstaff Ave | (559) 732-2660



Studio Bling
114 S Stevenson St | (559) 429-8949

COMMUNITY LOYAL MEMBERS

A thriving community starts here!



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

New

Business Connector Members:
■ ReNew Visalia

Renewing

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

Visionary Members:

■ Family HealthCare Network

Cornerstone Members:

- Brain Balance Achievement Center of Visalia*
- Fairfield Inn Visalia/Sequoia Gateway*
- Ryans Place Restaurant*

Small Business Members:

- HNH Nut Co.*
- Lagomarsino Group
- Martin & Martin Properties LLC*
- San Joaquin Valley Homes

Business Connector Nonprofit Members

- AMVETS Department of California*

Small Business Nonprofit Members:

- Family Builders Foster Family Agency*
- Visalia Lions Band Review

*Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.

HEALTHCARE NOTE

Quality HealthCare for the Communities We Serve



By Kerry Hydash

Annually, the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) provides Quality Improvement Awards that recognize the highest performing health centers nationwide, as well as those health centers that have made significant quality improvement gains from the previous year. Family HealthCare Network (FHCN) was pleased to be recognized by HRSA for its achievement in overall quality, efficiency, and the value of the health care services offered. This year FHCN was recognized in five categories including:

Health Center Quality Leader recognizing achievement in the best overall clinical performance among all health centers.

Access Enhancer recognizing health centers that increased the total number of patients served and the number of patients receiving comprehensive services.

Health Disparities Reducer recognizing health

centers that met or exceeded the Healthy People 2020 goals or made at least a 10% improvement across different racial/ethnic groups.

Advancing HIT for Quality recognizing health centers that utilized at least five Health Information Technology (HIT) services and/or telehealth services.

Patient Centered Health Home (PCHH) Recognition for health centers with one or more PCHH delivery sites.

Of the 1,273 health centers that received awards nationally, FHCN received the second highest award, acknowledging the organizations level of excellence. Additionally, Family HealthCare Network is now the fifth highest ranked Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in the nation, and ranked third in California for the number of patients served. Last year, FHCN served nearly 185,000 unique users from Tulare, Kings, and Fresno Counties.

Family HealthCare Network takes pride in providing affordable and quality healthcare in the communities we serve. Our communities can have the confidence that when they walk into any of our health centers, that they will receive great service and great care. The recognition is an acknowledgment of the commitment of our staff and professional providers serving our communities.





Tulare County Library partnered with Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias to encourage young people to form good reading habits through creative outlets like the creation of the Jolly Rancher Reading Club.

Congratulations to Habitat for Humanity of Tulare & Kings Counties, their ReStore recently hit a milestone. They have sold over \$350,000 in items!

Visit Visalia announced Nellie Freeborn as the new Executive Director. Congratulations!

The Tulare County Sheriff's Department partnered with the LA Clippers to offer a free basketball clinic for 150 TCSO Junior Explorers. The coaching staff provided uniforms for the children and invited them down to LA to attend a professional basketball game.

The Tulare Outlets celebrated the



beginning of Fall with a special event that unveiled Big Jack! For the entire month of October, the Outlets continued to host various community events including line dancing, wine tasting, a pumpkin night, and Dia de los Muertos.

Thank you to AMVETS! 20+ AMVETS volunteered at this year's Oktoberfest. They have volunteered at Oktoberfest for many years, and the event could not be successful without their support. See you next year!



Wonder Valley Ranch Resort recently celebrated the grand opening of their Ropes Course. Congratulations!

Happy 90th Anniversary to Hydrite Chemical Co.! They recently hosted a 90th Anniversary celebration for their team, members and the community.

Family Services of Tulare County raised nearly \$30,000 through their fifth annual Purple Party. Proceeds benefit Karen's House and their transitional housing program. Congratulations!

California Dairies (CDI) recently announced the promotion of Phil Girard as senior vice president and chief financial officer (CFO). As CFO, he will oversee the cooperatives' financial, accounting, treasury, information technology and risk management functions. Congratulations!

The Carlos Vieira Foundation welcomed



over 900 attendees to their free Autism Day BBQ Visalia for families in the community living with autism. The free event featured a fun-filled day in a safe, loving environment for children with autism.

Arts Visalia debuted a new show, "Handweavers of the Valley: A 2019 Cultural Exhibition". An opening reception took place on October 4 and the exhibit ran through October 25.

Congratulations to Momentum Broadcasting's Sales Manager Amy Kehmeyer Moore! She was one of eight finalist and winner of the Radio Wayne Sales Manager of the Year award. The annual award is presented by RadioInk magazine, a national radio trade publication.



Thank you to JP Electric & Solar! As a sponsor of this year's Oktoberfest, 4 lucky winners got to attend Oktoberfest for free.

THE LAW AT WORK

GUBLER & ABBOTT ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Provided by: Brett T. Abbott,
Gubler & Abbott

Most companies have employee handbooks. Some are extensive and regularly updated, while some are just a few pages long and haven't been revised in decades. Some have been carefully reviewed by HR experts or labor law attorneys, while others have been cobbled together from the internet. No matter what form an employee handbook takes, there are some potential pitfalls regarding handbooks that employers should know.

Advantages of using an employee handbook

Handbooks commit employers to deal with situations in specific ways. They provide for consistency of treatment and reduce the risk of discrimination and retaliation claims. Employee handbooks also reduce confusion about unstated policies and benefits – less confusion results in fewer lawsuits and morale problems. Handbooks can help eliminate arguments of "arbitrary termination" and can assist in resolving complaints. Perhaps most importantly, employee handbooks aid new employees in understanding a company's policies and culture.

Concerns regarding the use of employee handbooks

Despite the numerous benefits of implementing an employee handbook, there are some possible concerns employers should be aware of. If an employer fails to abide by policies provided for in a handbook, it may be more likely to be found liable to an aggrieved employee. Employee handbooks are fodder for employee rights attorneys who look for progressive discipline policies that have



not been followed or for other deviations from the handbook. There can also be some significant time and expense involved in creating an accurate, thorough employee handbook. Handbooks also require updating as employment laws and company policies change.

Preserving the at-will relationship

The biggest concern with employee handbooks is that the handbook will alter the "at-will" nature of employment. California courts have held that policies contained in employee handbooks can create contractual obligations (*Foley v. Interactive Data Corp.* (1988) 47 Cal.3d 654, 681).

To avoid this unwanted change in the "at-will" status of employees, many employers add disclaimers that the handbook does not create a legally enforceable agreement. At-will disclaimers should be prominent – on the cover or first page of the handbook. The language should state clearly that the handbook is not a contract with employees, and it expresses only "guidelines" regarding the company's "policies." Any disclaimer should also expressly state that, with the exception of the at-will policy, all other policies in the handbook can be modified by the employer at any time without a written revision of the handbook.

Conclusion

This article is not meant to provide an exhaustive analysis of employee hand-

books. Rather, the goal of this article is to illustrate the benefits, and potential drawbacks, associated with them. While a thorough, accurate employee handbook does take time to create and modify, employers usually find the benefits far exceed the effort involved.

This article is for education and information purposes only; it 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 (brett@thecalifornialawyers.com).

For specific employment law advice or other legal assistance, contact Gubler & Abbott (559) 625-9600, 1110 N. Chinowth St., Visalia, CA 93291 (www.thecalifornialawyers.com).



THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS

Putting on the
GLITZ

39TH CHRISTMAS TREE AUCTION

Visalia Convention Center
12.6.19

Tickets:
www.visaliachamber.org



MEMBERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

AspenDental / simply easier™

Name: Erica Miranda,
Lead Dental Assistant
Company: Aspen Dental

Provide a brief overview of your business.

We love a challenging mouth, and we treat every patient like our mother! We don't just want to treat your mouth; we want to listen to it! As dental professionals, the last thing we want to do is sugar coat anything, and we want you to know there is a solution to every mouth! In our opinion, every mouth deserves a second chance.

News to Share? List the latest awards you've received, new products your business has launched, etc. (Pictures welcomed!)

Nominate your Hero! We are so excited to share this with the community! We want everyone to have a part in recognizing someone special to them and give them a chance at a new smile! We are accepting nominations until November 1st! Contact our office for more information: (559) 754-1901.

Tell us something interesting about your business or product(s).

Although Aspen has almost 800 offices nationwide, we are only the 3rd in California! Our brand may be new to our community, but our employees are not! Almost everyone that works for us is considered a central valley native and has been in the dental field for quite some time! Our team is stellar, and we are so lucky to have them!

How does your company get involved in the local community?

DAY OF SERVICE is our big one! We have a day of free dental care for veterans once a year as a company (normally in July), but since we missed that this year while our offices in California were under construction, we are doing the Nominate Your Hero program instead! We didn't want to leave out our Veterans in the Central Valley!

The best part of working for your company is?

We have the best support system in Aspen, a support system that allows us to be involved with those around us. We want to make sure that everyone knows our culture and that it is visible by how supported and appreciated we feel by our company!

How has the Chamber and/or the Ambassador Program helped you and/or your business?

The Chamber has done nothing but incredible things for us so far! We love the events and the networking. We are so excited to partner with other local organizations to make sure the community gets the care that they need!

Top thing you wish Visalia knew about your business?

We want people to know that we understand that walking through the door is hard and taking care of yourself is hard. Taking that step to be the best version of yourself is not an easy one, and we are here to partner with you to give you your smile back. No judgement here!



RANSOMWARE

It's Not Scary If You're Prepared



Provided by TechCare360

Ransomware has been a hot topic in the news lately. Whether you are a business owner or home user, ransomware is scary and stressful. So, what is it? How can you protect your data from this powerful form of theft? Ransomware is simply a computer program that infects your computer. Once it takes hold of your computer, it encrypts/locks your information. Typically, the cyber criminals will then ask for money to unlock your files. The average cost of unlocking your files is around \$4,300. Ouch! This can stop a business in its tracks. If you can't access your files, how are you going to serve your clients? The following steps are some ways you can prepare for a ransomware attack.

1. Training

Educating yourself or your employees on how to avoid a ransomware incident is one of the best ways to protect your data. The most common way cyber criminals infect a computer is through infected emails. These are not easy to detect without knowing what to look for. One way that cyber criminals hide, is using a compromised email account of a coworker or vendor to carry out the attack. It might say something like, "Could you please pay the attached invoice?" This is a normal request in the business world, and many click on the link without much thought.

Being able to spot clues is key to protecting your data. The biggest question you can ask yourself is, "Is this email really from this person and do they usually send me this type of attachment or link?" If you are suspicious, call the person to ask if they



A new organization will fall victim to ransomware every 14 seconds in 2019, and every 11 seconds by 2021.

SOURCE: CYBER SECURITY VENTURES

sent you the email. You can sometimes find clues in the contents of the email. Are there misspellings or are there unusual word choices? Is it a strange file type that you are not used to working with?

There are great training services like KnowBe4 where you learn how to detect false emails and much more. KnowBe4 also provides tests to practice what you have learned. They do this by sending you test, malicious emails that are actually safe to help hone your new skills.

2. Backups

Despite your best efforts to avoid ransomware attacks, they do get through from time to time. Having an offsite backup service for your files is a

great way to beat ransomware. If your computer gets infected, you can simply restore your files once the infection is removed. However, it can take time to restore your files.

3. Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

MFA is a software that requires multiple sources of proof of your identity before allowing you to login. Adding several layers of security makes it difficult for cyber criminals to crack. It's like having multiple types of locks on a door.

Implementing these tips will help keep your information safe. You will also get to practice your detective skills on incoming emails. Who needs Sherlock Holmes?



HOW CAN THE CHAMBER HELP ME FIND OUR NEXT EMPLOYEE?

As a member of the Visalia Chamber of Commerce you can post jobs to our job board! Have a position you would like us to share? Send it my way: jena@visaliachamber.org. Also, we have great employment services agencies as members, and I know they would LOVE to help fill that position!

Have more questions on how to leverage your membership benefits? Contact Jena today!

LEADERSHIP VISALIA

Leadership Visalia explores local government



By George Rodriguez, Principal Ivanhoe Elementary School

The Leadership Visalia 2019-2020 cohort, met on Friday, October 11, 2019, for a day session that featured overviews of the Visalia community and local and state government. Congressman Devin Nunes, R-U.S. Representative of the 22nd Congressional District, greeted the class and spoke of his efforts to support constituents. His office aides' citizens in issues relating to Social Security, immigration, tourism, trade, and health care; to name a few. In addition, his service center in Visalia, and satellite center in Clovis, directs citizens on how to find

pertinent information at the local, state and federal levels. When asked about his legacy, he stated, "...it's about the common people you help out."

A history of Visalia was then presented to the class, beginning with a question, "Did you know Visalia is older than Canada?" Impressive statistics included the first indoor mall in California was built in 1964, in Visalia; our city has the #5 Lowe's in the country; and the #2 Habit. According to the last census, Visalia, generates a yearly revenue of \$1.87 billion dollars a year and visitors spend \$430 million annually.

Students then met with Mayor Bob Link, Tulare County Board Supervisor Amy Shuklian, and Trevor Lewis with the office of Assemblyman Devon Mathis, R-State 26th District. Each spoke of their respective



roles in politics, political experience and current issues with the city, county and state. When asked what advice they would give a citizen who intends to run for political office, the common response was - get involved. Citizens have many opportunities to volunteer at the city, county and state

levels. Finally, the cohort was led by City Manager Randy Groom and Mayor Bob Link in a mock City Council meeting. Members of Leadership Visalia served as the Mayor, city council members and posed as conflicting citizens in a staged Public Hearing item.

CITY UPDATE

Working to manage our most precious resource

By City of Visalia Staff



While much of the state of California received adequate rainfall last year, the Central Valley

is still in a severe state of overdraft. With growing needs and state mandates to meet, the City of Visalia is a key part of the Mid-Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency, a group of local agencies working together to manage our most precious resource,

groundwater. "The City of Visalia receives one hundred percent of our water from groundwater," shares Nathan Garza, City of Visalia Conservation Technician. "Protecting and conserving our limited water resources is imperative if we hope to prevent water from becoming scarce and ultimately, our sources depleted."

To this end, Visalia's Stage 1 of the City's Water Conservation Ordinance has been revised. Effective November 4, 2019, the City's Ordinance now prohibits the overseeding of lawns.

Stage 1 of the Water Conservation Ordinance allows Visalia addresses to turn

irrigation systems on three days per week during the months of March through November and one day per week watering during the months of December through February.

What days and times can you water? Even addresses can water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and odd addresses water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Watering must take place before 8 a.m. and after 6 p.m. and is prohibited within 48 hours after measurable rainfall (1/4").

Highlights of Stage 1 of the Water Conservation Ordinance include:

No overseeding of any kind. New Plant

Establishment permits are available for new plantings. All runoff is prohibited. Fines remain the same at \$125, \$250, and \$625. A warning is generally given before the first citation. The first citation fee may be waived by attending a water conservation class offered by the City.

For questions on the City of Visalia Water Conservation Ordinance, contact the Natural Resource Division at 713-4531 or nronline@visalia.city. For more information and tips on water conservation, visit www.GoGreenVisalia.com.

Tips for water leakage prevention at your business



Provided by Karen Gross, State Farm Agent

How can you prevent business water damage?

Water leakage damage in your place of business can be a devastating blow: Not only can it cost you quite a bit to clean up, but it can also slow—or even shut down—business operations.

Whether it's managing the distraction, sending employees home for the cleanup, or losing equipment and records, water damage will inevitably cause your business to take a hit. Here are some strategies to help prevent

water damage from happening.

The Usual Suspects of Water Leakage

Determining where water might come from can go a long way in preventing water damage in the workplace. Here are some possible water sources to investigate:

- Appliances: Common sources for water damage include the water heater, clothes washers, dishwashers, refrigerators, and air conditioning units. The age of an appliance is a major factor; over time, appliances that produce condensation often rust, increasing the chances of a leak. Water supply hoses on washing machines and dishwashers also may develop leaks. Hundreds of gallons of water can escape, resulting in significant damage to the building and property inside.

- Pipes and drains: Plumbing systems are susceptible to clogs and stoppages, which can lead to overflowing appliances such as toilets, sinks, and washing machines. Grease buildup in kitchen sinks and roots in sewer lines are some of the reasons for clogs and stoppages. In the winter, pipes can freeze, burst, and damage the building and the occupants' personal property. A 1/8-inch crack in a pipe can release up to 250 gallons of water a day.

- Roofing: Deteriorated, missing, or damaged roofing materials, and ice dams can allow water to enter through the roof and damage ceilings, walls, and floors. Inadequate attic insulation and ventilation can speed up a roof's decay and contribute to the formation of ice dams. Exposure to wind, snow, ice, rain, and foot traffic can also affect a roof's ability to keep water out.

Other roof debris such as leaves, branches, and moss can also prevent water from properly flowing or draining off a roof.

Preventing Water Leakage: Building Interior

Look over your equipment; if you see something that worries you, it's probably time to get involved. Here are some things you can do.

- Make sure hose connections are secure on water supply lines to washing machines, ice makers, dishwashers, and other appliances that use water.

- Re-caulk and re-grout around sinks, showers, and tubs. Leaking shower pans and loose or missing tiles should be repaired.

- Check and replace washing machine hoses every 3-5 years as part of a proactive maintenance program. Sooner if there are signs of cracking, bulging, or other deterioration. Consider replacing traditional reinforced rubber hoses with stainless steel braided hoses, for increased durability and longevity. For additional peace of mind, consider a stainless steel braided hose with a built-in auto-shutoff mechanism.

- Follow the recommended maintenance procedures for all appliances and equipment. This includes periodically draining a portion of the water out of the water heater to flush out the sediment in the bottom of the tank. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Tankless water heaters also need regular maintenance and servicing as well as water softener and water filtering systems.

- Regular maintenance by a qualified HVAC contractor will help keep air conditioner pan drain lines clear of deposits that can clog the line.

- When the weather turns cold, a trickle of water from both hot and cold faucets may help prevent frozen pipes. Another good idea is to open cabinet doors to allow heat to get to pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls.

- Insulate water pipes that are exposed to freezing temperatures or drafts, such as those located in garages and basements, to help reduce the chance of leaks from frozen pipes.

Preventing Water Leakage: Building Exterior

Water can also come from outside sources. Do you think you're at risk? If so, here are some steps to consider:

- Hire a professional roofing contractor to promptly repair deteriorated or damaged roofing materials.
- Gutters, eaves, and downspouts should be free of debris. This will allow water to drain freely. Downspouts should extend away from the building to carry water away from the foundation.

- Adding insulation and ventilation in the attic can extend the life of the roof and reduce the chance of ice dams that can cause water to back up under roofing. The insulation should be in good shape and attic vents clear.

- Most insulation materials can last more than 50 years, as long as they are installed and maintained well. Their thickness and material type can impact their effectiveness. Adding or replacing insulation may be needed to gain a higher efficiency, especially in colder climates. Improper installation, moisture, UV rays, and disturbance can all negatively impact the effectiveness of insulation.

- If your building has outdoor hose connections, remove hoses from hose bibs in the fall and turn off the water supply to hose bib connections to help minimize the chance of burst pipes due to freezing.

Hardware That Can Help Prevent Business Water Damage

To help keep an eye on these or other trouble spots, you may want to consider installing a commercial water leak detection system. Leak detection systems can be either active or passive.

- Active leak detection systems: These commercial leak detection systems usually generate some type of alarm, but also can stop the water flow. They feature some form of shutoff valve and a means to determine that a leak is occurring. Most devices use moisture sensors to detect a leak. Other systems utilize a flow sensor and a timer to determine that something is leaking and the water needs to be turned off. An active leak detection system can operate only for an individual appliance or control a whole property.

- Passive leak detection systems: These commercial leak detection systems, also called 'water alarms,' are intended to alert you to a possible water leak. They generally sound an audible alarm tone; some may also feature a flashing light. Passive systems are frequently battery-operated, stand-alone units. They are inexpensive and easy to install. Some simply sit on the floor, while others may be wall mounted. A moisture sensor is located on the bottom of the unit and activates the alarm when it becomes wet. Battery-operated devices need to be tested regularly, and the batteries should be replaced on a periodic basis.

The information in this article was obtained from various sources not associated with State Farm®. While we believe it to be reliable and accurate, we do not warrant the accuracy or reliability of the information. These suggestions are not a complete list of every loss control measure. The information is not intended to replace manuals or instructions provided by the manufacturer or the advice of a qualified professional. Nor is it intended to effect coverage under our policy. State Farm makes no guarantees of results from use of this information.

Karen Gross is a local State Farm Agent; License #0C36140, NMLS #139716. For more information she can be reached at: 1325 W. Main St. Visalia CA 93291, (559) 625-8700, karen@myagentsgross.com. Neither State Farm nor its agents provide tax or legal advice. Please consult your own adviser regarding your particular circumstances.

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CALENDAR - NOVEMBER 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 City Council Meeting 7:00 pm City Hall	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Government Affairs Committee Meeting 7:00am, Buckman-Mitchell Office	13	14 YPN Meet Up Barrelhouse Brewing, 5:30pm	15	16
17	18 City Council Meeting 7:00 pm City Hall	19 Business After Hours Mixer Prestige Assisted Living 5:30pm	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

THANK YOU TO OUR PREMIER MEMBERS: CHAMPION:



VISIONARY:



REGIONAL LEADERS:



KEYSTONE:



CORNERSTONE:

CIGNA, CSET, E.D.I.S., Lamp Litter Inn, M. Green and Company, Naked Nut Southern California Edison

MEDIA PARTNERS:



VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

VUSD students and staff share their thanks

By Tamara Ravalin, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent

In recognition of Thanksgiving, this month we share "thank you notes" from students, teachers and principals. I hope you enjoy their thoughts, and perhaps they will bring to mind your own school experiences and memories and those special teachers who helped mold you into the person you are today.

On a personal note, I thank the business community that so graciously supports our Linked Learning Academies: providing career awareness, job shadowing and internship opportunities. We are thankful for your help as we work together to create



a strong workforce of the future.

A LIFETIME OF THANKS

As a student at Royal Oaks Elementary, Divisadero Middle School, and Mt. Whitney High School, I experienced caring adults who made it their life's work to educate their students, but even more importantly, to make their students better people. The knowledge I gained prepared me to earn a political science degree from UCLA and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Pacific, McGeorge School of Law. I returned to Visalia, where I practiced law and earned a multiple subject credential, which allowed me to teach and, ultimately, become a principal. I now share my experiences with fellow VUSD students to let them know it is possible to do so much with the education that starts in Visalia. In doing so, I get to build relationships with students that will, hopefully, last a lifetime.

THANKFUL TO LEARN TOGETHER

Charter Home School Academy staff is thankful for the amazing opportunity to teach students and parents weekly. In a classroom setting, Charter Home's outstanding teachers model reading and math strategies for parents to use at home with their child.

SECOND LANGUAGE, SECOND CHANCE



I wanted to improve my education, so I came back to school to learn English. It's amazing! And the classes are free. I'm thankful to be studying at Visalia Adult School. Furthermore, I have an excellent teacher. Her name is Sarah Motola. I'm thankful to have her because she helps me a lot. She does her job with passion, and it's reflected in us.

ROSA OLMOS, STUDENT

Willow Glen Elementary School is thankful for our Warrior Leadership Council. Students created and put up posters around the campus and tied yellow ribbons to highlight the character trait of respect.



ONE STEP AT A TIME

I am thankful for Ms. Stiff, because she helps me understand math, step by step. Idalla Hernandez, Ridgeview Middle School

BRIDGE-BUILDING CONVERSATIONS

In all my activities at El Diamante, I am exceptionally grateful for the opportunity to create the All4theMiners: Coffee with Carmen Podcast. I have been able to have conversations with people I may never have talked to otherwise. Thank you to my ASB advisor Ruby McBride, the amazing interviewees and the amazing listeners who care enough to better understand their fellow Miners. I am forever grateful.

Carmen Gallegos
THANKFUL FOR THE FIRE

I spent two years in foster care, moving homes, schools and towns. Because I was always moving, my skills were low. When I came to Sequoia High School, I felt ashamed. My homeroom teacher asked me the question: what is your plan after high school? When I told her I was clueless, she had a determined look on her face – a look I've never seen on anyone's face before. She wanted to help me. She told me I should feel that I can be successful. She told me I had a fire in me that only needed fuel to rise. I then felt nothing could stop me. As long as I have a plan, I am heading only up.

Signed, A thankful Sequoia High School student
THANKFUL FOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING!

We are thankful that VUSD encourages collaboration. We are especially thankful for our Professional Learning Community (PLC) members who work together to plan lessons and activities that foster learning. We work through goals and learn from one other. We learn how to support students who are struggling. And, we learn how to use enrichment activities to keep the kids who "got it" engaged. Thank you to our PLC teams and our Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA).

Marla Bueno, Principal
Goshen Elementary School

VUSD STAFF MEMBERS

How do we measure our thanks? VUSD staff members are thankful each school day for the improvements made possible with the community's support of Measures A and E.

Measure E made Ridgeview Middle School possible, and Measure A will make possible the fifth high school. In addition, both voter-approved bond measures funded improvements to campuses District-wide, including flooring, roofing, safety, accessibility, science labs, band rooms, technology and more.

Thank you, Visalia, for supporting kids and campuses.

Signed,
Thankful VUSD staff

100 REASONS TO BE THANKFUL

One year ago, Neighborhood Church staff members came up with the idea of a soccer league specifically for Houston Elementary School. The league was launched in late August, in collaboration with VUSD, and now has more than 100 students, from both the church and the school. Church members provide a soccer uniform for any student in need and help to fund the equipment. The volunteer coaches are from the school and the church, and the kids are having a blast. Thank you, Neighborhood Church!

TRAVEL PRESENTATION 11.6.19



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THE AZORES - JEWELS OF PORTUGAL August 21 - 30, 2020

BLUEGRASS COUNTRY & THE SMOKY MOUNTAINS September 17 - 25, 2020

ALBUQUERQUE BALLOON FIESTA October 9 - 14, 2020

