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Business Update

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

UPCOMING EVENTS

- JUNE 9, 2015**
Government Affairs Meeting
Buckman-Mitchell Office
7:15-8:15 am
- JUNE 10, 2015**
Romance of the Rhine & Mosel
Slide Show Presentation
Visalia Chamber Office
222 N. Garden, #300
12-1 pm
- JUNE 18, 2015**
Annual Awards Celebration
Visalia Convention Center
6-9:30 pm
- JUNE 30, 2015**
Business After Hours Mixer
Hosted by:
Visalia Chamber of Commerce
222 N. Garden, Suite 300
5:30-7:30 pm

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Take time to say 'Thank You'

The manager looked stunned. "You want to file a," he looked around and said "compliment?" The young woman with small kids in tow explained that she thought a compliment was just as important as a complaint. She wanted her kids to look for the good things people did and not always be quick to point out the mistakes. The manager made note of the employee's performance and thanked the woman for going the extra step. As the woman left he explained to her, and what seemed to be the entire store, that most customers typically don't go out of their way to say thanks or compliment an employee. Why don't we say thank you more? Why is it easier to point out a short coming rather than thank an employee, manager, and business owner who did something right?



Gail Zurek
President & CEO
Visalia Chamber
of Commerce

We expect great service, especially in Visalia. Our community is full of amazing examples of great locally-owned businesses that make Visalia special. From small home-based businesses to large international companies, business in Visalia is different. We all have our favorites. I'm willing to bet we all have stories about local businesses making a difference in big and small ways. When was the last time you pointed out specifically what makes these businesses great? When was the last time you filed a compliment?

The young woman's point was not lost on me. A compliment is just as important, dare I say even more valuable, than a complaint. Employees want to know they helped, made your day, or went above and beyond. Businesses want to know what they are doing right. We want great businesses in our community. We need business to grow and thrive.

On June 18, the Visalia Chamber will gather to give awards to Small, Medium, Large and Non-Profit businesses of the year. We will recognize the Man and Woman and Emerging Leader of the Year. These awards are important. Nominees in all categories have gone above and beyond. Good wasn't good enough and each business has strived to impact their community more than the 'typical'. We are excited to thank them for their work. We invite you to join us on the 18th. It will be a fun evening celebrating all that is right about business in Visalia.

We are also starting #ThankABusinessTuesday on our social media channels. Please contribute and use your social voice to publically thank businesses that are making a difference in big and small ways. Take time, through social or in person, to thank a business, compliment an employee and make it a practice to look for the good things in our community.

Our community is full of amazing examples of great locally-owned businesses that make Visalia special.

St. Anthony's Retreat offers something for everyone

Imagine a remarkable treasure hidden in plain sight. Located in the quaint community of Three Rivers and just four miles from Sequoia National Park, you will find an oasis of peace, tranquility and natural beauty that awaits you.

Saint Anthony Retreat (STARR) provides a comfortable, peaceful and naturally beautiful setting for individual and group retreats, as well as both religious and secular conferences and gatherings. St. Anthony Retreat Center provides meetings space, dining, and overnight accommodations for up to 100 guests. St. Anthony Retreat is adjacently located to the newly-built Santa Teresita Youth Conference Center.

As a ministry of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fresno, St. Anthony Retreat seeks to provide resources for spiritual See St. Anthony/6

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce invites you to explore in 2015 & 16!

- Athens & Greek Islands**
October 16-24, 2015
- Reflections of Italy**
November 10-18, 2015
- Natural Wonders of Costa Rica**
February 17-25, 2016
- Champagne, Burgundy & Paris**
March 14-21, 2016
- Romance of the Rhine & Mosel River Cruise**
March 31 - April 15, 2016
- South Dakota:**
The Black Hills & Badlands
June 21-27, 2016
- Spectacular South Africa**
September 22 - October 5, 2016

Collette Vacations CST#2006766-20
Chamber Explorations CST#2048841-40
Grand Circle Travel CST#2041626-40
Jet Vacations

For more information, go to www.visaliachamber.org

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.

- COLLECTION AGENCY**
Acclaim Credit Technologies
559.741.7140
- ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION**
SALVI Entertainment
559.909.2737
- INVESTMENT SERVICES**
Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc.
559.471.0970
- NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**
San Joaquin Valley Veterans
559.584.8100

- NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**
West Visalia Kiwanis
559.967.6808
- WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS**
Extreme Wireless Inc.
559.749.0737

Renewing

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

- Adventure Park of Visalia*
- Bank of the Sierra*
- Carroll's Tire Warehouse
- Gunning & Gunning, C.P.A.*
- Habitat for Humanity of Tulare County*

- Judi Pirnstill/Keller Williams Realty
- Klink Citrus Association
- La Quinta Inn*
- Meridian Center for Wellness, LLC
- Pack Track Marketing Consultancy
- Peck Planning & Development LLC*
- Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
- Select Business Systems*
- Sun Fresh
- Surf Thru Express Car Wash
- Tucoemas Federal Credit Union*
- Visalia First Assembly
- Visalia Imaging & Open MRI

*Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.

GROUNDBREAKING • GRAND OPENING • RIBBON CUTTING • CEREMONIES



Ribbon Cutting

Oak Run Model Homes by Wathen Castanos
2723 N. Boise St. • Visalia • 559.549.5421
www.wchomes.com



Ribbon Cutting

Salvi Entertainment
559.909.2737
www.comedyblast.net



Ribbon Cutting

Wish Upon A Star
204 N. Floral St. • Suite D • Visalia • 559.733.7753
www.wishuponastar.org



Ribbon Cutting

Alterra Home Loans
1820 S. Central Street • Ste. B • Visalia • 559.741.9656
www.alterrahomeloans.com/#/visalia-ca/c1koq



Ribbon Cutting

Café 210
210 W. Center • Visalia • 559.739.9009
www.210life.com

VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MISSION ICONS

- Business-Government
- Business Relations
- Promoting Community
- Strong Local Economy

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

Vasquez take reins as Vice President Senior Branch Manager

Bank of the Sierra recently named George Vasquez as Vice President Senior Branch Manager of the Exeter, Farmersville, and Three Rivers branches. In his new position, Vasquez will supervise the operations of the branches, supervise and direct the lending officers, assess risk of all financial transactions executed by branch personnel, direct, coordinate and monitor activities to implement policies, procedures and practices, and is responsible for the overall direction, coordination, and evaluation of the branches.

Vasquez was most recently employed by Rabobank, NA as Vice President Branch Manager. Prior to Rabobank, Vasquez was Assistant Service Manager at Westamerica Bank.

"We are excited to have George on our team as manager (Exeter, Three Rivers, Farmersville), his high level of professionalism, customer service and background will provide a great addition to our team," stated David Soares, Market President.

Bank of the Sierra (www.bankofthesierra.com) is in its 38th year of operations, and at \$1.7 billion in assets is the largest independent bank headquartered in the South San Joaquin Valley. The Company has over 400 employees and conducts business through 28 branch offices, an online branch, a real estate industries center, and an agricultural credit center.

Suncrest Bank positions itself for continued strategic initiatives

Suncrest Bank, (OTCQX: SBKK) announced that it has completed a private placement of approximately \$13.5 million of its common stock, positioning the Company to grow its Central California Franchise.

In the offering, the Bank issued 1,918,827 shares to both new and existing local investors as well as institutions, and proceeds will be used to support Suncrest's continued strong growth, as well as improve capital ratios.

"Over the past couple of years we have achieved significant growth in core deposits and within our loan portfolio, while maintaining excellent credit quality and a strong balance sheet," said President and CEO Ciaran McMullan, "This new capital will allow us to continue our organic growth, and give us the flexibility to consider other strategic initiatives".

During 2014 Suncrest Bank grew its total assets by over 49% and its loan portfolio by 33%, and is rapidly becoming one of central California's banking success stories, being in the top 1.5% of fastest growing banks in the country in 2014.

Valley banks named top performers

Visalia-based Valley Business Bank has been recognized on American Banker's annual list of the top 200 community banks in the nation.

The bank was ranked the 142nd best in the nation with a 3-year return on average equity (ROAE) of 9.63 percent.

Premier Valley Bank also made the magazine's Top 200 list. American Banker ranked the Fresno-based financial institution as the nation's 131st best community bank, with a 3-year ROAE of 9.8 percent.

The publication's report noted that it was getting tougher to earn a spot in the annual ranking of banks as the return on equity that it takes to crack into the top 200 has been on the rise for a few years.

The ranking is of exchange-traded banks and thrifts with less than \$2 billion in total assets as of December 31, 2014.

"We're very pleased to be recognized as one of the top community banks in

See Banks / 3

About this publication ...

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First 5 of Tulare County honored the following Chamber Members at their Hands-On Heroes awards ceremony this month. Karen O'Conner, RDH, **Family HealthCare Network**, KinderCare Program - Julie Scaife and Sue Pierce, **CASA of Tulare County** - Edi Nugent, **Visalia Unified School District** Preschool Academic Learning Center - Kim Weeks, **Tulare County Health and Human Services**, Child Welfare Service - Lupita Aguayo, Tulare County Sheriff/**Family Services of Tulare County** Gang Awareness Parenting Program.

A Big Thank You to **Jo-Ann's Distribution Center** in Visalia for the Third consecutive year for sending their employees out to volunteer at **Happy Trails!** You guys are the best!! Thank you!

A huge thanks to Carol Linville for donating an amazing collection of cute characters! Carol used her credit card points to order these stuffed animals after reading about **Wish Upon A Star** in Lifestyle Magazine! They're sure to bring lots of smiles to our Wish Kids' faces, and don't forget that any donation, big or small, can make a kid smile again.

Congratulations to Ms. Shirley Romo who is **CVBF's** employee of the quarter!!!! Shirley is such a hard worker and always willing to help anyone in need. We are so lucky to have her on our team.

A great group of women (and men) from The PTO Coffee Club at Roosevelt School, **Cigna Health, South Valley**

Vascular, Financial Credit Network, Evolutions Fitness, NAS Iemoore & The Tulare County Fire Department joined **Habitat for Humanity of Tulare County** staff at the "Women Build" projects in Tulare the first week of May. On May 5th, 2015, County Board Poel III joined the volunteers at the start of the construction day to support the ongoing efforts of Habitat for Humanity in Tulare and the county.

In 2014-15, the Guild raised \$126,427.20 for patient care equipment and on May 5 presented a check for that amount to Lindsay Mann, Chief

Executive Officer of **Kaweah Delta Health Care District** and Dena Cochran, Vice President of Development. In fiscal year 2014-15, Guild members spent 19,737 hours volunteering for the district.

Happy 5th Birthday to **Visalia Toastmasters!** HUGE congrats to **DMI's** social media manager, Kent Moore, who just received an award of merit from PRSA Central California Chapter for his work on the Great Western Fan Festival's 2014 social media campaign. Way to represent **DMI Agency!**

Congratulations to the Regional **Rotary** club on helping to raise \$100,000 during their Valley to the Coast Ride to End Polio.

Thank you to all the volunteers, committee members and staff who helped put on the **Habitat for Humanity** 10th Annual Birdhouse Auction. It was a great success! It takes many hands to make a difference!

Happy Trails said: Congratulations to our 2015 CALNET show team! We are proud of you!

Freestyle Event Services: One of our largest proms of the season took place last night at the Visalia Convention Center with an attendance of over 2,000 students! We enjoyed working with the Visalia schools and bringing their circus-themed prom to life!

The **Business Journal** won two 2nd-place awards as part of the California Newspaper Publishers Association Better Newspapers Contest. The awards were in the categories of Agricultural Reporting and Feature Story. The Business Journal competes in the division for weeklies with circulation of 4,301 to 11,000.

Justin Cantu is the newest member of the **Innovation Commercial Flooring** Team, now occupying the Production Manager position and we couldn't be happier! His focus is to oversee our jobs to ensure quality installation for every project. Justin's 15 years of experience and extensive professional training makes him a valuable addition to our Installation Team. Additionally, he brings business skills and expertise to his position as a former business owner. And to top it all off, Justin is just a great guy, a family man and a coach for his daughter's Softball Team.

Good News from our Members



Romo



Habitat for Humanity



Kaweah Delta Health Care District



Cantu



Regional Rotary Club

THE LAW AT WORK

Rest breaks and the on-call employee

In 2012, the California Supreme Court reached a landmark decision regarding employee rest breaks in the case of Brinker Restaurant Group v. Superior Court. In the Brinker case, the court held that employers did not have a duty to police employee meal breaks and that employers were not required to ensure that no work was performed by employees during these breaks. The court stated that "relief from duty and relinquishing of control satisfies the employer's obligation." However, the Brinker case did not address what obligations an employer has, if any, with respect to rest breaks.

In California, an employee working more than 3.5 hours per day must be allowed to take a paid 10-minute rest period per every four hours of work. The law makes it clear that an employer cannot require an employee to "work" during rest periods (Labor Code section 226.7(b)).

In a recent case, Augustus v. ABM Security Services, Inc., a group of security guards claimed that their employer failed to provide uninterrupted rest periods by requiring employees to leave their radios and pagers on during breaks. The employees were also required to return to duty if requested by a supervisor. The employees' argument was that because they were on-call, they were never truly

relieved of duty, and thus did not receive rest breaks.

The court, however, disagreed, reasoning that simply being subject to the control of an employer via on-call status does not qualify as "work." The court held that being on-call is a "state of being, not an action." The security guards, even though they were on-call, routinely took uninterrupted breaks where they would read, smoke or use the internet. Because the employer was not requiring the employees to work, there was no violation of the Labor Code.

Most employers can provide completely uninterrupted rest breaks for their workers, and thus this ruling has little impact for these businesses. However, if your business is such where employees must remain on-call, it's helpful to know that being "on-call" is not the same as "work" for purposes of rest breaks.

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



Brett T. Abbott
Gubler & Abbott LLP

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Annual Awards Celebration highlights outstanding businesses in our community

By Nicola Wissler

Every year at the Visalia Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Celebration we take the opportunity to highlight outstanding businesses for their contributions to our community. This year is no different. 19 businesses have been nominated and are vying for the title of 2015 Small, Medium, Large and Non-profit BUSINESS OF THE YEAR. It is clear from the feedback received that each of the nominated businesses is committed to making sure that Visalia continues to be a great place to work and live. Please join the Chamber on June 18th at 6:00 at the Visalia Convention Center to find out which of these nominees will be named the winner.

Last year this was a sold out event and tickets are going quickly. Individual tickets are \$70 or you can reserve a table of 8 for \$520. Sponsorship opportunities are also available for this event. For more information or to purchase tickets go to www.visaliachamber.org.

Non-Profit of the Year Nominees

Family Services of Tulare County has been active in the community since February 1983. The mission of Family Services is to help children, adults, and families heal from violence and thrive in healthy relationships. Today they serve more than 3,000 people each year with a focus on domestic violence, mental health, parenting resources, sexual assault, supervised visitation & exchange, violence abuse intervention and supportive housing.

Habitat for Humanity has been active in Visalia since 1994. They seek to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes, community and hope. Habitat for Humanity has provided home ownership opportunities to more than 200 hardworking, low-income families. They have recently expanded their "A Brush with Kindness" home-repair program.

Hands in the Community was launched in January 2009. Hands in the Community has developed and continues to grow an extensive network of volunteers and providers in targeting and delivering help to the underserved populations of Tulare and Kings County. Since inception HNC has helped over 4,400 families and with more than 1,100 volunteers and 180 business partners.

Pro-Youth/HEART After School Program began in August of 1998. The mission is to help youth succeed academically, socially, and emotionally by providing a safe, healthy, and supportive learning environment during out-of-school time. Today HEART has grown to serve 10,000 youth at 43 elementary/middle schools and 5 high schools in the Central Valley.

The **Sequoia Natural History Association** is dedicated to supporting education, interpretation, and research in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, Devils Postpile National Monument, and Lake Kaweah. Since 1940, their goal has been to keep our parks accessible, genuine, enticing, and fun and to offer the best experience for our community and our guests.

Small Business of the Year Nominees

The mission of **Bourdette & Partners** is to provide quality service and justice to our clients. To support the Bill of Rights especially the 7th amendment's right to a jury trial in civil matters. They offer flexible time off plans and educational benefits to all employees.

The mission of **Companion Animal Medical Center** is to offer quality, compassionate veterinary care to humans and their pets. They provide intensive on the job training as well as continuing education for employees and work closely with local high schools and community colleges providing internships for students.

Educational Employees Credit Union is the largest credit union based in the central San Joaquin Valley with 15 branches and more than 239,000 members in 10 counties. Their mission is to understand their members' financial needs and to provide quality financial products and services to meet those needs.

Max's Cookie Company @Bothof's continues the Visalia tradition of having the finest scratch bakery in the Valley, bringing only top quality pastries, cakes, cookies and other fine bakery good to each and every guest. Max is proud to employ local high school student and provide mentorship and educational support to each of them.

Stor It is family owned and operated and offers a free moving truck to help customers keep the cost of moving to a minimum. Their mission is to help the community of Visalia find a great storage solution to their storage needs with friendly staff and great prices.

The **Lockwood Agency** is celebrating their 30th anniversary. Their mission is to help clients develop and maintain a positive image in the community and meet their goals through effective communications, collateral/digital materials, relationship-building and advertising. They offer flexible schedules and encourage community involvement for every employee.

Medium Business of the Year Nominees

Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group was established in 1968 with the mission to deliver superior value through innovative efficient, and responsible solutions that assist our clients in accomplishing their goals. They achieve this by hiring and retaining talented staff that are committed to the success of their projects. They provide continuing education funding for employees and summer internships for students.

The mission of **Seals/Biehle Inc.** is to be an industry leader in construction services, bringing value to our clients, suppliers, and vendors through our ability to fulfill their needs and exceed their expectations. Seals/Biehle was founded in Visalia in September 1993 on the idea that hard work, strong relationships and pragmatic solutions foster progress.

The mission of **Suncrest Bank** is to help build and sustain local communities. They focus on keeping their customers money circulating locally, and lending locally to help businesses grow locally. Every employee is an owner of the bank and is provided with Go Local Training education quarterly to support their mission.

Visalia Ceramic Tile prides itself on excellent customer service and customer satisfaction in tile sales and installation and on giving back to the communities that contribute to the company and team members' success. Visalia Ceramic Tile has been a family owned and operated business since 1959 and currently employs 85 people.

Large Business of the Year Nominees

Bank of the Sierra's newly defined brand promise is; "we will help to make every community we're part of better." They are the largest publicly traded bank headquartered in Tulare County and is proud to offer in-house training for new hires and they currently employ more than 20 veterans.

The mission of **Jo-Ann Fabric & Craft Stores West Coast Distribution Center** is to be the best fabric and craft retail brand for our customers, our Team Members, our communities, and our investors. The Visalia Distribution Center opened in 2001 and distributes fabrics and crafts to 215 stores in the Western United States. They believe strongly in promoting internally and many of the managers have been at the location since it opened.

KRC Safety Co., Inc. provides traffic control and related services to their customers, with a clear focus on their core value of: Safety, Integrity, and Professionalism. Employees receive training that helps them to excel as leaders in the industry as well as other career paths including CPR, First Aid, Graphic Design and Forklift and Welding Certifications.

At **Pacific Southwest Container** the mission is to design, develop and manufacture creative packaging solutions that consistently exceed customers' expectations. Since 2004 they have doubled the number of full time employees at the Visalia facility and they provide educational tuition reimbursement to all

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

Skip Nugent

Skip Nugent is the Owner of Best Buy Market in Visalia, Hanford and Lemoore. He has been a Chamber Board member for 6 years and will be terming out on June 30. He was also a Chamber board member in Lemoore, and termed out earlier this year.



Nugent

I feel it is important to be a Chamber member, because there are many things the Chamber offers to help business, and support of issues that pertain to business. It also is important, because it brings members and the public together with events that are held. It creates networking, and getting your business name in front of everyone.

I was born in Visalia and raised here most of my life. I attended school here up to and through COS. Visalia has been my home through my entire career. I actually went to school to be a CPA, but working in a grocery store since I was 12 years old, I loved the business and ended up making a career out of it.

My favorite thing about my company is people. I am a very community oriented person that loves people. It is very important to me to be involved with customers and the community, as well as our associates. We employ a lot of entry level jobs for young people. A lot of time it is their first job. If we can have an impact on them and train them for experiences later in life. It is exciting when you see them several years later and see what they have done in life.

If you know me, you know what my favorite charity is. Thirteen years ago, we created Happy Hearts to benefit Valley Children's Hospital. We see what a great institution it is for our children and the excellent services they provide. Our fundraising takes up most of the year with various events, and last year, we surpassed 1 million dollars we have raised. It makes me so proud to be a part of our community, to see what we all can do together.

AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT

Steve McCartha

Steve McCartha is the Owner/Business Consultant of True Legacy Consulting, which provides business solutions for businesses of all sizes. If your business wants to grow, improve or fix a problem, we will create a unique strategy that works for your business. They assess the business, develop strategies, and deliver the solutions by working with your business to implement the strategies. Their focus is to partner with businesses in order to create a plan for growth and systems to support the desired goals of the business.



McCartha

True Legacy Consulting has recently developed social media solutions. They help businesses that have a hard time figuring out which social media platform best fits their company. They design a strategy that is structured around the target market of each business. With these social media strategies, they can help invite customers to come experience your product, enjoy your product, understand your product and ultimately purchase your product time and time again.

What are some of the ways you'd recommend getting involved/working with/partnering with the Chamber? The worth of the Chamber is in your attendance and participation with the Chamber.

What has Chamber Membership meant for your company? A platform for growth and opportunity.

The best part of Visalia is ... The People.

What is your favorite local charity/non-profit? Visalia County Center Rotary.

Holiday Inn Visalia soon to become Wyndham Visalia

Shaw Hotel Group LLC announced recently that the Holiday Inn Visalia, located at 9000 W. Airport Drive, will become Wyndham Visalia. Shaw Hotel Group LLC has owned the property since 2004 and the hotel is managed by AltaMont Hotels, Inc.

The opportunity arose when the current 10-year Holiday Inn license agreement was approaching renewal and we decided that it was the ideal time to introduce an upgraded product into the Visalia market.

"We're excited to be joining the Wyndham Hotels and Resorts family and are looking forward to providing our guests with the high-quality accommodations that the chain is known for," said Steve Carter, President, AltaMont Hotels, Inc.

The property will undergo a \$6 million renovation and upgrade to become the newest member of Wyndham Worldwide hotel chain under a new 15-year agreement. The hotel will remain open during the renovation which is scheduled to be completed by fall 2015.

The five-story, 256-room hotel will feature a number of notable

upgrades, including redesigned guest bedrooms and baths, state-of-the-art fitness center, and a complete redesign of the popular onsite restaurant Café California and Mahogany's Lounge. In addition, the lobby area will be upgraded to accommodate a more socially interactive guest, along with improvements to meeting rooms, banquet areas and ballroom facilities, which can accommodate 10-1000 guests.

"The management and staff are very excited to be able to offer a beautifully renovated hotel to the community while continuing to provide excellent service to our residents of Tulare County and travelers from all over the world. We understand the important role the hotel has played in the community for the past 40 years and that the hotel has, for many, become a family tradition, from engagements and weddings to birthdays and retirement parties and will do so for years to come," said Samantha Rummage-Mathias, the hotel's General Manager.

Ownership, the Management Team and the Staff will not be changing, we will continue to loyally serve each and everyone one of you.

Banks

(continued from page 2)

the country," said Allan Stone, president and CEO of Valley Business Bank.

"This designation reflects the hard work of our board of directors, management and employees who are committed to providing our community with high-quality banking backed by excellent service and strong financial performance," Stone added.

This is the second honor Valley Business Bank has earned in the past couple of months. In April, the bank was recognized as a "Super Premier" performing bank, the highest possible rating given by Findley Reports, based on the bank's 2014 operating performance.

Edward Jones actively recruiting military vets in the Visalia area

As part of its effort to serve a growing number of individual investors and create jobs for military veterans, financial services firm Edward Jones today announced its plans to hire more financial advisors in the Visalia area.

Edward Jones has a long history of providing career opportunities for veterans across the county. Today, one in nine Edward Jones financial advisors has past military experience.

Edward Jones is looking to increase this number by hiring new financial advisors who are interested in operating in an entrepreneurial environment with the support, training and mentoring benefits of one of the oldest and largest firms in the industry.

In May 2012, the firm nationally launched FORCES, a first-of-its-kind program for eligible military veterans.

Edward Jones was recognized by G.I. Jobs magazine as a 2013 Military Friendly Employer and by *CivilianJobs.com* as a winner of the 2014 Most Valuable Employers (MVE) for Military. In 2014, Edward Jones was named a best company to work for by FORTUNE magazine, ranking No. 4 on that prestigious list, and was ranked a best company for training by Training Magazine, the 14th consecutive year the firm has earned that honor.

Family HealthCare adds new registered dietitian Julie Hamilton

Family HealthCare Network (FHCN) is pleased to announce Julie Hamilton, RD as the newest addition to its nutrition provider team. A Registered Dietitian, Hamilton is now accepting patients at FHCN's Goshen Health Center.

Hamilton received her Certificate of Advanced Study in Dietetics from California State University, Fresno, where she also completed a Bachelor of Science in Food and Nutrition Sciences. Hamilton is a member of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as well as the Central Valley Dietetics Association.

Nutrition services provided at FHCN include education and counseling programs for both individual patients and in group settings. FHCN offers group classes year round in Visalia. Both the "Weight Control Class" and "Nutrition and Physical Wellness Class" offer support for weight loss, healthy eating, and guidance from FHCN's registered dietitians and psychologists. For more information, visit www.fhcn.org.

California Medical Imaging Associates offers flat rate pricing

California Medical Imaging Associates (CMIA), a central California medical group, understands employers are struggling with the rising cost of HMO group plans and employees are often opting for higher deductibles. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation Survey, "covered workers at small firms (three to 199 employees) are more likely to face large deductibles, with 61 percent facing at least \$1,000 deductibles and a third (34 percent) facing at least \$2,000 deductibles".

High deductibles may be discouraging employees from obtaining recommended medical imaging and lab studies. These common diagnostic exams are often the first step to solving common health issues such as chronic back and shoulder pain, old injuries and chronic cough resulting in low productivity or lost days of work.

California Medical Imaging Associates' Flat Rate Pricing is offered to curb the challenge of meeting high deductibles for common diagnostic imaging tests. Flat Rate Pricing can save you and your employees up to 60%-70% on medical imaging exams. Full payment is due at the time of exam and includes the imaging test, and radiologist's report provided to the referring physician within 48 hours.

To schedule an appointment, obtain directions to our offices or discuss additional alternatives for healthcare cost containment call, 559.475.9091 or email, Administrator@cal-rads.com.

HEALTHCARE NOTE

Diabetes: A community-wide concern

More than one in three patients in San Joaquin Valley hospitals has diabetes, according to a recent study by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. In Tulare County, it's estimated that 15 out of every 100 people has diabetes and nearly 35 percent of hospitalized patients have diabetes.

Diabetes adds dramatically to the cost of health care. The study reported that patients with diabetes added \$20.5 million to the cost of providing hospital care in Tulare County alone.

Diabetes has the ability to cause long-term health problems affecting the heart, brain, feet, nerves, gums and teeth. It is the leading cause of blindness in the U.S. among people ages 20 to 74 and the leading cause of kidney failure.

Because of the number of people in our area with diabetes, Visalia Medical Clinic is committed to providing expertise and services to help prevent or delay these serious complications.

One of the leading experts in our area is Susan Smith, Ph.D., a nationally certified diabetes educator, who has been in the diabetes



Rick Strid
CEO
Visalia Medical Clinic

education and treatment field since 1988. She has been with VMC since 2002, working with patients individually through all of VMC's internal medicine and family practice physicians.

Dr. Smith provides a level of expertise that is of great value to our patients. When one of our physicians diagnoses a patient with diabetes, we are able to seamlessly refer that patient to see Dr. Smith. She works with patients to teach them what diabetes is, how to control it through diet and exercise and to help them understand the serious ramifications of failing to control their blood sugar levels.

Unmanaged diabetes can lead to devastating damage and loss of quality of life. The cost to our community is also staggering, as more and more hospital patients find their recovery impaired by their diabetes.

Diabetes is a community-wide concern and managing it should be a community-wide goal. VMC is committed to doing our part to improve our patients' quality of life, while working to control health care costs.

For information about diabetes, including symptoms and healthy recipes, visit vmchealth.com. To reach diabetes educator Susan Smith, call Visalia Medical Clinic at 559.739.2087.

Dr. Smith works with patients to teach them what diabetes is, how to control it, and to understand the serious ramifications of failing to control their blood sugar.

VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

VUSD's water management and conservation

We are clearly in a serious drought. This year has been four times drier than the driest year on record! I think we are all aware that we are in a four-year drought cycle that has accelerated an already depleting supply of ground water. The Governor and legislature have taken actions to respond to the drought and put in place long-term ground water management plans. So, the question might be, "What is VUSD doing about this?"

We have a long record of improving our water consumption. If you go back just a few years, we have invested in automatic irrigation and that was a smart investment. Before that we were moving "sprinkler kickers" by hand to turn on water in many of our large field and playground areas. This took manpower and did not allow us to water at night-or efficiently. We are now automated at most schools and can control when and how



Craig Wheaton, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Visalia Unified School District

much we water. This was the first big step in conserving water. Now we are very aware of the need to conserve water. We meet with city staff members monthly, and water management is high on our agenda. We are working closely to ensure that the school district's water management plan is in alignment with the City of Visalia. We realize that the most recent changes will require us to reduce our water use by over 30 percent. This is a difficult but necessary task.

We have taken this seriously. Over the last month, our staff visited every school to analyze water usage practices and field space needs; and we are developing a plan for each individual school. One of our main concerns is to keep green fields for safe play for our students. Safety is our first concern, and we believe that can be achieved at the same time we meet the reduction rates necessary.

So, join in and help us save water!

Our staff visited every school to analyze water usage practices and field space needs.

Protecting yourself from identity theft

Have you ever lost your wallet, purse or cell phone? Are you stressing out just thinking about it? Where could it be? Where did I have it last? What if someone stole it? Are you thinking, my whole life is in there?

The first things to run through your mind may relate to your finances. Who do you have to call to protect your accounts? Even if you recover your beloved purse, cell phone or wallet, did they take anything out of it or take a picture of the contents? If so they may have your information. The anxious feeling quickly expands to near panic.

So you've spent a week in a flurry of cancelling accounts and trying to replace things. You think, OK, I'm good again. Twenty years ago, that was probably true, but not anymore. Today the different forms of identity theft include:

- Government benefits (think social security, disability, taxes, healthcare)
- Medical (since the anthem data breach, this has become the fastest growing form)
- Driver's license (what do the police ask for when you're pulled over?)
- Criminal / Character (one man's college roommate became a drug dealer with his information)
- Financial (credit cards, bank accounts, this is now less than 20%

of identity theft)

The reality is, you need professional help. 70% of the time when your identity is stolen, you will require an attorney, quite possibly in another state.

Identity theft victims not only have issues with credit and background checks, they typically face countless hours tracking down what's gone wrong, contacting numerous government agencies, or even spending time in jail.

You should strongly consider protecting yourself from identity theft: because you cannot prevent it, and once a victim, thieves use your information and then sell it, over and over.

When considering a service to protect yourself, be sure:

- That it covers all areas of identity theft, not just financial.
- It includes legal protection across the country.
- That it includes true restoration, otherwise you're in for a long battle.

LegalShield and Kroll combined have more than 43 years of experience making them the most comprehensive Identity Theft Restoration service on the market. For more information on preventing identity theft or restoring your identity once compromised contact Clayton Biewer a local LegalShield representative at 559.731.0750.

United Way 2-1-1 information and referral is more than just a number

During the devastating flood in Earlimart and debilitating freezes of 1990 and 1999, it became evident that a centralized clearinghouse for information and referral during disasters in Tulare County was urgently needed. In response to those needs, as well as to the continuing need for a central source of up-to-date information, United Way of Tulare County expanded its existing information and referral system by establishing FIRST CALL in 2001.

In March 2009, the Tulare County Board of Supervisors affirmed United Way of Tulare County as the lead organization for 2-1-1 in Tulare County. With this new system, United Way can take calls twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, three hundred sixty-five days a year.

For over ten years, United Way is committed to helping individuals find services. These call services have received over 70,000 calls and provided more than 100,000 resources to callers. Over the last three years, the 2-1-1 program has expanded its services to include CalFresh (Food Stamps) pre-qualification, Medi-Cal, affordable care act enrollment, drought services line, disaster relief services, and on-line assistance. The 2-1-1 program has also recently partnered with the organization GraceCity to give individuals resources from a smart phone application.

In 2014 alone, we served:

- 10,319 Callers including
- 61 Domestic Violence Calls
- 60 Suicide Calls
- 5 Sexual Assault Calls
- Provided 16,463 referrals
- Over 400 Drought calls since July 2014
- Enrolled over 200 individuals in insurance
- Pre-Screened 906 individuals for CalFresh (Food Stamps)
- Had 11,364 unique visits to the 2-1-1 website and had 82,328 resources viewed

The 2-1-1 program is more than just a number, it is a resource center, insurance agent, crisis line, drought services hotline, and a potential for more services is always growing. All of these services and more are available because of our supporters and advocates such as Tulare County Board of Supervisors, Tulare County Mental Health, TulareWORKs Division of HHSA, First 5 Tulare County, and the numerous organizations that we provide referrals too. United Way is so thankful that these agencies have made a commitment to our community and because of them we have been able to provide clients with vital services that saves lives.

Sightsee as you travel with shuttle service to local national parks

Whether you ride our shuttles into the park or use them once you get here, they allow you to sightsee as you travel and they eliminate the need for find parking. They also help with air pollution by reducing the number of cars on the park roads.

The Sequoia Shuttle is a great way to leave your car behind, sightsee while you ride, and reduce air pollution! All shuttle buses are wheelchair accessible.

The Sequoia Shuttle offers free bus routes throughout Sequoia National Park serving destinations from Dorst Campground to Potwisha Campground, including the Lodgepole and Giant Forest areas. In 2015, summer shuttle service begins on May 21st.

If you'd like to leave your car behind, the Sequoia Shuttle also offers trips from the city of Visalia and the town of Three Rivers into Sequoia National Park. A round-trip ride is \$15 per person and includes the park entrance fee. Reservations are required.

Call 877-BUS-HIKE. For more information on shuttle service from Visalia to Giant Forest in Sequoia National Park visit the City of Visalia's Sequoia Shuttle web page.



Start as a student, graduate as a CEO

By Nicola Wissler
YEA! Program Manager

This year the Visalia/Tulare Young Entrepreneurs Academy began with 13 middle and high school students each with a desire to one day own their own business. On May 12, 2015 the YEA! program graduated 10 brand new CEOs. Each student completed a rigorous 30 week course and was supported along the way by more than 50 local business professionals.

The YEA! program began in September, meeting weekly at the COS campus in Visalia and Tulare. The last month of the YEA! program was a whirlwind of activity for the class. Students participated in the 2015 State of Business Expo held at the Visalia Convention Center. At the Expo, students networked with local businesses, sold their products and services, and gained much needed exposure for their fledgling business. Many of the students sent out their first press releases to local media announcing the launch of their business and they launched social media accounts. Lastly each business wrote reports to the Investors who funded their business in March.

On May 12th the Business Mentors, who met one on one with the student businesses throughout the year, took the opportunity to speak at the Graduation Ceremony held at the Visalia Holiday Inn Hotel & Conference Center. Mentors spoke proudly of the accomplishments of their students and the trials that each overcame while in pursuit of their dreams.

"The Visalia and Tulare Chambers' of Commerce are beyond proud of the YEA! students. Each, showed ambition and passion for their business throughout the class and we know these traits are key for all successful entrepreneurs" stated Ben Bruebaker, CEO, Tulare Chamber of Commerce. Nicola Wissler, Visalia YEA! Program Manager



noted, "Every year we watch these students grow and develop into amazing entrepreneurs. It is exciting to watch them graduate and we are eager to follow the students progress in coming years. We know that they will all go on to do great things."

On May 14th Edgar Godinez, CEO of Ocegüera Salsa traveled to Phoenix Arizona to represent Visalia and Tulare at the 7th Annual Saunders Scholars Competition. The regional competition hosted by the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce gave 37 students from 13 states the opportunity to pitch 29 business ideas to a panel of judges with hopes of winning one of the two coveted finalist spots at the National Competition held during the US Chamber of Commerce Small Business Summit in Washington DC in June. Although Edgar did not win the regional competition he represented the local YEA! program well and even gained new customers who asked him to ship his salsa to Alaska.

The YEA! program will begin a new class in September. The program can accommodate 24 students and is open to 7th - 12th graders. No business experience is required to be part of this program. For more information or to download an application, please go to www.visaliachamber.org/pages/YEA33.



New sales manager announced at San Joaquin Valley Homes

Visalia-based residential builder San Joaquin Valley Homes announced today that Danny Garcia has been named as Vice President of Sales. Garcia brings over 21 years experience in real estate sales management, land development and construction, including 12 years exclusively in new home sales. Garcia will hire and train San Joaquin Valley Homes sales staff, reinforcing the company's philosophy of putting customers first and providing service that exceeds expectations.



"Danny Garcia has a proven track record of building professional sales teams that are committed to buyer satisfaction," states San Joaquin Valley Homes president, Joe Leal. "Danny knows what it takes to create a pleasant home-buying experience for our customers, and we are very excited to have him join us."

Garcia acquired his broker license in 2004, and will be the broker of record for San Joaquin Valley Homes. He earned his GRI (Graduate Realtor Institute) Designation in 2010, and was previously employed with Century 21 Jordan Link & Company in Visalia where he managed a staff of over 90 real estate agents.

San Joaquin Valley Homes was established in 2013 by Joe Leal, Randy Merrill, and Jim Robinson, bringing together over 75 years of experience in residential development and construction. The firm has six communities in Corcoran, Hanford, Tulare and Visalia. Its much anticipated San Marino neighborhood recently celebrated its grand opening in northwest Visalia. For more information, visit SJVhomes.com or call 559.732.2660.

Leadership Visalia class learns about Tulare County legal systems

The May 8th Legal Systems Day Session was informational and exhilarating. The day began with a presentation by Police Chief Jason Salazar. Chief Salazar spoke about his transition from officer to Chief and the impact of Prop 47 on our community.

The class then visited the Superior Court where Assistant District Attorney Anthony Fultz and Prosecutor Kerri Lopez gave an overview of the prosecution and defense system. The visit culminated with a live court proceeding.

Next was the Pre-Trial Facility where the class enjoyed a lunch on behalf of the Sheriff's Department followed by a visit to the Juvenile Justice Center. Judge Juliet Boccone spoke of the need for compassion and the complexities of working with juveniles and families within the court system. CASA Director Marilyn Barr spoke of the need for advocates and foster parents.

The day finished with a Pre-Trial Facility tour. Sheriff's department personnel escorted the class as they visited inmate housing units, witnessed a body scan and the booking process. The Sheriff's Department shared exactly what takes place to ensure the safety of our community and inmates alike.

This Day Session showed the class how our law enforcement and prosecutors enforce laws with discernment and compassion.



Leadership Visalia Law Enforcement Day



Kaweah Delta names new vice president of human resources

Kaweah Delta Health Care District has named Dianne Cox vice president of human resources.



Cox comes to Kaweah Delta from Redlands Community Hospital in Redlands, California, where she also served as vice president of human resources. Her résumé includes 30 years experience in human resources at three hospitals including Saint Agnes Medical Center and Corona Regional Medical Center.

Originally from Missouri, Cox moved to Fresno as a teenager. She worked professionally in Fresno for 10 years, before making the move to Southern California.

"I had always watched Kaweah Delta, even when I was in Southern California, and been impressed with the district's growth of services," she said. "I chose to come back to the Central Valley earlier than expected because of Kaweah Delta. I wanted to be affiliated with this organization and bring my experience to see what we can accomplish with the great team in human resources."

Cox has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from California State University, Fresno, and a Master of Business Administration from California State University, Fresno. She is married and has three grown children.

Established in 1963, Kaweah Delta Health Care District is a 581-bed hospital district with 3,900 employees. It is the only level III trauma center serving Tulare and Kings counties. For more information, visit www.kaweahdelta.org or follow Kaweah Delta on Twitter and Facebook.

YEA! is an afterschool program that transforms middle and high school students into real entrepreneurial success stories.

Hands on Learning

- Brainstorm ideas
- Write business plans
- Pitch your idea
- Receive start-up funding
- Participate in a tradeshow
- File paperwork with the County and State
- Work with business mentors
- Field trips and guest speakers

Applications can be downloaded at: www.visaliachamber.org

For more information on the Visalia/Tulare YEA! program Call 559-734-5876 or go to: www.visaliachamber.org/YEAA33 www.facebook.com/YEAVisalia

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Some job creator bills survive first deadline

A handful of California Chamber of Commerce-supported job creator bills remain eligible to advance in the legislative process this year following key deadlines.

The job creator bills still alive are listed below along with their current locations.

Creates Construction Jobs

AB 35 (Chiu; D-San Francisco) Creates Affordable Housing Opportunities. Expands the existing low-income housing tax credit program, making the state better able to leverage an estimated \$200 million more in Federal Tax Credits. *Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee hearing May 11.*

AB 323 (Olsen; R-Modesto) Expedites and Reduces Cost for Roadway Repair and Maintenance Projects. Streamlines infrastructure development by extending until January 1, 2020 the current CEQA exemption for certain roadway repair and maintenance projects. *Passed Assembly, April 27; awaits assignment to a committee in the Senate.*

Improved Legal Climate

AB 54 (Olsen; R-Modesto) Disability Access Litigation Reform. Seeks to limit frivolous litigation regarding construction-related accessibility standards by incentivizing employers to obtain a Certified Access Specialist inspection by providing a tax credit for such inspections. *Assembly Revenue and Taxation hearing May 11.*

SB 67 (Galgiani; D-Stockton) Disability Access Litigation Reform. Seeks to limit frivolous litigation against small businesses and those that have sought to comply, by limiting remedies to injunctive relief and expanding the current period to correct any violation from 60 to 120 days. *Senate Judiciary Committee hearing May 12*

SB 251 (Roth; D-Riverside) Incentivizing Disability Access and Education. Seeks to limit frivolous litigation and claims regarding construction-related accessibility claims by providing businesses who have proactively sought to become Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant with an opportunity to resolve any identified violations as well as provide a limited period in which to resolve technical violations that do not actually impede access.

Tourism

SB 249 (Hueso; D-San Diego) Enhanced Driver's License. Encourages international trade and tourism by authorizing the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue enhanced driver licenses to U.S. citizens to expedite legal traffic at the border. *In Senate Appropriations Committee.*



Two-Year Bills

Following are bills that either missed deadlines to advance this year or whose authors have indicated they do not plan to pursue action this year. The bills will be eligible to be considered in January 2016.

AB 52 (Gray; D-Merced) Disability Access Litigation Reform. Seeks to improve access for disabled customers and limit frivolous litigation against businesses for construction-related accessibility claims by providing an opportunity for the businesses to timely resolve any potential violations. *In Assembly Judiciary Committee.*

AB 641 (Mayes; R-Yucca Valley) Expedites and Reduces Cost for Housing Projects. Streamlines and reduces regulatory burdens for the approval and construction of housing developments by providing an expedited review process under the California Environmental Quality Act. *Failed passage in Assembly Natural Resources Committee, April 27.*

AB 588 (Grove; R-Bakersfield) Reduces Frivolous Litigation. Seeks to limit frivolous litigation under the Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act, by allowing an employer a 33-day right to cure technical violations on an itemized wage statement that did not cause any injury to the employee. *In Assembly Labor and Employment Committee.*

AB 1252 (Jones; R-Santee) Protects Businesses from Proposition 65 Lawsuits. Provides needed relief to small businesses by prohibiting a person from bringing a Proposition 65 lawsuit against a business employing fewer than 25 employees. *Failed passage in Assembly Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee, April 14. Reconsideration granted.*

AB 1470 (Alejo; D-Salinas) Reduction of Costly Employment Class Action Litigation. Limits frivolous class action litigation against employers in California who are creating high-paying jobs by creating a rebuttable presumption that employees earning at least \$100,000 and performing no manual labor and at least one exempt duty are exempt from overtime requirements. *In Assembly Labor and Employment.*

AB 1038 (Jones; R-Santee) Flexible Workweek. Provides employers with the opportunity to accommodate employees' needs as well as business demands by allowing employees to request a voluntary, flexible workweek agreement that can be repealed by the employee at any time with proper notice. *Failed passage in Assembly Labor and Employment, April 22. Reconsideration granted.*

VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

will be relocating as of June 1, 2015.

Our new office can be found at:

Address 222 N. Garden St., Suite 300

City	Visalia	State	CA	Zip	93291
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Phone (559) 734-5876

website www.visaliachamber.org

St. Anthony's

(continued from page 1)

growth and transformation for people of the Central Valley of California and beyond, and to promote and develop a vibrant faith and full human life for the people it serves.

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Or call for your reservation today at 559.561.4595 (STARR) or 559.561.1038 (STYCC).

CLIP & SAVE

CALENDAR - JUNE 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	2 Visalia City Council Meeting 4 pm work session; 7 pm regular session Council Chambers		3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Government Affairs Meeting Buckman-Mitchell 7:15 am	10 Slide Show Presentation Romance of the Rhine & Mosel Chamber Office, noon	11	12	13
14	15 Visalia City Council Meeting 4 pm work session; 7 pm regular session Council Chambers	16	17	18 Annual Awards Celebration Visalia Convention Center 6 pm	19	20
28	29	30 Business After Hours Mixer Visalia Chamber Office 5:30-7:30 pm		Ambassador Breakfast Visalia First Assembly 8 am		

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