



Business Update

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **FEBRUARY 11, 2016**
Preventing Workplace Violence
Presented by: Boretti Inc.
Marie Calendars
11:30 - 1:30 pm
\$50.00 includes lunch
Reservations Required
michelle@borettiinc.com
- **FEBRUARY 16, 2016**
Travel Slide Show: Colors of New England
12:00 pm
Chamber Office 222 N. Garden Street
- **FEBRUARY 17, 2016**
YPN Mixer
Lunchbox - 112 N. Court
5:30 - 7:30 pm
\$10.00 at the door
RSVP vypn@visaliachamber.org
- **FEBRUARY 24, 2016**
What you need to know about the largest shift in payment/credit card processing history
Presented by Alexander Financial
9:00 - 10:00 am
Brandman University,
649 S County Center
http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/calendar/2016-02-01
- **FEBRUARY 23, 2016**
Business After Hours Mixer
Hosted by Kaweah Delta Hospital
5:30 - 7:30 pm
- **FEBRUARY 25, 2016**
Chamber Ambassador Breakfast Meeting
Visalia First Assembly Church
8:00 am



We Invite you to Explore in 2016!

- **Spectacular South Africa**
September 22 - October 5, 2016
- **Colors of New England**
October 11-18, 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

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

Creative Partners Make Creative Flowers Thrive



to help express your feelings of love, gratitude, sympathy, and caring. Shyra and Meg bought Creative Flowers three years ago and are very excited about the direction and growth that they have experienced so far.

When Meg and Shyra bought Creative Flowers they brought with them years of floral design and business experience. Longtime friends, Meg and Shyra worked together for many years and knew that they would be a dynamic partnership. As partners in the business, both owners have defined roles that make the business work. Shyra has been a floral designer for more than 25 years. Her focus is on the creative side, and working alongside customers to understand their vision. Meg brings years of floral design experience and business knowledge gained from owning a previous business.

"Three years ago, we began thinking about making a change, we were looking at our options. When this store came up for sale all of the pieces seemed to fall into place and we decided that we needed to take the leap and go out on our own" stated Meg. Since taking ownership, Creative Flowers has seen dramatic growth. "I think that one of the reasons for our growth is our commitment to our customers. We treat them like family" stated Shyra. They also credit their corner location downtown with helping them to grow their business. "We have a very walkable location, it is easy to get to and there is good parking" noted the owners. "We get a lot of walk in traffic, some is due to location although a lot of the credit is due to our window designs. We design our windows for each season to show the range and variety of flowers available."

Hicks noted that they are very picky when it comes to the types of flowers that they carry. With the drought, there are certain flowers they no longer carry because the blooms and stocks are too small. They want to be sure that every customer is getting the best possible arrangement when they leave the shop. Sometimes Shyra and Meg



Shyra Hicks and Meg Bagnall, have owned and operated Creative Flowers for three years.

have to take a few extra minutes to educate their customers about the different characteristics of the flowers in order to ensure the best quality arrangement. One tip for all potential customers is to be sure to use a local florist whenever possible. "Even if someone ends up using a competing florist, we want our customers to understand that using a wire service to order floral arrangements is not a good idea.

A local florist will always ensure that you get your moneys worth, whereas with a wire service you will usually end up paying for a substandard arrangement". Both owners agreed, looking out for customers best interest and really listening to what clients want have been keys to the success of this new business.

Creative Flowers prides itself on staying on trend with floral and gift shop trends. They have begun to carry more gift items, so that customers can purchase flowers and gifts at the same time. Creative Flowers carries gifts at all price points and believes that no matter what the occasion they can help you find the perfect gift. Another trend that Creative Flowers is taking advantage of is social media. More and more people are finding ideas for floral arrangements online and using online reviews and social media to choose a florist. Shyra and Meg are very happy that their online reviews have been positive and that they know that these reviews have helped them to grow their business.

Whether you have an intimate dinner party, a large wedding or just want to say that you are thinking about someone special Creative Flowers is happy to help you find the perfect gift or floral arrangement. They work hard to provide a high quality product, educate their customers and give back to the community that has helped them to be successful. The Chamber would like to thank Creative Flowers for their support of this community and for their willingness to take a leap of faith and follow their dreams.

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.

- **ALARMS & SECURITY**
Ag Central Security
594.9444
- **ADVERTISING SERVICES & GRAPHIC DESIGN, NEWSPAPERS**
Coffee News
594.9444
www.visaliacoffeenews.com
- **COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE**
Graham & Associates
754.3020
www.mdgre.com
- **DEPARTMENT STORES**
DSW Designer Shoe Warehouse
www.dswinc.com
- **GIFT BASKETS**
Central Valley Health Snacks
372.7286
www.centralvalleyhealthysnacks.com
- **MERCHANT SERVICES**
Alexander Financial Group
509.270.6207
<http://seanb02.wix.com/afg1>

- **PRINTING, TROPHIES, PLAQUES & ADVERTISING, SIGNS & BANNERS, GRAPHIC DESIGN**
Epic Print & Promo
594.9444
www.epicprintandpromo.com

- **SPORTS & TRAINING**
The Diamond Academy of Central California
802.5001
www.thediamondacademycencal.com

Renewing Members

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

- Advanced Micro Systems*
- BEN-E-LECT Foundation*
- Berkshire Hathaway Home Services *
- California Business Machines
- California Medical Imaging Associates
- Edward Jones/Mandy Basra Financial Advisor
- Family Builders Foster Family Agency*
- Figaro's Mexican Grill*
- Golden State Cardiac & Thoracic Surgery, Inc
- Gubler & Abbott LLP
- Hiliti, Inc
- Innovation Commercial Flooring, Inc
- J & D Lighting & Alarm*
- Karen Gross / State Farm Insurance
- Lowe's
- Marriott Hotel
- Rauber & Johnson*
- Sam Logan/Merrill Lynch
- Sequoia/Wuksachi Village & Lodge*
- St. Paul's School*
- The Yokohl Ranch Company LLC *
- Tulare County Fair
- Tulare County Office of Education
- Visalia Public Cemetery District
- Walton Family Moving & Storage, Inc.*
- Wells Fargo (Main Street Branch)*
- Wells Fargo (Mooney Branch)*
- Wells Fargo Advisors*
- Wells Fargo Commercial Banking Office*
- Wells Fargo Home Mortgage*

*Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.

VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MISSION ICONS

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

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START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT BY VOLUNTEERING FOR THE TULARE COUNTY LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD

Would you like to make a difference in the lives of children, teens, and adults?

Do you want to contribute to keeping our libraries great in Tulare County?

The Tulare County Library Advisory Board seeks candidates to fill vacancies representing Supervisor Districts 4 and 5 and three At-Large members. The Advisory Board meets once a month to advise and make recommendations regarding all phases of library services and operations of the Tulare County Library System. Members work with the County Librarian on important library issues that affect their communities. The Board also presents an annual report to the Board of Supervisors about the Tulare County Library.

District Four includes libraries in Dinuba, Orosi, Woodlake, and opening soon in London. Springville and Terra Bella libraries are located in District Five. At-Large members can come from anywhere in Tulare County.

For more information and to request an application by mail, contact either the Library at (559) 713-2700 or the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors' Office at (559) 636-5000. The application form also is available on the Tulare County website at <http://tularecounty.ca.gov/clerkoftheboard/>.

Bank of the Sierra Run Funds Local Non-Profit; Inspires Fitness for New Year



The 4th annual Rockin' Resolution Run gives participants a healthy start to the New Year while raising \$6,000 for Visalia Rescue Mission.

Bank of the Sierra held its fourth annual Rockin' Resolution Run on New Year's Day. The annual run aims to inspire community members to make fitness goals for the New Year, while also creating community awareness. In its fourth year, the run has now raised more than \$30,000 for local charities.

Low temperatures in the 30s didn't deter nearly 330 runners from participating in the race, including 51 children showing up for a one-mile kid's race.

Over the past three years, the local run has partnered with Visalia Rescue Mission, a local homeless outreach organization which serves the community through offering food and shelter and other programs for men, women and children in need. The group serves an average of 130 people each night. All net proceeds for the event, totaling over \$6,000 this year, went to the Mission.

Mike Olague, chief banking officer for Bank of the Sierra and presenter of the check to the Visalia Rescue Mission, expressed his gratitude to the organization. "Bank of the Sierra's promise is to help make every community we're a part of better, and we're honored to partner with the VRM to assist in their service. We're also pleased to be able bring an enjoyable event to the Visalia community."

About this publication ...

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The Visalia Chamber Hits the Ground Running in 2016



Gail Zurek
President & CEO
Visalia Chamber
of Commerce

When I worked in higher education I was often asked what I did with my summers. Most assumed since the college students were not on campus, I must not be either. However summers were vital to making the academic year successful. The lull allowed for vital evaluation and planning that pushed my department and ultimately the university to be even better for the students, alumni, and community we served.

I chatted with a business owner recently about this phenomenon. When we began talking about business high and low cycles, I shared about summers in higher education. He laughed saying "I remember low cycles, but they're a thing of the past." He learned quickly that those cycles meant less business, less production and he simply couldn't afford any lows cycles anymore. Now he has to do all the planning and evaluation during busy high cycles. I can relate. I shared with him that the Chamber was non-stop, as soon as one initiative was over, the next was half way through. He smiled at my confession, "Good, it's good to hear our Chamber is working really hard for our members!"

So to share with you, all I shared with him: your Visalia Chamber is hitting the ground running in 2016. We see many wonderful things on the horizon. It's hard not to be optimistic in our line of work. Our Young Entrepreneur Program continues to inspire youth ages 12 – 18 to start their own business with the support of a nationally recognized program. The Visalia Leadership program has a dynamic group of leaders that designed a water conservation program that has reached funding and partnership support weeks ahead of schedule and is on track to make a real impact on educating children. Your Visalia Chamber has advocated to develop a strong economy through potential changes to the food truck and microbrewery zoning ordinance. The Chamber responded to members request to update the sign ordinances in ways that would support how businesses do business. If this is just our list to date, 2016 is indeed going to be a wonderful year.

The reality is your Chamber's work is never done. There is always more to be done to support our members and help create as strong local economy where business thrives. I invite you to join us in this important work.

Spectacular South Africa

September 22 - October 5, 2016
\$4899 per person (double occupancy)

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce invites you to escape on a once in a lifetime trip to spectacular South Africa and experience culture and nature in harmony. The fourteen-day stay is an amazing chance to take in breathtaking scenery, experience rich cultural histories, and get up close and personal with wild animals.

The trip is planned to take place from September 22 through October 5 in 2016, with options to spend 3 nights in Dubai or 3 nights in Victoria Falls before or after the tour. Booking your unforgettable trip to South Africa before March 23rd allows



you to take advantage of lower prices.

The getaway begins in Sandton, South Africa – the cosmopolitan center of Johannesburg. Tours will take you from there through Soweto (South West Township) to explore the area's rich history; this includes museum tours and an excursion to Liliesleaf, where Nelson Mandela was arrested. From there escape into nature with a few days exploring Kruger National Park, the largest game reserve in South Africa. A local expert will lead you on an open-air-vehicle safari game drive in search of elephants, buffalo, lions, leopards, and rhinos.

Next you will fly to Knysna, a picturesque resort town. Enjoy the opportunity to explore Featherbed Nature Reserve with a lagoon cruise and a drive through the biologically rich forest. Find your way back to civilization by visiting a local school and

learning about the efforts being made to educate the region's children. After that you'll get to enjoy a guided tour of one of the older working ostrich farms in the area. You will then travel to the heart of the wine lands region and explore Stellenbosch, one of the oldest European settlements in the region, before enjoying a wine tasting.

End your journey in Cape Town, where you will get to ride a cable car to the top of Table Mountain, offering stunning panoramas of the surrounding area. Travel out to Cape Point and spend some time with the penguins at Boulders Beach, then explore the famous Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens. You will say goodbye to South Africa with a lesson on the Djembe Drums, a hand washing ceremony, and a communal African dining experience.

Booking your unforgettable trip to South Africa before March 23rd allows you to take advantage of lower prices.

Highlights:

- Johannesburg
- Panoramic Route
- Safari Game Drive
- Knysna
- Ostrich Farm Visit
- Cape Town
- Soweto
- Kruger National Park
- Garden Route
- Featherbed Nature Reserve
- Wine Pairing Dinner
- Table Mountain

Features:

- 14 days
- Roundtrip airfare from Fresno
- English Speaking Tour Director
- 22 meals

GROUNDBREAKING • GRAND OPENING • RIBBON CUTTING • CEREMONIES



Ribbon Cutting

Literacy Center

Tulare County Library • 200 W. Oak Ave • 713-2700



Ribbon Cutting

Tulare Rescued Treasures

266 E Cross Ave, Tulare



The Visalia Chamber of Commerce is now seeking nominations for the 2016 63rd Annual Awards Celebration

Categories

- Large, Medium, and Small Business of the Year
- Non-Profit of the Year
- Emerging Leader
- Woman of the Year
- Man of the Year

To nominate a person or business go to: www.visaliachamber.org or call 559-734-5876

The deadline for nominations is April 1st, 2016

Award recipients will be recognized at the Annual Awards Celebration on June 16, 2016

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Forbes ranks **Citizens Business Bank** Number 1 - Forbes has ranked Citizens Business Bank Number 1 on its 2016 list of the 100 largest publicly traded banks and thrifts in the U.S. With \$7.6 billion in total assets, Citizens Business Bank earned its Forbes top ranking based on 10 metrics, including assets, return on average total common equity and revenue growth.

The **Visalia Police Department** announces the promotion of Senior Communications Operator Darlene Friend to Communications Supervisor. Darlene began her career with the Visalia Police Department in December 2003. During her tenure with VPD, Darlene has worked as a Communications Operator and Communications Training Officer, in addition to her most recent assignment as a Senior Communications Operator. Prior to her employment with VPD, Darlene worked as a Communications Operator for the Reedley Police Department. Congratulations to Darlene!



Visalia Police Department

Kaweah Delta Healthcare District would like to Congratulate Lindsey Porter on being named employee of the month. Lindsey Porter was nominated by Elsen Jacob, pharmacist at Kaweah Delta. "Lindsey is a wonderful technician," shares Jacob. "Not only does she complete her duties with diligence and care, she does so with an infectious cheerfulness. Additionally, when there are STAT medications, or medications requiring delivery, Lindsey often runs the medication up to the patient care units herself to expedite care for the patient."



Lindsey Porter

Hands in the Community would like to thank the Exeter Women's Club and its members for supporting us since 2010. HNC has been fortunate to receive help in the way of volunteers, gift baskets for our annual dinner/silent auction and connecting us with the business community.

We are grateful for our partnership together. This enables us to ensure that fundamental principles of partnership, equality, fairness and inclusion are threaded throughout all the community.

Visalia Transit wants you to know that if you have a monthly bus pass you can get rewarded at over 70 local vendors. See all of the discounts here: <https://www.visaliarewards.com/participating-retailers/>

Family Healthcare Network - In recognition of MLK Day, FHCN's Community HealthCorps AmeriCorps members and Community Health team honored Dr. King's legacy through a day of service. As part of an annual tradition, our team volunteered at the Woodlake Veterans Memorial Building by patching up and repainting interior walls and ceilings. A big thank you to our volunteers from Woodlake Rotary, Woodlake Unified School District, and Woodlake High School who joined us, and to Oral E. Micham, Inc., The Home Depot, and Wal-Mart for their generous donations.



Happy Trails

For the eleventh consecutive year **Happy Trails** has increased the number of rides offered to our children and adults with disabilities. In 2015 we provided over 2,394 lessons to riders from 17 central valley communities. The 138 riders ranged in age from 4 to 50+ with the majority (85%) under the age of 18. Our riders are challenged by a variety of disabilities including ADHD, developmental delay, autism, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, fetal alcohol affects, PTSD and various psychological-social issues. There were also more than 11,000 volunteer hours expended in 2015 in arena classes and property improvement projects.

THE LAW AT WORK

The Importance of Sexual Harassment Prevention Training

The old adage "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" most definitely applies to the workplace. Sexual harassment is among the most serious of workplace problems, and thus preventing this problem is worth almost any effort. Thus, California has made prevention of sexual harassment the law; Government Code section 12950.1 requires that certain employers provide training on sexual harassment prevention.



Brett Abbott, Attorney
Gubler & Abbott LLP

This law applies to employers with 50 or more employees (it is not required that all 50 employees be in California). Training must be given to all supervisors. Employers would be wise to construe the definition of "supervisors" broadly - if there is doubt as to whether your employee is a "supervisor," train them just to be safe. Employees covered by the law must be trained every two years.

The law requires that the training be of the "classroom" variety or other "interactive training." California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing has suggested that internet/web-based training is sufficient as "interactive" training. The training must include practical examples dealing with prevention of harassment, discrimination and retaliation.

If the training is conducted as "classroom training," the actual time instructors spend teaching must total two hours, excluding breaks. Furthermore, classroom training can only be done by an attorney, a professor or instructor, or a Human Resource professional (each of these must have two years of experience). If the training is web-based, it must take at least two hours to complete the course. A record of who received the training, when it took place and what type, and who gave the training must be kept for two years.

While training does not completely eliminate the possibility of sexual harassment lawsuits, this "ounce of prevention" - required for all companies with over 50 employees - is well worth the effort.

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).

VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Time of Transition



The beginning of the spring semester of the 2015-2016 school year is a time of transition for Visalia Unified. As you may know, Craig Wheaton, our superintendent for the past five and half years, has accepted a position as deputy superintendent for Tulare County Office of Education. In an earlier article, he outlined the accomplishments of our district during his tenure, including the continuous increase in academic achievement, a graduation rate that significantly exceeds the state average, the opening of a new elementary school and, soon, a new middle school—all while successfully guiding Visalia Unified through the recession. We wish Dr. Wheaton well as he takes on the responsibilities of his new position.



Todd Oto, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Visalia Unified School District

In November 2015, I was named the interim superintendent of Visalia Unified. As interim superintendent, my role will be to ensure that the school district functions smoothly until the new superintendent is named. This involves maintaining all of the services and activities currently being provided by the district to support learning and achievement for all students. We have much work in progress, including the ongoing transition to the new state standards, our growing systems for academic and personal support for students at all levels, and our efforts supporting teachers in their work with students. Currently, the Visalia Unified School Board is considering the process and timeline for selecting the new superintendent. Our organization has strong and capable staff at all levels, and I am confident that the interim period will

be one of seamless transition.

On a personal note, I am honored to be the interim superintendent of our district. This is my 28th year with Visalia Unified, the only district that I have known as an educator. My career began at Mt. Whitney High School in 1987, where I taught drafting and woodshop. I was a dean at Mt. Whitney for one year and then an assistant principal at Redwood High School for five years. In 2004, I was selected as principal of Sequoia High School; and in 2006, I was named principal of Redwood. In 2010, I became an Area Superintendent, with oversight of alternative education; in 2012, I became an Assistant Superintendent, with oversight of secondary education (middle schools and high schools); and in 2015, my position was expanded to oversee the entire Instructional Services division, which includes all 40 of our schools. Having worked at many levels within our district, I have knowledge of all aspects of our schools. As interim superintendent, I will become more familiar with the financial and human resources systems that, along with instruction, represent the whole of our district's organization.

On a personal note, I am honored to be the interim superintendent of our district.

I look forward to learning more about Visalia Unified in my new position; and I am excited to be leading an organization in which I have grown up—one that is engaged in many great things that are bringing education, achievement, and options for the future to the 28,000 students whom it serves.

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

Stacy Morris



Stacy Morris

Stacy Morris is the Vice President / GM of BEN-E-LECT. She has been a Chamber Board member since 2013. The Chamber is our connection to the city.

It keeps us up to date with local happenings, whether good or bad, and lets the business community know what we need to be aware of. It also provides networking opportunities with other individuals and businesses that one could not get elsewhere.

What brought you to Visalia? I was born and raised in this area. My family moved to the high desert for a couple of years and came right back when we realized that it snowed there!

What is your favorite thing about your job/company? I can make an immediate impact in the professional lives of others. It's a company where we can bring somebody in with minimal work experience and if that person has the desire and work ethic, we can mentor him or her to become a strong manager. Our entire management team is on board with this mentoring philosophy and in fact, many came through the ranks through mentoring. It really makes for a great culture.

What do you like to do when you are not working? I love the game of soccer. I enjoy playing in as many leagues as possible and watching my husband and daughter play. I also get the joy of supporting my youngest in her love for raising and competing on horseback. It has me spending many weekends at junior rodeos and other horse competitions. Last, but not least, I am an active student through Masters where I am working towards degrees in Biblical Counseling and Christian Ministries.

What is your favorite place to go in Visalia when you are not working? Home. I spend so many nights and weekends away from my home, that when I have the opportunity to select where I will be, it's always home with my family.

What is your favorite charity or local cause? I am a non-profit junkie! I am deeply embedded in The BEN-E-LECT Foundation which supports the Visalia Rescue Mission through its mentoring program and has supported Good News Jail & Prison Ministry along with many others.

What is your best advice for young professionals? Don't expect anything to be handed to you. If you want to be in a position of leadership, do more than is asked of you on a regular basis. Not for the sake of your extra effort being noticed, which is nice, but for the sake of pushing yourself to learn more, stretch your limits and become a person who others can rely on. It will pay off in the end.

What is your favorite quote? "Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen." - Sir Winston Churchill

Chamber
VISALIA BUSINESS ACADEMY
of Commerce

February 11th
Preventing Workplace Violence

Presented by: Boretti Inc
Marie Calendars
11:30 - 1:30 pm
\$50.00 - Lunch is included
Registration is required:
michelle@borettiinc.com

February 24th
What you need to know about the largest shift in payment/credit card processing history

Presented by: Alexander Financial
Brandman University
9:00 - 10:00 am
Free for Chamber Members
\$10.00 for non-members
Registration is requested:
<http://www.visaliachamber.org/events/calendar/2016-02-01>

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Clinical Dermatologist Returns to Visalia Medical Clinic

VISALIA – Visalia Medical Clinic announces the return of clinical dermatologist Laine Koch, MD, to its staff.



Laine Koch, MD

Dr. Koch practiced with Visalia Medical Clinic for several years before moving to Virginia with her Navy husband. Her practice focuses on diagnosis and treatment of skin cancer and chronic skin diseases such as psoriasis, eczema and severe acne, she explained.

“Some dermatology practices may focus more on cosmetic concerns, but my practice primarily addresses skin diseases,” she said. “I also really see my practice as a partnership with my patients, where we work together to find the best solution. What works best for one patient may not be right for another. It is important to tailor treatments to meet each patient’s specific needs.”

Dr. Koch completed medical school at Eastern Virginia Medical School; served her internship in pediatrics at Children’s Hospital of the Kings Daughters in Norfolk, VA; and completed her residency in dermatology at Eastern Virginia Medical School. She has special interests in pediatric dermatology and dermatopathology. She has studied dermatopathology at Tufts Medical Center/Caris Life Sciences in Boston in addition to having practiced dermatology there.

Visalia Medical Clinic, an affiliate of Kaweah Delta Medical Foundation, offers the expertise of more than 50 providers. The clinic is open Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; with extended and weekend hours at QuickCare. For information, call 739-2000 or visit www.vmchealth.com.

5 Reasons to call a Staffing Agency Today

Most businesses can use an extra set of hands to handle a big project or a new surge in business, but most are also reluctant to hire full-time staff. A staffing agency can provide temporary employees to help with a wide variety of business tasks. Working closely with the staffing agency, a hiring manager can ensure that temporary workers possess the needed skills, education, and experience to meet the needs of the company.

Improve Productivity

Bringing in temporary workers to handle work overload can prevent employee burnout of full-time staff. By bringing in temporary staff to handle the extra work load, full-time employees can continue to focus on their main job tasks while maintaining their productivity.

Try Before You Buy

Temporary employees give the business a chance to try out an employee before making a permanent offer of employment.

Decrease Costs

Temporary staff persons are employed by the staffing agency, not the business that is using their services. This can decrease the overall costs of the employee as the business does not have to provide benefits to a temporary staff member. In addition, bringing in temporary staff may reduce other overhead costs such as overtime for regular, full-time employees.

Avoid Unemployment Claims

Because the temporary staff person is an employee of the staffing agency and not the business, there is no concern about the person filing for unemployment when their services are no longer needed by the business.

Increase Flexibility

Temporary employees allow businesses to use staff as needed. Temporary employees can be brought in to cover the vacation of an employee or maternity leave. Many staffing agencies can provide employees in a wide variety of disciplines to meet all of the needs of the business. The business then has the flexibility to use the services of the temporary staff as needed, whether it is a few hours at

See Staffing /6

HEALTHCARE NOTE

Many New Developments are on the Horizon



Kaweah Delta is one of our region’s most dynamic and progressive health care providers. We work hard to make sure vital medical and nursing services are available to meet individual patient care needs – it is the most important thing we do.

To support our physicians and nurses, we also work to provide the facilities and technologies needed for the provision of excellent patient care. In that regard, Kaweah Delta is now entering into one of the most dynamic growth phases in its history.

Our Board of Directors has approved funding to support the development of a new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and cardiology/medical surgical unit on the fifth and sixth floors of the Acequia wing of the medical center. In addition, we are now planning a major expansion of the emergency department, a new endoscopy facility, and an urgent care center in northwest Visalia. Each of these are truly essential projects that will allow our physicians and nurses to provide the best care for the individual needs of our patients.

In addition, to ensure we meet the requirements of state law, relative to the seismic safety of hospital facilities, and to expand and modernize our acute care system, we are now planning for the development of a new acute care hospital. This upgrade will replace the original Kaweah Delta hospital, often referred to as the Mineral King wing.

This project is required by law. We know this with certainty because we have spent more than three years working with the state. We aimed to determine if we could, in some manner, exempt Kaweah Delta from these seismic requirements, thus allowing us to preserve use of the Mineral King wing. It was



By Lindsay Mann
Chief Executive Officer –
Kaweah Delta Health
Care District

confirmed with great clarity that a new acute care hospital would be required.

We are now in the active planning stages for the development of the new acute care hospital. We will not only replace some 273 beds, which currently do not meet the new seismic safety standards, but also provide for critical supporting services such as laboratory, radiology, and pharmacy services.

The requirement to develop a new acute care hospital of this scale will involve undertaking the most significant capital project ever taken on in our community. While Kaweah Delta will use its financial reserves, issue additional revenue bonds, and seek out available state and federal funding, we will not be able to undertake this project without community support.

It is a simple and powerful fact that while Kaweah Delta is financially strong, it does not have the resources necessary to take on a project of this magnitude without community support.

In the near future, you will learn a great deal more about this project and our work to develop the most responsible funding strategy possible to develop the new acute care hospital.

While this project is about development of physical facilities and critical technologies, it should be remembered that the very heart of this effort is to secure, for our community and region, the best health care possible.

This new acute care hospital effort will translate into lives saved and lives restored to good health. These vital services are always provided to individual patients, one at a time, by physicians and nurses who are at the heart of everything we do. Please join us in our effort to secure a bright and vital health care future for our community.



Hospitals Seeking Our Support

The election cycle in 2016 will be a busy one indeed, not just because we elect a new president for our nation, but for a variety of issues much closer to home as well. Both the Tulare District Hospital and the Kaweah Delta Healthcare District are anticipating reaching out to voters to pass bonds for major construction.

I had lunch with the CEO, Lindsay Mann of the Kaweah Delta Healthcare District in November, and discussed the projects they envision building, and the mandates they are under to completely upgrade and replace their acute care facility as required by state law by 2030.

These expansions and the new Kaweah Delta acute facility will cost millions of dollars, which local taxpayers are going to have to agree to support through the passage of general obligation bonds. Grants, loans, and philanthropic donations are also part of the formula for funding, but let’s be clear, local tax payers are going to have to agree to these bonds if they want to continue having hospitals here.

Unfortunately you can expect that the largest tax burden will fall



By Joey Airoso,
Tulare County
Farm Bureau President

on landowners, and namely farmers will feel that pain in their tax assessments each year. It’s difficult to see the costs associated with these bonds, and know that our tax assessments get bigger and bigger, but so do our needs for water and other farm inputs, which are not going to get cheaper.

Without more water in this Valley, the agriculture economy is going to suffer, and so will our ability to pay these bonds. Agriculture like everything else in business cannot continue to bear the higher and higher costs of doing business in California without addressing some of these concerns.

As citizens we all need to care about the water availability for exactly this reason. Our farms do not just support food production and jobs, but water means commerce and commerce allows rural infrastructure to be built and services like hospitals to be provided to our communities. Without water, farms can’t pay for bonds to support these services. We all need to work together to support our local economy and ensure we keep our farms and families safe and healthy.



LEADERSHIP VISALIA

Planning, Land Use, and Transportation

On the misty morning of Jan 8th, the Visalia Leadership class of 2016 boarded a Visalia city bus bound for the Airport. Along the way, civic session coordinators Amy Davis, Caleb Gunning and Caleb Haus shared fun facts about Visalia transit and the extensive transit network.

Mario Cifuentez, manager for the COV Airport greeted the class on arrival and shared the history of Air service in Visalia and the exciting future ahead. Mario discussed concepts of Federal aviation administration funding and regulatory compliance. The class took to the airfield touring the grounds as Mario spoke of greater commercial air service opportunities ahead for Visalia. Time did fly as it was soon back to the bus, and on to the downtown Visalia transit center.

Monty Cox, Visalia’s transit manager gave an overview on the role of public transit in our region and the great partnership with the National Park Service including the Sequoia Shuttle. The Sequoia Shuttle reduces tourist impact in the park and creates incentive for travelers to stay in Visalia hotels with a discounted park entrance fee. Additionally, Monty shared information about the newly launched commuter line between Visalia, the Fresno Airport and Fresno State University called the V-Line.

The class then met with Josh McDonnell, City Planner for Visalia. The class reviewed the 2030 General Plan which outlines future growth for the City. The plan includes a scenic “Conservation Buffer” corridor along the 198 and continues the trend of growth rings radiating from downtown. The tiered growth boundaries “pressurize redevelopment”, promotes infill of under utilized property and improves accessibility for residents.

The class then stopped at the Tulare County Board of Supervisors building and walked a little of the bike path/trail

along the Mill Creek river and Main St. featuring trail signs with historical information. Arriving back at Fresno Pacific University, the class enjoyed sandwiches from the Lunchbox Catering Company, and listened to Jim Robinson of San Joaquin



Leadership Visalia Class Members learned toured the Visalia Municipal Airport and learned about regional air services.

Valley Homes talk about residential planning and what goes into creating a housing development. The process of home building is a labyrinth of urban planning review, consideration for access to services, environmental impact, inclusion of commercial space or schools as part of the development, and what types of houses to build.

The day concluded with a panel discussion with Stephen Peck of Peck Planning and Development, LLC and City Council Member Greg Collins from Schoettler Planning Consultants. The discussion was lively as the class asked questions on the history of development in Visalia, planning for the future, lessons learned and ideas for the future.

From all the viewpoints and visits observed through this day, it is clear that a great care has been dedicated to the future of Visalia and how the community moves. The identity of Visalia is made up of varying viewpoints, continued participation and collective vision - An incredible day of learning for any aspiring leader.



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Opportunities for Student Entrepreneurs are Everywhere

One of the biggest barriers that entrepreneurs face while starting a business is finding start-up capital and getting some initial visibility. These barriers are not easy to overcome, however students participating Visalia/Tulare Young Entrepreneurs Academy have three amazing opportunities to present their business ideas to the public and raise start-up capital for their new businesses.

The first chance for the YEA! students this year will be participation in the 2016 Southern California Gas Company Entrepreneurship



Challenge. 2016 marks the 10th year that the Southern California Gas Company will work with the Tulare County Office of Education, Innovate Tulare Kings and the Visalia Chamber of Commerce to host an event geared toward inspiring young people to become entrepreneurs. The Gas Company Challenge is open to all high school student teams in Tulare and Kings County. In the past teams from Redwood, Mt. Whitney, Golden West, Dinuba, Porterville, Harmony, Lemoore and Tulare have competed for the opportunity to win cash prizes and bragging rights. Previous winners presented business ideas for a medical app while another team created a plan for a for a business that would produce bioluminescent chlorine that makes your pool or fountain glow in the dark. If you know of students or student teams/clubs with an entrepreneurial spirit we would encourage them to learn more about this great opportunity by going to: <http://www.tcoe.org/Challenge/>. The challenge will be held on March 9th at the Wyndham Hotel from 8:00 - 2:00pm.

The week after the Gas Company Challenge YEA! students

will participate in the Young Entrepreneurs Academy Investor Panel. Students will pitch their ideas to a panel of Investors much like the show Shark Tank. They will explain their ideas, provide financial projections and wow the investors with their entrepreneurial spirit. At the end of the evening students will be award start-up funding that will give them the boost they need to get their businesses off the ground. The YEA! Investor Panel will take place on March 17th at 5:30 pm in the Oak Building behind the Visalia Unified School District office. This event is open to the public and we encourage entrepreneurially minded students to come and learn more about how to get involved the YEA! program next year.

Lastly, students from all over California will have the opportunity to participate in the "Get a Taste of Success" pitch competition hosted by Doing What Matters For Jobs and the Economy. This is a video pitch competition where students are encouraged to film a 2 minute business pitch and provide a 10 slide power point presentation. Regional finalist will move onto a statewide competition, the finishers at the regionals will pitch live at the state competition to a panel of judges. The submission deadline for this competition is April 8, 2016. More details on this competition can be found at: <https://app.reviewr.com/s1/site/GetATasteofSuccess>



Become a Cavalier, at a lower cost

Calley Cederlof

Originally published in the Visalia Times-Delta on January 5, 2016

Central Valley Christian School is rolling out a way for students to attend the private school without breaking the bank.

Variable tuition is a need-based tuition assistance program that assesses each family's financial situation separately to determine tuition.

"We want to make faith-based education available to as many families as desired," said Larry Baker, CVC superintendent.

Families that are unable to cover tuition costs can apply for variable tuition in order to see if their needs fit the criteria. The application is separate from the enrollment application process and does not effect admission to the school.

The implementation of the new program comes after a drop in enrollment.

Currently, the CVC high school, which can hold 350 students, has a little over 250 students in attendance. The elementary and middle schools are also looking for higher enrollment rates.

The hope is that with the introduction of lower tuition costs, classes will begin to fill up.

"There is a great sense of community and generosity in the CVC family that enables us to provide tuition help, and this new program will allow more families to get in on that," Westra said.

CVC's variable tuition ranges from 40-80 percent of the full cost of education. No family ever pays the full cost of tuition, as textbooks and transportation fees are included at no additional cost.

Families interested in the tuition program are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, as there is a limited funds available.

If funding were to run out, students will be admitted to the school but will be put on a variable tuition waiting list. The first students on the list, structured in the order in which applications were received, will receive lower tuition costs if and when more funds are made available.

Payment plans are also available.

For more information on CVC or the program contact Nicole Mulder at 734-2684 ext. 260 or visit www.cvc.org/admissions.

Lengthy Ballot Shaping Up for November



The November ballot is likely to include lots of issues for California voters to decide.

So far there are two measures placed on the ballot by the Legislature and six by proponents gathering sufficient petition signatures.

On the Ballot

The Legislature placed on the ballot proposals to:

- Kick legislators out of office for bad conduct.
- Remove from law provisions specifying how bilingual education immersion programs were to function. The deleted provisions were adopted via Proposition 227 of 1998 but later overturned by the courts.

Initiatives

Proponents have submitted petitions signed by enough registered voters to qualify the following initiative proposals for the November ballot:

- A California Chamber of Commerce-supported measure that makes it more difficult to divert federal Medi-Cal matching funds to programs other than health care.
- A CalChamber-supported \$9 billion school bond: \$3 billion for new construction and \$3 billion for modernization of K-12 public schools; \$1 billion for charter schools and vocational education facilities; \$2 billion for community college facilities.
- A CalChamber-opposed proposal to require statewide voter approval for revenue bonds used to build California infrastructure projects exceeding \$2 billion.
- A referendum asking voters to overturn the legislation banning single-use plastic bags.
- An initiative to require condoms to be used by performers in adult films.
- An initiative that prohibits state agencies from paying more for a prescription drug than the lowest price paid by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Awaiting Signature Verification

Awaiting verification that sufficient valid signatures were submitted

is a referendum to overturn the aid in dying law passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor last year. The law allows a terminally ill, mentally competent adult to obtain a prescription for a life-ending drug if two doctors confirm the diagnosis and other safeguards are met.

Possible Initiatives

Major proposals that may find their way onto the November ballot include measures dealing with:

- **Legalizing recreational use of marijuana.** The CalChamber will be making sure any proposal doesn't interfere with employers' ability to enforce policies needed for a safe workplace.
- **Income tax.** A couple of initiative proposals filed would extend the income tax increase approved by Proposition 30. One proposal is sponsored by teachers; the other is sponsored by the hospital association and a health care union. Both would move the highest income tax rate up to 15.3%.
- **Property tax.** A proposal has been filed to impose a tax surcharge on commercial and residential property worth more than \$3 million. In essence, this would be a tax increase on business properties, similar to a split roll.
- **Cigarette tax.** One proposal increases the cigarette tax by \$2 per pack and the equivalent on other tobacco products and electronic cigarettes to fund certain Medi-Cal and health care programs.
- **Minimum wage.** Two very similar initiatives to increase the minimum wage have been filed. Both would increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2021, but one would expand the minimum number of paid sick leave days from 3 days per year to 6 days per year.
- **Legislative Process.** The initiative would require all proposed legislation to be in print for 72 hours (3 days) before the Legislature votes and require all legislative proceedings to be recorded and be available within 24 hours.
- **Campaign Finance.** The proposal would increase fines for violations of the political reform act.
- **Water Bond.** The proposal would benefit water recycling, conservation and open space purchases

COLOR OF NEW ENGLAND

Join the Chamber's wilderness presentation February 10th at 12:00 p.m. at the Chamber office

SEPTEMBER 22-OCTOBER 5, 2016

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For pricing or registration details call the Visalia Chamber of Commerce at 559-734-5876 or visit www.visaliachamber.org

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

Save the Date: Hands in the Community Golf Tournament

We'd like to invite you to participate in Hands in the Community's Third Annual Golf Tournament event on Friday, April 29th between 12:00 and 5:00 p.m. at the Ridge Creek Country Club. There is limited space for team registration (four people per team), so sign up quickly!

To reserve your place you need to pay online and the cost of this event is \$150.00 per player or \$550 per team. You can pay on our secure website: <https://secure-q.net/Donations/HandsITS/4685>. Let us know how many people are attending in the comment section and that you want to attend the Golf Tournament.

Thank you for your partnering with us. If you have any questions, please give us a call at 559.625.3822 ext. 3 or email us at hncvisalia@gmail.com.

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Staffing

(continued from page 4)

week or on a full-time basis. Using a staffing agency can avoid the permanent commitment that a full-time employee requires, saving both time and money.

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Beth Bruegman - Personnel Solutions 559.734.0570

CLIP & SAVE

CALENDAR - FEBRUARY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Visalia City Council Meeting 4 pm work session; 7 pm regular session Council Chambers	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Government Affairs Meeting 7:15 pm Buckman-Mitchell Office	10	11 Preventing Workplace Violence Seminar 11:30 am Marie Calendars	12	13
14	15 Visalia City Council Meeting 4 pm work session; 7 pm regular session Council Chambers	16 Travel Slide Show Visalia Chamber Office 12:00 pm	17 YPN Mixer Lunch Box 5:30 pm...	18	19	20
21	22	23 Business After Hours at Kaweah Delta 5:30 - 7:30 pm	24 Payment Card Processing Seminar 9:00 am Brandman University	25 Ambassador Breakfast Visalia First Assembly Church 8 am	26	27
28	29					



SHRM of Tulare County Announces Legal Updates Luncheon

Join the SHRM T/K Legislative Director, Faith Lisle Driscoll, as she reviews the new laws, regulations and judicial opinions affecting California employers this year. This training session will include:

- modifications to the state mandated paid sick leave,
- expanded protections for whistleblowers,
- new interpretations to religious accommodation requirements,
- the new Equal Pay Act, update on FMLA, and
- dealing with the new strict compensation requirements for piece-rate compensation.

Attendees will be provided with practical tips for applying the changes in the workplace and communicating them through employee handbook revisions. Bring your notepad and questions to get the most out of this session!

Bio: Faith Lisle Driscoll was born and raised in Fresno. She is a graduate of California State University, Fresno and holds a degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Entrepreneurship.

She continued her education at San Joaquin College of Law, where she received her Juris Doctorate degree. Her legal practice is concentrated in the areas of employment compliance and litigation. She assists employers in disputes involving claims of unpaid wages, discrimination, harassment, retaliation and wrongful termination. Ms. Driscoll also drafts employment agreements and ensures employment handbooks are compliant with state and federal law. Additional areas of representation include general business litigation matters including breach of contract, torts and commercial collections.

WHEN: Tuesday February 16TH 11:30-1:30
(Check in starts at 11:00)

WHERE: The Marriott in Visalia located at
300 S Court St. Visalia, CA 93291

REGISTER ONLINE: www.shrmtularekings.org

QUESTIONS: Contact Fran Herr at 559.300.5941
or email fran_herr@us.afiac.com



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