

www.visaliachamber.org Business Update

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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INSIDE

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EVENTS

MAY 11
Travel Slideshow
 Time: 12 p.m.
 Location: Visalia First

MAY 26
Ambassador Monthly Meeting
 Time: 8 a.m.
 Location: Visalia First

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK FOR DATES

Coffee & Conversation with Your Chamber CEO-Facebook Live
 Time: 8 a.m.

TRAVEL WITH US

JUNE 11-17, 2022
 Landscapes & Lighthouses of Coastal Maine

SEPTEMBER 3-11, 2022
 Western Canada's Rockies, Lakes & Wine Country

OCTOBER 5-12, 2022
 New England Rails & Trails

OCTOBER 23-27, 2022
 Spotlight on San Antonio

OCTOBER 29-NOVEMBER 6, 2022
 Wonders of the Danube River Cruise

NOVEMBER 1-8, 2022
 Irish Discovery

DECEMBER 1-5, 2022
 Christmas Markets of Montreal & Quebec City

FEBRUARY 21-28, 2023
 Ecuador & Galapagos Islands Cruise

APRIL 19-28, 2023
 Holland Windmills, Waterways & Tulips River Cruise

MAY 2-10, 2023
 Athens & The Greek Islands

MAY 7-22, 2023
 Flavors of Portugal & Spain

JULY 19-28, 2023
 Iceland: Land of Fire & Ice



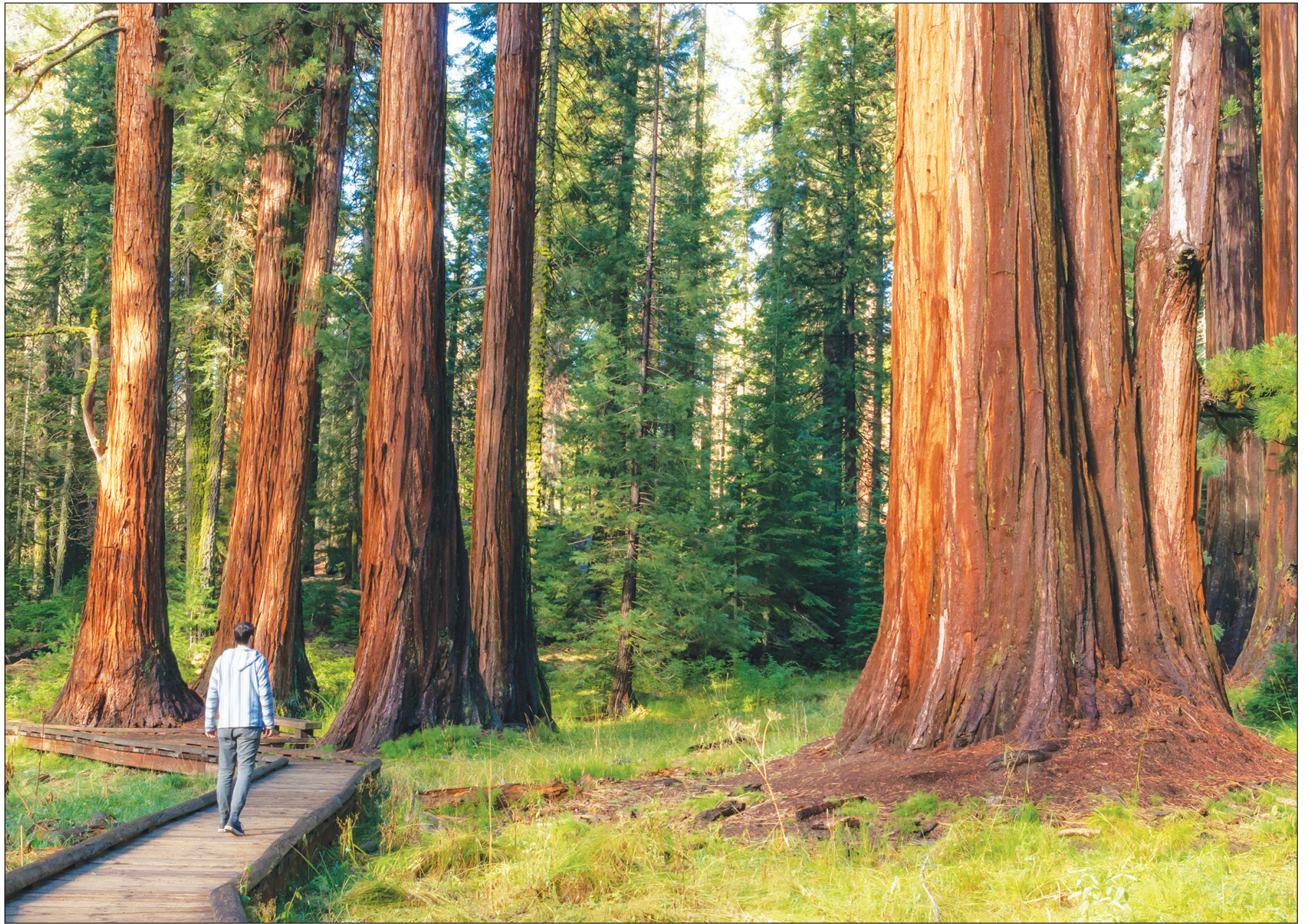
Travel provided by:

Collette Vacations
 CST #2006766-20

Mayflower Tours
 CST #2044099-20

Chamber Explorations
 CST #2048841-40

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



A young man walks through the giant groves in Sequoia National Park.

BELIKOVA / ADOBE STOCK

Visit Visalia celebrates National Parks Week

Visit Visalia hosted National Parks Week celebration events April 16 to 24 to teach visitors about the parks and their gateway city, Visalia



The Sun-Gazette

director of Visit Visalia said.

By Maddi Langton
 Reporter
 The Sun-Gazette

Visit Visalia was excited to spark a connection with National Parks week by hosting several family-friendly activities April 16 to 24.

"We are so happy to help 'sPARK' connections' with our local national parks—Sequoia and Kings Canyon—and provide our visitors with fun activities and information about the national parks," Nellie Freeborn, executive director of Visit Visalia said.

The National Park Service hosted special events and activities that were open to visitors who are looking to learn more about the parks and the gateway city of Visalia. The parks service wants to pique people's interest with national parks and highlighted a different theme each day. All these events were held in conjunction with the National Parks Service events held annually to highlight America's treasures.

On Saturday, April 16, the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks waived park entry fees to start the week off. On Wednesday, April 20, guest speaker Kirsta Simonic from the Sequoia Guides talked about giant sequoias in a fun and interactive presentation. This event was free for all ages and took place at the Sequoia Legacy Tree in downtown Visalia at 5 p.m. On Satur-



day, April 23, in accordance with National Junior Ranger Day, kids were encouraged to explore, learn and protect their national parks and become an official Junior Ranger. Once they acquired their badges, they were welcomed to come into the Visit Visalia office and receive a free congratulatory gift anytime before June 30.

The city of Visalia is not only a gateway to the great outdoors, but is a charming and welcoming place with an abundance of experiences. Along with great outdoor experiences and the arts, Visalia's local food scene ranges from a culture of thriving food trucks to fine dining offering foodie lovers even more to explore. Visit Visalia is looking forward to greeting all travelers.

For more information please visit visitvisalia.com/national-parks-week-2022.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Big changes to Annual Awards



By Gail Zurek
 President and CEO
 Visalia Chamber

"It's the most wonderful time of the year..." while traditionally a Christmas song, it's been running through my head during the Spring.

After a long three-year hiatus, the Visalia Chamber of Commerce is knee-deep in planning our Annual Awards. Celebrating local businesses and the people that make Visalia great is at the heart of this 130-plus-year-old chamber. Bringing our community together to celebrate the 'Best' of Visalia has always been my favorite night of the year. This program reminds us that while being in business isn't for the faint of heart, those who do it, particularly here in Visalia, do so much more than just sell widgets. Visalia businesses give back to this community in significant ways that inspire others, connect us all and give us hope for an even better future. During these last particularly hard years, I missed this celebration. I think we all missed the opportunity to gather for the celebration of the great things our local businesses have accomplished. After such a monumental time in history, the return on annual awards makes this event that much sweeter.

If you have never been, this is your year to attend. Consider this your invitation and head over to visaliachamber.org/awards for tickets.

We have made some changes that reflect some of our lessons over the last three years. First, we are excited to announce Annual Awards will be hosted at Visalia's historic Fox Theater. This grand theater is truly a gem and needs our support. Unable to host events, the Friends of the Fox have been without the regular financial support it relies on. Additionally, this beautiful theatre fits

for such a glorious celebration.

We've also learned the value of our local restaurants. They have faced a changing business environment from all angles, government restrictions, health concerns, supply chain shortages, staffing shortages, and patience shortages. Yet they have still managed to serve delicious, creative, culinary creations that soothe the soul. To support them, we're changing our traditional banquet event. This year we have moved the event earlier so, after the awards show, you can gather with your office, teammates, and family at a local restaurant to celebrate. Everyone wins. You get to choose the type of food to celebrate with, and local restaurants benefit from your support. Our website will have more information but start talking about where you'd like to make reservations.

And here's something you probably won't hear anywhere else; we've lowered the price. With over a 60% price reduction, tickets are now only \$30. This means even the smallest businesses can afford to bring their entire team. Gathering together to celebrate good is something all teams need right now.

While anyone who has attended knows the table decorations are next level, this year's swag bags will have all the same good-spirited competition. Swag bags have a bit of a storied history at major award celebrations. These bags are opportunities to get in front of influencers, promote their company to a new audience, and have fun. We are doing the same thing. If you want to design ten swag bags for a row of those in attendance, expose your company to a new audience, or just get in on the fun competition about who has the best grab bags, contact our office at 559-734-5876.

The Annual Awards Committees, Chamber Staff, and the Board of Directors are excited to welcome you back to again celebrate Visalia, our local businesses, and how together we are stronger. Ticket and sponsorship information can be found at visaliachamber.org/awards.

CITY UPDATE

Visalia's Public Opinion Survey is now open

Each year since the 1970s, the City of Visalia has conducted a survey to gauge the sentiments and opinions of citizens. This year's survey is here, but act fast, the survey closes May 13th.

This year, with the approval of the City Council, the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) is again conducting the annual Public Opinion Survey to determine the public's satisfaction with City services, programs, and projects. The Survey includes questions on service contact with Visalia Fire and Police Departments and asks respondents to rate a variety of other City services ranging from road maintenance to recycling collection.

For 2022, the CAC chose to include a question on the new Sports Park for question #8 and if residents think the City should have a Public Swim Complex for question #10. The bulk of the survey may seem familiar to those who have completed past City of Visalia public opinion surveys. By design, much of the survey remains unchanged from year to year to better measure trends and changes in public opinion.

This year's survey will be available digitally via the City website at www.visalia.city/



Open to all Visalia residents, the survey is an opportunity to provide feedback and help shape the future of our community. By sharing these details and the survey link to those in your professional and personal network, you can help us ensure that we receive responses from a cross section of the public.

In total, the survey takes approximately five minutes to complete and will remain open until May 13th.

For those who would like to request a paper survey be sent to them, they can contact City of Visalia Administration at 713-4535, 713-4900 (TTY) or email communityfeedback@visalia.city

For more information on the 2022 Public Opinion Survey, contact CAC staff representatives Jason Serpa, Public Works Manager, at 713-4533 or jason.serpa@visalia.city or Lt. Luma Fahoum, Police Department, at 713-4103 or luma.fahoum@visalia.city.

For the latest updates and news from the City of Visalia, visit www.visalia.city or visit them on social media @CityofVisalia.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Name: Keith Stump
Company: Able, Inc.
Title: Executive Director

Able is a job training and life skills program dedicated to creating opportunities, facilitating connections, and reducing stigma for people with developmental disabilities in the Central Valley.

We have two big announcements! The first is that we've rebranded and the second is that we're moving! Our rebrand was officially launched late last year and we're just beginning to share the new look with our community. We're purchasing a building that better serves the community and our clients moving forward (and yes, we'll still be in Visalia!).

Able is all about empowering amazing people to be independent, and in many cases, even employed. We make connections throughout our entire community.

Able is everywhere. We're part of the Visalia, Tulare, and Dinuba Chambers; we're connected with rotaries and clubs throughout Tulare County. We're proud to service the City of Visalia Parks as well as partner with Rosa Brothers, Best Buy, Kraft, Kaweah Container, and others. We partner with several key non-profits in our community including The Source LGBT+ Center, Happy Trails, United Way, Central Valley Regional Center, and the Visalia Adult School just to name a few!

People. It's all about the people we serve. We learn much more from them than we will ever teach.

The Chamber has featured us in various outlets and we're here right now! We've also loved being part of IMPACT over the last two years.

Able people are everywhere and we're all about community. Whether you are someone who is looking to develop life skills or tap into our unique on-the-job training and placement; or you are a local business or non-profit who needs services, we're here for you.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

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Editor Gail Zurek
Layout The Sun-Gazette

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Call 734-5876. Mail to:
Visalia Chamber of Commerce
222 N. Garden St. #300
Visalia, CA 93291
Visit 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.

Business Connector Members:
■ Tennis Visalia

Small Business Members:
■ LMG Ag Products
■ The Valley Eatery by Chef Tim

Small Business Nonprofit Members:
■ Southern Sierra Conservancy
■ PAW Estate Rescue and Shelter, Inc.

RENEWING

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

Champion Members:
■ Bueno Beverage Company

Regional Leader Members:
■ California Water Service Company*

Keystone Members:
■ California Dairies, Inc.*

Community Investor Members:

■ College of the Sequoias*

Business Connector Members:

■ La Quinta Inn*
■ Quail Park on Cypress*
■ Zeltmacher Structural Design Engineering, Inc.

Small Business Members:

■ Anthem Blue Cross
■ Bryan Company*
■ Bryson Cancer Care, Inc.*
■ Klink Citrus Association*
■ Law Offices of Sherwood & Marvin
■ Milestone Pediatrics, Inc.*
■ Spraying Devices, Inc.
■ Tulare County Library
■ Valley Yellow Pages

Community Investor Nonprofit Members:

■ GateWay Church*

* Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.

**CALIFORNIA 16TH SENATE DISTRICT
Gail Zurek named 2022
Women of the Year**

Senator Shannon Grove (R-Bakersfield) has selected Gail Zurek, President and CEO of the Visalia Chamber of Commerce as her 2022 Women of the Year. Each year, Senator Grove nominates from the 16th Senate District a woman known for her hard work and dedication to improving the lives of others. This year, Senator Grove nominated Gail Zurek for her mission and success in creating a business-friendly community, a place where job creators are welcomed with open arms.



GAIL ZUREK

"Gail has been a strong advocate for businesses and has supported Visalia's economic vitality," said Senator Grove. "She's worked especially hard to put Visalia on the map, giving the community a key voice in California's heartland."

Zurek and her team at the Visalia Chamber poured themselves into supporting business, providing resources, workshops, and support during the COVID pandemic. Businesses were forced to reimagine and innovate as the market changed overnight. Gail's innovative approach gave businesses real solutions and, perhaps more importantly, hope. From leveraging local relationships to create relief funds, to workshops about accessing federal and state programs, to weekly video messages communicating the latest business information, the Visalia Chamber was focused on making sure local businesses not only survived but thrived.

Serving the Visalia Chamber for over seven years, Gail has led community-wide initiatives to create a microbrew district to infuse a developing industry into Visalia's historic downtown; developed Jr. CEO to teach youth the value of starting their own business; and created Impact Leadership Conference to provide substantive world-class leadership training for young professionals in the Central Valley.

In addition to serving Visalia businesses through her position at the Visalia Chamber, Gail is a second-year student at San Joaquin College of Law. Pursuing her law degree will allow Gail to provide solutions to local businesses more effectively. Gail and her husband Michael have been married for twenty years, have two teenage boys, and firmly believe life should be an adventure.



rector at Tulare County Farm Bureau. Jeff touched on what the company he is involved farm, that include blueberries, cherries and table grapes and ways they had to evolve to be able to meet new standards produce and be able to compete in the market with other states and countries. After this panel was time for lunch. Lunch was Mexican food. The food was really good. After lunch the next panel was California AG and the featured presenter was Vivkie Goudreau. She discussed her background and her move to the Central Valley and how The Whole Vine started from an idea to showcase that we have a lot to celebrate and be grateful for here in the Valley and The Whole Vine cel-

brates grapes. The next Whole Vine festival is scheduled to be in October 2022. The last panel for the day was Local Ag which included presenters Bob McKellar from Farmer Bob's World, Darrin Monteiro from California Dairies, and J.R. Shannon from SK Ranch Management. This panel discussed local farming and what they are going through with today's issues and new regulations but also what is the great thing about being in the AG career. The day ended with a tour of Farmer Bob's World. The group got on a trailer being pulled by the tractor and got to tour, the class was given a history and informative tour on what it takes to care for and have a productive farm.

RIBBON CUTTINGS



Arts Visalia hosted a ribbon cutting in March in celebration of their grand re-opening. Their May First Friday opening reception will be May 6, featuring Christopher Troutman and Chao Ding. The exhibit will run through May 27. The 21st Annual Orchid Sale is back and will be available while supplies last.

DAY SESSION

On April 8, Visalia Leadership had the 7th day session of the course. The day session's topic was Agriculture and Water and the facilitators for the day were Karissa Padron and Jason Deniz. The morning was nice and sunny and the day started at Farmer Bob's World in Ivanhoe at 8:30 am. There was breakfast, coffee and fresh oranges provided by Farmer Bobs, Bob gave a brief history on how the farm started in 1927 by his parents and how the idea came about in creating Farmer Bob's World. The class snacked and chatted until the first panel started. The first panel was about local water and included presenters Kevin McCusker from California Water and James Fisher from Tulare Irrigation District. We started the panel by seeing a video about the water in California, its history and what is going on today. California is in a water crisis and water is becoming less available due to the drought and other reasons. Kevin and James touched on how the Visalia and the surrounding areas are affected by this since we live in an area with a lot of agriculture. The second panel as AG innovation included presenters Patricia Stever from Tulare County Farm Bureau and Jeff Beck from Lagomarsino group. Patricia discussed her involvement with students and then to being the executive di-



The Visalia Rawhide hosted a special ribbon cutting event on April 6 to kick off a new season. Game tickets can be purchased at rawhide-baseball.com.



Sequoia Painting located at 1125 N. Roseburg Ct. hosted a ribbon cutting to kick off their chamber membership. Sequoia Painting is a full-service painting company that specializes in residential and commercial painting. Call (559) 201-8367 to start your paint project.

CSET among selected nonprofits of Target Circle Community Giving

Target Loyalty Members may cast their nonprofit votes by June 30

By Micaela Lara-Lopez
CSET Marketing Coordinator

Community Services Employment Training (CSET) is honored to announce that it was chosen to participate in a special charitable giving campaign, sponsored and funded by Target. Now through June 30, Target Circle guests have a chance to help direct a portion of Target's donation to CSET. We are calling all CSET supporters to help us make the most of this incredible opportunity.

Every vote counts to help us receive a portion of the available Target funds as we continue our mission to inspire youth, families, and communities to achieve self-reliance

We've partnered with Target Circle. Vote by June 30. CSET Community Services Employment Training. Target Circle NONPROFIT PARTNER.

through innovative pathways and collaboration. Target Circle is a loyalty program for Target shoppers (Guests), available nationwide. Guests earn a vote for each Target trip. Guests can then use those votes to di-

rect where funds go in support of nonprofits in their community and across the nation. As each voting period wraps, Target awards grants to the nonprofits based on the percentage of votes they receive.

Guests in participating markets can enroll in the Target Giving Program for free by signing up at target.com/circle, by downloading the Target App through App Store or Google Play, or by phone at their local Target store. As you shop, you earn more votes, allowing you the opportunity to keep voting multiple times during the campaign!

Guests may cast their votes for CSET in the Target app. Here's how:

- Step 1: Choose "My Target" in the Target app
- Step 2: Tap on "Target Circle"
- Step 3: Select "Vote for nonprofits"
- Step 4: Find us & vote!

To learn more about Target Circle visit, www.target.com/circle. For questions regarding CSET's Target Circle Community Giving, email csetgiving@cset.org.



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MAY 11, 2022 | 12PM

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sue@visaliachamber.org

Travel provided by: Chamber Explorations;
CST#: 204884140

Book Now!

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES with THE CHAMBER. VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. LEARN MORE: visaliachamber.org/travel



Congratulations to **Fresno Yosemite International Airport** who celebrated 60 Years of Growth on March 25th!

Bank of the Sierra announced Tom Lynn as Vice President, Senior Commercial Loan Officer for its Real Estate Industries Group.

California Service Dog Academy



VISALIA RAWHIDE

Visalia Rawhide defeated the Quakes in 13 innings by a score of 5-4. It took 13 pitchers and 4 hours and 13 minutes to clinch the Opening Weekend series.

Cindy Summers of the **Visalia Public Cemetery District** was awarded the Presidents Award for Outstanding Service in Public Cemeteries in California. The award given by the Public Cemetery Alliance is to annually recognize one person who has been exemplary in furthering the professionalism and excellence of cemetery management in California.

Provost & Pritchard recently announced that Assistant Engineers, Kelly McEnerney and Jordan Muell, passed the exam and have met the State of California required qualifications to be licensed Civil Engineers.

Family HealthCare Network was presented with the Large Business of the Year Award on behalf of the Cutler-Orosi Lion's Club.

LMG Ag Products participated in the "Cultivate Community" contest sponsored by ADAMA to give back to their community. Through the contest, \$8,000 was donated to **Happy Trails Riding Academy**.

Visalia Police Activities League (PAL) won 1st Place Overall at the 1st Annual First Responders Battle for the Beef BBQ Competition. Proceeds will assist with the PAL's outreach efforts and programs.

Assistance League of Visalia recently donated luggage and backpacks to the children and youth of **CASA of Tulare County**.

Congratulations to **Topograph** who celebrated one year in March!



TOPOGRAPH

has teamed up with **BarrelHouse Visalia** for a Pints and Patriots fundraiser on May 15th. The public is invited for live music, food, raffle and silent auction. Tickets are not required.

Eagle Mountain Casino added to its Jackpot total in March with a \$50,000 winner. In the past couple of months, Eagle Mountain has awarded over 2,700 jackpots to their guests, totaling over \$7 million through January and February.

Tulare County Library has partnered with **Kaweah Brewing Co.** to host The Final Draft Book Club. Supplies can be picked up at the Visalia Library, with a discussion scheduled for May 19th at Kaweah Brewing.

Kaweah Health considers building staff housing

Medical center says it is looking into developing residential units in downtown buildings to house its visiting physician residents and medical students

By John Lindt
Sierra2theSea News

Kaweah Health is hoping to take up residence in residential units downtown, or at least their physician residents are.

Chief strategy officer Marc Mertz said Kaweah Health is looking to acquire residential units in the Downtown Visalia area to accommodate their physician residents and visiting medical students. Among the options are talks about developing the vacant Main St Theatre into residential units. The theater could make for an ideal

location as it backs up to a city parking garage and is just a few blocks from Kaweah Health's medical complex. Other second story Downtown properties are in play as well.

"We have been looking at options to acquire or develop residential property in downtown for a couple of years," Mertz said. "We are looking at several options, including the (Main St) theater" but said no deals are in place.

JR Shannon's Legacy Investments bought the theater from the city in 2018 for \$515,000.

Shannon originally proposed to use the building for a large concept restaurant and later discussed splitting the building between commercial and residential tenants. Mertz said the lack of new construction and inventory of existing homes has made finding affordable residential property difficult.

"As you know, the real estate market has been heating up in Tulare County, and these learners often struggle to find affordable housing," Mertz said.

Residents, or medical doctors and specialists who have their



medical degree and are gaining experience at a hospital, spend between 1 and 5 years in Visalia, depending on their specialty. Mertz said Kaweah Health Medical Center is currently hosting 130 residents.

Medical students, those who have a four year degree but

have yet to graduate from post-graduate medical school, are typically here for just four to six weeks. Mertz said Kaweah Health has an affiliation with the University of Southern California to complete their clinical rotations while other schools, like UC Davis, have less formal partnerships.

"These rotations are a great opportunity for us to show them that Kaweah and Visalia are great places for them to consider when choosing their residency," Mertz said. "Having safe, convenient, affordable temporary housing for these individuals would benefit all involved."

Mertz said he hopes medical schools will help fund the development of the residential units but said Kaweah Health will also be exploring state and federal grants to offset the cost of construction.

Life insurance for business owners

By Jacob Sorensen
Licensed Insurance Agent
Sorensen Agency Insurance



The discussion of life insurance can be a difficult conversation for anyone, but none the less it is a necessary conversation. When we think about the life insurance discussion it is most often associated to our personal situation within the household. There are plenty of reasons why people obtain life insurance, but the primary reasons are to pay off debt, maintain a current lifestyle, and protect the financial future of our loved ones. As we transition the conversation to business, I ask you. Do businesses need life insurance for owners and key people?

I assume most of you answered correctly but the answer is yes! Whether your business is a sole proprietorship, a partnership, or have a key person who plays a vital role in your business, life insurance should be a major consideration in your business plan. A properly structured life insurance policy can ensure the continued operations of the business in the event of an unexpected death. The list of people counting on you grows as you build a business; family members, business partners, and employees.

Let us look at a few opportunities a life insurance policy provides for a business. If you are a sole proprietor, it is a strong likelihood you leveraged assets or took on personal debt to start your business. If you have a spouse, they not only depend on your income but depend on the success of the business to pay off debts. A personal life insurance policy can ensure in the event of your death, the debts can be repaid, and loss of income can be replaced. A term life insurance policy can be a good option for covering the death benefit need while keeping costs low for the duration of the need.

Having ownership in a business with one or multiple partners can be a wonderful experience but can absolutely be more complicated in the event of a death of an owner. A buy-sell agreement should be used when there is multiple interest in ownership. Each owner would have a life insurance policy issued and in the event of their death its proceeds would provide liquidity to purchase the deceased's interest. Without a buy-sell agreement it is quite possible the remaining owners end up in business with someone not expected. A permanent life insurance policy might be the best option to last with the future of the business.

Every business has someone who is indispensable. These employees are called "key people" and without them the busi-

ness could suffer a loss of revenue until a replacement is found. A life insurance policy is issued on a key person and owned by the business. A key person life insurance policy can ensure the business can sustain its costs if revenue decreases while trying to find and train a replacement. A term life insurance policy should be considered for the estimated time of the key persons remaining employment.

As businesses grow, they compete in the marketplace to hire the best candidates. Candidates often look beyond the salary and expect additional benefits. A permanent life insurance policy can be one of those additional benefits that the employee owns but is paid for by the business. A permanent life insurance policy not only provides the employee's family financial

protection, but it can help supplement the employee's retirement income.

As you can see there are many possibilities as to why life insurance should be addressed in every business plan. An unexpected death is not only tragic, but it can create even more hardship and turmoil. Having a protection plan in place can reduce the impact on family members, business partners, and employees. This article was a brief overview of potential options that could apply to your business. Always consult with a licensed insurance agent to assess your needs, understand tax implications, and learn more about available products. American National has a suite of life insurance products to handle all your personal and business needs.

THE LAW AT WORK

Family responsibilities: A new 'protected class'?



By Brett T. Abbott
Gubler & Abbott LLP

When employers hear the words "protected class," certain other words come to mind: age, race, sex, religion, disability, etc. Both state (Fair Employment and Housing Act) and federal law (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) prohibit discrimination and harassment of workers based on these protected classes. Soon, there might be a new protected class.

Recently the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) released new guidance regarding discrimination against employees with caregiving responsibilities for family members. Similarly, California has a pending bill, AB 2182, which seeks to add "family responsibilities" as a protected class under the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA).

If passed, the bill would prohibit employment discrimination on account of family responsibil-

ities, defined as obligations of an employee or applicant to provide care for a minor child or care recipient. A care recipient includes a family member or household member of an employee who relies on the employee or applicant for medical care or assistance with activities of daily living.

Under the proposed bill, it would be unlawful for an employer to fail to make reasonable accommodations for the known family responsibilities of an applicant or employee related to specified obligations, or to retaliate or otherwise discriminate against a person for requesting an accommodation. While the bill would give employees additional flexibility in balancing work and home responsibilities, it would also create additional scenarios where employers would be required to engage in an interactive process and accommodate their employees.

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

Ask Jena

How can the Chamber help me with a business problem or question?

If we don't have the answer, we will connect you with someone who does. As a catalyst, convener, and champion of local business, we fight for our members!

How do I utilize my membership benefits?

You've come to the right person! Please contact me anytime to discuss how to leverage your membership benefits to their full potential.

Have a question about the Chamber?

Send me a message:
Jena@visaliachamber.org

VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTS

ANNUAL AWARDS

JUNE 9, 2022

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT VISALIACHAMBER.ORG/AWARDS

Thank you

TO OUR PREMIER MEMBERS

CHAMPION:



VISIONARY:



REGIONAL LEADERS:



KEYSTONE:



CORNERSTONE:

CIGNA, CSET, E.D.I.S., LAMP LITER INN, M. GREEN & COMPANY, MILLIPORESIGMA, SOCCER CITY 1852 VISALIA, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON

MEDIA PARTNERS:



JOSH TURNER

SLATED TO PERFORM AT THE VISALIA FOX

The country music recording artist is scheduled to take the stage on May 20, tickets on sale now

Country music lovers have a chance to see Josh Turner, the artist behind hits like "Your Man," "Would You Go With Me" and "Long Black Train," at the Fox Theater on May 20.

With his rich, deep voice and distinctive style, MCA Nashville recording artist Turner is one of country music's most recognizable hit-makers. From his 2003 Platinum-selling debut "Long Black Train" to his 2017 Billboard No. 1 release, "Deep South," Turner has scored multiple Grammy, CMA and ACM Awards nominations and received six Inspirational Country Music Awards.

Tickets start at \$44 plus applicable fees and go on-sale Friday, April 8 at 10 a.m. They are available for purchase at foxvisalia.org or at the box office.

Turner's newest project "I Serve A Savior" debuted at No. 1 on Nielsen's Top Current Country Albums Chart and No. 2 on Billboard's Top Country Albums Chart and Billboard's Top Christian Albums Chart. The project adds an exciting new dimension to the South Carolina artist's already acclaimed career. The "musically brilliant" (Worship Magazine) album remained Top 10 on Billboard's Top Country Albums Chart for 17 consecutive weeks. It currently sits at Top 10 on the Top Current Country Albums chart and Top 5 on the Top Current Contemporary Christian Albums chart, as it has for 38 of the 41 weeks since its October release.

The event is one of 12 shows happening at the Fox from April to June. Other upcoming concerts include the Sequoia Symphony Orchestra on April 9, Beatles tribute band The Reunion Beatles on April 16 and local musician Vanessa Rae on April 23. Local theater company Enchanted Playhouse will put on their production of Snow White on April 28, 29 and 30. The comedy musical Menopause the Musical will take place on May 17. Upcoming comedy shows at the Fox include Hodgetwins on April 22, Pablo Francisco on May 14, Steve Trevino on May 21 and Mario Aguilar on June 17. Additionally, the Visalia Chamber of Commerce will host their annual awards ceremony at the Fox on June 9. Tickets to any of these events can be purchased at foxvisalia.org or at the box office.



The Sun-Gazette

MICHAEL GOMEZ / JOSHTURNER.COM

Bank of America donates domestic violence kits to Family Services Tulare County, other Valley centers

Family Services of Tulare County is grateful for donations of basic necessities as they continue to see a rise in domestic violence cases



By Maddi Langton
Reporter
The Sun-Gazette



Domestic violence seems to be at an all time high without any relief in sight. Each year, Bank of America raises donations of basic necessities to help relieve pressure from local domestic violence shelters and bring awareness to the community.

"It takes a whole community," Family Services CEO Caity Meader said. "I think people think of domestic violence as a private issue or a family matter. And this is just one more way we appreciate Bank of America, for stepping out and demonstrating that it takes everybody in the community in different ways to help break the cycle of violence."

Family Services of Tulare County helps anywhere from 150-200 people each year. Their mission is to help children, adults, and families throughout Tulare County heal from domestic violence and thrive in healthy relationships. Family Services is a non-profit organization that accepts donations in all forms. Shelters like these usually lack the most basic necessities like sanitary products, diapers, clothing and food products. Meader expressed her gratitude for Bank of America and other organizations and individuals that donate "high needs" items, because it allows the nonprofit to spend money in other areas that need the help.

"Every time we don't have to spend funds on basic needs items, that gives us more flexibility to pay for services for these folks that ensure that they have every opportunity to really see a significant life change," Meader said.

This year the Bank of America donation is especially helpful seeing as Family Services has been busier than ever. Bank of America dropped off around 100 hygiene kits to Family Services on March 31. These kits are now being distributed throughout different areas of the program on a need basis. It will also help prepare for the arrival of new families and provide them with what they need to feel more comfortable.

There has been such an increase in needed services this year. Add on top distancing protocols and Family Services has had to put families up in motels more than ever before. Naturally these motel vouchers are an additional expense.

Meader has worked in the industry for 20 years

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and she has never seen it like this. The amount of crisis calls for service has taken an 86% jump from January 2019 to January 2022, but it doesn't stop there. Since January of this year, Family Services are continuing to see an increase of 15% month over month according to Meader.

"Many families have experienced a significant amount of trauma over the last couple of years that put additional strain on relationships. And we are definitely seeing that truth come through in our numbers," Meader said.

Some of these cases are referred to Family Services via the Tulare County Sheriff's Department high risk team. The high risk team assesses individuals to determine whether they are considered "high risk" or not. These individuals will then be given information on what Family Services has to offer regardless of risk status. This program is a good way to bring awareness to individuals who may not think their situation is a problem.

In lieu of families sheltering in place at the beginning of the pandemic, Family Services implemented a chat line in addition to their calling hotline option. This online chat option allowed for several individuals in danger to talk to a trained domestic violence advocate without making a phone call. Family Services has seen a huge boom in cases via this method of communication. According to Meader, this chat is seeing individuals from not only Tulare County, but also individuals all over the country that are in need of help.

Family services is looking ahead to hopefully be able to broaden their horizons to more than Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"Because it's been so successful, we're hopeful to be able to expand it to 24/7 and also expand it to sexual assault survivors," Meader said.

With this boom in domestic violence cases, Family Services is doing what they can to open up more room for more available beds at their shelter. Meader explained that this issue has grown "exponentially, really fast" and they are doing what they can to keep up with this demand.

"We encourage people to look at this as it's not just an issue of an individual family, it can absolutely be a community-based issue. Because when we see violence in the home, that is the type of violence that spills out into schools and into public places and workplaces," Meader explained. "We want people to know that safety in the home is also a public safety issue."

Visit fstc.net for all donation inquiries, basic information, hotline phone number or to chat with an advocate.

"We want people to know that safety in the home is also a public safety issue."

CAITY MEADER
CEO
Family Services of Tulare County

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