

Topics in GA

By Jonathan DeYoe, Chairman of Governmental Affairs



The last three months at the GA committee, we have had presentations from Mayor Bates and council members Gordon Wozniak and Linda Maio. Here are a few highlights for the many of you who wanted to make the meetings but couldn't.

In addition to mentioning he might run again in 2 years, Mayor Bates expressed his great respect for the work that Phil Kamlarz is doing and his concern over the upcoming budget years due to reduced transfer tax revenue and the negotiations with the Police, Fire and City Employee's Unions. He expressed both the desire to be fair to those represented by the Unions and a concern for the city's shrinking coffers. This focused him sharply on the need to develop new revenue sources for the city.

On the top of his list is the hotel and conference center for the Shattuck site (a huge revenue source for the city) and the possibilities for the world class Berkeley Art Museum in addition to the myriad smaller projects throughout the cities transit corridors and the huge potential of West Berkeley.

He discussed his goals for better integration of social services and broadening of the successes on Telegraph to the rest of the City's commercial districts.

Mayor Bates has introduced the Public Commons for Everyone Initiative (PCEI) which will provide some minimal standards of street behavior in an effort to make Berkeley a nicer place to visit, an easier place to shop and an all around better place to be for those that live here as well as for those that frequent our great local restaurants and local shopping and arts districts.

PCEI is a more developed and well-rounded version of an idea supported by the Chamber for many years and we believe it needs and deserves your vocal support. There is an organized effort in Berkeley against ANY regulation of street behavior. If businesses and residents would like to see cleaner and safer commercial districts they should make their support of the PCEI known to the city council.

Go to <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/elected/> to find contact information for the Berkeley City Council.

Finally, he asked the chamber members to commit to greenhouse gas reduction by supporting the implementation of Measure G.

In February, Gordon Wozniak came to present much of the research and preparatory work that was being done for PCEI. He expressed the need to expand and coordinate the social services in tandem with

(See "Topics" Page 2)

Just One of Those Days

By Roland Peterson, Chairman of the Board



A few evenings ago, I was watching the evening news on television. The weather forecaster began his comments, "Today was a Chamber of Commerce day in the Bay Area, if I may say that..." Yes, you may say that. And it dawned on me that although I

hear that phrase a couple of times per year, what does it really mean?

When someone who isn't a Chamber member describes something as a Chamber of Commerce day, or place, or event, that person is often describing something portrayed as wonderful. Sometimes there is a hint of sarcasm not so slightly hidden in that description. But when you really think about it, it really is wonderful. So, today I am calling Berkeley a Chamber of Commerce city. Consider the following:

1. Setting—can the view from the Berkeley hills be anything less than truly spectacular? Anything less than world-class? I agree there are other spectacular views elsewhere, but Berkeley's ranks right with them, no apologies needed.
2. Weather—admit it, can it be better than right here?
3. Brilliance—Berkeley is home to a world-class public university and one of the best community colleges anywhere. What city boasts more Nobel laureates? And this city even has an element named after it.
4. Architecture and historic landmarks—Listening to the Chamber's and my critics, one would think that these aren't valued. Nonsense!! This is what gives any city part of its sense of place. The Chamber opposed Measure J in the last election to reform abuses, not tear down buildings of beauty and historical impor-

tance. We have these treasures in abundance, and we should celebrate that.

5. That football team—Go Bears!
6. Restaurants—In recent weeks, I have savored several wonderful dinners in some of Berkeley's fabulous restaurants, who are Chamber members I might add. Many cities would openly "salivate" to have them in their city. We tend to take them for granted. So here's a Chamber salute to our great restaurants! And while I'm on the topic of food, a salute to our farmer's markets as well.
7. Compassion and service—We have in our city some of the best and most compassionate social service agencies anywhere. I recently noted with appreciation the generosity of certain restaurants for "We give thanks" month. But these agencies do this year-round. We know who you are, this list is long, and our word is "thank you." And to top this off, we have to add the caring, generous citizens of this fair city.
8. The arts—Symphony, opera, live theatre, street performances, museums, festivals—need I say more?
9. Tilden Park, Live Oak Park, Cordonices Park, plus many small neighborhood parks.
10. The Marina with the Pier, the boats, the view, Cesar Chavez Park, and soon new sports fields. Plus possibly a ferry terminal in the near future!

With a list like the above, isn't every day in Berkeley a Chamber of Commerce day? I issue this challenge to every Chamber member—let's try to make each and every one of our businesses a Chamber of Commerce business. World-class, the envy of the rest of the world, first-rate, obviously superior. I know of many who succeed at that, and many are so good at what they do, just being themselves proves the point. I think it is time we all go out and enjoy our fine city. ■

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2007

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- GETTING BACK TO BASICS: ANOTHER LOOK AT 2 IMPT. DOCUMENTS.....PG. 2
- APPLAUSE! APPLAUSE! FOR RACHEL RUPERT!PG. 3



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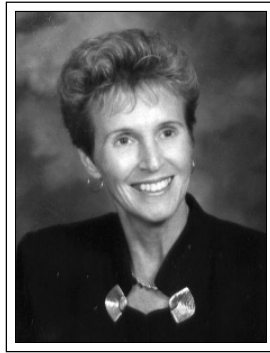
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Getting Back to Basics: Another Look at Two Important Documents



By Rachel A. Rupert, CEO

IRAQ – Should we stay? Should we get out? Why do we fight at all? Your guess is as good as mine. However, if you believe the surveys taken, you would have to say, we Americans want out of Iraq. That is if the surveys taken have not been manipulated to give the pollsters the responses they are looking for; kind of like the on-going song and dance routine a majority of our illustrious legislators practice each and every day. Too bad, most of them have not gone back to the basics. Below is my take (personal and professional) on two very important documents that I wish everyone would take the time to review.

Declaration of Independence - If a Chamber of Commerce were to be a true legislative advocate for its members, it would be prudent for us to remember why the United States of America declared its independence. When any one person or political party continually subjects a nation to abuses, more often than not a natural occurrence will happen. An act of civil disobedience will take place or in some instances an attempted coup and sadly enough a full-scale war, with all its pain and suffering, may be considered the road to establishing or reestablishing good government.

And, so history (as evidenced in the Declaration of Independence) puts the King of Great Britain right up there with all our past and present tyrants. Why any one individual or group would believe they have absolute power over another is sometimes beyond comprehension. When people are expected to abdicate their rights as a human being, whether experienced in the form of harassment, obstruction of justice, seizure of property and goods, taxation, involuntary servitude or any other invasion of unalienable rights, a call to action will be imminent. For one government to force its own beliefs or laws without giving the people within a nation the right to choose creates a case for them to justly proclaim their independence.

It would do our own legislators good to reread the Declaration of Independence. Too many times they vote on issues that significantly impact the entire nation without realizing the true outcome of their vote. Too many times our legislators play the political game without remembering why they were elected. And, too many times, it is we the people who ultimately pay the price for the decisions made by our elected representatives. And, yes, it is we the people who must pay attention. Through the document signed on July 4, 1776, we were given the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and as

such are the guardians of the same for future generations.

Every time I attend a city council meeting, I am a representative not only for our membership, but also for all Berkeley businesses. It is my obligation to be informed, vocal and available to protect the rights of these businesses to be treated fairly and with respect within our community. It is also my duty to the community to help develop and nurture a business community with a conscience. Any city must have a balance of a strong economic base with businesses that are sensitive to the social or welfare needs of the whole community. This is not always an easy task, but one that is necessary if a city is to be healthy and vital for everyone. Again, as proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, people must feel a part of the whole process or they will exert whatever force is necessary to right what they feel is wrong.

International Bill of Human Rights - It is amazing to me that our nation should have to enact any additional legislation to protect human beings from experiencing unwarranted abuse of human rights. If people would take the time to read documents, like the International Bill of Human Rights, they would understand more clearly the concept of inherent dignity, equality and inalienable rights for everyone. We are a nation of people that is suppose to embrace freedom of speech without threat of retribution. Today, I could go through most of these articles and point out where we the people are in direct conflict with these basic beliefs. The International Bill of Human Rights was adopted in 1948; maybe it's time for us to take a hard look at where we stand on these basic principles of this important document. As Chief Executive Officer of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, I have had a constant reaffirming lesson in human rights. Since we are the home of the University of California and mother of the 60's free speech movement, I feel quite comfortable stating that we have a diverse community. I have been taught many lessons by being part of this multicultural community. We are all the same and yet we are all different. The gift in all this is to make it work for the good of the community. Each culture has something of value to offer a community. When you can effectively get people of varied backgrounds to work together, your organization and the community benefit significantly. I believe it is up to organizations, like the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, to lead the way in this area. The **International Bill of Human Rights** — international is highlighted, because I feel, we the people, lose sight of that aspect. This document is intended to protect the rights of all people within our country. It is important that we all realize that our nation has become a country of many nationalities. This is a fact! Together we have the capacity to accomplish great things. Apart we could end up destroying the very essence of what is important to us all. I choose greatness! What is your choice? ■

Topics... from Front Page

stopping the current multiple warning requirements, expanding the ordinance to include sitting and expanding the ordinance to all of Berkeley's commercial districts. Included in this presentation was an opportunity to look at similar rules in Portland and Santa Cruz.

In March, Linda Maio came to the Chamber to present a big issue that continues to threaten both residential and commercial parts of her district and much of West Berkeley – Storm Drain Infrastructure. After describing the age and deterioration of Berkeley's storm drain system, describing some recent major flooding in years '03-'05 and cataloging the list of contributing factors (including development using non-permeable surfaces, illegal connections, clogged catch basins, tidal actions and the Bay), Linda suggested that it would take about \$84 million to upgrade and modernize the system and improve the Potter and Strawberry main lines.

Much of the ensuing discussion was an attempt to contextualize this challenge. How much of the total infrastructure cost deficit is specifically storm drain infrastructure. Is the storm drain system only 10% of the whole infrastructure need or is it more like 50%. The state just passed an infrastructure package through the legislative process and it seemed important to members of the committee that we at least understand the whole infrastructure problem, even if we have to approach the solution one piece at a time.

On April 2nd, Kriss Worthington will be presenting his 10 point plan for business. If this gets out in time, I hope to see more of you at the Government Affairs meeting. ■

Applause! Applause! for Rachel Rupert!

By Betty Loftesness



Betty Loftesness & Rachel Rupert

Applause! Applause! for Rachel Rupert! What a wonderful and talented woman who made a difference in Berkeley and especially a difference in the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce.

Imagine, assuming the position of CEO when the Chamber was at a very low point. Rachel "has the touch" to make a success of the position; Rachel "took it on," and she focused her business expertise to put things in order. She learned about the work involved to make things happen. One of Rachel's mentors and good friend was, and is, David Ruegg of the Rue-Ell Company. His encouragement and advice made a difference in the success of the Chamber.

There are others who "stood by" Rachel when she probably was ready to "throw in the towel." Miriam Ng, of Korman & Ng, was always there to give a boost to ideas and suggestions.

Her laughter made a difference in the success of many projects. Projects, oh the projects and events! I remember the Mixers—they gave us the opportunity to encourage businesses to "open their doors" to other businesses. A great way to make friends and share their trials and tribulations of doing business in Berkeley.

Then, Breakfast meetings were introduced to the membership. Those days began so early! These were well attended when hosted at the former Santa Fe Bar & Grill and later at the Berkeley City Club. Good speakers! Good food and good friendships too!

We got our "feet wet" when it was decided to "spread our wings" and arrange for events such as the "Crush" - a good draw and a money-maker, and it was a new venue. It took off, and so did we. In the early days it was called the "Beoujois Nouveau." French wines only. A lot of work, but it was the "start of something grand."

"A Night at the Races" and "Casino Night" were a lot of work. We would shop and telephone for the prizes, but prizes were the reward that brought the crowd. Everyone had the opportunity to be a winner! Another money-maker!

"Christmas letters to Santa" - and all the letters were answered. We lit the big tree behind City Hall. A good feeling for the Chamber and we were delighted to do our part to make the City more festive during the Holidays.

The "Berkeley Affair Parade" was another "big" event. We were involved to "show off" our City with the Parade and exhibits - worth all the efforts.

Every event that I have mentioned was chaired by Rachel. She was a worker and those of us at the Chamber helped make her efforts come to fruition.

The Annual Dinners were so well planned and recognition of those who directed the Chamber were honored. There was always a theme which made every event special. What a talent!

Let us not forget Scholarships, Ribbon Cuttings, The Convention & Visitors Bureau, re-doing the building and hiring staff. It takes skill to manage these issues. She spent many hours juggling, schedules.

And let's not forget the Berkeley Women's Chamber of Commerce. Rachel chaired the organization, as did I and Miriam Ng. Let me not forget Peggy Casey. Oh, the good times we had. We even hosted the Convention of the California Women's Chamber of Commerce. A great group! We were clowns and "Dill Pickles."

Rachel, you have been outstanding as CEO of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce! It was my privilege to work with you. My memories are so dear and you made each and every one of them special. May you enjoy your free time at a new location. Don't forget the good times, you made them happen! Applause! Applause! Betty Loftesness. ■



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The Art of Tipping

Winston Burton, Downtown Area Planning Advisory Committee Member



Tipping is not a city in China!

I was twenty-five years old and my two brothers and I were going out for a night on the town. They are both great musicians, thus usually broke. My father stopped us on the way out and said, "You guys should do what we used to do in the 1940's. We would give all of our money to one person and he would pay for everything and everyone thought he had money. The next time out someone else would hold all our money and eventually people thought we all had money." Unfortunately I think that's how he snagged my mom! But it worked. The "Burton brothers" became known as big spenders and big tippers. We were the life of the party, and partying was our life. It all came to a crashing halt when I tipped a waitress I was trying to impress \$25 on a \$25 tab. My brother liked her also and we had a big falling out.

When I drove a taxicab in Philadelphia my whole existence was dependent on tips. Someone once made the mistake of offering me a \$10 tip to get them to the airport on time. They eventually gave me \$20 to slow down. What a chicken!

One of the fun things I learned to do was what I call "blind tipping", tipping people that never expect it and/or in professions that never get tips. How about your dentist receptionist or DMV clerk? They stutter

and stammer and say I can't take that. I say why not! I leave a \$5 on the counter and walk away. You'd be surprised at how much good will and good memories \$5 can create even months later when you return.

I recently conducted a completely scientific survey (of at least 5 waiters, waitresses and bartenders) in the places I frequent in the area and the following are some results:

- People from the East Coast tip more than anyone else, only if they're on vacation.
- Women tip better than men, but they use calculators and charts more.
- Older men tip the worst, unless they're with much younger women.
- Black people (who have been falsely categorized as poor tippers) tip well if or when they tip at all.
- Bad service deserves no tip, especially if you don't plan to go there again.
- Tip early and well, you'll get better service and stronger drinks throughout the night.

Ultimately we may not be remembered for what we have or leave behind, but for what we give. So tip well!

Winston Burton
Berkeley resident

What do you think?
winburton@aol.com

■ **April 19th – Evening Mixer**
Berkeley City Club
2315 Durant Ave.
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

■ **May 9th – Meet & Greet**
Chester's Bayview Café
1508 Walnut St., Unit B
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.

■ **May 17th – Annual Show Case**
Double Tree Hotel
200 Marina Blvd.
5:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M.

■ **June 13th – Meet & Greet**
Chester's Bayview Cafe
1508 Walnut St., Unit B
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.

■ **June 28th – Annual Dinner**
DoubleTree Hotel
200 Marina Blvd.
6:00 P.M. – 9:30 P.M.

■ **July 11th – Meet & Greet**
Rose Garden Inn
2740 Telegraph Ave.
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.

■ **July 26th - Evening Mixer**
Wells Fargo Bank
2144 Shattuck Ave.
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

■ **August 8th – Meet & Greet**
Rose Garden Inn
2740 Telegraph Ave.
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.

■ **August 23rd – Berkeley FD BBQ**
Berkeley Yacht Club
1 Seawall Drive
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

■ **September 12th – Meet & Greet**
Rose Garden Inn
2740 Telegraph Ave.
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.

■ **September 20th - Evening Mixer**
AAA Insurance
1775 University Avenue
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

■ **October 10th – Meet & Greet**
Chester's Bayview Café
1508 Walnut St., Unit B
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.

■ **November 4th – Annual Crush Festival**
DoubleTree Hotel
200 Marina Blvd.
2:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.

■ **November 14th – Meet & Greet**
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