



BERKELEY

Promoting, connecting and strengthening business & community!

BUSINESS ADVOCATE

A Publication of the BERKELEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE • 1834 University Ave. • Berkeley, CA 94703 • TEL 510.549.7003 • FAX 510.549.1789 • EMAIL info@berkeleychamber.com

Time to Shop Local!

By Jonathan DeYoe, Chairman of Governmental Affairs



Whew! Has it really been 2 years since I started chairing the Chamber's GA committee? It's hard for me to believe it's already time to pass the torch. Before I hand it over to my worthy successor, I'd like to take a moment to reflect upon what I've learned during my interesting, challenging,

all-too-brief tenure.

The way I see it, the existence of our Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs committee in Berkeley can best characterized as an act of unmitigated blind optimism. Despite the fact that the Chamber and the Council often appear to be at odds, both parties have done their level best to keep the lines of communication open, with varying degrees of success. There is resistance on both sides, but you can still see movement: the council wants to support business and business wants to support them. Unfortunately, the growing Marines/Code Pink issue is the most recent evidence of the Council and the Chamber failing to connect on a vital issue.

The real tragedy in this communication breakdown is that we could truly be the Council's greatest ally. In fact, I am certain that our council people are genuinely concerned about local businesses, if for no other reason than that the challenging economic conditions of late have helped drive home how important a thriving business community is to Berkeley's success as a whole. As the Real Estate Transfer Tax has dried up a bit, the Council has come to realize that their best source for generating revenue to fill city coffers is the local merchants. Uh-oh! Our best protected secret is out. There truly is a direct correlation between prosperous businesses and a flourishing community, both in terms of tax revenue and direct support for the local non-profits that are critical to making the quality of life in Berkeley better for all its citizens. A successful business community yields handsome monetary and invaluable social returns for the city.

My takeaway from the last two years is that while there will always be elements in Berkeley that simply will not listen to the needs of a business community, there is also a strong (though often silent) majority who are interested in supporting local businesses and the Berkeley economy in general. In one on one conversation, I sense a deep support for Berkeley merchants and an understanding of how difficult and expensive it is to do business in Berkeley. I cannot count the number of times I've been asked "Why do you stay in Berkeley?" However, when one goes to a council meeting or any general community meeting, those strong, silent types can't be heard over the shrill voices demanding the Council's attention. My hope is that the Council and Chamber can work together to create an environment where everybody can be heard - not just the folks with the loudest voices. I want to see measured, well reasoned opinions move us forward - not bullies with bullhorns.

Due to the recent council actions and ensuing increase in demonstrations, there is more and more talk of a Boycott of Berkeley Businesses. Comedian John Stewart even did a 4 minute "Berzerkeley" clip. If you have ever wondered how we could make our downtown even more sparse and create even more (See "Shop Local" on Page 3)

The Universe of a Bubble

By Roland Peterson, Chairman of the Board



All of us have been hearing plenty about bubbles lately. Is there a credit and housing bubble, and will it explode causing values to plummet? Is the stock market experiencing a bubble, as though the values of the Dow, NASDAQ, and more should be significantly lower? As your Chairman, this metaphor has seemed to me to be apt in still more ways.

The Marine Corps recruiting center on Shattuck and the City Council's votes on it have been the focus of lots of recent attention by the Chamber leadership. The Chamber has heard numerous times of the significant negative impacts to the neighboring businesses to the center and to the businesses that derive a substantial portion of their annual revenues from tourism. Members of the Chamber leadership have met with some members of the Council and their staffs to highlight these impacts to them and request some tangible support.

Repeatedly in dealing with this issue, I feel like I am in a Berkeley bubble. It is its own universe that is totally separated from all of the other universes and all of the rest of the country. I believe that the City Council in its actions did not consider how they would be viewed outside of the city. To be sure, their chief concern is usually satisfying their constituency, which for each is one-eighth of the city itself. It's a Berkeley bubble that ignores that the rest of the planet has an impact on Berkeley as much as Berkeley at times tries to impact the rest of the planet.

But, as in all bubbles, they pop easily. The right sharp point or the key wrong legislation can cause it all to explode. Whether they are adjustable rate mortgages resetting their interest rates or an incendiary phrase in a resolution, one sharp point does the trick.

I will never forget the day the Council first discussed the Marine Corps resolution. I read it on the Council agenda, and I thought to myself "No one will pass this" and thought of the reasons. That day I was more worried about other agenda items more than this one. How wrong I was! In the aftermath, my Berkeley bubble popped and I had to look more closely at our business brethren. I had to look at how Americans around the Bay Area, California, and the country would view Berkeley. I was forced to leave my Berkeley bubble, whether I wanted to or not. I misestimated badly how this issue would play itself out.

I believe that the eventual result from all of this will be an invigorated Chamber. More than any other organization in the city, it is your Chamber that has been in the forefront in support of those impacted businesses. As trying as these days are, these are the best days to be involved with your Chamber, to speak your voice, and move forward a business-sensitive agenda. I can't predict what exactly will be the outcome of these efforts, but efforts have been made and will continue to be made. Berkeley and its business community will be all the better for it. And all of us—City Council, businesses, protestors, and more—will be out of our bubbles and back into the world. ■

Business Expo 2008

TWO DYNAMIC chambers coming together to promote their members:
Berkeley & Emeryville Chambers of Commerce

DoubleTree Hotel
200 Marina Blvd., Berkeley, CA
Thursday, May 22, 2008 • 4:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
FREE Admission

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Statement of Editorial Policy

It is the policy of Berkeley Business Advocate to present in a fair and objective manner information of interest to the business community in general, and to the membership of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce specifically. Editorial opinions published are signed and reflect the opinions of the author and are not necessarily those of the Board of Directors or the members of the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce. Those of differing opinions are encouraged to offer those opinions in a Letter to the Editor. Letters must be signed to be considered for publication. Names may be withheld at the request of the writer.

Shop Local Chamber Members!



Ted Garrett, CEO

Thank you to Mayor Tom Bates for appearing at the recent Annual Mayor's Luncheon. Mayor Bates gave us his take on the business climate and embracing redevelopment saying "I love cranes." We appreciate that he brought up recent events that have disrupted the business community.

This has been an interesting time for business in Berkeley. Your Chamber is working diligently with others and meeting with the Mayor and City Council members and staff to find solutions to events on Shattuck Avenue that are disruptive to the business district. We will continue to be a strong business advocate in Berkeley!

You have a Chamber Advantage when you buy local, especially from other Chamber members. And membership is increasing so you can also have more customers! That is what networking is all about. You put your right foot in ...

Promoting You

The Chamber Advantage: member2member

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on products and services

Know where to go for the savings

- Daily a listing is available online at www.berkeley.com/member2member.
- Quarterly the Chamber News will print the participating businesses.

Shop Berkeley Chamber Members!

For more info go online to: www.berkeleychamber.com. Hit bCAP button.

Strengthening Your Business

Need free assistance? We've added SCORE to our list of business resources. SCORE is different from our on-line business resources in that you can schedule a free appointment with a counselor at the Chamber office. Counseling is private, confidential and free.

For more info go online to: www.berkeleychamber.com. Select "About the Chamber." Then select "Business Resources."

Connecting You

Our breakfast networking is getting bigger and bigger. Recently we have been hosting almost 40 people and welcoming many new members. Good things happen when you network with other chamber members! Go to www.berkeleychamber.com for networking events and new members!

We are getting tens of thousands of hits on our web site.

GO TO WWW.BERKELEYCHAMBER.COM FOR MORE INFO.

- Have a special event coming up? Send me the information and we'll post it on our COMMUNITY PAGES.

The Berkeley Chamber of Commerce, working for you, your business and community. ■



Taste Buds Visits Bay Grill and Lounge

By Taste Buds, Ambassadors Dining Out at Member's Restaurants



Bay Grill and Lounge

DoubleTree Hotel

200 Marina Blvd.
Berkeley, CA 94710
Tel. (510) 548-7920

The "Taste Buds" are an informal group of Chamber Ambassadors who gather once a month to dine at a Berkeley member restaurant, and share their impressions of the food, service, and ambiance.

The group includes some hospitality professionals, as well as people who just enjoy getting together for a good meal. The Taste Buds are now a part of the newly formed Hospitality Committee, chaired by Carolyn Henry-Golphin.

On February 19th, eight of us met for lunch at the Bay Grille, Doubletree Hotel. Everyone loved the view of the bay, which can be viewed from just about every seat in the restaurant. Our group was seated in a separate private dining room, excellent for corporate lunch or dinner meetings. We had a partial view of the bay.

Positive comments included:

- "Love the plates!" China was creatively used, with a variety of unusual shapes.
- "Really enjoyed my sandwich!" a three cheese crab melt.
- "I liked the fresh flowers on the tables and the view of the marina."
- One of us rated everything "fantastic" except for the piped in music. He loved his classic Reuben sandwich.
- "Grilled shrimp delicious!"

Other categories that received high ratings from some of the group were the cleanliness, and atmosphere of the restaurant, as well as the appearance, taste, temperature, and serving size of the food.

Less positive were comments about the service, which was erratic. Some of us were pleased with the service, but for others, there were complaints about the bread and drinks arriving too late.

One of us, a grandmother, was disappointed that there was no children's menu. Another group member was unhappy that no small side salad was available, and also suggested that the buffet should be listed on the menu.

About half of the group rated the overall experience as either "very good" or "fantastic" including the comment, "I'd go back!"

In summary, the consensus was the Bay Grille is a fine place to meet for a business lunch. The views of the bay are wonderful, and the menu is reasonably priced, if not especially adventurous. For some of us, this a plus! ■

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(Shop Local, from Page 1)

vacancies—just continue the demonstrations. There are solid local businesses that are suffering because people do not want to contend with a demonstration when they shop, go to get their copies made, or step out for lunch. And, the malaise is spreading to the rest of Berkeley. There have been cancellations at our local hotels. Local restaurants have received e-mails stating that long-time customers will not be coming to town this year. Artists and musicians have received letters decrying their decision to ply their craft in Berkeley. The situation is bad and is getting worse.

What can we do about outsiders who have decided not to shop in Berkeley because they disagree with our City Council's politics? I believe this is a great time for Berkeley locals (who presumably agree in principle with the council actions) to focus more intently on purchasing from local merchants. I myself have a bias for purchasing from Chamber members, but I would be thrilled if people stopped going to Emeryville and El Cerrito to buy their wine and cheese and stayed in our neighborhoods to make their purchases. We need to get the message out to the community that shopping local is greener and more sustainable and right now, Berkeley's local businesses need their support. Let's get Berkeley's citizens to unite: if you are going to buy, please buy local.

I am so thankful that Mark McLeod has agreed to chair the Chamber's Government Affairs committee for the next 2 years. Mark is steeped in both the history and politics of Berkeley while at the same time understanding small business, advocating for sustainability and smart growth & urban planning. Mark will bring a fresh perspective and energy to the Chamber's Government Affairs committee and I look forward to working with him.

Mark, I leave this in your capable hands. ■

AMBASSADORS' CORNER

Exciting Happenings for Our Ambassadors!



Kevin Allen, Chief Ambassador

We meet just once a month, on the first Wednesday of the month at the Rose Garden Inn at 8:30am for a breakfast meeting. Several subcommittees are formed during the year to handle the various functions. Many of our Ambassadors are also on the Board of Directors as well.

Every year the Northern California Chamber Ambassadors meet on a Friday to network, share ideas and gain new knowledge. Coming in the first weekend in May several of our Ambassadors will be heading to Clovis for the 2008 Rally. We took 10 representatives last year to the rally in Richmond - and are hoping to take at least 10 to Clovis.

Thanks to Richard Hom and Doris Grant - Berkeley has volunteered to host the Rally in 2009. There will be over 100 Ambassadors here - staying in local hotels and eating out in our restaurants. We will be

I'd like to start this month by explaining what it entails to be an Ambassador at the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce. Our Ambassadors are volunteers who plan, staff and execute many of the events for the chamber. We also are expected to attend most of the functions throughout the year.

holding the meeting itself at the Berkeley City Club, where they have graciously agreed to provide the meeting room at no charge. Richard Hom has volunteered to lead the planning committee and has already been working on information for us to take down to Clovis to build up the excitement.

We recently held a very successful Green Crab Feed at La Quinta Hotel. John Abrate with Wells Fargo Bank led the planning committee, and the event was staffed entirely by individuals from the Board of Directors and Ambassadors. A big thanks to everyone who helped out and to Tom at La Quinta for the room and the goldfish centerpieces. We were able to raise money for the Chamber - and through the raffle ticket sales - a nice contribution to the Scholarship Fund as well - all while having a great time and eating a lot of crab!

Our Ambassador group has grown to over thirty active members, but of course, there is still room for more. If you would like a way to get the most out of your Chamber membership - the Ambassador group is the answer. Meeting new contacts and making new friends, while helping the chamber - what could be better? You can either contact Ted or Tammy at the chamber, myself at rosegardengm@aol.com, or just come to the next Ambassadors meeting and we'll add you to the group. How simple is that?

As always - thanks to the Ambassadors for all you do. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated. ■

It's Snowing in Berkeley

Winston Burton, Former Downtown Area Planning Advisory Committee Member



It's the first week of March and I'm sitting around in a tee shirt watching TV coverage of storms on the East Coast and record snows in the Midwest. I must admit that during the recently passed holiday seasons (Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Years, and Super Bowl) I had thoughts of why I missed the snow, something that rarely happens in Berkeley.

When it snows everyone looks better. With a hat pulled over your head, scarf wrapped several times around your face, layers of multiple sweaters and pants, wearing big boots – what's not to like. You're barely recognizable! Who needs to work out at a gym? With layers of clothes wrapped around you and a big overcoat on we all look kind of round and chunky, ear muffs instead of I-Pods! We all have one goal - trying to stay warm, unlike surfers who are trying to look cool. Snow makes people friendlier too. When it's snowing people that don't know each other jump-start each others car and dig out their neighbors driveways. Snow can be a mini-disaster as well, and disasters bring people closer together. Its fine when you visit it (skiing, snowboarding)), but its not as much fun when it visits you - it might not leave when you want it to.

In Berkeley there is an unwritten law, that if you don't call, don't just drop by! Everyone's lives are so busy and planned that someone just coming by unannounced, for an hour long visit because they happened to be in the neighborhood, is just out of the question. It could disrupt your whole day, and internal clock! You may visit, but you often won't get pass the threshold. "I'm too busy right now" or "I was just on the way out";

"Call me and we'll get together next week." But if someone visits you during a snowstorm it's a completely different story. You hear them stomping the snow off their boots before they ring the bell, because they know that regardless of why they came you will let them in, before you tell them to leave. Usually if someone visits you when it's snowing they truly want to see you, are not just passing by, and your surprised that someone has made such an effort in bad weather.

Spring might be the time of mating for the birds and the bees, but I am neither fowl nor insect. Actually, in the winter when the snow's falling, it may be the most romantic time of all. When someone comes in out of the snow it's almost like a slow striptease show just watching them take off all of those outer garments. How sensuous. Should I spend the evening? I have no choice, and to leave in the middle of the night in a snow storm could be tragic. I think Ray Charles and Betty Carter described the moment best in their classic recording, "Baby Its Cold Outside". How can I forget being snowed in at some lucky lady's house with a tall glass of Lancers wine, sitting on a bean bag chair in front of a kerosene heater, Voodoo Child playing on the stereo. Oh but I wax nostalgically.

I'm not sure I really want it to snow in Berkeley. But maybe, sometimes, we should treat each other like it is snowing outside and say, "Come on in and visit. Take off your jacket. I'm glad you stopped by! Would you like some green tea and soy muffins? I'll go to the gym and yoga tomorrow". ■

What do you think!
winburton@aol.com

Winston Burton, Former DAPAC (Downtown Area Advisory Committee) member

- **April 9th**
Networking Breakfast
Rose Garden Inn
2740 Telegraph Ave.
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.
- **April 9th**
Ribbon Shredding
Staples
2352 Shattuck Ave.
1:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.
- **April 10th**
Ribbon Cutting/Mixer
Albany Cabinets & Design
920 San Pablo Ave.
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
- **April 12th - Cal Day**
UC Berkeley
University Campus
9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
- **April 17th - Building Bridges**
"How To Connect With The Media"
Berkeley Chamber Office
1834 University Ave.
12:00 P.M. – 1:00 P.M.
- **April 24th**
Evening Networking Mixer
ACCI Gallery
1652 Shattuck Ave.
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
- **April 30th - Candidate Forum**
Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto
1919 4th St.
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
- **May 14th**
Networking Breakfast
Rose Garden Inn
2740 Telegraph Ave.
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.
- **May 22nd**
Business Expo 2008
DoubleTree Hotel
200 Marina Blvd.
4:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
- **May 29th**
Evening Mixer
Hornblower Cruises & Events
Berkeley Marina Dock
200 Marina Blvd.
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.
- **June 5th**
New Member Orientation
Berkeley Chamber Office
1834 University Ave.
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.
- **June 11th**
Networking Breakfast
Rose Garden Inn
2740 Telegraph Ave.
8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.
- **June 19th**
Annual Dinner
Dance & Awards Presentation
Berkeley City Club
2315 Durant Ave.
6:00 P.M. – 10:00 P.M.

For more on this topic, go to: www.score.org



- SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" is a nonprofit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide. SCORE is a resource partner with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).
- Both working and retired executives

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Candidates Forum

April 30, 2008
Spenger's Fresh Fish Grotto
1919 4th StREET
5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.



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