

Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce and VISITORS CENTER



BRINGING BUSINESS & THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER!

4787 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Visitors Center: Mon. - Fri. 9 am - 4 pm www.markwest.org

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The Lark

November 2016
Volume XXX Issue 11

MARK WEST CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

The Mark West Citizens Advisory Council is off to a running start.

When they met on November 14 in the boardroom at the Mark West School District office, there were at least 80 members of the community in attendance.

With wide-open eyes, the Council welcomed everybody. The Council members are still learning about the rules they have to abide by, the Brown Act and the Sunshine Law. They understand their goals are to:

- Decide how the franchise money we citizens pay is to be spent in this community
- Look at projects in the county and get public input
- Triage (prioritize) local public works and transit projects
- Study and give community input on the Sonoma County General Plan, which is due for an update in 2020.

As they are learning about being a Brown Act Committee and getting used to the whole idea, The Carlton Senior Living Center Proposal, along with a very opinionated and vocal community, was laid in front of them.

It was very organized, thanks to Supervisor Gore and his aide Jen Mendoza. The meeting was very civil. Everyone who wanted to had a chance to speak his or her opinion or concern.

Supervisor James Gore was there to introduce the Council members to the community and explain the purpose of the Council and the approval process for all projects, including the Carlton Senior Living Center proposal.

Jennifer Barrett, Deputy Director for the planning division of the Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD), gave the Council and the community an overview of their process. They look at noise, traffic, cultural relief, environmental impact, etc.

Scott Tetlaff, Vice President of Finance and Development for Carlton Senior Living, gave a history and overview of the company. He shared the process by which they chose Larkfield as the place for their new development and a little about this particular project. He answered lots of questions and said all their concerns will be considered as they move forward in the review process. To be clear, this proposed project is directly across the street from the Mark West Area Chamber's office and the Visitors Center.



The Carlton Senior Living Center proposal is one of the projects the Mark West Citizens Advisory Committee will be evaluating and commenting on.

Continued on page 5

*November Social
hosted by
Multiple Chambers at
American AgCredit, ACA
See p3*

UPCOMING EVENTS: next AFTER HOURS BUSINESS SOCIAL

Hosted by

Larkfield Exchange Bank & Molsberry's Market Thursday December 8, 2016
500 Larkfield Center, Santa Rosa 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM



Steve Plamann
Aaction Rents
President

*Our Mission:
The Mark West Area
Chamber of Commerce
is organized to advance
the economic well-
being and uniqueness
of the Mark West Area
so that its citizens and
all areas of its business
community shall prosper.*

CHAMBER MEETINGS

Board of Directors

Second Tuesday
Of Each Month
11:30 am - 1:00 pm at
Best Western Plus Wine
Country Inn & Suites
870 Hopper Av. S.R.

Ambassadors Mtg.

Second Thursday
Of Each Month
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
At the Chamber offices

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Americans eat 46 million turkeys each Thanksgiving. Californians consume the most turkey in the U.S. on Thanksgiving Day. Benjamin Franklin wanted the turkey, not the eagle, to be the national bird. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin's first meal in space after walking on the moon was foil packets with roasted turkey, and the heaviest turkey on record, according to the Guinness Book of Records, weighed 86 pounds.

Well now that you know all that, I will have to come up with some Christmas tree history for next month.

I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving filled with great food and good company. It has been another good year for us in the Mark West Area. Business is up and we have continued to add new businesses to our area. The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce is here to assist all new businesses with the opportunity of a Chamber membership at a very reasonable price. We look forward to helping new or established businesses with ribbon cuttings, networking socials, a listing in our business directory, a website listing, quarterly business luncheons and our yearly trade show. Make your chamber part of your business strategy for an even better next year. Chambers really support shopping locally.

I'd like to thank American AgCredit for hosting our November Social. It was a joint mixer including three other chambers and the Mexican-American Vintners Association. It was in their new office building on Airport Blvd in Santa Rosa. It was a huge crowd and it looked like people were having fun and making new contacts. The catered food was great, as were the liquid refreshments. It was on the third floor out-door patio.

Holiday Tree Lighting

On December 7th Molsberry Market in the Larkfield Center will once again host our annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony. Santa will arrive by firetruck courtesy of the Rincon Valley Fire District. Christmas carols will be sung by the Mark West School District. The tree will be donated By Kringle's Korner.

Our upcoming social is our Christmas party and it will be held at Exchange Bank in Larkfield Center. It is co-sponsored by Molsberry's Market and will be held on December 8 from 5:30 till 7:30PM. Don't miss this event; it will bring out the spirit of the season in you.

Happy Holidays and please remember to "shop local".

Steve Plamann, President



Above: Your classic turkey. In truth, the ones that reach your table are more likely diminutive white versions, without all the fashion accessories. Photo by Len Blumin.



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FAX 707-546-0902

NOVEMBER SOCIAL BROUGHT TOGETHER FOUR CHAMBERS AND A BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The November 10 after hours business social was supplanted this month by a multi-chamber event hosted at the new American AgCredit building on Aviation Boulevard just off Airport boulevard.

Hosts were:

- Black Chamber of Commerce
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Windsor Chambers of Commerce
- Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce
- Mexican-American Vintners Association

It was lively and friendly group, with lots of visiting going on between members of these friendly neighbor chambers.

We thank all who participated, particularly American AgCredit for giving tours of their new facility!



SPIRIT OF SONOMA AWARDS DECEMBER 9

The Annual Spirit of Sonoma County Award luncheon honors those who contribute to the economic development and enhancement of the communities in which they live, work and conduct business.

In the past, several members of the Mark West Area Chamber have been honored with awards, including Jim Boulter (Mark West Community Services Committee), Shawna DeGrange (Cloverleaf Ranch), and Kathleen Palmer (SonomaCONNECTION). This year's Mark West Area honoree is the Molsberry family, locally famous for Molsberry Markets, Inc., to honor their many long-term contributions to the Mark West Area Chamber and the Mark West Community.

This year's awards event will take place December 9 at the DoubleTree Hotel Sonoma Wine Country, One DoubleTree Drive, in Rohnert Park. Tickets are \$70 per individual, and \$70 Reserved Table for 8 (additional seats may be placed at a table for \$70 apiece – contact the event planner).

For more information, visit the Sonoma County Economic Development Board web site at <http://sonomaedb.org/Calendar/2016-Spirit-of-Sonoma-Awards/>.

**NORTH BAY BUSINESS JOURNAL NAMES 20 NOTABLE PROJECTS OF 2016**

The North Bay Business Journal has announced the winners of the 2016 Top Real Estate Projects in the North Bay awards. Winners will be honored Dec. 15, 4–6:30 p.m., at the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel & Spa in Santa Rosa. Tickets for the Top Real Estate Projects in the North Bay awards event cost \$65 per person or \$675 for a table of 10. To reserve a seat or table, register online at nbbj.news/projects16 or call Linda Perkins at 707-521-5264.

Local honorees include:

For "Education": the Healdsburg High School art classroom modernization and new STEM building, and the Santa Rosa Charter School for the Arts. For "Green": Michel-Schlumberger Winery solar installation, Healdsburg. For "Hospitality – Hotel": Graton Resort & Casino hotel, Rohnert Park. For "Industrial": Cader Corporate Center, Petaluma. For "Industrial – Green": American Tank Co., Windsor. For "Medical": Lytton Rancheria medical office building, Santa Rosa. For "Multifamily – Sonoma County": The Annadel Apartments, Santa Rosa. For "Office": American AgCredit national headquarters, Santa Rosa. For "Office – Reuse": TLCD Architecture office tenant improvement, Santa Rosa. For "Retail": Big John's Market, Healdsburg.

The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce congratulates these honorees. For more information, visit the North Bay Business Journal website at <http://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/northbay/sonomacounty/6321001-181/north-bay-top-projects-2016-named?artslide=0>



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ADVISORY COUNCIL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Council recommendation to approve or not approve, is only one cog in the wheel. The job of the council is to review proposals and also to report on what the citizens of this community want. Once this happens, they will make their recommendation (and it is only a recommendation) to the Board of Supervisors and the PRMD.

There are several other steps involved with a few other departments that any proposal has to go through. Each department has its own requirements and reports.

Members of the community voiced their concerns about parking, the height of the building, and how the project would affect traffic and road conditions. They were concerned about the layout and how delivery trucks would enter and leave the area.

Supervisor Gore wrapped up the discussion saying that everybody has concerns, and that at the bottom line, the big question is going to be "is it good for the community? This is the process."

Another project that was introduced some time ago and will now come before this Council is the Faught Road project. It is for a 6-unit apartment complex on a parcel that presently contains a vacant, rundown house.

Watch for when this shows up on the agenda. Date, time and location of the meetings will also be on the agenda.

The next meeting is December 12, at 6:00 at the Mark West School Board office.

The agendas will always be posted at the Supervisor's office, at the Mark West School District office and in the Nextdoor online community.

Winter Coat Drive: October 21 - December 9

Just a quick reminder. The Winter Coat drive is still going on. Glen Hurley (text) 707 321-9262, a local Realtor, is collecting them in this area. Text him for pickup.

I know you will be reading this after Thanksgiving so my wish for every one of you and me is that our gratitude will be lasting.

Contributed by Aggie Maggio, Realtor @ Coldwell Banker

UPCOMING BUSINESS SOCIALS

Wednesday, December 7, 2016
Holiday Tree Lighting - Community Event 6:00pm
Hosted by **Molsberry Markets, Inc.**
522 Larkfield Center, Santa Rosa

Thursday, December 8, 2016
Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Hosted by **Exchange Bank, Larkfield Branch & Molsberry Markets, Inc.**
500 Larkfield Center, Santa Rosa

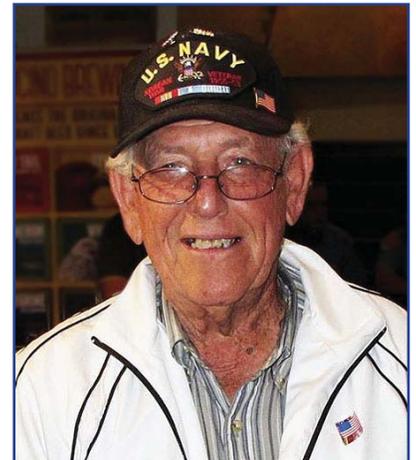
Thursday, January 12, 2017
Chamber Business After Hours Social 5:30-7:30pm
Hosted by **Anytime Fitness**
490 Larkfield Center, Santa Rosa

A SAD FAREWELL TO WALT SMITH

We are greatly saddened to report that longtime Mark West Area Chamber member and Past President Walt Smith has passed away. He had a stroke on November 15, and died in the hospital on the 17th. At the time of publishing, no obituary was available so we regret that we cannot provide details of his life and family.

But anyone who knew Walt knew that he always had a smile on his face, a happy thing or two to say to you, and more friends than anyone could count. He was active with the Veterans community, and in his '80s he founded and was running the Wounded Veterans Thrift Store in Rohnert Park, the proceeds from which benefit Purple Heart Veterans Chapter #78.

We will all miss him. It was always a treat to walk into one of our social events and see him there, because you knew a smile was in store. All of us at the Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce express our condolences to his family and friends, and all who worked with him.



Interested in joining our Ambassador Club?
Contact the Chamber at
office@markwest.org
707-578-7975



To host a Ribbon Cutting, contact...
Aggie Maggio
aggiemaggio@icloud.com
707-486-1303



Keep abreast of important information pertinent to local business issues: <http://edb.sonoma-county.org/>

“MY WEBSITE GETS 19,000 VISITORS A MONTH BUT I’M NOT SELLING ANYTHING!”

I heard this from a colleague several months ago. I agreed to have a look at her web traffic using Google Analytics to see what was up.

The problem was that she was looking at the simplistic “traffic counter” her e-commerce platform provided. It was recording one thing and saying it was another, and she thought it meant something else. In truth, her actual website traffic was orders of magnitude less than that counter seemed to indicate. A sad truth, but at least we knew what was happening and could address the problem.

What Do the Numbers Really Mean?

Back at the dawn of time, around 1996, website traffic was measured in hits. Stop thinking about hits. What you should really be interested in is visitors and sessions. Let’s assume you have a website that promotes your business and has a shopping cart to sell a few products.

Users or Visitors: This is a person who visits your website. They may come back again and again, or visit only once. An analytics tool uses each computer’s unique IP address (Internet Protocol Address) to identify individual users.

Sessions or Visits: These are instances of a user coming to your website. If I visit your site once on Monday and twice on Tuesday, I’m one visitor generating three sessions. A session or visit encompasses all the things the user does on your site before they leave: watch a video, click around among several pages, read your blog, put something in the shopping cart, and so forth.

Hits: A “hit” is just the user’s web browser asking for something from the web server. For example, if a web page has six images on it, the visitor’s web browser might “hit” your server seven times: one for delivery of the web page itself, and one for each of six images. One web page can generate dozens or even hundreds of hits each time a user visits it, depending upon how the servers and web pages are set up. So hits are a very poor indicator of a website’s success. Forget about hits.

Think In Terms of *Users* and *Sessions*

One user can have several sessions that together generate thousands of hits. My colleague’s web traffic counter was recording those meaningless hits, but she (quite rightly) wanted to know how many users she had and what they did on her site. That’s the core reason for web analytics: to learn about your users, discover how they interact with your site, and plan strategies to help them find what they are looking for and increase your business.

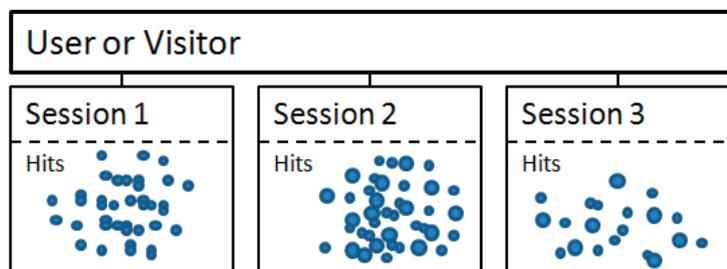
Google Analytics is free to use, relatively easy to set up, and remarkably powerful. Even a little bit of poking around in Google Analytics can reveal important business facts:

- Where do my users come from?
- Why aren’t they buying? Where do they drop out of the sales funnel?
- What search terms are they using to find my site?
- Is my online or print ad generating any traffic?

Every website should be equipped with Google Analytics, whether you are actually selling online or just providing business information. It is pretty easy to set up on most websites. Once you see what is happening, you can start thinking about simple ways to engage your customers better, get them to sign up for your emails, and do many things that will eventually lead to increased sales.

Visit www.google.com/analytics to get started.

Contributed by Peter Loughlin, Loughlin Marketing, peter@loughlinmarketing.com



One website “user” can visit your site during multiple “sessions” that are made up of many, many “hits”. You want to focus on users and sessions because that is where you make your money.

MARK WEST AREA COMMUNITY INFORMATION

AREA POPULATION - within a 3 mile radius - 20,000
 ELEVATION - 160 feet above sea level
 BOUNDARIES - Area approximately bounded by:
 Shiloh Road - North Piner Road - South
 West Olivet Road - West Lodge on Mark West Springs Rd - East

The Lark Newsletter is published monthly under the direction of:
 The Mark West Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center
 4787 Old Redwood Hiwy, Suite 101, Santa Rosa, CA 95403

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Deadline for publication is the 3rd Wednesday of the month.
 Please email your materials to info@markwest.org

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Effective May 1, 2006

Standard Dues		Non-Profit Dues
\$125.00	Business (1-5 Personnel)	\$110.00
\$175.00	Business (6-10 Personnel)	\$155.00
\$245.00	Business (11+ Personnel)	\$215.00
\$625.00	Corporate Sponsor	
\$ 95.00	Individual (no business affiliation)	

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AFTER HOURS BUSINESS SOCIAL

Thursday
December 8, 2016
5:30 - 7:30 pm

LARKFIELD EXCHANGE BANK & MOLSBERRY'S MARKET

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