

Business Connections Breakfast

Thursday, May 24th, the Norwalk Chamber hosted the Artesia Chamber of Commerce at a joint networking breakfast at the Norwalk Arts & Sports Complex. Members and guests from both Chambers had a great morning together practicing "candy bar" networking. Additionally members spent time in small groups discussing effective marketing strategies and new and innovative ways businesses are addressing the current economic situation.

Interestingly enough, almost every group reported back that the "old-school" way of networking was the best way to go in their marketing strategies. Both younger and more seasoned business owners and representatives indicated that face to face direct contact with other business leaders and potential clients build trust and developed your business more than anything else. Although the latest technologies are being

utilized by most businesses, they are an additional strategy – an extra to the tried and true methods of marketing and growing your business. A few shared some new ideas they have used for growing their customer base. One business offered a raffle ticket for every new client referred by a current client, with the prize being a weekend trip to Las Vegas. Another business uses tracking technology on their website to identify repeat visitors for follow up phone calls.

Especially important is offering a service or product that is of better quality, less costly or different from your competitors.

In conclusion, taking advantage of your Chamber connections with face to face networking at every opportunity will help all businesses in these tough times!

Special thanks go out to Sug Kitahara, Executive Director of the Artesia Chamber and the

Artesia Chamber members for joining the Norwalk Chamber at this event. Be sure and check out our Norwalk Chamber website for more great opportunities to network

your business! Additionally, we thank our generous members who donated today's raffle prizes: Norwalk Florist, Golf n' Stuff, and the Doubletree Hotel of Norwalk.



Norwalk Chamber Executive Director, Vivian Hansen, with Sug Kitahara, Artesia Chamber Executive Director, Sophie Lupu, Merrill Lynch, and Manu Patel current President of the Artesia Chamber.



Laura Zolnekoff, CAPC, Rene Ramos, Jeepney Asian Grill and Christina Vicencia, Vicencia & Buckley Insurances Services, during the small group discussions.

Norwalk Chamber attends CAPC Kaleidoscope Five Chamber Mixer

Red was the color of the day at the Norwalk Doubletree Hotel for the Community Advocate for People's Choice (CAPC) Kaleidoscope Five Chamber Mixer. This is an annual fundraising event, put on by CAPC to support their organizations mission of "Maximizing the quality of life for adults with developmental disabilities in their home communities." Those that attended were able to network with members of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce and Chamber members from La Habra, Pico Rivera, Santa Fe Springs and Whittier. They also enjoyed food samples from many local restaurants including the Doubletree Hotel and Café n' Stuff. At the event you could bid on a silent auction basket, purchase a chance to win an iPad, or buy a 50/50 raffle ticket, all

in the goal of supporting CAPC. Many of the clients of CAPC were in attendance and volunteering at the event, either selling tickets or manning the silent auction tables. If you would like more information about this organization, visit their website at www.capcinc.org.



CAPC Executive Director Carolyn Reggio with Norwalk Chamber President Joseph Derthick, of AFLAC, receives a special "thank you."

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Ready to Start Saving?
The Norwalk Chamber of Commerce strives to make your membership dollars work for you. We are proud to bring you a program that has no contracts or participation fees, just incredible discounts!

The Chamber, with the support of Office Depot has negotiated special member discount pricing on office products and services. This is a tangible benefit from your membership

While saving REAL money for your company

To sign up or for question, please contact our local Office Depot Rep, Katherine Leflore at (562)406-8686 or send an email to ODS00652@officedepot.com or call the Chamber office.

Joseph Derthick
President-Norwalk Chamber of Commerce

Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
12040 Foster Road, Norwalk, CA 90650

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NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

NORWALK CHAMBER BUSINESS CONNECTIONS (NCBC) is the Official Publication of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce.

Norwalk Chamber of Commerce

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info@norwalkchamber.com
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<http://on.fb.me/oB5EUM>

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
EDITOR, NCBC
VIVIAN HANSEN**

**MEMBERSHIP SERVICES
DIRECTOR
CAREN SPILSBURY**

New Members

AVE Sheet Metal & Rain Gutters
Efrain Arellanes
11830 Alondra Blvd.
Norwalk CA 90650
562-333-6301

City Connections

Jennifer Hulick
P.O. Box 59544
Norwalk CA 90652
714-486-8049

To Place an Ad
in the Norwalk
Chamber Business
Connections,
please call Caren at
(562) 864-7785

Renewing Members

The following companies and individuals renewed their membership with the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce and the services we provide are made possible by their support.

37 Years
Chapel of Memories

36 Years
Southern California Edison

34 Years
Norwalk Elks Lodge #2142

33 Years
Union Bank

26 Years
Leed Electric
J & N Nut Factory

20 Years
Healthfirst Medical Group Inc.

19 Years
Wheelabrator

17 Years
Metropolitan State Hospital

16 Years
West Coast Arborists

13 Years
Goodwill Industries
Diana's Restaurant

10 Years
Paddison Square/Duckett-Wilson

8 Years
Big Truck Equipment & Sales

7 Years
Long Beach Community College

5 Years
N.Y.X. Cosmetics

New Member Meet & Greet

The Norwalk Chamber hosted its third New Member "Meet and Greet" of the year on Wednesday May 2nd at the Norwalk Chamber office. These events are designed to provide new and potential members the opportunity to meet our Chamber Board and Ambassadors in a fun, social setting, while visiting the Chamber resource center. Many that attend these events are surprised to see all the resources the Chamber has available to support their business. Additionally,

getting to know our new members is a priority for the Norwalk Chamber and this is one of the vehicles we use for that process. We invite all members to drop by the Norwalk Chamber office sometime to browse through our resource center or pick up business cards from other members. And if you haven't provided any of your business cards to the Chamber, plan on dropping those off also!



Chamber Board Members present renewal plaque to the Norwalk Rotary at the New Member Meet & Greet. Richard LeGaspi, TNT Fireworks, President Joseph Derthick, AFLAC, and Karla Butler, Thompson Bookkeeping are shown with Briant Carcamo of the Norwalk Rotary.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

A.V.E. Sheet Metal & Rain Gutters

New Member A.V.E. Sheet Metal & Rain Gutters is a ready to help you beautify your home or business with custom roofing sheet metal products and rain gutters. Visiting their business, you will see a variety of products that they have crafted to cover chimneys or connect the corners of your rain gutters. Owner Efrain Arellanes will work

with you to custom design, fabricate and install these beautiful fixtures. Looking to upgrade the look of your home or business, this is a great way to go. For more information about rain gutters and fixtures, contact Efrain at 562-333-6301 or by email at effyare68@yahoo.com.



Norwalk Chamber Executive Director Vivian Hansen, presents Efrain Arellanes of A.V.E. Sheet Metal & Rain Gutters with his new member plaque.

DON'T MISS THESE UPCOMING EVENTS!

Saturday & Sunday - June 9 & 10, 9:00 am, Relay for Life
Cerritos College Soccer Field

Thursday - June 21, 2012, Mixer at Downey Auto Wholesale
7255 E. Firestone Boulevard, Downey - 5:30pm - 7:30pm

Thursday - June 28, 2012, Chamber Installation

This is our celebration of the last year's successes, installation of officers for the new year and also awards are given out for Business of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Ambassador of the Year and President's award.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



No Time for Meetings? No Problem

Member-to-Member Discount Program. The Norwalk Chamber can help you promote your business without leaving your office. Being a member allows you to join the many members who save big \$\$\$ on goods and services from fellow members. Visit the Member-to-Member list on the website www.norwalkchamber.com. If you'd like to participate in this program, simply call the chamber to add your business to the list.

Referrals. We receive hundreds of requests each year for the names and contact information of local businesses, professionals, services and other establishments. ONLY Chamber members are referred. What a great way to drive business to your door!

Ribbon Cutting or Grand Openings. Just say the word and the Chamber Board and Ambassadors will do a ribbon cutting or grand opening for your business to help celebrate your grand opening, expansion or business anniversary.

Chamber Web Marketing. The Chamber website provides 24/7 exposure for your business and attracts thousands of visitors each month! Your membership in the Chamber includes a FREE category listing in our on-line business directory with a link to your website. Maybe it's time to get more attention by placing a tile ad on the front page or one of our often visited pages on the Chamber website. Call Caren at 562/ 864-7785 for more information

Write a Press Release. Write about something happening in your business, a new product, new employee, a promotion, recognition, a great sale – whatever. Send it to ceo@norwalkchamber.com for placement in the next Norwalk Chamber Business Connections Newsletter. It's FREE. Make the headline snappy and attention grabbing for best results.

Expose yourself! Make sure your business flyers, business cards and brochures are available to visitors in the Chamber office.

We are committed to helping businesses in Norwalk and surrounding cities thrive in these tough economic times. Let us know how we can help you.

-Vivian Hansen

Norwalk Chamber Gourmet Food Trucks

Have you ever wondered what all of the "hype" was about gourmet food trucks or even what a gourmet food truck was? Saturday, May 12th, at the Southeast ROP Academy was the place to be to get answers to these questions and more. Attendees at this event were able to purchase food from a variety of trucks which included the well know Nom Nom Truck, The Grilled Cheese Truck, Don Chow Taco's and Da Burger Boss while listening to music offered by DJ Dave! This was not the time to count calories, while feasting on all the gourmet fare that was offered! An added bonus was

the business and health expo component where you could get a free blood pressure screening before and after sampling all of the great food.

Our special thanks to our generous sponsors for this event: Walgreens, Consolidated Disposal, Food Truck Army, Roaming Hunger, Food Trucker, and especially the Southeast ROP Academy Cadets who volunteered their time that day for the event. If you missed out on this event, be sure and check out the Norwalk Moose Lodge or Golf n' Stuff for other upcoming events with Gourmet Food Trucks!



Chamber Board Members Richard Fierro and Jesse Urquidi in front of the famous Grilled Cheese Truck, just before their doors open.

LABOR LAW CORNER

Employers Must Provide Employee Payroll Records Upon Request

Question: Is an employer required to provide copies of payroll records to employees?

The answer is yes if you are referring to the information that appears on the itemized wage statement issued with the payroll check.

Required Information

Labor Code Section 226(a) requires employers to list the gross wages, total hours worked, piece rate units, number of piece rate unites earned, all deductions, net wages earned, inclusive dates of the pay period, name of the employee and an identification number, the employer and the address, and all hourly rates, including the corresponding number of hours worked at each rate. Review the complete Section 226 for exceptions to the general items listed here.

Records Requests

Labor Code Section 226(b) refers specifically to the information contained in Section 226(a) and requires that employers shall afford current and former employees the right to inspect or copy those records upon reasonable request.

Employers should comply with the request as soon as practicable, but no later than 21 calendar days from the date of the request. The section further states an employer may charge for the actual reproduction cost of any copies provided.

An employer who fails to provide such access within 21 days of the date of any oral or written request may be assessed a fine of \$750.

In addition, knowing and intentional failure to comply with a request may subject you to court action. An employee may recover the greater of actual damages or \$50-\$100 for the initial and subsequent violations, up to \$4,000 plus costs and attorney fees.

Review requests to determine exactly which records are being requested and comply accordingly.

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SERVING CUSTOMERS THE WAY YOU LIKED TO BE SERVED

- Your customer cannot interrupt your work. They are the reason you have work.

- Greet everyone with a smile. Usually if you give one you get one back.

- Use their name when possible. It's the most important word in their vocabulary.

- Your ARE the company. The company's Customer Service and relations program is as strong as the weakest link.

- Arguing is not winning. The customer is not always right, however, your job is not to point that out.

- "I don't know" is not an answer. "Let me find out for you," is the correct response.

- Our customers pay for our homes, college educations, and our freedoms. For that they've earned respect.

- Attempt to use positive language. Words like, "Now just calm down," are fuel additives. Staring your company policy begins the down-ward spiral of good feelings.

- Take the smallest activity and go the extra mile for unexpected, unanticipated results. It can come back to you many times over for your effort.

Need help surviving these Tough economic times?

Want to expand your existing business? Need help starting a business?

SBDC Counselors help small business owners with business start-up loan packaging, business planning, sales campaigns, internet presence and use of Social media, certification and bidding for government agencies, international Trade assistance, analyzing financial statements and budgeting and implementing accounting systems.

Don't Know Where to Turn? WE HAVE THE ANSWERS! FREE

Business Counseling
Available By Appointment Only
Norwalk Chamber Office
12040 Foster Road, Norwalk

Counseling Services Provided by:
SBDC
(Small Business Development Center)

English or Spanish
To Schedule an Appointment
562-864-7785

Revised State Budget Plan Hinges on November Tax Initiative

Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. used this week's release of his updated budget proposal to reiterate his commitment to budget austerity and his plea to voters to raise taxes in November.

Addressing a newly calculated deficit of \$15.7 billion, the Governor claimed that "the revised May budget slashes spending in almost every part of government, but proposes a 16 percent increase in funding for K-12 education, subject to voter approval."

Budget Challenges

This sentence captured the challenge facing the Governor in achieving his solutions to return fiscal stability to the state.

• **First**, state revenues continue to fall short of the Governor's expectations, even as the economy has returned to modest growth.

The lagging revenues are a result of much smaller tax receipts on capital gains than forecasted by the administration.

The incorrect estimate came about from the unfortunate convergence of wishful thinking plus volatility of what has become a major source of state revenues. See the tax and spending trends in the chart at right.

• **Second**, having convinced the Legislature to cut state spending by some \$10 billion last year, the Governor's options for politically viable budget cuts have been further reduced.

As a result, he has dipped into the bag of one-time solutions that he had previously committed to avoid. He has justified this approach because revenue growth will bounce back with the recovering economy.

• **Third**, the convolutions of the state's school finance formula required that most new state revenue growth must be devoted to increasing K-12 funding. This is fortunate, since voters are most sympathetic to spending money on schools. On the other hand, it also means that should the voters reject the Governor's tax proposal at the ballot, schools will suffer proportionately higher reductions.

• **Finally**, the proposed tax increase in November is central to his plan for

fiscal stability. Voters will be asked to raise income taxes for seven years, adding one to three percentage points on incomes of higher-income Californians. Also included will be a four-year, quarter-cent increase in state sales taxes.

The tax increases will raise up to \$8.5 billion to address next year's budget deficit, and about \$7 billion annually in the following years.

Cutbacks

The revised budget proposal continues grim news for most of the state programs, services and activities financed by the \$88 billion in state general revenues (before the tax increase; \$96 billion should the taxes pass).

Even if taxes are hiked, the University of California and California State University will have virtually no changes in their budgets—after deep cuts last year. If the tax hikes fail, each segment would be cut by \$250 million.

Even if taxes are increased, the funding for the state's trial courts will be reduced by more than a half-billion dollars, and scheduled to be offset by using local budget reserves retained by counties, and by postponing courthouse repairs and construction.

Even if voters approve new taxes, health and welfare programs will be cut by \$800 million, including reducing payments to hospitals and nursing homes, increasing managed care systems for Medi-Cal, limiting eligibility for the state's cash welfare program, and reducing services for in-home care.

K-12 Schools Impact

Schools will feel the brunt of the impact should voters reject the Governor's tax plan. Funds to K-12 schools and community colleges would automatically shrink by \$5.5 billion. Since these reductions would take effect after the November election, it is highly likely that school districts will have planned on the lower amount when they open school in August or September.

Therefore, while school budgets will be extremely tight for the 2012-13 year, losing the tax election should not result in widespread aftershocks in schools.

Staff Contact: Loren Kaye, California Foundation for Commerce and Education

Don't send that email! 5 tips for avoiding typos

BY Amy Levin-Epstein

Few things are more frustrating than an ugly typo. And fewer errors are more damning to your professional reputation. Careless mistakes in emails and memos aren't easy to avoid. It's like losing weight -- seems simple, but if everyone could turn on a switch and just do it, we'd all be thin.

The problem? Our eyes "see" what they want to see, so proofreading is only a first step. "If we read the phrase, 'Once upon a ...,' our mind tells us that the next word is "time," even if, by mistake, we type 'tine,'" notes Roy Peter Clark, author of *Writing Tools: 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer*.

Here are 5 better ways to make mistakes the very rare exception, not the norm:

Read your words out loud

Simply reading while listening may force you to more carefully consider your writing for both flow and accuracy. "Reading aloud helps the writer in dozens of ways, including the detection of typos and other mistakes," says Clark. But do it deliberately to avoid merely seeing -- and hearing -- what you want to see. "This method is not foolproof. Writing is, by definition and practice, an act of prediction," says Clark.

Don't stress about every email

In an ideal world, you'd never include a typo in even a casual email, instant message or text message. In reality, you might save your best, most methodic proofreading for when it counts. "Have a clear sense of the 'event' and the degree of formality. If I am sending a message to my brother Vinny about a professional wrestling match, typos are not only acceptable, but [perhaps even] desirable," notes Clark.

Use your spell-checker but don't rely on it

Your computer's spell check should only be a part of your proof-reading routine. "Have your favorite dictionary at arms-length," suggests Clark. Nobody's perfect -- not you and not even your computer. But the two of you combined with a little old school help from a dictionary or style guide should make a pretty good team.

Learn from your mistakes

Typos, as with all other type of errors, happen. Remember that feeling and let it urge you to proofread more mindfully next time it's important. "I once wrote a letter of recommendation (via e-mail) on behalf of a student seeking a scholarship. I was too lazy or too busy to proof read it. The next day I found two typos in it and began to worry that my carelessness would cost this student a prize I felt she deserved," recalls Clark.

Be as careful with digital writing as you would with print

If you're handwriting a thank you note, you naturally take more time to read it as you go, ensuring you don't waste a note card or include an embarrassing error. Do the same with your digital correspondence. "Treat anything you write in digital form -- including personal messages -- as public documents. I imagine that anything I write could turn up on the front page of the New York Post. That fear keeps me honest -- and mostly accurate," says Clark.

Amy Levin-Epstein is a freelance writer who has been published in dozens of magazines (including Glamour, Self and Redbook), websites (including AOLHealth.com, Babble.com and Details.com) and newspapers (including The New York Post and the Boston Globe). To read more of her writing, visit AmyLevinEpstein.com. Follow her on Twitter at @MWOnTheJob.

10 Tips for Becoming Known as an Industry Expert

BY Rieva Lesonsky

Developing a reputation as an expert in your industry can raise your business's pro-file; help you attract customers, partners and employees; and even enable you to charge more for your products and services. You're already an expert in what you do—and spreading the word about that expertise is easier than you might think. Here are 10 tips to get you started.

1. Give a speech. Find organizations that your target customers belong to—whether the local marathon runners' training group, PTA or Rotary club--and offer to speak at their meetings. Create a relevant handout to leave behind, and bring business cards and brochures, too.

2. Start a blog. Adding a blog to your business website is a smart tactic for companies that provide information and expertise, such as accounting or consulting firms. Blog about industry news, timely advice for your customers, or new developments in your business.

3. Comment on other blogs. If you don't have the time or skill to blog, build your rep-utation by commenting on your industry's leading blogs. Make sure your comments are thoughtful and add to the conversation. Don't be overly promotional, but do include your name and business name.

4. Use Twitter. Use Twitter not just to promote your business, but also to share interesting links and retweet useful infor-mation. Focus on quality, not quantity. By consistently sharing good information, you'll build a reputation as a knowledge-able source.

5. Get LinkedIn. If you own a business-to-business company, LinkedIn Groups and Answers are great ways to share your expertise. Join Groups related to your indus-try and participate in discussions. Look for LinkedIn Questions related to your business and answer them.

6. Write articles. Blogs and online publications are influential, but print media still carries more weight with most people. Contact trade publications and local news-papers and ask if you can contribute articles related to your industry, or even write a regular column.

7. Become a trusted source. Being quot-ed in print or online cements your reputation as an expert. Seek out journalists who cover your industry, then make yourself a resource by commenting on their articles and sending them information related to their "beat"...and your business.

8. Lead the way. To become an industry expert, you've got to be active in your in-dustry. But don't just attend industry events and conferences—take a leadership role by offering to head committees, speak at events or develop programs.

9. Network. Be an active networker, both online and offline. Focus not on what you can gain, but on how you can help others by connecting them and sharing valuable information. People will come to view you as a reliable and trustworthy resource.

10. Get involved in your community. Keep a high profile in your community by participating in local events. For instance, if you own a health club, you could sponsor a fitness fair or get a booth. The more active you are in your community, the more busi-ness will come your way.

Rieva Lesonsky is CEO of GrowBiz Media, a content and consulting company that helps entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses. Before launching her business, she was Editorial Director of Entrepreneur Magazine. Rieva Lesonsky also works with the Los Angeles Regional Small Business Development Center Network. The SBDC is a group of successful small business owners helping fellow entrepreneurs start, sustain, and grow their business through low-cost workshops and free one-on-one consulting in business planning, finance, marketing, and various other specialty areas (Spanish speaking consultants available). To make an appointment call: the Norwalk Chamber at (562) 864-7785

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