

## Members Say



The Chamber has truly helped Welcome to the Neighborhood Magazine increase our business. The Taste of Conejo was an amazing event. From the monthly Chamber breakfasts to the evening networking events, we have had the opportunity to place our magazine in front of thousands of potential clients.

**Jodi Santino**  
Welcome to the Neighborhood Magazine

## Events

**Breakfast:** Fri., Dec. 2, 6:45-9 a.m., Sheraton Agoura Hills Hotel.

**State of The City:** Tues., Dec. 13, 11:15 a.m.-2 p.m., CLU.

**Mixer:** Wed., Dec. 14, 5:30-7 p.m., Thousand Oaks Inn, T.O.

**Breakfast:** Fri., Jan. 6, 7-9 a.m., Hyatt Westlake Plaza.

**Mixer:** Wed., Jan. 18, 5:30-7 p.m., Los Robles Greens Banquet Center.

**Recognition Gala:** Fri., Jan. 27, 6:30 p.m., Four Seasons Hotel.

*More on page 10*

## Inside

President's Message .....	2
Board Members .....	3
New Member Businesses...	4
Business Briefs.....	5
Lunch and Learn.....	6
Event Highlights.....	6
Calendar.....	10

Online at [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org)

## We Create Opportunities for Business Success by

- Creating a strong local economy
- Promoting community
- Providing networking opportunities
- Representing the interests of business with government
- Taking political action
- Supporting a sustainable future

## PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

# Chamber Earns 5-Star Accreditation

Greater Conejo Valley Chamber is Top One-Percent in the State and Nation

The Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce has been awarded a Five-Star Accreditation by the Accrediting Board of the United States Chamber of Commerce, the highest level of accreditation offered by the U.S. Chamber. This prestigious honor puts the organization among the top one percent of chambers nationwide.

The only program of its kind in the country, U.S. Chamber Accreditation recognizes excellence in cham-



Phil Koonce, Chamber Chairman of the Board, and Jill Lederer, Chamber President/CEO, show off the new Five-Star certificate presented by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

ber planning, performance and community involvement. To achieve Accreditation, a chamber must demonstrate quality programs, clear organizational procedures, and effective communication by meeting minimum standards in its operations and programs, including areas of governance, government affairs, finance and technology. This extensive review can take from six to nine months to complete.

—Continued on page 11

## GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION

# State of the County Reported at Governmental Relations Committee

Michael Powers, County Executive Officer for Ventura County, addressed the October Governmental Relations Committee on the state of the county.

Powers assumed his position in April of 2011. In his role he oversees a budget of \$1.6 billion and over 8,097 full time employees in 27

vices averaging around 10.6 percent. Powers reported that while other counties are struggling, the budget for Ventura County is balanced and critical services are being provided. In order to plan for future deficits, all employees took a three percent cut in pay and overhead costs were significantly



(L-R) County CEO Michael Powers; Ryan Van Ommeren, Chairman of the GRC; and Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks.

agencies and departments. He is responsible for overseeing and supporting all major county functions and services including budget, finance, legislation, human resources, labor relations economic development and information technology.

While discussing the budget, he announced that the total budget for this year was down 1.3 percent from last year. The majority of the budget is spent on public safety which is 57.4 percent, with health and social ser-

**... the budget for Ventura County is balanced and critical services are being provided.**

—Continued on page 11

## PROMOTING COMMUNITY

# Recognition Gala to Celebrate Chamber's Man and Woman of the Year

The Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce announces its selection for Man and Woman of the Year, an honor bestowed annually by the Chamber since 1963.

Matt Lallo, retired owner of the Tune Up Factory, is 2011-12 Man of the Year. Rosemary Licata, Thousand Oaks Republican Women,

Federated, is the Woman of the Year.

Lallo and Licata will be honored at the 2012 Recognition Gala on Friday, January 27, at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village.

At that event, the Chamber will also recognize

—Continued on page 12



Man of the Year, Matt Lallo (3rd from L)



Woman of the Year, Rosemary Licata (6th from L)



## Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce

600 Hampshire Road, Suite 200  
Westlake Village, CA 91361  
805.370.0035 • Fax 805.370.1083  
[www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org)

(Formerly the Thousand Oaks-Westlake Village Regional Chamber of Commerce)

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Phillip A. Koonce, Chairman**  
PAK Financial Group

**Jill Lederer, President/CEO**  
Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce

**Pete Turpel, Chairman-Emeritus**  
Phone On-Hold Marketing Systems

**John LaRocca, Chairman-Elect**  
Sage Bankcard

**Leonard Greenlee, Treasurer**  
Baxter Healthcare

**Marcia Sutton, Secretary**  
Dole Food Co., Inc.

**Kristen Davis, Director-at-Large**  
Amgen, Inc.

**Dave Friedl, Director-at-Large**  
CR Print

**Susan Murata, Director-at-Large**  
Silver Star Automotive

### DIRECTORS

**Fariborz Aframian**, Paris Cut Hair Design  
**Tracy Chudoba-Wood**, Caruso Affiliated  
**George Cogswell III**, Ventura County Star  
**Betsy Friedman**

**Mary Guy**, First California Bank

**Tammie Helmuth**, Conejo Awards  
**Peggy Hinz**

**Matthew Huss**  
Sheraton Agoura Hills Hotel

**Greg Kaapuni**, Attorney at Law

**Paul Long**, Oaks Christian School

**Matthew Midura**, Pepperdine University

**Jacqueline Pick**, Doctor of Chiropractic

**Yavar A. Rafieha**  
Power of Home—Agoura Design Center

**Angel Robertson**, Dallas Capital

**Lisa Safaeinili**, Westminster Free Clinic

**Candice Shehorn**, Key Pointe Coaching

**Keith Sinclair**, Sinclair Company

**Mike Soules**, Corwin - A SAGE Company

**Greg Taylor**, Hub International

**Ryan Van Ommeren**  
California Lutheran University

**Nicole Winner**, WinnerQuotes Insurance

### CHAMBER STAFF

**Jill Lederer**  
President/CEO

**Sue Tuttle**  
Controller

**Jan Smith**  
Director of Governmental/Economic Affairs

**JoLynn Hinger**  
Director of Marketing/Communication  
Managing Editor

**Sarah Ekeberg**  
Communication & Special Projects  
Manager  
Assistant Editor

**Brad Yajima**  
Marketing & Communication Intern

**Suzanne Sommer**  
Membership Director

**Liz Barrett**  
Membership Representative

**Kelli Lighthizer**  
Director of Community Relations & Events

**Barbara Brown**  
Community Coordinator

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# You Are a Member of a 5-Star Chamber

I have been hoping to be able to write these words since I had the honor of following Janet Levett's stellar career as President/CEO of your Chamber almost three years ago: Congratulations to each of you; you are now a member of a FIVE-STAR Chamber of Commerce!

After a year of rigorous analysis of everything your Chamber does including governance, finances, human resources, governmental affairs, technology, marketing and communication, facilities and benchmarking, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has awarded its highest ranking, Accreditation with Five Stars, to the Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce.

We join an elite group of only four other Chambers in the State of California to



Jill Lederer  
President, CEO

hold this ranking and are in the top one percent of the almost 7,000 chambers nationwide.

Though your Chamber has been accredited since 1974, this is the first time we have been awarded the

are asked to do.

**We join an elite group of only four other Chambers in the State of California to hold this ranking....**

Five Star. Taking inspiration from our members, we used the battering economy to improve and innovate what we do for our members because everyone one of you deserve it every single day.

For me, the very best part of this achievement is that we accomplished it as a team, Board Members, Ambassadors, Committee Members, staff all together with one thing in mind: being the very best for our members. Every day we evaluate best practices, distill feedback and try to find more ways to say "Yes!" to everything we

For us, this Five-Star is a validation of the implementation of our strategy and vision, but more importantly, it's a starting point for all the days to come. If there is one business in our community that can be more profitable, then we have more work to do. It is our mission and our passion to do it.

Now that your Chamber has been recognized for performing at the highest level there's only one thing left for us to do: raise the bar!

My respect and admiration to each of you.

## BUSINESS EDUCATION

# HR Committee Learns About Workplace Investigations



Louis Klein

Louis Klein, an attorney with Jackson/DeMarco/Tidus/Peck-enpau, works as a partner with businesses and management to find resolutions to workplace and employee issues and problems before they escalate to litigation.

His experience includes trials, arbitrations and mediations of employment disputes, as well as participation in administrative proceedings before the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the California Labor Commissioner.

At the quarterly Chamber Human Resource Committee meet-

ing in October, Klein presented the "Anatomy of a Workplace Investigation—Avoiding Legal Landmines." The presentation began with "Why Investigate?"

The employer has a legal obligation to take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent discrimination and harassment from occurring (Government Code 12940K), maintain good employee morale, limit employer liability by diffusing the situation before it escalates and providing employer defense. The duty to investigate is both affirmative and mandatory.

Triggers that instigate an investigation include an employee complaint, as well as any other source that puts the employer on notice. A prompt investigation is a necessary step by which an employer meets its obligation to ensure a discrimi-

nation-free work environment and means "immediate and appropriate corrective action".

As to who handles the investigation, the investigator could be a witness, someone in-house who is trained to conduct investigations, or someone who is not in the chain of command. It could also be an attorney, a licensed private investigator or other professional.

Klein provided in-depth information on how to interview the complaining employee and other witnesses.

Guidelines for a proper investigation include: promptness (diligent and timely); impartiality (objective investigation); confidentiality; training (investigator should be well-trained); thoroughness; questioning (relevant, open-ended

—Continued on page 11

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# Thousand Oaks State of the City Address Coming Dec. 13

Mayor Andrew Fox is slated to speak at the annual Thousand Oaks State of the City Address and Luncheon on Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2011, at California Lutheran University, 60 West Olsen Road, Thousand Oaks.

A networking reception begins at 11:15 a.m., with luncheon at 12 p.m., followed

by the mayor's address at approximately 1 p.m.

The cost is \$45 per person. Paid reservations must be received in the Chamber office no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 8.

For more information on sponsorship or tickets, call the Chamber at 805.370.0035 or visit [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org).

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

# Members Discover Chamber Benefits at the October New Member Luncheon



Nearly 20 new members were introduced to the many features and benefits of Chamber membership at the October New Member Luncheon.

A panel of Chamber employees and member representatives presented promotional and networking options, Chamber committees, and a variety of extras that are afforded to all Chamber mem-

bers, such as Lunch and Learn classes and free *Conejo Business Times* articles.

The group also took advantage of the networking opportunities available amongst themselves.

Lunch was provided by Buca di Beppo, located in the Janss Marketplace at 205 N. Moorpark Rd. #P, Thousand Oaks, 805.449.3688.



**PROMOTING EDUCATION**

## Education Committee Learns About Century Academy



Jeff Davis  
CVUSD Director  
of Education

Dr. Jeff Davis, Director of Secondary Education for the Conejo Valley Unified School District, briefed the Chamber's Education Committee members

on one of the newest schools in the district, Century Academy.

The school is an independent study high school located on the campus of the Conejo Valley Adult School.

Century Academy is described as "customized instruction for the independent learner." The school features individualized instruction, customized student scheduling, a high school diploma, CVUSD

curriculum grades 9-12 and a computer lab.

Online learning is a significant component of Century Academy. Students are expected to complete online courses as part of the educational program. Attendance at an independent study school is based on completed school work.

For additional information, go to [www.conejo.k12.ca.us/centuryacademy](http://www.conejo.k12.ca.us/centuryacademy).

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

## Avoid a Lawsuit: Purchase Your Required 2012 Employer Posters and Pamphlets from the Chamber

If you have even one employee, California and Federal laws require that you post the notices that are provided on this 28 x 53-inch poster.

All required federal and state notices are provided on a single poster and it is also available in Spanish. The poster must also include information about your workers' comp benefits, pay day schedule and emergency contacts. You may need to order several to ensure that your business, branches and satellite offices are displaying the poster according to the law.

Avoid fines up to \$17,000 and legal problems in one affordable purchase.

Also available are required pamphlets including:



Sexual Harassment Information Sheet, Unemployment and State Disability Insurance pamphlets, Paid Family Leave pamphlets, and Workers' Compensation Rights and Benefits pamphlets.

You may also want to purchase the *2012 HR Handbook*, a step-by-step guide to managing human resources issues and complying with federal and California labor laws. This book covers key

—Continued on page 12

**TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

## Optimize the Internet to Keep Your Business in Front of Customers

At the October Technology Committee, Jeff Lynch from Lynch Interactive presented *Local Search Marketing for Service Industries: How do customers find your service when they need it?*

Local search marketing is the emerging trend on the Internet and can help a business "stay in front" of prospective customers.

Lynch Interactive, developers of the Chamber's website, has the technical and mar-

keting experience that small businesses are looking for in their web-based marketing. They have a new division called eLocal Leads that works specifically with service industries to insure they are getting their unfair share of the business from people looking for their type of services. They also have extensive experience with e-commerce development and marketing.

The Technology Committee brings the busi-



Jeff Lynch

ness community up-to-date on the latest technology and computer issues that affect the bottom line. The focus is to educate, be educated, and to discuss myriad options and challenges that business owners and managers face.

**SUPPORTING EDUCATION**

## Conejo Elementary Instructor Named Teacher of the Month



Maria Jambor, a teacher at Conejo Elementary School, was named October Teacher of the Month for the Conejo Valley Unified School District.

Each month throughout the school year, the Greater Conejo Valley Community Foundation recognizes a Teacher of the Month. A total of 10 teachers from the Conejo Valley Unified School District and three teachers from the Las Virgenes Unified School District are honored each school year.

Thank you to the participating businesses that so generously donate to this program: Sinclair Company, SAGE Publications and Corwin Press, Congressman Elton Gallegly, Senator Tony Strickland, Assemblymember Jeff Gorell, Mediation by Bernard, California State

University-Channel Islands, Mathnasium of Thousand Oaks, United Blood Services, Ventura County Star, First California Bank, Sylvan Learning Center, Carington Insurance Agency, Huntington Learning Center, Stonefire Grill, Pacific Oaks Federal Credit Union, The Non-profit Agency, LLC, Touro University Worldwide, Gayle Caughey of Avira Real Estate, and World Financial Group.

If you are interested in becoming a Teacher of the Month sponsor, contact Jan Smith at the Chamber, 805.370.0035 or [jsmith@conejochamber.org](mailto:jsmith@conejochamber.org).

**PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION**

## Leadership Conejo Class Visits VC Star and County Fire Department



The Leadership Conejo class was privy to numerous demonstrations while visiting the Ventura County Fire Department headquarters, including the jaws of life.

The Leadership Conejo class of 2012 was treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the Ventura County Fire Department and the Ventura County Star as part of their November session.

At the Ventura County Star Publisher George Cogswell, III, and Michael Hoffman, Director of Niche Publications, welcomed the class.

Leadership Conejo was created by the Greater Conejo Valley Community Foundation to identify and promote skills of current and future community leaders.



Giant rolls of newsprint tower above the class during media session at the V.C. Star.

# Chamber Announces 2012 Board of Directors

The Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce congratulates its newly-elected 2012 Board of Directors and thanks the 2011 Board for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Board members serve a three-year term and are allowed a maximum of two consecutive terms.

Newly elected to the Board are: Jennifer Ciccone, Senior Property Manager, The Oaks Shopping Center; Rick Lemmo, Senior Vice President Community Relations, Caruso Affiliated; Tim Snyder, Regional Vice President, Anthem Blue Cross/Wellpoint; and Kim Woods, Realtor, the Moerler Team - Keller Williams.

Re-elected to the Board for a second term are: Mary Guy, Senior Vice President & BD Officer, First California Bank; Dr. Jackie Pick, Doctor of Chiropractic; and Yavar Rafieha, General Manager, Power of Home Agoura Hills.

The Executive Committee for 2012 includes: Chairman of the Board John LaRocca, Managing Director, Sage Bankcard; Chairman-Elect Kristen Davis, Senior Manager of Corporate Communications, Amgen Inc.; Chairman-Emeritus Phillip A. Koonce; Treasurer Rick Lemmo; Secretary, Leonard Greenlee, Facility Management Director, Baxter Healthcare; Director-at-Large Matt Huss, General Manager, Sheraton Agoura Hills Hotel; Director-at-Large Matthew Midura, Assistant Vice President of Integrated Marketing Communications, Pepperdine University; Director-at-Large Marcia Sutton, Director of Human Resources, Dole Food Co. Inc.; and Jill Lederer, President/CEO, Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Sitting Board Directors are: Fariborz Aframian, CEO/Owner, Paris Cut Hair Design; George Cogswell III, Publisher and President, Ventura County Star; Dave Friedl, CR Print; Betsy Friedman; Tammie Helmuth, President, Conejo Awards; Peggy Hinz; Greg Kaapuni, Attorney at Law; Paul Long, Director of Admissions and Marketing, Oaks Christian School; Angel Robertson, General Manager, Dallas Capital; Lisa Safaeinili, Executive Director, Westminster Free Clinic; Candice Shehorn, Founder, Key Pointe Coaching; Keith Sinclair, Owner, Sinclair Company; Mike Soules, President, Corwin - A SAGE Company; Greg Taylor, Hub International; Ryan Van Ommeren, Vice President Facilities Planning, California Lutheran University; and Nicole Winner, Owner, WinnerQuotes Insurance.

Board members whose terms expire at the end of 2011 are: Tracy Chudoba Wood, Caruso Affiliated; Susan Murata, Vice President/CFO, Silver Star Automotive Group; and

—Continued on page 11



## Thank You for Renewing

Exceptional businesses invest in the Chamber because they recognize the value of membership.

<b>43 Years</b> Automobile Club of So. California	<b>10 Years</b> Society Social Calendar Tignino & Lutz, LLP
<b>38 Years</b> Smith Precision Products	<b>9 Years</b> First Private Bank & Trust Wades Wines
<b>34 Years</b> Wender and McLaine, CPAs	<b>8 Years</b> Computer Pro Kama Sutra Company Los Robles Greens Golf Course Togo's - Westlake Village
<b>27 Years</b> Let's Get Cookin' / Westlake Culinary Institute	<b>7 Years</b> American Muffler Brake & Radiator Nordman Cormany Hair & Compton, LLP
<b>26 Years</b> Newbury Disposal Company	<b>6 Years</b> California Pizza Kitchen Community Conscience TownePlace Suites by Marriott
<b>24 Years</b> Anthem Blue Cross / WellPoint Daniel Cherger Insurance Agency, Inc.	<b>5 Years</b> America's Tire Company Azusa Pacific University, Ventura County Regional Center Stitch, Ronald K., Attorney
<b>23 Years</b> Behr-Browers Architects, Inc. Carignan Consulting Company Senior Concerns	<b>4 Years</b> Agoura Car Care Daland Swim School
<b>19 Years</b> CRC Performance Transmissions Brian Slywka, MD Village Chevron	<b>3 Years</b> Extra Space Storage - Newbury Park Insperty Las Virgenes Educational Foundation Law Offices of Barton Pokras United Blood Services
<b>18 Years</b> Radical Air & Refrigeration	<b>2 Years</b> Advantra Graphics Conejo Deals.com Dennis Rehm Insurance Agency McAuliffe Financial Services, Inc. Sweet Arleen's
<b>17 Years</b> PTS Home & Office Furniture	<b>1 Year</b> All Stars Athletics Chem-Dry Carpet Tech
<b>16 Years</b> Westlake Lake Management Association	<b>11 Years</b> Crunchies Food Company Jewelry Couture Sarna & Company Certified Public Accountants Westlake Yacht Club
<b>15 Years</b> California Dance Theatre Tax and Notary Offices of Ted Jessee	
<b>14 Years</b> North Ranch Self Storage	
<b>13 Years</b> Conejo Valley Stamp & Coin, Inc. Warner Pacific Insurance Services	
<b>11 Years</b> La Reina High School Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum Total Woman Gym & Day Spa	

### PROMOTING BUSINESS

# Meet the New Chamber Members

## Lindamood-Bell Opens New Thousand Oaks Learning Center

Lindamood-Bell develops language processing so everyone can learn to his or her potential. In order to be a proficient learner, in any subject, it is critical that an individual is able to efficiently process information, either by listening or reading.

Their instruction helps a wide range of individuals of all ages (pre-kindergarten through adult) by addressing the underlying skills necessary for

independence and self-correction. Beyond traditional subject tutoring, Lindamood-Bell focuses on the development of processing skills.

It is common to see years of learning gained in reading, comprehension, critical thinking, and spelling through just weeks of intensive instruction.

The rapport Lindamood-Bell builds with their students and

consistency in instruction produces superior results. All students are approached as individuals to be appreciated and aided in realizing their gifts and potential.

Every aspect of their interaction is oriented to enhance their students' self-confidence and to develop trust in their abilities to think, reason, and communicate.

**The Thousand Oaks Learning center is located at 2824 Camino Dos Rios, Suite C, Thousand Oaks, 91320. For more information, call 805.499.6700 or visit [www.lindamood-bell.com/Centers.aspx?CenterId=270](http://www.lindamood-bell.com/Centers.aspx?CenterId=270).**



**LINDAMOOD-BELL**  
Learning Processes

### PROMOTING BUSINESS

## Welcome New Members

### Fourteen Businesses Invest in Their Success

We welcome 14 new members. Be sure to check out their services and products, and use them whenever possible. Learn more about them at [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org). There's strength in our numbers!

Betsy Friedman

Gail Claridge Interiors

Nancie L. Apps - Lic.  
#0G92615

Shanghai Spring Int'l Travel  
Service USA Inc.

Billy D'z Backyard BBQ

Herzog Wine Cellars

Peloso Photography

South Coast Tax Resolution

Conejo Valley CPR


IQ Advisory Group

Proactive Sports  
Performance

Ventura Transit System

Farmers Insurance / Jacob  
Rasoul



Lindamood - Bell Learning  
Processes



## Networking at Night Mixer

### Together for the Holidays in Thousand Oaks

**Wednesday  
Dec. 14, 2011  
5:30 - 7 p.m.**

Hosted by:

**TOI Tapas Bar & Lounge and  
Best Western Plus Thousand Oaks Inn**  
75 W. Thousand Oaks Blvd., Thousand Oaks

Visit Best Western Plus Thousand Oaks Inn, a true Thousand Oaks landmark, and the new and exciting dining locale, TOI Tapas Bar & Lounge, for an unforgettable, delicious night of networking with fellow professionals!

**Chamber Members: \$5 Non-Members: \$15**  
Sorry, no refunds. For more information, call or visit:  
**805.370.0035 • [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org)**  
Join us on Facebook

**NETWORKING · FOOD · PRIZES · MUSIC · NETWORKING**



## JUMP START Networking Breakfast

### Networking in the New Year

Friday, January 6, 2012 · 7 - 9 a.m.

Be a part of a new and improved breakfast format for the 2012 Jump Start Networking Breakfasts! We are eager to debut new networking activities such as live testimonials, brief introductions for all guests, and drawing connections between professionals on-site! We can't wait to hear your feedback as we continue to make exciting enhancements.

**Hyatt Westlake Plaza**  
880 S. Westlake Blvd., Westlake Village, CA 91361

Special thank you to breakfast sponsor:



Emcee: Dave Burns, Cover2Cover Music

**Pay by 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 5, & save!**  
Members: \$20 · Non-Members: \$30  
Pre-registered members included on Hot Sheet!  
Walk-In Members: \$27 · Non-Members/Guests: \$37  
No refunds or transfers

Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce  
600 Hampshire Road, Suite 200, Westlake Village, CA 91361  
805.370.0035 FAX 805.370.1083 [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org)



PROMOTING BUSINESS

# Business Briefs: Announcements

## More Than 70% Off Holiday Gift Certificates

It's that time of the year when many people are not quite sure what type of gift to give to their loved ones. Give a lasting gift for this holiday season and receive a super-discount of over 70 percent.

Joel Bogeberg of Photography By Joel is an award winning photographer who, for over 25 years, has been taking natural, fun and priceless portraits with children and families.

For this holiday season they are making available, for only Chamber members, a very-special holiday gift certificate that includes a deluxe studio portrait session and a custom 10x10 portrait, a \$320 value, for only \$40!



That's a \$250 savings! This holiday you can give your family a special and lasting memory that just takes a couple of minutes to order. Great for the last-minute and busy super-busy people.

This offer won't last long. To reserve your gift certificate contact Photography By Joel at 818.706.3778 by December 15, 2011. Mention code "Holiday Chamber Special."

**Photography By Joel is located at 31368 Via Colinas #101, Westlake Village. Online at [www.photographybyjoel.com](http://www.photographybyjoel.com).**

## Business Missing Sales with Customers On Hold

Pete Turpel, owner and president of Phone On-Hold Marketing Systems, says, "The telephone is the single most important marketing tool available to businesses, yet, companies often ignore this asset and lose customers, even before they can talk with them. When someone calls and is put on hold... they need to be immediately engaged or the potential customer simply drops off the line and may not call back."

In a study published by the North American Telecommunications Association, it was noted that, if people are put on hold when they call into a company and they are greeted by silence, 90 percent of callers will drop off the line within 40 seconds. Music can hold caller attention 30 seconds longer than

"dead air;" however, when businesses offer information on their company, products, services, specials or even hours of operation, callers will stay on the phone up to three minutes longer.

Turpel adds, "Phone on-hold marketing is a very personal, powerful marketing tool that has a track record of effectively creating additional sales, improving customer loyalty, enhancing a company's brand, and elevating stature in communities served. This telephone forum is a means of communicating information of importance to your callers and should always be viewed—not as an afterthought—but as a primary point of contact."

**For additional information on how to maximize telephone hold time, contact Phone On-Hold Marketing Systems at 800.465.3102 or email [info@phoneonhold.com](mailto:info@phoneonhold.com).**

## Ambassador Spotlight



Robert J. Fisher  
Fisher & Associates Inc.

Robert J. Fisher, a veteran public relations executive, counselor and consultant with four decades of experience in the fields of public relations, marketing, communications and advertising, is President of Fisher & Associates, Inc., an award-winning Westlake Village-based public relations and communications firm which has served a broad range of small to medium sized businesses and industries on local, national and international levels since 1978.

Due to his experience and expertise in his profession amassed over four decades, Fisher also serves as an expert witness in litigation throughout the country and regularly is utilized as an expert information source and analyst by the mass media most often relating to matters of public perception, image/reputation and crisis communications.

A former New York Times reporter, Fisher also worked for three of the nation's largest PR firms. He is an active author, speaker and lecturer. F&A's website is [www.fisherpr.com](http://www.fisherpr.com) and phone number is 805.496.5386.



Bernard Goodman  
Mediation by Bernard Goodman

Bernard Goodman is well-suited to his role as a mediator. His experience includes many years as a business owner, both in England and California, with a staff of close to 200. His experience includes his years as a real estate broker serving as a director and working on several committees for the Conejo Association of Realtors, where adhering to professional standards and serving as an advocate to the public was close to his heart and his desire to uphold the ethics of the profession.

Goodman decided that all the mediation that he had done in his various professional and personal capacities should be put to good use, so he attended and continues to take mediation classes at Pepperdine University to hone his skills. Goodman gives back by working, when asked, pro bono for the Ventura Superior Court.

There comes a time in everyone's life when they are in conflict with another person or entity and when that happens Goodman can step in as an independent person to assist the dissidents in being able to negotiate among themselves in a confidential forum and come to a livable compromise.

Have a problem looming? Contact Goodman at 805.630.3758.

## The Boys & Girls Clubs of Conejo & Las Virgenes Receive Gift

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Conejo & Las Virgenes is pleased to announce the gift of \$1 million by the Anderson Family to help provide much needed programs and services for the youth of Newbury Park, Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village, Agoura Hills, Calabasas and Hidden Hills.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Conejo & Las Virgenes recently received this significant donation, which will help fund one million dollars to the Clubs over a three-year period.

"We are so honored to receive this momentous gift that will greatly impact our efforts to provide for and improve the services we offer to our youth," stated Cal Johnson, Chairman of the

Board for the Boys & Girls Clubs of Conejo & Las Virgenes. "It's a true testament to how important our efforts are when community leaders step up and realize the need to give back to youth who will help shape and determine our future," he continued. "We couldn't be more grateful for this gift from the Anderson family."

The Anderson family provides hundreds of auto dealerships jobs in Thousand Oaks under Silver Star Automotive Group.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Conejo & Las Virgenes provide program services before and after school, during lunch, on the weekends, all day during school vacations and the summer to 2,400 children. **For more information about supervised youth programs, to donate, volunteer, or register online, please log onto [www.bgcconejo.org](http://www.bgcconejo.org) or call 818.706.0905.**

## Pat Helton Represents Coldwell Banker at Conference

Pat Helton, a broker associate in the Coldwell Banker Westlake Village regional office, represented the Conejo Valley at the Coldwell Banker Previews Estate Conference in Santa Barbara in early October. The event highlighted the latest technology and marketing.

Helton is a former educator, and holds a master of science degree. She has been a leader in real estate sales in the Conejo Valley since 1985. She is a licensed broker, a certified relocation and corporate property specialist. She holds designations of CRS (Certified Residential Specialist), GRI (Graduate of Realtors® Institute), ABR (Accredited Buyers Specialist), SRES (Seniors Real Estate Specialist), CN (Certified Negotiator), and e-PRO (Leader In Online Real Estate Technology).

**Call Helton to accomplish your real estate goals at 805.444.1233. Visit her website at [www.PatHelton.com](http://www.PatHelton.com) to see virtual tours, homes for sale and information about our schools, the Chamber of Commerce, parks and recreation.**

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**BUSINESS EDUCATION**

## Free Lunch and Learn Business Seminars Slated for December

Learn from peers and pros at the Chamber's free lunchtime education series. Bring your own brown-bag lunch and join fellow Chamber members at the Janet Levett Chamber Conference Center, 600 Hampshire Rd., Suite 202, Westlake Village.

This series is open to the first 20 respondents and advance reservations are suggested.

Lunch and Learn is free to Chamber members. Non-member cost is \$10. Pre-register online at [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org) to reserve your place. Call the Chamber at 805.370.0035 for further information.

**Wed., Dec. 7, 12-1:30 p.m.**

### How to Steer Potential Customers to Your Website for FREE

Moriah Scoble,  
Symbiocracy.com



This seminar offers an overview of Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

Online networking provides a simple and affordable method to facilitate small business marketing. Learn the basics and more at this powerful presentation.

—Continued on page 7

**BREAKFAST NETWORKING**

## Networking and Gifts Featured at Holiday Boutique

Breakfast guests got a head start on their holiday shopping at the November Jump Start Networking Breakfast. Several Chamber businesses had booths set up to sell their wares for the Chamber's special holiday boutique at the Sheraton Agoura Hills Hotel.

In addition to the creative gift ideas that filled the room, attendees had ample opportunity for networking and promotion. Each guest was able to give a short business commercial to the entire audience.

Following the promotional portion of the morning, people from the audience could give a personal shout-out to other businesses in attendance.

The morning wrapped up with a game of meet, greet

and sign the networking sheet.

The emcee was Dave Burns of Cover 2 Cover Music. Breakfast sponsor was Welcome to the Neighborhood Magazine.

Thanks to the boutique vendors: Fitness Movement, Photography by Joel, Cookie Lee Jewelry, Stella & Dot Jewelry, Herzog Wine Cellars, Sheraton Agoura Hills Hotel and WineShop at Home.

For future Chamber events, visit the calendar section of the Chamber's website.

A multitude of terrific raffle prizes were donated for the breakfast, including:

- Deluxe family studio portrait session and a custom 8x10 portrait, donated by Photography by Joel,

- Two-week unlimited package, donated by Fitness Movement,

- Complimentary Admission to the November Networking at Night Mixer at Capstone Direct, Inc. in Newbury Park, donated by Greater Conejo Valley

Chamber of Commerce,

- First month free rent, free use of move-in truck and free lock, donated by So Cal Self Storage, and

- Two hours of complimentary tutoring, donated by Sylvan Learning Center of Westlake Village.



New Chamber members were introduced to the breakfast guests.



Ben Gilbert and Jodi Santino of Welcome to the Neighborhood Magazine.



Guests had ample jewelry to choose from courtesy of Cookie Lee Jewelry.



Herzog Wine Cellars offered a variety of gift baskets.



Photography By Joel displayed numerous samples.



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- Flat panel monitor for computer and DVD projection
- 30 executive and 15 metal folding chairs
- Kitchenette (sink, microwave, refrigerator, coffee-maker)
- Private restroom

Visit the Chamber Store at [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org) or call 805.370.0035

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NETWORKING AT NIGHT

# Networking Takes the Prize at Awards Showroom

Scores of mixer guests filled the showroom of Conejo Awards to overflowing at the October Networking at Night Mixer.

Business representatives

enjoyed delicious sandwiches from Panera Bakery along with beverages, giveaways, door prizes and networking opportunities.

Chamber mixers are a

great way to make new contacts to enhance your business. For information on future events visit [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org).

A multitude of terrific

raffle prizes were donated, including:

- Three roller ball pens with personalized engraving, donated by Conejo Awards,
- One-hour massage session and a bottle of chocolate wine, donated by Massage Envy Spa – Thousand Oaks and Precept Wines,
- \$50 gift certificate, donated by Nate 'n Al,
- Four free hours of homework support tutoring, donated by Sylvan Learning Center Westlake Village, and
- First month free rent, free use of move-in truck and free lock at So Cal Self Storage, donated by So Cal Self Storage.



Conejo Awards welcomed guests to its showroom.



Samples of awards surrounded guests.



The evening offered ample opportunity for networking.



Sandwiches from Panera Bakery were a popular fare with guests.



The store's front counter doubled as a refreshment station.

## Lunch and Learn

—Cont. from page 6

Wed., Dec. 14, 12-1:30 p.m.

### Be the Best Networker You Can Be: Learn the Art of Business Networking

Same day as the Mixer. Learn at lunch, practice that evening at the Networking at Night Mixer.

John LaRocca,  
Sage Bankcard



Sarah Shirazi  
Reznick,  
Edward Jones



Nicole Winner,  
Winner Quotes  
Insurance



Discuss how to meet, greet, network and get qualified leads at the evening's mixer.

- Five biggest networking mistakes.
- How to feel comfortable with cold introductions.
- How to manage leads.
- Choosing your power partners.
- Critiquing your result.

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Belmont Village resident Dorothy W.  
with her daughter Marilyn.

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## Business Briefs

—Cont. from page 5

### Debbie Soden is Your Certified Short Sale & Foreclosure Specialist

*What does short sale mean?*

A short sale means that the amount of the existing mortgage(s) is greater than the amount that the property would sell for today. The mortgagee accepts the lesser amount and avoids the foreclosure proceedings. The balance of the loan is forgiven by the lender.

*If you have equity in your home, will your lender allow a short sale?*

Depending on the amount of equity, lenders may choose the traditional means of foreclosure. This may allow the lender to recapture some of the expense of the proceedings. However, the home may be encumbered by other liens, and the inventory of homes may detour the lender from wanting to take title.

*Can I still profit on a short sale?*

No. A seller may not receive proceeds. Though the seller may have used the equity on a previous refinance or equity line, the current loan balance is higher than the selling price of the home.

*Is there an application process to start?*

It depends on the lender. Be prepared to submit a hardship letter detailing the circumstances behind the short sale; current financial condition of the seller, i.e. pay check stubs, bank statements, and a personal financial statement, as well as other lender-required documentation.

*Will a short sale affect my credit rating?*

Each lender decides what to report. Often it will note loan as "paid" on the credit report, with a footnote reference "settled for less than amount owed." It is more favorable that "foreclosed."

*I have filed for bankruptcy; can I still*



*do a short sale?*

No. Usually a short sale is a collection activity prohibited in a bankruptcy.

*Will I need an appraisal?*

Lenders vary on whether they will use a full appraisal or real estate brokers price opinion (BPO). All lenders require a formal assessment of value of the home.

*What are the tax implications in the short of real estate?*

Consult a tax accountant as each case varies. Generally, taxes are reported as a loss to the lender and a gain to the buyer. If the lender forgives \$20K on your mortgage, you receive a form 1099C in that amount as income, and are responsible for paying the tax.

*Other advice*

Understand lender's procedures for a short sale. Are they willing to work with you? Can you modify your existing loan? In a pre-foreclosure, the clock is ticking. Communicate any delays to your lender.

It is a myth that banks would rather foreclose than be bothered with a short sale. Today, many lenders would stall a foreclosure with the knowledge you are committed to completing a short sale transaction.

As a certified Short Sale & Foreclosure Specialist (SFR), Debbie Soden, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, Westlake Village, has the knowledge and expertise to help navigate and negotiate on your behalf.

**Give her a call at 805.300.0936 or email her at [Debbie@DebbieSoden.com](mailto:Debbie@DebbieSoden.com), or visit [www.DebbieSodenForHomes.com](http://www.DebbieSodenForHomes.com).**

### VCEDA Survey Shows Businesses in Step with Sustainability Message

A survey of about 200 attendees at the 41st Annual Business Outlook Conference (BOC) presented by the Ventura County Economic Development Association (VCEDA) shows that many local businesses are seeing sustainability practices as a road to business success.

The questions asked the attendees mirrored questions from a fall 2011 survey of 4,700 global business executives conducted by MIT Sloan Management Review.

When asked whether pursuing sustainability-related strategies were necessary to be competitive, 78 percent of VCEDA conference attendees said yes. The MIT Sloan Management survey

found 67 percent said yes.

Nearly identical percentages of business executives locally and globally said their organization's commitment to sustainability had increased in the past year. The global survey saw that percentage jump from 25 percent in 2009 and 59 percent in 2010.

Those surveyed were asked if their organization's commitment to sustainability in the year ahead would increase—71 percent locally and 74 percent nationally indicated an increase.

Bill Buratto, VCEDA president and CEO, says "Whether it's reusing and reducing energy, creating new systems that run more efficiently or recycling and reducing waste—sustainability practices offer enticing alternatives to the old ways of doing business."

**To review the survey results go to [www.vceda.org](http://www.vceda.org).**

### Coach Adds Health Component to Services

Next Level Coaching has added a new service, that of health and nutrition coaching as well as the normal repertoire of individual, group, and executive coaching for businesses.

Health coaching is offered with the Take Shape For Life company. One of the keys to successful weight loss is that coach Steve Wilson will be in contact with a client every day during the

tough first few weeks and then every few days as often as they like.

The Weight Management Center at John Hopkins has used this program for the last eight years and have achieved stunning results with nine successful clinical studies on the balance between the Take Shape for Life weight loss results and its nutritional value.

**Contact Wilson at Next Level Coaching 805.340.8654. Learn more at [www.NLC.com](http://www.NLC.com).**

—Cont. on page 9

*To be included in Business Briefs or Meet the New Members, Chamber members can submit 120-word articles by the first working day of the month preceding the publication date (i.e., deadline for the February issue is January 1). Insertion is at the discretion of the Chamber and articles may be edited or held for future editions. Call the Chamber for details.*

## CHOOSE YOUR BEST FUTURE

Presented by **BUNNY VREELAND**,  
Founder of Vreeland College of the Healing Arts

Thursday December 15th, 2011

LOS ROBLES GREENS GOLF CLUBHOUSE  
299 Moorpark Road, Thousand Oaks, CA 91361

5:30 pm Networking 6:30 pm Dinner & Program

Wow! 2012 is just around the corner... how can you make this your best year ever?

Our guest speaker, "Dr. Bunny", as she is called, was a 16-year-old high school dropout who took 40 years to earn her Ph.D. She has a story. How did she get from that 16-year old to where she is, today?

We all have a story - what is yours? Have you ever considered that we create our story? Have you ever considered that we create our past, our present and, yes, our future? The challenge is to create our future based on a positive base rather than a negative history that most of us have.

Join Dr. Bunny as she shows us how to choose our best future.

**Opportunity Drawing for Members:** Bring a \$25.00 gift for our drawing and get a chance to speak about your business.

**Early Bird Registration:** By Friday, December 9th  
Members: \$35 Non-Members: \$40

**After December 9th and at the door:** \$45.00 for everyone

**Next Event is January 18** – NAWBO-VC Winter Mixer - Come mingle with other women business owners, enjoy good food, and take a peek at the home office of Maura Raffensperger, Your Chief Simplicity Officer. Create a banner year for your business in 2012 with new relationships and useful tips for a more efficient office.

**TO REGISTER, visit [www.nawbovc.org](http://www.nawbovc.org)**  
or call **877.NAWBO-VC (629-2682) or 805-777-1000**



National Association of Women  
Business Owners – Ventura County  
[www.NAWBOVC.org](http://www.NAWBOVC.org) 877.NAWBOVC



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### Green Business Certification

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- Become a 'green business' leader
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For more details, visit  
**[www.toaks.org/GoGreenBiz](http://www.toaks.org/GoGreenBiz)**  
or call 805-449-2400





Business Briefs

—Cont. from page 8

Companies Find Qualified Workers Through Ventura County Job & Career Centers

The Workforce Investment Board of Ventura County (WIB) knows that not all employment news is gloomy. A bright spot is the work being done by the WIB-supported employment professionals at Ventura County Job & Career Centers (JCCs). A recent success story highlights the efforts of the JCC staff to match job seekers with local employers—all at no cost to either party.

All New Technologies, Inc. (ANT Furnace), is an Oxnard company that provides equipment for materials ther-

mal processing. Owner Eric Gisonno contacted the JCCs after his wife heard a local radio spot highlighting free JCC employer services. In the past year, he has hired four employees through the centers, taking advantage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) on-the-job training program that underwrites training costs. Gisonno says, "The training brings employees up to speed on how we do business. The Job & Career Centers were very helpful and eager to come up with solutions that work for our company."

To learn more about free employer services for Ventura County businesses through the Job & Career Centers, call 800.500.7705, email HSA-Employer-Services@ventura.org, or visit www.venturacountyjcc.org.

Thousand Oaks Farmers' Market Announces Holiday Hours

The Thousand Oaks Farmers' Market announces its holiday schedule for the upcoming season. The Market will be closed through December 31 2011, re-opening again on January 5, 2012. The Thousand Oaks Farmers' Market takes place at the Oaks Shopping Center at the East End Parking Lot, on Wilbur Road and Thousand Oaks Boulevard

from 1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Thousand Oaks Certified Farmers' Market offers an array of freshly grown produce including a supply of organic varieties, fresh cut flowers, fresh local seafood and more

For more information, call the Ventura County Certified Farmers' Market Association at 805.529.6266 or visit the website at www.vccfarmermarkets.com. Follow the Farmers' Market on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vccfm.

Local Business Plans to Help Rescue Schools and Non-Profits

Community Funding Solutions (CFS), an Agoura Hills/Westlake Village based company, announces plans to rescue California schools and nonprofits from the financial challenges created by massive funding cuts.

Responding to the need to generate long term, sustainable ongoing financial support, the CFS plan will create sustainable school and non-profit funding for the future through the unification of community-minded homeowners, real estate professionals and businesses. Habitat for Humanity of Ventura and Big Brothers Big Sisters have already become beneficiaries.

Lynne West, CEO of Big Brothers

Big Sisters of Ventura County, said the organization's executive board considers the CFS program "a truly sustainable funding solution..."

Agents from Troop, Sotheby's, Comfort, Prudential, Costigan and Rodeo have already become part of the CFS Network of Giving Agents. This innovative business model will ensure continued funding for years to come.

B.J. Ward from Comfort Real Estate Services in Ventura stated, "CFS does not charge the agents. It's a win-win for everyone. CFS is the most comprehensive business solution I've ever seen. It creates a 'New Conversation' between our agents and their clients that comes from the heart. All of my agents are very enthusiastic about CFS."

For more information on CFS, call 818.624.1814 or email jamesalcroft@gmail.com.

New Fireplace Showroom Opens in Valley Aire

Fireplace Systems, a division of Valley Aire Inc., has remodeled their showroom. Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays, see the cutting edge in the Tri-Counties for modern, beautiful and functional fireplaces, fire pits and any indoor or outdoor temperature needs for homes,

restaurants and hotels.

Displayed are linear, direct vent, log sets, glass, river rock, outdoor heaters and bar-b-qs. Add a fireplace where you never had one before in one day!

Free clicker lighter upon visit at 1317 Lawrence Drive, Newbury Park. 805.499.4343. Free estimates for fireplaces, heating, air conditioning. www.valleyaire.com.

Advertisement for VCStar.com featuring the headline "Showcase your business in a fresh new light!" and contact information for Matt Gray at 805.437.0316.

Advertisement for Waste Management featuring a young girl in a car and the text "Seasons change. Times change. People change. But one thing remains unchanged..."

Advertisement for Waste Management with the logo and the slogan "THINK GREEN. Find out more at KeepingVenturaCountyClean.com or give us a call at (805) 522-9400."

Large advertisement for COVER 2 COVER MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT, featuring photos of bands and a DJ, and listing services for DJ's, Bands, MC's, Tribute Acts, and Look-A-Likes.



# December 2011 Calendar of Chamber Events

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			<b>1</b> Business Breakfast Network Preferred Referral Alliance Westlake Leaders Synergy Bus. Connections	<b>2</b> SCORE Counseling  <b>Jump Start Networking Breakfast, 6:45 - 9 a.m.</b> Sheraton Agoura Hills Hotel
<b>5</b> New Referral Group (NRG) Conejo Connectors	<b>6</b> Conejo Professional Alliance Nightlite Networkers	<b>7</b> <b>Lunch &amp; Learn</b> <b>Search Engine Optimization</b> <b>12 noon - 1:30 p.m.</b>  Education Committee <b>3:45 - 5 p.m.</b>	<b>8</b> Business Breakfast Network Preferred Referral Alliance Westlake Leaders	<b>9</b> SCORE Counseling
<b>12</b> New Referral Group (NRG)	<b>13</b> Conejo Professional Alliance  <b>T.O. State of the City Address</b> <b>11:15 a.m. - 2 p.m., CLU</b>	<b>14</b> <b>Lunch &amp; Learn</b> <b>Art of Networking</b> <b>12 noon - 1:30 p.m.</b>  Networking at Night Mixer <b>5:30 - 7 p.m., Thousand Oaks Inn &amp; TOI Tapas Bar &amp; Lounge</b>	<b>17</b> Business Breakfast Network Preferred Referral Alliance Westlake Leaders Synergy Bus. Connections  <b>Technology Committee, No Meeting this Month</b>	<b>16</b> SCORE Counseling
<b>19</b> New Referral Group (NRG)  <b>Monthly Mailer Flyers Due by 12 Noon</b> Conejo Connectors	<b>20</b> Conejo Professional Alliance Nightlite Networkers  <b>Manufacturing Committee, No Meeting this Month</b>	<b>21</b> <b>Governmental Relations Committee - dark</b>	<b>22</b> Business Breakfast Network Preferred Referral Alliance Westlake Leaders	<b>23</b>  <b>Closed at 12 noon for Holiday</b>
<b>26</b>  <b>Closed Dec. 26 - Dec. 30</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>

## Drowning in Payments?

You Have Options... We Can Help!

**Debbie Soden, Realtor**  
 Certified Short Sale & Foreclosure Specialist (SFR)  
 DRE#01358252

Call Today: 805-300-0936  
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 DebbieSodenForHomes.com

**Chamber Discount:**  
 2 Year Home Warranty Free




Are you aware that loan modification, refinance, forbearance, repayment plan, foreclosure, deed in lieu of foreclosure, Deed-for-Lease™, bankruptcy and short sales are options for struggling homeowners? The short sale is one option that has grown in popularity. This may be due, in part, to a new development in California. The passage of Senate Bill 931 (Ducheny) and Senate Bill 458 (Corbett) prohibits lenders, of residential 1-4 units, who agree to a short sale from pursuing homeowners for the deficiency that is realized as the result of a short sale.

The fact is, only you, in conjunction with the appropriate legal, financial and tax advisors, can determine the best course of action. In the event you decide to proceed with a short sale, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage and I can assist you.

A few important facts to consider: 1) there are no guarantees; 2) lenders are not required to approve short sales; and 3) in the event you stop paying your mortgage, you could lose your home and damage your credit.




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## Thousand Oaks State of the City Address

**Tuesday, December 13, 2011**  
 California Lutheran University  
 Gilbert Sports & Fitness Center  
 60 W. Olsen Rd., Thousand Oaks

**\$45 per person**

Reception begins at 11:15 a.m.  
 Luncheon will follow at 12 noon

You are invited to join city officials, locally elected government representatives, business and community leaders for the 2011 Thousand Oaks State of the City Address. The honorable Mayor Andrew Fox will address the city of Thousand Oaks, highlighting recent city accomplishments and discussing the exciting endeavors that lie ahead. Plus, enjoy private tours of the new William Rolland Stadium and Gallery of Fine Art, led by CLU's athletic coaches.

**Pre-registration is required. Payment deadline is Thursday, December 8, 2011.**  
 Online registration is available at [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org).  
 Contact the Chamber for more information: 805-370-0035.



# Chamber Promotes New Member Businesses at Ribbon Cuttings



The Chamber Ambassadors joined **Market Finders** got together at the Chamber to celebrate its ribbon cutting. Call 805.777.7479 or visit [www.marketfinders.net](http://www.marketfinders.net) for further information.



**Massage Envy Spa – Thousand Oaks** greeted the Chamber Ambassadors at their spa at 1348 North Moorpark Road in Thousand Oaks for their ribbon cutting. To book an appointment, call 805.494.1448 or visit their website [www.massageenvy.com](http://www.massageenvy.com).



**Work Scorecard.com** and the Chamber Ambassadors visited the Chamber to celebrate their ribbon cutting. For more information on Work Scorecard.com call them at 866.642.6621 or visit [www.workscorecard.com](http://www.workscorecard.com).



The Chamber Ambassadors visited **Buddha's Belly** at 446 W Hillcrest Drive in Thousand Oaks, for their honorary ribbon cutting. To make reservations, call 805.557.1212.



**State Farm Insurance / C. Bluth** invited the Chamber Ambassadors to commemorate ribbon cutting at 650 S. Westlake Blvd. #304 in Westlake Village. For additional information on State Farm call 805.495.5900.



The Chamber Ambassadors joined **Valley Aire – Heating, Air Conditioning & Fireplaces** at 1317 Lawrence Drive in Newbury Park for their ribbon cutting. Call 805.584.2343 or visit their website [www.valleyaire.com](http://www.valleyaire.com) for more information.

## Accreditation

—Cont. from page 1

The final determination is made by the Accrediting Board, a committee of U.S. Chamber board members and chamber executives from across the country.

The Five-Star Accreditation is a distinction attained by only 75 chambers nationwide. Of the nearly 7,000 chambers in the U.S., only 234 are accredited—rated Accredited, Three-Stars, Four-Stars or Five-Stars. With more than 600 chambers in the state of California, only 13 are accredited, and of those only five have been awarded Five-Stars.

“This is the first time we have attained the top honors of a Five-Star Accreditation. We are so fortunate to be an integral part of this community and are thrilled to have earned such distinction and recognition from the U.S. Chamber. We look forward to doing even more for our members in the days to come—it’s our passion,”

says Jill Lederer, President/CEO of the Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce. “Our chamber’s mission is to enhance the profitability of businesses in the cities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills, and we will continue to strive for the best through leadership, political action and dynamic programs to promote economic vitality for our members and community.”

The U.S. Chamber gave special recognition to the Greater Conejo Valley Chamber in many areas, including the Buy Conejo program, a robust government affairs program and an excellent job of recognizing its volunteers.

“The tenets of our chamber’s values statement are to serve the businesses of the Conejo Valley, promote economic vitality, create value for our members and be accountable in offering innovative and effective programs for members and the community at large,” says Phil Koonce, Chamber Chairman of the Board. “Earning a Five Star Accreditation

from the U.S. Chamber is recognition that we are heading in the right direction.”

“Accreditation validates a chamber as having programs that benefit their local economy and for positively influencing action in their community,” said Raymond P. Towle, IOM, CAE, U.S. Chamber Executive Director of Political Affairs and Federation Relations. “We applaud these organizations for advancing the principles of free enterprise.”

The Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce was established in 1939 and has been an accredited chamber since 1974, most recently with a four-star accreditation. It is the official chamber for the cities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills. Learn more at [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org).

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

## Board

—Cont. from page 3

Pete Turpel, President, Phone On-Hold Marketing Systems.

The Chamber enhances the profitability of businesses in the cities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills through leadership, political action and dynamic programs to promote economic vitality for our members and community. Learn more at [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org).

## HR Committee

—Cont. from page 2

questions); determining credibility and making a determination.

When the investigation is complete, promptly inform the parties of the results of the investigation. Promptness helps to diminish liability by preventing further harassment or discrimination, helps to establish defenses and provides a sense of closure.

## GRC

—Cont. from page 1

lowered.

Due to state prison overcrowding and budget deficits, the state is releasing prisoners to local counties for jurisdiction for the management of specific lower level inmates and parolees from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Powers reported that this will put additional workload on the local probation and sheriff departments in the upcoming year. Ventura County is expecting to receive an estimated 400 prisoners this year. The state provided approximately \$6.5 million to Ventura County this year to fund the new realignment; however, future funding to handle this increase is still in question.

The county has also embarked on a detour from traditional approaches in its stand against waste, using a continuous improvement model known as Lean Six Sigma. “Lean” can be defined as a management approach that seeks

to maximize value while removing wasteful activities and practices. “Six Sigma” can be defined as a management approach that seeks to systematically apply scientific principles to reduce variation and eliminate defects in service offerings. This system reduces costs by incorporating online billing and sharing of equipment.

Other items of interest presented by Powers included the success of the county-wide trauma centers located at Los Robles Hospital and Medical Center and the Ventura County Medical Center where approximately 2,214 trauma patients were served. Ventura County is fortunate, due to these facilities, to have an overall mortality rate lower than other national centers. The new health center at the previous Borders bookstore should be up and running in approximately nine months.

He concluded his remarks to the committee by expressing that the county is moving forward in this difficult time, but is well positioned to weather the current economic storm.



**Gala**

—Cont. from page 1

the outgoing Chairman of the Board, Phillip Koonce; Business of the Year, Conejo Deals; Corporate Sponsor of the Year, Silver Star Automotive Group; and Volunteer of the Year, Jerry Jayne, Amgen Inc.

Tickets for the Gala can be purchased online in the Events section of [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org), or by calling the Chamber at 805.370.0035.

**Man of the Year – Matt Lallo (retired), former owner of the Tune Up Factory**

A Rotarian since the early 1970s, Matt Lallo is passionate about raising money for underprivileged children through Rotary International, is largely responsible for recent improvements to the Conejo Valley YMCA in Thousand Oaks, and helped the Conejo Recreation and Park District ready the historic McCrea Ranch as a visitor attraction.

**Woman of the Year – Rosemary Licata, Thousand Oaks Republican Women, Federated**

For more than 40 years, Rosemary Licata has devoted herself to advocating for children in Spastic Children's League; for teens learning about freedom and government in Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge programs; and in promoting roles for women leaders as a board member of the National Federation of Republican Women and Thousand Oaks Republican Women Federated.

**Business of the Year – Conejo Deals**

Conejo Deals encourages residents to Buy Local by partnering with local businesses to present incredible deals during challenging economic times, and fosters a give-back mentality through donating back a percentage of every purchased deal to a variety of community non-profit organizations.

**Corporate Sponsor of the Year – Silver Star Automotive Group**

Silver Star Automotive Group demonstrates its commitment to the greater Conejo Valley community through participating in countless civic and business related activities, supporting and giving back to the community, all the while serving as a huge driver of the local economy.

**Volunteer of the Year – Jerry Jayne, Special Projects, Amgen Inc.**

Jerry Jayne was a major

factor in the success of the final stage and celebration of the Amgen Tour of California in 2010 and 2011. His efforts helped to foster an even stronger partnership between the cities of Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Agoura Hills that has continued to grow with other events. He contributed hundreds of hours, creative suggestions to heighten the fun of the event, and he was an inspiration to everyone involved.



Business of the Year, Conejo Deals (2nd, 3th and 4th from L)



Corporate Sponsor of the Year, Silver Star Automotive Group (3rd from L)



Volunteer of the Year, Jerry Jayne (3rd from L)

Greater Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce presents

**FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS**

**2012 Recognition Gala**

Friday, January 27, 2012

Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village

6:30 p.m. Tailgate Party  
cocktails, hors d'oeuvres  
and raffle prizes

7:30 p.m. Opening Kick-Off  
dinner and program

Sponsorships available.

For more information  
visit [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org)  
or call 805.370.0035.

Cocktail attire or classy team apparel.



**HR Notices**

—Cont. from page 3

HR areas including: hiring, policies, benefits, workplace safety, preventing discrimination, harassment and termination of workers. Written in plain English, it provides online access to all required and recommended forms and is an essential guide to developing and using human resources practices.

For legal questions, the 2012 Labor Law Digest is a California-specific digest puts answers to labor law questions at your finger-

tips. Required and recommended forms are included on CD.

Key topics covered include: hiring, training, personnel records and privacy, wage and hour laws, unemployment insurance, State Disability Insurance, paid family leave, Workers' Compensation and more.

Members can purchase their compliance materials at a discounted rate—one of the many rewards of being a Chamber member.

Contact the Chamber today at 805.370.0035 or visit [www.conejochamber.org](http://www.conejochamber.org) and go to the Chamber Store to order supplies for each of your locations.

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