

FAIRFIELD DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

May 2008

Certified Farmers Market

The Fairfield Certified Farmers Market celebrated its opening day on May 1st. Mayor Harry Price, Community Development Director Eve Somjen and a group of school children helped cut the Red Ribbon to open the market season, which runs every Thursday afternoon from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. until October 2nd.

In addition to the traditional vegetable and fruit vendors, Pacific Coast Farmers Market Association has recruited flower, barbeque sauce, olive, bread and cheese vendors. There is live music each week, plus gardening information and children's activities.

The market is located on Jefferson Street between Texas Street and Empire Street, adjacent to McInnis corner (Starbucks) and the Solano County Courthouse Annex. Jefferson Street is closed to through traffic from 1:00 pm until after the market vendors have cleared the area (approximately 8:30 p.m.) each week.

FDA merchants are entitled to a free booth, space permitting, at the discretion of our Market Manager, Genevieve Krause. Please call Genevieve at 925-825-9090 to arrange your space.

Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce Business Expo

Fairfield Downtown Association staff and Board Members staffed the FDA booth at the annual Business Expo on Monday, April 14th, at the Hilton Garden Inn. Several hundred business people attended the Expo that featured 65 vendor booths and

a food court featuring 8 restaurants. Anita built a very attractive raffle prize that included Tomato Festival materials, fertilizer from Everything Green, garden and tomato decor from Hamilton House, a live tomato plant and a trowel to encourage the winner to join the fun of the Best Home Grown Tomato Contest at the Tomato Festival and West Coast BBQ Championship in August. The lucky winner was Andrea Valmore (Curves for Women/Suisun City).

In addition, we held a booth raffle for three of Anita's hand-painted Tomato signs. Winners were Connie Aaron (First Bank - Waterman Blvd.), Brook

Akowicz (Quail Creek Assisted Living in Fairfield) and Aida Gibson (one of our most loyal volunteers).

The Fairfield Downtown Association recommends membership in the Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce. Since space at the Expo is limited, we encourage all FDA members to provide staff with brochures and other materials. Come to the Expo and circulate! Meet and mingle with other business owners, using the FDA booth as your supply station. Participate and help your business grow by developing contacts in the local business community.

The 2009 Business Expo will be held in April. Pencil it in on your calendar now.

Independence Day Parade

Our annual celebration of Independence Day will take place on Friday, July 4th. Entries will line up on Webster Street between Empire Street and Travis Blvd., and on Kentucky Street between Jefferson Street and Webster Street. The parade route will follow its traditional path - Kentucky Street, south on Taylor Street to Texas Street, then east to Washington Street, north on Washington Street, to end on Kentucky Street where it began. Streets on this perimeter and inside the rectangle of the route will be closed in a rolling closure beginning at about 8:00 a.m. on the 4th of July.

The day will begin with a pancake breakfast at the Masonic Temple - 412 Travis Blvd., and sponsored by the Order of Eastern Star. Breakfast will be served from 6:30 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. Prices are: Adults - \$5, Children 6 to 12 - \$3.50, kids under 6 are free. For more information on Breakfast, call 707-427-1895.

From 11:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m., a local Scout troop will sponsor a barbeque on the Solano County Courthouse Annex lawn, and the Fairfield Downtown Association will sponsor a FREE concert featuring local band Watersign.

This year's parade theme is, "I'm Proud to Wave the Red, White and Blue," and the entry fee is \$35. A parade entry can be as basic as your own car with a sign advertising your business - decorate in red, white and blue to show your sense of community and patriotism and enter the parade - it's very effective, inexpensive advertising that reaches thousands of people internationally - yes, internationally!

The parade is seen not only by those who watch from the sidelines, but it is broadcast on the City of Fairfield's TV station - Channel 26 in Fairfield, but it

is also broadcast on the City's website-
www.ci.fairfield.ca.us - so it can be viewed by our
military personnel and others around the world!

2007 Tomato Festival featured on Taste of America- Travel Channel

Watch Taste of America on THE TRAVEL CHANNEL on Wednesday, May 28th at 8:00 p.m. (in Fairfield, Comcast Spotlight channel 71) for highlights of the 2007 Tomato Festival and West Coast Barbeque Championship.

A production crew for the program visited us last year and shot videotape in Suisun Valley to document the tomato crop grown by the Tenbrink Family, then came to the festival and taped the Tomato Eating Contest. They spent nearly a full day interviewing visitors, vendors, and volunteers for the segment.

BUSINESS STRATEGIES IN AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

RESERVE YOUR SEAT NOW
Tuesday, June 3rd, 2008- 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.
Rancho Solano Club House
3250 Rancho Solano Parkway, Fairfield
\$15 admission in advance / \$20 at the door
FDA WILL PAY THE FEE FOR MEMBERS!
Cost includes continental breakfast

The City of Fairfield Economic Development Division will present a workshop and panel discussion on how to survive in an economic downturn. The Keynote Presentation will be from Charles Eason, Executive Director of the Solano Small Business Development Center.

The Panel Discussion will include information about small business financing options, real life examples of how you can manage your business in a downturn, and what is really working out there or businesses affected by this downturn.

In addition to Mr. Eason, speakers will include Bill Davini, Colliers International and Solano Community College, Arthur Washington, Nor-Cal Financial Development Corporation and Therese Doyle, Ethan Allen Home Furnishings, Fairfield.

If this "downturn" is impacting your business, this could be a very wise \$15 investment in your future.

Register online at www.fairfield4business.com, or call 707-428-7727. E-mail LorRaine Fernandez at lfernandez@ci.fairfield.ca.us for more information. Scholarships for FDA merchants are available. Call Anita or Emily – 422-0103- for details!

FDA Office Lease Renewed

In the last newsletter, we informed our membership that the Fairfield Downtown Association office would move when its lease expired on March 31st.

As it turns out, the Fairfield Police Department will occupy the property at 1100 Texas Street (formerly Solano Bank), and FDA has negotiated an extension of its lease.

Thanks to Tony Brantley, Ruston Saul, and Russell Low, the storage area has been reconfigured to provide more space for our supplies, so we're ready for the long haul in our current space.

FDA Membership Benefits

- **Medical Insurance** - Western Health Advantage, **Dental Insurance** - Blue Shield or Liberty Dental and **Vision Insurance** – Medical Eye Services - call Carlos Badell at 800-870-4510 for more information.
- Reduced rates on pre-sort mailings using the FDA account.
- FREE flyers design for your promotions.
- Free photocopies - you provide the paper.
- Reduced rate advertising in the *Daily Republic* call Robert Ponce at 427-6965.
- 20% discount on vision care from Dr. Mark Christensen, 744 Empire St., 425-2187.
- Free Notary Service **by appointment only**.
- Special FDA room rate at Courtyard by Marriott - Mention FDA membership when making the reservation to obtain the special rate - 422-4111.
- Press release preparation for special promotions.
- Low cost web site design through Garson Design - 428-1743 or www.garsondesign.com.
- Link between the FDA website – www.fairfielddowntown.com and your website.
- Low cost training and seminars through California Main Street and Solano Small Business Development Center.
- Façade Rehabilitation assistance programs through the City of Fairfield.
- Promotional announcements in the FDA newsletter.
- Advocacy with Fairfield Planning and Economic Development Divisions.
- Advertising in the FDA newsletter - \$25 for a business card-size ad.

Associate Memberships

Financial institutions, insurance, and investment firms were exempt from the PBIA assessment. Associate Memberships allow those businesses to take an active role in the operations of the

organization. Businesses pay \$135 yearly, while individuals pay \$40. This is a way for us to increase active participation from the community and add to the FDA operating funds. If your business falls into one of these categories and you would like a voice in the decisions made by the organization, contact the office for an application.

Standing Committees

The National Main Street Center Four Point Approach™ to revitalization is the guideline for our organization. Within that framework, there are four “standing committees” providing the specific direction.

Organization is the administrative committee and is responsible for membership and fundraising efforts, including the personnel and human resources elements of the non-profit. Johnnie Milton (438-7306) is chair.

Beautification/Design is responsible for the overall look and maintenance of the district. Cathi Jasso (428-1105) is chair. Currently, the committee worked closely with Community Development and Public Works staff to improve lighting to the corridor by installing white LED lights in trees near intersections along Texas Street.

Promotions oversees our special events through the year. Joe Caruso (421-8274) and Cathi Jasso (428-1105) are co-chairs. This year, the committee will work on festival enhancements, building a community-wide committee to oversee all aspects of the major festivals. High on the list is a seasonal ice rink for downtown through the holiday season.

Business Development focuses on recruiting and retaining businesses in the district. Galen Lawton (432-0774) and Cliff Gordon (422-0313) are co-chairs of this committee, working with Lorraine Fernandez of the City staff.

Fairfield Downtown Association Board members cannot fill all the committees. Board members are also business owners that are trying to keep their own businesses successful while taking responsibility for the district as a whole. Please volunteer for service on one of these important committees, and bring your fresh ideas and insights to the work.

2008 Calendar of Events

- May 1st- Certified Farmers Market Opens
4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**
- July 4th- Independence Day Celebration
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**
- August 16th- 17th Tomato Festival &
West Coast BBQ Championship
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. - Saturday AND**

11 a.m. to 4 p.m. – Sunday the 17th

**October 2nd- Certified Farmers Market ends
4 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

**October 11th- 8th Candy Festival
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**November 11th- Veterans Day Commemoration
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**December 5th- Holiday Night of Lights
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.**

Please note: The 17th Annual Tomato Festival will be a two-day event. After five years of a single day format, we found vendor numbers dropping because of travel expenses associated with a move mid-weekend. The two-day format allows vendors to drive a distance, set up on Friday and drive home again on Sunday instead of trying to find a second single-day event and moving twice.

The competitors in the West Coast BBQ Championship arrive on Friday, August 15th. They’ll cook all night for their competition on Saturday. Back yard teams and private “amateur” barbequers are welcome.

In addition, due to the budget concerns in the City of Fairfield and cutbacks in funding for the Arts and Community Events Division of the Community Services Department, the Fairfield Downtown Association has been asked to take responsibility for the **Veterans Day Commemoration**. This is the eighth year for this event, so there is no change to the original street closure schedule. Funding to support the event will come from the City of Fairfield, an anonymous local donor and community contributors.

Your concerns about street closures are valid, and FDA and City staff will plan the event set up to minimize inconvenience to our merchants. Your participation in set up of the events would be much appreciated. With more people helping with the set up of these large events, the total time for set up would be reduced and the dependence on other City crews to place No Parking signs or barricades within their own work schedules would be minimized.

For example, we depend on Public Works Street Division staff to post No Parking signs. Regulations require that posting take place no less than 24 hours before the closure. IF WE HAD A MERCHANT COMMITTEE TO POST THE SIGNS WE WOULDN’T NEED TO DEPEND ON PUBLIC WORKS CREWS TO POST THEM DURING THE CITY WORK DAY. Currently, we are at the mercy of their schedule and workload. The City of Fairfield does not charge FDA for this service.

Transitions

Miko's Japanese Cuisine will open in the site formerly occupied by Sunny's Oriental Noodle House (900 Texas Street) as soon as tenant improvements can be completed. Kurt Souza is the proprietor. Miko's theme is "Don't wrestle with the Decision- Have both Salmon and Yellowtail!" Miko's will serve Sushi, Sashimi, Rolls, Steaks and more. Sake, Beer and Wine will also appear on the menu, and there will be specials for the kids.

Mariscos Del Pacifico has opened in 1215 Texas Street, the spot formerly occupied by Favela's Taqueria. Veronica Favela is opening a new restaurant on the west side. While we'll certainly miss Favela's, we wish Veronica all the best in her new endeavor, and welcome Mariscos Del Pacifico. The restaurant specializes in seafood with a Latin flair, and rounds out the menu with traditional Mexican dishes and burgers. The restaurant is open seven days a week- Monday through Friday 10 am to 9 pm; Saturday 9 am to 9 pm, and Sunday 9 am to 6 pm. The phone number is 422-4920, and major credit cards are accepted.

4 You Custom Gifts and Awards (726 Texas Street) celebrated its second anniversary on April 19th. Owner Rochelle Henderson was recently featured on the Channel 40 (Sacramento) Morning Show on April 25th. In a brilliant marketing move, Rochelle sent E-mails to every television station in our viewing area telling about her unique products. Channel 40 responded with an invitation the morning show, and ordered CUSTOM BOBBLE HEAD DOLLS of the news anchors! The televised interview gave Rochelle an opportunity to market her products to the entire Sacramento Valley viewing audience- just before Mother's Day!

Annabelle's Boutique (947 Empire Street) celebrated its first anniversary recently. Annabelle's Boutique sells well-priced handbags (check out the adorable dog and cat themed bags), hats and hand-made jewelry. This shop is one of downtown's gems- on a side street, it has well done window displays that draw business. Proprietor Susan Yarbrough reports good repeat business- once folks realize where she's located!

Touch of India (800 Texas Street) has opened in the space formerly occupied by Eastridge Funding. The shop is stocked with beautiful clothing for men and women, accessories and jewelry.

Fairfield Internal Medicine, the practice of Dr. Simon Chan and Dr. Ann Chen, has opened its doors at the rear of 1127 Texas Street (the former Sanwa Bank building). The doctors continue their recruitment efforts for the front of the building.

Realty World (1000 Texas Street, Suite E) has moved its office to downtown. Alex and Hong Buccat are veteran real estate brokers serving Solano County. They can be reached at 427-8877.

Fine Homes Real Estate (1001 Texas Street) has closed. Spectrum Properties offers the space for lease. Tenant improvements for a café are in place. Refer possible clients to Traci at 707-436-7300.

The former **BayView Bank** building (721-729 Texas Street) has recently undergone a remarkable transformation. John Costanzo is completing handsome tenant improvements. Two retail spaces at the front of the building are now available, and the entry area has been upgraded to form a patio where outdoor dining would work well. If you have anyone interested in small retail or café space, please contact John at 580-0563. Our list of desirable businesses includes a florist shop, ice cream or candy shop and children's clothing.

Board Elections Due

It's election time again for the Fairfield Downtown Association. Four Directors' terms expire on June 30th. Three of those Directors are unable to continue their service, leaving FDA with those positions to fill. Board members are asked to attend one meeting monthly (the first Thursday from 8 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., and to serve on one or more of the standing committees or event committees as their personal schedules allow. Please consider this service to the assessment district that you support. If you are a downtown business owner, the future of your business depends on the revitalization activities of the Fairfield Downtown Association and the Fairfield Redevelopment Agency working together to enhance every aspect of the district. The best way to keep informed is to keep active in the organization.

Sign Ordinance Update

Over the past month or more, Anita Horwath has been working with City of Fairfield planners and Bret Corwin, **Liberty Graphics** (710 Madison Street) to develop a clear and definitive program for downtown business owners to comply with the ordinance for design and display of A-Frame signs.

If you recall, the Fairfield Downtown Association took the lead on development of an enhanced sign ordinance for A-Frames on the broad brick sidewalks we enjoy downtown. Unfortunately, the program was difficult to interpret, so merchants didn't take advantage of it. To the rescue came Anita and Bret.

If Anita hasn't visited your business with the new paperwork yet, please call the office and we'll send the materials to you. Bret has developed special pricing for downtown merchants so the program is easy to use and the signs are cost-effective and professional. Contact **Liberty Graphics - 422-4449**.

The Importance of Communication

Most people feel they are good communicators, but truly effective communication takes work. Below are some guidelines that can help in becoming a better communicator.

1. Always concentrate on what the customer is saying.
2. Look your customer in the eye.
3. Listen carefully to everything the customer is saying.
4. Don't interrupt -- let him/her finish the entire thought.
5. Don't judge the customer by appearance -- instead focus on what the customer is saying.
6. Show sincere interest in what is being said.

Spending more time communicating rather than just "selling" will enable you to find out exactly what your customers want and help you serve them better. A retailer doesn't have to be that interesting to create a great customer experience- they just need to be interested in the customer.

Small Business Development Center June Schedule

June 12th- 6:30 to 9:30 pm- \$30
How to Finance Your Business
Suisun City Council Chambers-
701 Civic Center Blvd, Suisun City

June 17th- 1:00 to 5:00 pm- \$45
Introduction to Quick Books
Solano College Vallejo Center-
545 Columbus Pkwy, Vallejo

June 19th- 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm- \$30
Maximize Your Marketing
Vacaville Chamber of Commerce-
300 Main Street, Vacaville

June 25th- 5:15 to 8:00 pm- FREE
Small Business Clinic
Solano College SBDC-
360 Campus Lane, Ste 102

Call the SBDC at 707-864-3382 to reserve your space or for more information. Visit www.solanosbdc.org for even more SBDC news.

The Small Business Development Center is your link to state and federal small business assistance and training. Core Services offered include

- NxLevel™ Entrepreneurial Training,
- Small Business Workshops,

- Solano College Short Courses and
- Individual Business Owner Counseling by a corps of business professionals.

Market research sites:

bizstats.com- find useful statistics by industry
city-data.com & epodunk.com- U.S. City profiles
gisplanning.com/service.htm- properties, demographics

Inc.com/articles- Small business articles- most free
Irs.gov/smallbiz- Click on *Businesses*, then **Small Businesses/ Self Employed**, then *Industries/ Professions* for information.

Financial Strategies

How many of these apply to you?

- You can't sleep at night worrying about debt;
- You and your spouse argue about money;
- You have no idea when/ if you'll retire;
- You have no idea how you'll send your children to college;
- There is too much month left at the end of your money;
- You think financial planning is filing your taxes once a year

PRIMERICA offers a workshop designed exclusively with women in mind. The event takes place on June 2nd, 2008 at 7:00 pm, at 262B Sunset Avenue, Suisun City- in Heritage Park Shopping Center behind Raley's. Seating is limited, so call Brian Swagger at 707-761-7878 to reserve your seat.

An Invitation NVB -North Valley Bank Business Bank 711 Jefferson Street

Regional Manager Susan Vargas invites you to join her for a **Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce Sunrise Mixer and Continental Breakfast**. The Sunrise Mixer is **June 25th, from 8 am to 9 am**- the perfect start to your business day! In addition to continental breakfast, there will be door prizes and an opportunity to meet Chamber members and obtain information about the importance of membership in the Fairfield-Suisun Chamber of Commerce. Call Susan at 429-3660 for more information.

FDA Insurance Enrollment Information

As you were aware, United Health Insurance Company purchased Pacific Union Dental. Although they are a reputable organization, they have a third party administrator for provider relations. A history of service problems and vital

changes in underwriting procedures have caused us to look for another dental provider.

Insurance broker Carlos Badell contacted **Liberty Dental Plan**, and they have agreed to provide local servicing and increase covered procedures.

We made this change May 1, 2008 at the United renewal period, when rates were due to change. Most members have been contacted and transferred to the new plan. If you have not changed coverage, please contact Carlos at 707-763-4500 to obtain the necessary forms and premium information.

SAVE THE DATE
October 1 through 3, 2008

The annual California Downtown Association conference will be held in Santa Rosa this year. This year's conference will feature:

- Training and information sessions for both small and large cities
- Mayor's Forum
- Keynote Speakers
- Sessions on the Main Street Four Point Approach™
- Vendor Exhibits and Reception
- Networking opportunities

The conference will be held at the **Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel and Spa**. It's less than two hours away, so carpools can be arranged for merchants who want to attend single sessions or the entire conference. Visit www.californiadowntown.com for more information.

**Fairfield Downtown Association
Board of Directors
707/422-0103
www.fairfielddowntown.com**

Chair: Joe Caruso

Starbucks- 421-8274

E-mail- joestryfe@hotmail.com

Term expires June 2008

Vice Chair: George Romero (Associate Member)

HiTec Cellular- 421-2189

Email- Mrhitec@wmconnect.com

Term expires June 2008

Corresponding Secretary: Marge Block

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Directors:

Phillip Borders, Jr.

Fairfield Insurance Associates- 425-9588

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Term expires June 2009

Sheila Costanzo

Hamilton House- 429-2911

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Term expires June 2009

Cliff Gordon

Gordon's Music & Sound- 422-0313

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Term expires June 2010

Cathi Jasso

California Pacific Realty - 428-1105

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Term expires June 2008

Galen Lawton

Everything Green - 432-0774

Email - glawton21@yahoo.com

Term expires June 2010

Johnnie Milton (Associate Member)

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Email - JohnnieMilton@sbcglobal.net

Term expires June 2009

Ruben Padilla

Rube's Barbershop- 803-9709

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Term expires June 2010

Thomas Randall

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