

the

Hispanic Network



www.kernhispanicchamber.com or kchcc.org • April 2004

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Reflecting upon the first three months of my term as President of the Chamber, the time has quickly passed and we have much work yet to accomplish. The long hours of planning with the Chamber staff and Board members, working with committees & chairs representing the Chamber, meeting with Chamber members, sponsors and community leaders and most importantly, making sure that the needs of our membership and sponsors is an awesome responsibility. The fruits of these hours and hard work by both the Chamber staff and Board members will be made public in press releases later this month.

As we look at the Chamber's goals for 2004: advancing its financial status through grant writing, membership growth, providing additional meaning to our sponsors and added value to our membership, and reaching out to the "Mom & Pop" business within the Hispanic community; changes need to play an important role in our daily operations. These are not merely words, changes are beginning to happen.

We are seeing great things coming from Heidi Curado-Garcia, our new part-time receptionist. Her addition will allow current staff more time to develop and work on grants to benefit the Chamber and its membership. With the

help of Board members Frank Dominguez and Fernando Aguirre, new computers along with an Access data base program have been installed at the Chamber office. Board member Shelley Maurer and her membership committee have been gathering and updating membership information for the new system. With the help of Abel Nunez & Dolores Neira, College Outreach Committee, the Chamber's board will be adding three college students: each a representative of the local colleges in Kern County. These students will bring a different interaction and refreshing dimension to the Chamber.

This quarter brings two other Chamber events to get excited about and mark your calendars. Connie Hinojos again will be chairing Casino Night, scheduled for May 15, 2004 at the Mission Bank courtyard. This event promises to be a fun evening of good food, music, prizes and games of chance. You might go home the lucky winner! Elva Lopez is back and will chair the ever popular 7th Annual Menudo Cook-Off at Stramler Park scheduled for June 6th. This is a fun family event with music, vendors, great food, and prizes where family and business contestants bring and cook their secret menudo recipes to be judged as "The Best Menudo in Kern County." Now is the time to call the Chamber and become part of these two great events by supporting them with either your sponsorship or participation.

We're off to a great year. Let's keep the momentum going and I'll see you at Casino Night and the Menudo Cook-Off. Again, I thank each and every one of you for your on-going support and I will continue to serve you with pride and integrity. Sinceramente, Tony Martinez, President ♦

Calendar of Events

APRIL...2004

April 2 11:30 am
Executive Committee Meeting

KCHCC Office

April 14 5:30-7:30pm

Mixer @ The Jungle Cafe

700 Truxtun Ave

(at the Hill House)

\$3 members • \$5 non-members

April 15 7:30 am

Government Relations

Lorene's Coffee Shop

23rd & Eye

April 21 5:30-7:30pm

Board Members Meeting

KCHCC Office - 3rd Floor

Conference Room

The Network

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Mayor Harvey Hall Meets with GRC

by Darrell Feliz, Committee Chair

On March 18, 2004 the Government Relations Committee met Mayor Harvey Hall at Lorene's Coffee Shop for an early morning breakfast meeting. Prominent business men and women from our Chamber gathered to become more informed on the "State of the City of Bakersfield"

Mayor Hall was filled with information on the City's welfare and shared with us many personal insights on the various programs he is promoting to improve Bakersfield.

He shared with us that meeting President Bush was quite an honor. The time and conversations he had were unforgettable. Bakersfield should be very proud the President of the United States would take the time to visit us.

Mr. Hall said he has the "Best Job in the World" and is very focused on being the Mayor for all the people of Kern County, not just the city.

He expressed his views and vision on such topics as High Speed Rail, Caltrans Citizen Advisory Board, a new ice rink, a freeway master plan, freeway beautification, road reconstruction, air quality, a new water treatment plant, Northeast Development, bike path extension, Rio Vista Park Project, GET buses, traffic light intersection cameras, and more.

The Mayor's passion is to see programs develop to save the children of Bakersfield from the influence of gangs at a young age, before sixth and seventh grade. He truly believes everyone in our community can and should help for the benefit of the city.

He is proud of the "Sister City" project and its progress. He talked of the efforts being made to secure a Sister City relationship with the colonial City of Queretaro, in the State of Queretaro, Mexico. He also mentioned the appointment of Hispanics to the Sister City Committee and other organizations.

In closing, the Mayor encouraged members of KCHCC to become more involved in the community and projects that affect our lives, and become an even more influential group than we already are. His advice is to get on more "Community Boards" and influence the community by being part of something positive.

To sit with the mayor, as we did, was truly an enlightening session. What I felt, and I am sure those present would agree, is that Bakersfield is truly a "Great City with a Grand Future" - a future in which the KCHCC will play a big part.

Again I want to thank Mayor Hall for taking the time from his busy schedule to share his wit and wisdom. He is a good friend of the chamber and we all should support him in his efforts to improve our city. ♦

Next committee meeting April 15, 2004

Lorene's Coffee Shop 7:30 am

23rd & Eye • Downtown

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"Great Hour of Political Insight"

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JDRF HOSTS GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation will host its 5th Annual Golf "FORE" a Cure tournament on April 26, 2004 at the Seven Oaks Country Club. Registration will be from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon. Players can also use the driving range from 10:00 to 12:00 and enjoy lunch on the patio from 11:00 to 11:45 AM. The format is a four-person scramble and the shotgun start is at 12:00 PM.

There will be a dinner and no-host bar in the Grand Ballroom immediately following the tournament, with a live auction and raffle after dinner.

For more information contact Lou Ann Durrett at 636-1305 or via e-mail at bakersfield@jdrf.org.



APRIL MIXER

@ The Jungle Cafe

Wednesday

April 14

5:30-7:30pm

**700 Truxtun Ave
(at the Hill House)**

**\$3 members
\$5 non-members**

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How to Improve Your Networking Skills

Business networking is a skill. As such, everyone can develop the ability to network regardless of natural disposition. Consider these eight strategies to improve your networking skills:

- 1. Make a great first impression.** Every time you meet someone new, think, "SHE is the key." S.H.E. stands for Smile-Handshake-Eye contact. A genuine smile, a firm and friendly handshake, and direct eye contact set a positive tone and make the best first impression.
- 2. Be a name-learning machine.** Knowing someone's name demonstrates you value the person. Associate the name with someone else you know with the same name or something that will jog your memory later.
- 3. Ask open-ended questions.** These questions get people to open up and tell you about themselves. Some examples: What are your most important responsibilities? What do you like most about your job? Where are you from originally? What do you like to do in your free time?
- 4. Master the art of listening.** Cell phones, deadlines, and multiple obligations often prevent people from being fully engaged listeners. Ask yourself, "Am I fully engaged when listening?" Show attentive body language by facing the other person and establishing eye contact.
- 5. Establish common ground.** This raises the level of the networking relationship from average to great. You've planted the most important seed of all relationships-a common shared interest. From this foundation, you can build a relationship of respect or even friendship. This can increase your business, because people like to do business with people they like.
- 6. Learn to help others before yourself.** Many people fail at networking because they're out to help only themselves. Successful net workers take the opposite approach. They think of ways they can help other people before helping themselves. For example, if you meet a fledgling freelance photographer, you might refer the person to a graphic artist who's a business associate to get business cards made. This is how the web of networking creates success.
- 7. Describe how what you do helps others.** When you tell others about your job, think of them first and explain how what you do helps others. It gives people something of interest to tell others about you.
- 8. Follow up and work you network.** Establish a system to record the contact you've made, and use it to refresh your memory frequently. A personal digital assistant or calendar works well to remind you to touch base with people in your network. ♦

14 WAYS TO STRETCH YOUR GAS DOLLAR

From MSN Money

Gasoline prices have again begun to rise sharply, and while \$2-a-gallon gasoline might seem to be a national emergency (especially if you just bought a big yellow Hummer), it really only means an extra \$10 on a 20-gallon fill-up. Sure, it's money. Sure it adds up. But don't let your first \$40 fill-up shock you into a move you might regret—investing thousands in a newer, smaller vehicle. Here's how to save with the ride you already own:

Find the best deal. The My Car service surveys 20,000 gas stations across the country nightly and finds the least expensive gasoline in your zip code. Sign up takes only a minute. You might also try GasBuddy.com where a network of spotters enters information on cheap gas.

If you're on the wrong side of the tracks, buy gas. The price of regular in the Seattle (or Bakersfield) area, for example, varies about 40 cents a gallon throughout the metropolitan area. Going a little out of your way to save 40 cents a gallon makes sense. Going clear across town probably doesn't. But if you're in the neighborhood, fill up.

Check traffic before you leave. Idling in traffic means you're getting 0 mpg. Most bigger cities have a real-time traffic Web site. The My Car service you signed up for above also offers real-time traffic information. The California Department of Transportation site probably has its own traffic page; many radio, television and newspaper sites do also.

Consider a credit card with gasoline rewards. The best deal when we last checked was the BP/Bank One Visa, which offers a 6% rebate on gas purchases for the first two billing cycles and carries a 10.65% variable interest rate. After the first two months the rebate falls to 3%. Check the internet for a current list of reward-card offerings (you'll find these cards faster if you search for "gas").

Buy big-box gasoline. Warehouse giants such as Costco and Wal-Mart sell discounted fuel to their members, sometimes as much as a dime-a-gallon cheaper. Make sure you use the membership for other things, as the fees (which run \$35 to \$100) could easily make any savings moot.

Take advantage of discounts. Conversely, many independent stations offer a cheaper price for cash transactions because there's no cut to pay the credit-card companies. RV owners might join a frequent-fueler program that discounts gasoline or diesel by a penny or two (which adds up if your motor home only gets 6 mpg).

Keep your car in shape. An out-of-tune engine, poor alignment or underinflated tires (check the recommended pressures inside the door or in the owner's manual) can cost you up to 2 mpg, the American Petroleum Institute says. Change oil and filters according to the manufacture's service schedule.

You may have a flexible-fuel car and not even know it. Each year, Ford, GM and DaimlerChrysler sell several hundred thousand vehicles with the ability to run either on gasoline or a gasoline-ethanol blend known as E85 (mainly because they win clean-air points for doing so). Some have "FFV" badges on them; others are invisible unless you check the owner's manual. Keep an eye on E85 prices, especially if you live where it's widely available. At some point, corn could become cheaper than crude.

Don't fall for miracles. Special oils, additives, magnets? A waste of money says the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which evaluates them. Most produced no results at all; improvements for others were marginal.

Remove the junk. If you're not skiing, you don't need the drag of a rack on top (though it does look mighty sporty). Take a pass through your trunk, glove box and back seat; 100 pounds of junk equals one less mile per gallon.

Slow down. Each 5 mph over 60, the EPA says, is like adding a dime to the cost of a gallon of gas. Avoid quick starts or a lot of passing. Slow and steady wins the race.

Skip the luxuries. Unless you live someplace like New Jersey or Oregon where self service is prohibited, pumping it yourself is as much as 25 cents cheaper. And if you're feeding your wheels premium gas, check the owner's manual. *continued page 6*



YOUR GAS DOLLAR Continued...

If your car doesn't require premium, you're wasting as much as 20 cents a gallon.

Share a ride. An easy way to double your gas mileage is to carpool with someone willing to do half the driving. Or ride the bus. Every day that you don't drive alone saves you money.

Try pedal power. Every trip on two wheels is money in the bank, and good exercise, too.

Sure, gasoline prices are way up, but the key to coping is to make little changes that become habit – and to keep doing them once pump prices are out of the headlines. ♦



March Mixer a Mega Success

By Stacie Couch, Mixer Committee

March 18th reminded members what networking is made of! The host of the March mixer, **Bank of the Sierra**, opened their doors and hearts to the membership! They provided excellent food and drink prepared by Que Pasa Mexican Restaurants. Many new faces lit up the facility and we were able to meet new people, hear new ideas, and remember that because of the Kern County Hispanic Chamber, we are able to mix business with a pleasurable evening. In fact, many of the first time mixer attendees walked away with new membership applications and were able to share their business with all in attendance.

Mark Olague, Vice President of the Bank of Sierra communicated with the membership that not only are they a friendly bank that is there to support all of your banking needs, but that no loan is too small or too large for them to entertain. They have an aggressive business loan program with knowledgeable and friendly loan officers. Call and make an appointment if you are in need of capital to grow your business.

Don't miss out on more networking opportunities! Remember, people do business with people they know and like. So come on over and make some new friends and drum up some new business. Mark your calendar today for the next mixer April 14th at the Jungle Café (at the Hill House), 700 Truxtun Avenue. ♦



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time, by suggesting the right solution the very first time. 365USA also represents several hundred Computer and Software manufacturers. In fact we are wholesale distributors for several manufacturers. From component level parts to enterprise solutions 365USA strives to offer the best possible pricing, timely delivery and most importantly Value Added Services to enhance your total experience. ♦

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MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

Dolores R. Neira

Dolores arrived in Bakersfield by way of San Jose, California where she was born and raised. She attended college and completed a BA in English/Communications and a MA in Educational Administration at California State University, Bakersfield.

Dolores is married to her husband of 20 years, Delfino, and together they have three children; Delfino Jr. 15, Micaela 13, and Diego, 7.

Dolores began her career in 1983, working first at University of California, Santa Barbara, University of California, UC Berkeley and CSU, Bakersfield. Dolores is the first ever Training Manager for Grimmway Enterprises, where she currently works. Her emphasis at Grimmway is on training, professional development and leadership skills for managers and supervisors. Her career endeavors surround being a corporate trainer, public speaker and aspiring author.



Dolores has been invited to present for various community organizations including, AmeriCorps, Junior League of Bakersfield and The Bakersfield Women's Business Conference. She currently sits on the Board of Directors of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and Kern Mission Group Homes.

In 2003 Dolores and her husband Delfino started Neira and Neira Organizational Development and Training. N&N ODT was founded on the principle that any organization, no matter what the size, can reach its desired outcomes by using effective leadership development and strategic planning. Since its inception, N&N ODT has helped local non-profit groups and small businesses improve the outcomes for their staff through effective training and business consulting.

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Save the Date - May 15, 2004
CASINO NIGHT

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