

# business briefs

## Union Bank of California in Orinda will hold its Grand Opening Celebration

Wednesday, June 4th at 5:30 pm, 140 Brookwood Road, #100, Orinda, CA 94563 (across from BevMo)

The Moraga branch, in the Moraga Center, had its ceremony last week in the presence of Masaaki Tanaka, CEO of the bank. The event attracted almost 100 people. Chamber President Edy Schwartz extended a warm welcome to the bank and thanked them for their early involvement with the community, while Mayor Lynda Deschambault highlighted the importance of a vibrant business community for the town. Debra Taylor, one of the bank's executives who had made the trip to Moraga thanked the community and the landlord, "We are here to stay," she added, "and to make things happen in the community." Branch Dimitry Bokman can be reached at 631-1800.



Union bank ribbon cutting: (right to left) CEO Masaaki Tanaka cuts the ribbon with Mayor Lynda Deschambault, Branch Manager Dimitry Bokman and Chamber of Commerce President Edy Schwartz

Photo Sophie Braccini

## Diablo Foods is 40 Years Old, 3615 Mount Diablo Blvd, Lafayette, 283-0737



3 generations of the Diablo Foods family at work (from left to right): Ed Stokes, daughter Connie Collier, son Dan and grandson Daniel

Photo Sophie Braccini

Diablo Foods, our local independent grocery, celebrates a 40 year history that was honored at Lafayette City Council meeting on May 13th. Founder Ed Stokes has received many distinctions both personally as an active contributor to the community and as a businessman. According to him, five elements have been key to the success of the business: the quality of the products they sell and that are a big draw in surrounding areas, the service to customers that only a structure with dedicated employees can offer, the competitiveness of the prices that the family keeps in check, the perfect cleanliness of the store and the great diversity of merchandise that is made possible by being in tune with their customers and being able to adapt quickly to their demands. Three generations now work in the store, each of them in charge of different aspects of the business and always getting together to solve problems. "We are a Lafayette family, belonging and returning to the community," says Connie Collier, Ed's daughter, "and our employees are part of that family too." Some of them are 3 generations as well; Mel Nicholson was Stokes' first hire, now his son is store manager and grand-son works in the store as well. "Our customers know us, that we are always available and ready to make decisions quickly," says Dan, Stokes' son, "if they say 'I bought this wonderful jelly in New York City, can you get it for me?' we will." Daniel, the grandson, keeps an eye on the future, "this is a tough business and we manage it day by day, constantly adapting and creating something new." The young man sees traffic on Mount Diablo as one of the main challenges the town will have to solve to support business development in downtown Lafayette.

## Pinnacle Business Services, 346 Rheem Blvd., Suite 107, Moraga, CA 94556, P: 925-377-0470

Pinnacle Business Services in Moraga is growing and recently moved into a new office space. The company is having an open house June 5th from 4PM to 6PM and invites current and prospective customers to stop by. Pinnacle provides bookkeeping services to small businesses. It has been in business for five years and has been growing through great word of mouth. The owner of the company is the mother of two girls at Campolindo; with her daughter soon to be leaving the nest, the mother wants to develop her business further. Pinnacle serves all kind of different small businesses from hairdressers to lawyers. The bookkeeping is done in the Moraga office, it is electronically filed and all the back-ups are made available on CD. Most of Pinnacle clients are local businesses, but some come from out of state.

## News from the three Chambers of Commerce:

**Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, 100 Lafayette Circle, Lafayette, www.lafayettechamber.org:**

- Wednesday June 11th Chamber Mixer at the Lafayette Gallery at 5:30 pm - 50 Lafayette Circle.
- Friday June 13th: Coffee With The Mayor - 8:00 am - Lafayette Chamber Conference Room.

**Moraga Chamber of Commerce, www.moragachamber.org:**

- Friday May 30th, general meeting in the fireside room at the Hacienda de las Flores, 7:45 am to 9:30 pm. Warm muffins and hot coffee at 7:45 AM offered by Roos Pal, with the meeting starting at 8:00 AM. Judy Dinkle, Chair of the Hacienda Foundation, will be the speaker.
- Tuesday, June 17th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM Chamber Mixer at the Moraga Country Club for members of the Moraga Chamber of Commerce. Spouses are invited. Appetizers and wine provided by the Club, RSVP before June 10th to edy321@comcast.net.

**Orinda Chamber of Commerce, 24 Orinda Way, Orinda, www.orindachamber.org:**

- Tuesday, June 17th: Chamber Luncheon Noon - 1:30 p.m. Orinda Country Club 315 Camino Sobrante, Orinda. Speaker will be Dr. Joel Parrott, Executive Director of the Oakland Zoo. Cost: \$30.00 per person. Call 925-254-3909 for your reservation



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## Lafayette Chamber is 60 Years Old

By Sophie Braccini

"What you do is essential," opened Mayor Mike Anderson as he proclaimed the sixtieth anniversary of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. "Sixty more years, even 120 more years would be too short. We need a big vision for the economic development of our town and you definitely have it."

The celebration of the anniversary during the May 12th Lafayette City Council meeting was held in the spirit of cooperation and partnership.

Council member Carol Federighi added, "The partnership you have with the city has made us what we are."

Larry Duson, the present President of the Chamber and Director of Bank of the West's Lafayette office couldn't agree more. "The history of the relationship between the city and the chamber goes way back, to the early days of incorporation," said

Duson, who speaks from experience as a repeat President. He remembered some of the most notable Presidents who did much for the Chamber: John Coleman, Dan Kelly, Anne Grodin, Scotty Loucks, Stacy Spell and Dennis Garrison among many others.

Steve Falk, Lafayette City Manager, is conscious as well of the key role played by

the Chamber in the success of the city. "The Chamber is responsible for so much of the progress we have made in the last fifteen years," he says. He highlighted the important role that the Executive Directors have played. "The Chamber has been blessed by a string of great, visionary executive di-

made me look good!"

To most residents and businesses, the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce has long been known as one of the driving forces behind improvements in the quality of their community and for being a "cheerleader" for the city.

"Sixty years serving Lafayette is a measurable milestone," adds Lifson. "After all, who is the keeper of the maps, directories and information about Lafayette? The list of services and programs the chamber provides to help the community is extensive. We are happy to be here, assisting and representing business, promoting the

community, and helping create a strong local economy. We are known as the 'friendly chamber.' We are always ready to help you." Lifson is proud of the achievements of the Chamber that has

grown by over 150 new members in the past two years. The Lafayette Chamber is now the "biggest Chamber in a little city," within the Bay Area.

"When things go wrong in Lafayette, it's usually the City's fault," humorously concludes Falk, "But when things go right, it's usually due to the hard work of the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce."



*60th Anniversary*

Mayor Mike Anderson (right) gives the proclamation to Chamber President Larry Duson (left)

Photo Sophie Braccini

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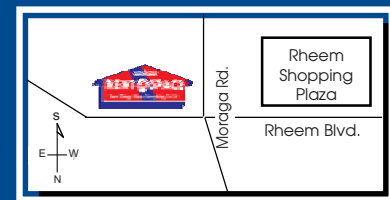
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