

April 2010

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# Biz News

## Special Interest Articles:

✧ Summary of the Comments of Mt. Diablo Unified School District's Superintendent

✧ BPCOC Website

✧ Mt. Diablo Class of '44

✧ Memorial Day Call-out to Veterans

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Bay Point Chamber of Commerce  
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## Memorial Day Call-Out to Veterans

On May 31, 2010, the Bay Point Chamber of Commerce and the Bay Point Garden Club will be sponsoring the third annual Memorial Day Derby Parade & Festival, from 9:00 am to noon

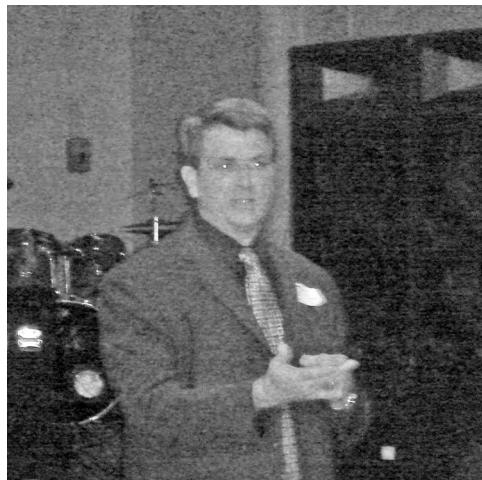
The Chamber of Commerce will be organizing the memorial event itself, scheduled for 9:00am, and would like to invite ALL veterans, regardless of the war or conflict, to attend and be honored.

Bay Point is proud of all the men and women who have served in the armed

forces, and if you are one of them, we would be honored to have you with us on this day. So, if you are a veteran (or know a shy one), please contact Gloria Magleby, at 925-458-2457, and let her know, so that you (or your shy friend) can be part of this event, and we may honor your service to our country in the ceremonies.

Thank you, in advance for all that you are, all that you have done, and for being part of our Memorial Day ceremony.

## Mt. Diablo Superintendent of Schools Speaks at Biz Lunch



Dr. Steven Lawrence, the new Superintendent for the Mount Diablo Unified School District, spoke at out last Biz Lunch about the state of the District, and Bay Point schools, in particular.

Dr. Lawrence has had a long, progressive career in California schools, and also spent two years as a volunteer in Haiti, all of which gives him unusual insight into the challenges and possibilities that face the District.

In addressing the budget crisis that has impacted the state, and therefore the schools, he explained that the District is facing a \$16.5 million shortfall next year. In order to recoup some of this money, there will be a bond issue (Measure C) up for vote on June's ballot. This is in large part a facilities bond that will help the District equalize facilities throughout the district by providing air conditioning, technology, and other improvements for all schools. In addition, the District may be receiving some help in becoming "greener", for example, by introducing

## **Mt. Diablo Superintendent, continued from page 1**



### **Networking Mixer!**

Look for news about our next mixer on our website: [www.BayPointChamber.org](http://www.BayPointChamber.org)

the use of solar panels in the schools, reducing their \$3.5 million current energy expenses. (PG&E offers rebates for the use of such energy saving works.) Also, the bond will help with deferred maintenance on many of our schools.

Three of the low performing schools located in Bay Point – Bel Air Elementary, Shore Acres Elementary, and Rio Vista Elementary – were addressed in particular. The Federal Government has four “models” by which action can be taken, none of which are ideal: (1) Replace principals; (2) Replace half the staff; (3) restructure (with the help of the state or federal government); or (4) reorganize the “offending” schools into charter schools.

The challenges facing Bay Point schools, however, are not so easily solved, says Dr. Lawrence. Because our population of English learners is so high, and English only testing begins just 18 months after the student arrives, more creative ways of dealing with the language problem are called for. English learners need greater support, and teachers need additional training. It was noted that to become fully fluent in English (speaking, reading and writing), the district has set up the expectation that a child entering kindergarten will be fully functional by 5th grade. This is a far cry from the 18 months allowed by the English only testing currently required. Clearly, then, we need to look at both the English language learning programs in place, as well as the effectiveness of bilingual education through 5th grade.

Other “draconian cuts” forced by the state include those to special education, and any special assistance that can be given to foster children, who tend to be behind in their progress, and whose assistance ends at age 18. The District is facing a 20% reduction in the amount of money they receive on a per pupil basis. Of the budget, after salaries and facilities, there is only a 3-5% discretionary income remaining to offset

the needs of these special students.

Focusing on equity among schools is the goal of the district, according to Dr. Lawrence. This involves not only facilities, mentioned above, but access to programs that have worked in other schools in similar situations. Cooperating with other teachers in other schools, other districts, other parts of the country are all part of the plans to improve the quality of education for our youth.

Likewise, it is important to have our students prepared for, and involved in, education beyond high school – education that is necessary to earn a living wage. Dr. Lawrence will be working with the community colleges, including Los Medanos college, to partner with them in getting seniors involved in college level classes that will begin to train them in the many technical and manufacturing fields where jobs are available. Engaging students their senior year is key to this process of increasing their math skills, and working-level reading and writing abilities, for 60-70% of our graduates need remedial work at the community college.

As part of this opportunity for improvement, the District just received funding for Project Lead the Way, to be implemented in Mt. Diablo and Clayton Valley High Schools. This program is designed to encourage and lead students into various engineering jobs. Additionally, community college classes could be held in the Bay Point area for seniors who are on a 4-hour day, so that they might begin their job-related education early, thus giving them a head start after graduation.

While there may appear to be many roadblocks to success, Dr. Lawrence sees them as opportunities for change and improvement. With our help, as volunteers, and in communication with our legislators, we can be a force for change in our educational community.

## Bay Point Chamber of Commerce Website

The Bay Point Chamber of Commerce has advertised a website in the past, but it hasn't been up and running. But it is now! Go to [www.BayPointChamber.org](http://www.BayPointChamber.org) and explore to your heart's content!

It contains the Chamber Directory, a copy of this newsletter, minutes from our meetings, our mission statement, a membership form, an on-line way to join us, and most importantly a community calendar for Bay Point! We advertise community events for organizations that belong to the Chamber, as well as those

who don't. So, we're doing our best to keep everyone informed.

We have tried to incorporate both the business side of our mission statement as well as the community side, and thus we have made the decision to become a "community" website. If you have information about an event your company or organization is sponsoring, contact Julie Nelson or Gloria Magleby at [JNelson@BayPointChamber.org](mailto:JNelson@BayPointChamber.org) or [GMagleby@BayPointChamber.org](mailto:GMagleby@BayPointChamber.org), respectively. We welcome your input.

## Bay Point Community Yard Sale

The Bay Point Chamber of Commerce and the Ambrose Recreation and Park District are co-sponsoring a Community Yard Sale on May 8, 2010, from 8:00am to Noon. It will be held in the parking area behind the Ambrose Center, at 3105 Willow Pass Road, in Bay Point. (Don't worry, there will be parking available in the lot and on the street, so come!)

Booths will be available to everyone -- residents, vendors, and companies are welcome to join us as sellers or purveyors of information, and everyone in the community is invited!

Each 10' X 10' stall will rent for \$20, with a refundable \$25 clean-up deposit. It's a great way to get your spring cleaning done, and sell those items that are no longer right for you, but are perfect for someone else! For those items that are not sold, we will offer a dumpster for trash, and a donation truck from Goodwill Industries for those gently used items.

Come and see the goodies that are for sale. This is the yard sale of the year! Not to be missed! See you all there!

## Mt. Diablo & the Class of '44

Once a month, what would seem to be an odd gathering occurs at Mt. Diablo High School's Serendipity Restaurant. A small gathering of "at-risk" students have an excellently prepared lunch with graduates of the Mt. Diablo High School Class of 1944. Co-sponsored by the Chamber, Tesoro, Criterion Catalyst and Allied Waste, generous members of the Chamber, these gatherings are designed to connect at-risk students with pseudo-grandparents who loved the school, fondly remember their days there, and are grounded in a way that the students, oddly enough, respect.

Some unusually honest conversations come out of these luncheons, and the students can be, if they wish, in contact with individual members of the class of '44 through a secure email system. These connections could be a link to someone solid, someone with strong values, yet someone who is non-judgmental about their situations.

While no follow-up research has been done yet to determine the effectiveness of this program, it is an innovative way to connect with students otherwise adrift. Thank you, Class of '44!

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*Try not to  
become a  
man of  
success but  
rather try  
to become a  
man of  
value.*

*Albert Einstein*

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**We're on the Web!**

See us at:  
[www.BayPointChamber.org](http://www.BayPointChamber.org)

**BAY POINT CHAMBER  
OF COMMERCE**  
P.O. Box 5395  
Bay Point, CA 94565

## Events

**Board Meetings:** 7:00pm on the Fourth Tuesday of each month. Usually at Golden State Water, located at the corner of Manor Drive and Willow Pass Road. Use the parking lot and door in the back. Be sure to call before coming, just in case we have changed the night or time at the last minute. Call for any other information..

**Biz Lunch:** 12:00 noon, the third Thursday of every month. Usually at La Finca Restaurant, 706 Port Chicago Highway, Bay Point. Again, call first, to

ensure that we have not changed the location for a special luncheon.

**Bay Point Community Yard Sale:** May 8, 2010, at the Ambrose Center (3105 Willow Pass Road.) The sale will run from 8:00am to Noon. Everyone is welcome to rent a space, or just come to see (and/or buy) the vast array of items that will be on sale. See article, page 3, for more details.

For more community events, go to our website: [www.BayPointChamber.org](http://www.BayPointChamber.org).

## Possibility of Enterprise Zone in Bay Point

Bay Point and Pittsburg are in the process of applying for a federal designation as an Enterprise Zone, an area where businesses who qualify may reap tax benefits for their businesses and for hiring qualified people who are unemployed.

The process involves environmental, economic and demographic studies, and the areas must reach a certain threshold of qualification. Most of these studies have been completed, and the waiting for processing and the decision now begins. It is anticipated that within a month or so, there will be more information on the status of the application, but hopes run high that this project will come to fruition.

Start-up businesses will have certain incentives for locating in the Enterprise Zone, and existing businesses may benefit from certain tax benefits available only to businesses located in the Zone.

The net result would be a boon to businesses in Bay Point, as it was to Pittsburg when they were designated as an Enterprise Zone before. It is hoped that we will have additional information for all businesses soon.

A special edition of the Biz News will be devoted to this issue, should the application be approved.