



# Martinez Living



Volume 8, Issue 4

Published by the Martinez Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourist Bureau

Winter 2010

# HOLIDAY FROLIC AND SNOW PARK



## 25 tons of Snow at the Main St. Plaza Downtown Martinez

Fri., Dec. 3rd - 3:00-9pm

Sat., Dec. 4th - 10am-5pm

Sun., Dec. 5th - 10am-4pm

### Downhill Sledding & Snow Play Area

Check website or call for pricing



## HOLIDAY LIGHT PARADE

Fri., Dec. 3rd - 6:30pm  
Main St.

Plus! FREE Jumpers - Face Painting  
Crafts & more on Main St.!

Call City of Martinez for details (925) 372-3510



## VISIT WITH SANTA

Visit and Photos  
with Santa  
at Santa's House  
Main St. Plaza

Dec. 3-24 • Visit website for hours and pricing



All kids must be accompanied by an adult for all activities! No refunds. Event may cancel without notice due to weather.



Shell Oil Products US  
Martinez Refinery

KAISER PERMANENTE thrive



Federal Credit Union  
Sharing In Your Future  
www.calpacfcu.org



CLAYCORD.com  
Breaking News & Information for Contra Costa County

CONTRA COSTA TIMES  
CONTRACOSTATIMES.COM

DIABLO VALLEY 92.1  
BEST NEWS BY THE FOX, PBS, AND ABC!

Tires LES SCHWAB  
Martinez, CA



BATH FITTER

**For more info visit [www.mainstreetmartinez.org](http://www.mainstreetmartinez.org)  
or call 925-228-3577**

**Martinez Chamber of Commerce  
2010 Board of Directors & Officers**



**Marie Knutson**

**Chairperson of the Board Elect**

The UPS Store  
925-890-5073

**Tuong Truong**

**Past President**

Boys & Girls Club of Diablo Valley  
925-228-3896

**Marie Knutson**

**VP Government Affairs**

The UPS Store  
925-890-5073

**Dwayne Glemser**

**VP Community Affairs**

Les Schwab Tire Center  
925-370-6382

**Suzanne Looker**

**VP Education**

J. Rockcliff Realtors  
925-917-9070

**Christine DiBerardino**

**VP Economic Development**

123 Accounting Solutions  
925-228-8300

**Fadhila Holman**

**VP Finance**

California Pacific Federal Credit Union  
925-677-0850

**Caroline Allsbrook**

Best Western John Muir Inn  
925-229-1010

**Jon Marangoni**

Shell Oil Products US  
925-313-3149

**Darrel M. Hodge**

Rhodia, Inc.  
925-313-8224

**Laura Philpot**

Heald College  
925-288-5800

**Rami Muth**

Superintendent of Martinez School District  
925-335-5909

**Susan Hurl**

Allied Waste  
925-671-5804

**Paula Kinder**

Kinder's Meats & Deli  
925-363-7367

**Janet Kennedy**

**ExOfficio**

Martinez City Council  
925-228-4253

**Martinez Area Chamber of Commerce**

603 Marina Vista, Martinez, CA 94553  
925-228-2345 Fax 925-228-2356

**Cynthia Murdough**

**CEO**

**Reba Bower**

Membership/Sales Director

**Joyce Deaver**

Office Assistant



## Chairperson's Message

**Marie Knutson,**

**Chairperson of the Board Elect- Martinez Chamber of Commerce**

It's holiday time and in honor of Thanksgiving that just passed, I would like to say **Thank You!**

Even though times are tough, there is so much to be thankful for: family, friends, food and warmth. I would also like to say thank you to our Board Members who keep us on track and our Ambassadors who roll up their sleeves and "get it done." A special thanks to Cynthia, our CEO, who has put in 110% and hates being on the sidelines right now. Without Reba and Joyce, our Chamber Staff, we would be lost.

A big thank you to Marty for all the hard work he put in as Chairperson in 2010. The King of the County BBQ increased attendance again and the new Martini Event was a success. When you see our favorite Santa around town, give him a hug. He deserves it.

We are grateful for the support of our Sponsors, our City Council and their Staff and the biggest thank you goes to our Members. Part of our goal for next year is to increase referrals within the Chamber membership and more one-on-one education to help teach how the many Chamber tools available can help member's businesses thrive.

So bring on 2011. It has been a tough beginning for me as Chairperson. As you may know our CEO had surgery which is taking longer to recuperate from than she planned. Those are hard shoes to fill. Also, like most businesses, we have had to tighten our belts and look for new options to grow. Luckily, our Chamber team is knowledgeable with a good mix of business sense and has great ideas. We are already working on events, economic development, outreach, and support for our membership. Next year is going to be great!

Happy Holidays and Best Wishes...

### What's new with our Members and Martinez:

Carlos Shoe Repair is moving around the corner to a larger space. The new facility will be able to recycle shoes and give them a new life (luggage too) and will eventually house a cobbler school for disadvantaged youths and veterans. Drop-offs of old shoes for the project are accepted now at his current shop on Main Street.

video + event  
AUDIO/VISUAL SOLUTIONS

**GUAVA**  
FILMS

g u a v a f i l m s . c o m

# A word from the Mayor by Mayor Rob Schroder



The election is finally over and the voters have returned the incumbents to serve another four years. It is now time to put the political rhetoric behind us and get back to work.

For the past several years the city council has been dealing with several very important issues, not the least of which is keeping our city financially healthy while delivering high quality public services that we all expect. We have been very successful in keeping our budget balanced with a healthy reserve for emergencies. We have a fully staffed police department and have not been forced to lay off any employees. The financial future is uncertain but we will continue to balance our budget on realistic expectations.

Martinez needs jobs, economic revitalization and quality, controlled growth. New restaurants and theatrical and arts programs are starting to stimulate Martinez businesses. There is an ongoing program to re-pave roads in every Martinez neighborhood. The Marina Vista Streetscape project is almost complete and it is not only improving one of our three major entrances to the downtown, but also help to stimulate business. The benefits of Measure H are being seen as Martinez Parks, library, and the Rankin Aquatic Center all continue to be rebuilt and upgraded.

Election campaigns are a good opportunity to talk with the voters and hear what they think. I walked precincts and listened to residents. I found many who share my love for this charming and historic town. They want the Mayor and the City Council to move this community forward. They want Martinez to be a thriving family oriented waterfront community that is safe and provides a high level quality of life.

It is now time to move Martinez forward on several issues that have been languishing while we listened and attempted to be inclusive. Now is the time for action.



"The Community Focus is an independent newspaper, published monthly by 3 local women and distributed to 40,000 homes and businesses in Pleasant Hill, Martinez, Walnut Creek, Pacheco and Lafayette. The Community Focus is dedicated to highlighting the vibrancy of businesses and people in the community and has become a must-read by every member of the family. The Focus is committed to serving the information needs and interests of our readers by providing local news, regular columns and features designed to inform and entertain readers of all ages. We encourage the community to submit articles, story ideas, opinions and comments, online at [www.ourcommunityfocus.com](http://www.ourcommunityfocus.com) or via email: [info@ourcommunityfocus.com](mailto:info@ourcommunityfocus.com)."

Thanks for your support, and we'll talk with you soon,  
Elena, Beck and Jennifer  
Publishers  
<http://www.ourcommunityfocus.com>  
925-335-NEWS(6397)  
"Help your community thrive! Support your local businesses"

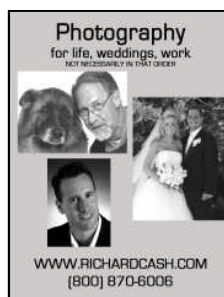
## EDWARD JONES INVESTMENTS TOYS FOR TOTS 2010 DRIVE

The time has come again! For the 6th consecutive year, John and Jeni at the exclusive Edward Jones Investment office in Martinez is serving as a drop off location for the Marines Toys for Tots program. With the Martinez community support and your donations we will strive to have the best year ever to bring gifts to kids within the area. To participate we are asking you for NEW and UNWRAPPED toys for children of all ages. Our outstanding Marines will distribute them to kids in need over the Christmas season. Our location is 608 Las Juntas Street, in downtown Martinez. We are accepting toys from now through December 16, 2010. Hours to drop off our 9:00 to 3:30, Mon - Fri. (925) 370-0184 or email Jeni at [jeni.waters@edwardjones.com](mailto:jeni.waters@edwardjones.com) if have any questions.

Thank you all! Happy Holidays!!!!  
Jeni Waters | Branch Office Administrator | Edward Jones U.S.A.  
Located | 608 Las Juntas Strret | Martinez, California 94553  
925-370-0184 | Fax: 866-617-7476



# Congratulations to the October Business of The Month



# Richard Cash Photography

# CITY COMMUNICATIONS CORNER

Marie Knutson

V.P. Government Affairs -  
Martinez Chamber



At the time of this writing, the final counts for the November elections were not in. Incumbents Mayor Rob Schroder and Council members Mike Menesini and Lara DeLaney were in the lead. "The last five percent take two weeks to count," said Steve Weir, Clerk-Recorder for Martinez, per the Gazette. It appears the voters chose to stay with their current leaders.

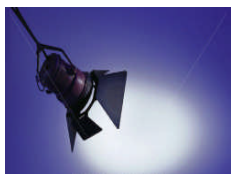
While awaiting the final votes, the City has plans for community workshops in December. For more information visit [www.cityofmartinez.org](http://www.cityofmartinez.org) under General Plan Update. The website lists meetings that will be held inviting the community to discuss the "Vision of Martinez." This is a chance to say what your vision for Martinez is. It is hard to move forward in such a tough economy, but this will be the guideline for our future. If you cannot attend the meetings or they have passed by the time you read this, you can still send your comments to Terry Blount, Planning Manager for the City of Martinez at [TBlount@cityofmartinez.org](mailto:TBlount@cityofmartinez.org).

The City is trying to look outside the box with the annexation of North Pacheco. This is currently with the Planning Commission. After that, the County will review it. Another factor is anticipating what will roll down from the

state budget, or should I rephrase that and say what money will not roll down from the state budget even though voters passed Proposition 22 to protect local funds.

This article is my last as V.P. of Governmental Affairs for the Chamber. I will be moving to Chairperson, as the Chamber looks forward to 2011. Your new V.P. of Governmental Affairs will be Dwayne Glemser of Les Schwab Tire Center. It has been a pleasure to learn the workings of a city and its council. As representatives of our Chamber membership, we look forward to increased involvement to better the economic climate of Martinez and keep you informed of what is happening.

And as always, please shop locally, keep an open mind, and get involved in your community. Have a wonderful Holiday Season.



## Ambassador Spotlight August Adam Hoffert

Adam Hoffert is a Life Insurance Specialist with AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah specializing in life insurance and annuities.

A lifelong California resident, he was born in San Francisco and moved to the East Bay in 1979. After attending California State University at Northridge he returned to the East Bay. He enjoys the East Bay dining scene, trips to the Sonoma Wine Country, and world travel.

He is proud to be a volunteer for the Martinez Chamber of Commerce as an Ambassador, providing him further opportunities to assist with local events, meet business owners and their employees, and network with professionals who care about our community.

With educational approach to service, Adam provides clients throughout California with information needed to make an informed choice when it comes to insurance and other financial decisions. As you seek financial security for yourself and your loved ones, you want a company and an agent you can trust.

For your insurance and financial needs in a professional and informative manner, Adam Hoffert can be reached at 925.817.9111 and [adam.hoffert@goaaa.com](mailto:adam.hoffert@goaaa.com).

Life Insurance Specialist  
AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah  
1276 S. California Blvd.  
Walnut Creek, CA 94596  
Office: 925.287.7626



## Foster A Dream

4585 Pacheco Blvd, Ste  
110, Martinez, CA 94553

Contact: Tamara Earl  
925-228-0200  
For Use: Through  
December 2010

### Holiday Heroes Needed!

### We're Building a 10,000 Sq. Ft. Holiday Wonderland for Bay Area Foster Children!

Martinez, CA –December 2010 – During the month of December, Foster A Dream is holding their 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Wonderland. We need your help now more than ever! Please help us give foster children the holiday they deserve. Here's how you can help...Make a donation, donate at one of our toy drive locations, host a toy drive or volunteer at the event. We are in great need of new unwrapped toys, \$10 gift cards for teenagers and new coats.

Join us Friday, Dec 10<sup>th</sup> at our Holiday Wonderland location for an Open House Celebration from 5pm to 8pm. For more information and details, please visit our website at [www.fosteradream.org](http://www.fosteradream.org) or call our Wonderland Hotline 707-260-2147.



# THE CALIFORNIA EMPLOYMENT LAW CORNER

"THE  
LIKEABLE

LAWYER"



JESSICA A. BRAVERMAN, ESQ.

## Legal Landmines of Social Media in Employment Issues

With the holiday season upon us once again, employers and employees must beware of the office holiday party and off site sponsored employer holiday festivities. Often alcohol is served and consumed and many people let their normal guard down during the employer sponsored holiday gathering whether it be on or off premises. All of a sudden people forget they are surrounded by their coworkers, and inappropriate behavior in the guise of joking and relaxing surfaces. **Remember:** *Sexual Harassment and Unlawful harassment rules apply at the employer sponsored events regardless of where they take place.*

This means hugging, touching, leering, staring, flirting and sexual banter and innuendo at the holiday party could lead to Sexual harassment allegations and lawsuits after the New Year. In fact, attorneys such as this author often marvel at the increased number of filed lawsuits alleging discrimination and harassment at the work place in Contra Costa County (and California) in the month of January following the yearly traditional holiday festivities at the work place.

The key is to be prepared ahead of the office holiday party and to prevent any

unwelcomed activities or behavior from occurring in the first place. This starts from the Leadership team on down and reminders should **begin now** with emails and meetings prior to the party or gathering time.

What else can employers do to prevent such allegations? First, remind all invited guests and employees to all holiday festivities at the time invitations are circulated that the rules at the work place are still in full force and effect including the zero tolerance policies towards harassment and discrimination at the party. Second, be clear that for everyone's enjoyment and meritment, comments, behavior and discussions must be kept business professional during the festivities. Next, advise all of your managers attending the parties to keep a watchful eye out for any inappropriate behavior. Fourth, empower your managers to speak up and to intervene at the party if any unprofessional behavior or banter is witnessed. Next, keep alcohol consumption at a minimum, if at all and watch to make sure no one over consumes or becomes intoxicated. Have a backup plan (call taxicabs in advance and have them on a speed dial if needed). Model good professional behavior at the party. Often we see the leadership team making the offensive jokes and remarks, so again remind the Leadership team that nothing they say is off the record during the holidays. Finally, remind employees about social media issues. No naked dancing pictures from the holiday party posted on facebook. Advise your employees not to post any pictures of the holiday party without prior authorization from those posed in the pictures and from management.

After the holidays it is a good idea for the leadership team and Human Re-

sources to ask for written feedback about the holiday festivities to plan for next year. On these forms, ask open ended questions so the employer can vet out if there are any potential issues that came up during the holiday party that no one was aware of. Address those issues quickly and follow all internal policies and processes. Paying close attention right after the holiday party and before the New Year will help ward off any potential claims.

Always consult with an employee relations/human resources professional such as the California Employment Law Training Center, a Martinez Chamber member, if you have any questions or need best practices to implement at your work place.

Everyone wants to unwind, relax and enjoy the holiday parties, but employers and employees must be mindful that the rules of engagement are still in play at office sponsored holiday events and must be followed, similar to any office or employer sponsored event on or off premises during the regular year. Have a great holiday season and remember the reason we all celebrate. Be good to one another and rejoice!

The California Employment Law Training Center offers year round sexual harassment and discrimination prevention training, preventative legal advice to the employer, on call and on site human resource support and employment law mediation. Free articles and resources can also be found at:

<http://www.BravermanSolutions.com> or  
<http://www.californiaemploymentlawtrainingcenter.com>

*This is a regular column for the Martinez Chamber of Commerce Newsletter. However this is an informational column only and nothing written may be construed as legal advice. All readers should consult with a legal professional.*

# Congratulations to the September 2010 Business of the Month



441 N Buchanan Cir  
Pacheco, CA 94553  
service@awsccc.com

Lobby Hours:  
8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Monday - Friday  
925-685-4711

[www.alliedwasteservicesofcontracostacounty.com](http://www.alliedwasteservicesofcontracostacounty.com)

## New Chamber Members

Foster A Dream  
Ovation Payroll Service  
Home Depot – Martinez  
Edward Jones Investments  
Pacifica Pizza  
California Fitness  
Garden Natives  
Muir Parkway Offices/Cranbrook Group  
PDQ Printing  
Tungston Group  
JBS Promotions  
Main Street Hydroponics  
Waddell & Reed  
Waters Moving & Storage  
You Walk Bail Bonds  
Carrows Restaurant  
Martinez Patch.com

## Renewal Memberships

Bay View Charters  
ARCpoint  
Le Gateau Elegant  
Diablo Valley Ranch Alumni Association  
Engineering Remediation Resources Group  
Scott's Floor to Ceiling  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
Bring Rover Over  
Parkway Smiles  
Martinez Wrestling Club  
Safe Security  
Diablo Trophies & Awards  
Servpro of Benicia, Martinez & SE Vallejo  
Pet & Home Care  
Togo's Eatery  
Best Western John Muir Inn  
University of San Francisco – San Ramon

Best Western Heritage Inn  
Boydston Construction/BCI Cabinets  
Bray & Bray Attorneys  
No Trace Shredding  
Martinez Masonic Lodge  
St. Catherine of Siena  
Michael Brionez – People & Properties  
Sotheby's Int'l Realty  
Bay Area Adventure Tours  
Paddock Bowl  
In Motion Dance Center  
Village Oaks Shopping Center  
Kaiser Permanente  
Nob Hill/Raleys  
Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano  
Remax Accord – Maureen Ingalls  
Martinez Rotary  
Nancy C. Roberts  
Boys & Girls Club of Diablo Valley  
Martinez Yacht Club

## Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Reports

### Unprecedented Local Need This Year

Concord, CA -- Despite signs that the worst of the economic recession may have passed, the Food Bank is responding to a sharp rise in the number of Contra Costa and Solano County residents now struggling with hunger: up to 1 in 6 by current estimates. More than 132,000 people, a 35% increase over just two years ago, are being served each month by Food Bank programs and partner agencies, and demand for services is growing.



“Unemployment is certainly a contributing factor,” says Larry Sly, Executive Director of the Food Bank. “With work harder to find, we’re seeing more families or single parents with children who need help.”

Nearly a third of those who receive emergency food are children. Other Food Bank programs target seniors and the working poor. Most recipients (86.5%) have incomes far below the federal poverty level; the median monthly household income among all

Food Bank clients last month was \$900.

To distribute the 12.6 million pounds of food required to meet the current need, enough for more than 10 million meals, the Food Bank relies on community support and donations, especially during holiday season.

“We know that many families have had to tighten their budgets,” says Sly, “but we hope the public will see how desperate the need is this year. Even small donations help.”

Overhead at the Food Bank, Sly notes, has been kept to an absolute minimum. 95 cents out of every donated dollar goes directly to food programs.

Financial donations allow the Food Bank to purchase fresh milk, bread, fruits and vegetables, which are essential to providing nutritious food to those in need. Financial donations can be made at the Food Bank's website: [www.foodbankccs.org](http://www.foodbankccs.org); or one may mail contributions to PO Box 6324, Concord, CA 94524.

The Food Bank also accepts donations of non-perishable food items at many locations throughout the community, including all Safeway stores, Whole Foods Markets, Mechanics Bank branches, Citibank branches, and Travis Credit Union Branches in Contra Costa and Solano counties. Lucky, SaveMart, and Food Maxx will

be collecting monetary donations instead of food donations this year. Many schools, community and religious organizations also sponsor food drives to support the Food Bank. More information is available at [www.foodbankccs.org](http://www.foodbankccs.org).

“We could not survive without public support,” Sly says. “As troubling as it is to see so many of our neighbors in need, it’s amazing and wonderful how generous and supportive people can be. We deeply appreciate the way our community comes together to help out.”

The Food Bank is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving the poor of Contra Costa and Solano counties with nutritious food. For more than 35 years, the Food Bank has been a vital part of the solution to poverty in our community. Donations to the Food Bank are tax deductible.

Contact: Lisa Sherrill 925-408-7655



Pictured at left are Renee Baptiste and Lisa Sherrill of the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano Counties. They

were the lucky winners of the Suzanne Looker - J. Rockcliff and Chris Roberts - Chase Bank raffle prize at the November business expo.

# ...CHAMBER HAPPENINGS...



Garden Natives Ribbon Cutting - Oct 10/12/2010 14:54



Martinez Mayor's Cup 2010 10/22/2010 11:28



10/22/2010 12:18



10/22/2010 12:30



10/22



10/22/2010 12:52

## Photography for life, weddings, work NOT NECESSARILY IN THAT ORDER



WWW.RICHARDCASH.COM (800) 870-6006

## THERE IS STILL TIME TO QUALIFY FOR HOME ENERGY TAX CREDITS

The Non Business Energy Property Credit and the Residential Energy Efficient Credit are good until December 31, 2010. Each could give you a tax credit up to \$1,500.

The Non Business Energy Property Credit equals 30 percent of what a homeowner spends on eligible energy-saving improvements, up to a maximum tax credit of \$1,500 for combined expenses in 2009 and 2010. This is for items like heating and air conditioning systems, water heaters, stoves that burn biomass, skylights, energy-efficient doors.

The Residential Energy Efficient Credit is for alternative energy equipment and could get you an additional \$1,500 tax credit. Qualifying properties are such as solar electric systems, solar hot water heaters, geothermal heat pumps, wind turbines, and fuel cell property.

Warning: Not all energy-efficient improvements qualify for these tax credits. Be sure to check the manufacturer's tax credit certification statement before purchasing or installing any of these improvements.

Eligible homeowners can claim both of these credits when filing their 2010 federal income tax return. Because these are credits, not deductions, they increase a tax payer's refund or reduce the taxes owed. You can claim these credits regardless of whether you itemize (Schedule A) or not.

Your Roni Deutch Tax Center in Martinez at 508 Center Ave, 925-265-2122 will be glad to help you claim these tax credits.

# Season's Greetings



Martinez Chamber of Commerce  
603 Marina Vista  
Martinez, CA 94553

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
CONCORD CA  
94520  
Permit 346

**CHOOSE THE WORLD'S LARGEST HOTEL CHAIN IN MARTINEZ**  
A SMART STAY SAVES FOR PLAY  
EXPLORE SAN FRANCISCO TO NAPA

Smart

Stay



Fri, Sat, Sun \$79

Mon - Thurs \$89

## Best Western John Muir Inn

- Spacious Rooms
- Complimentary Continental Breakfast with International Dishes
- Evening Receptions Monday - Thursday/Pizza Tuesdays
- International Travel Friendly
- Heated Pool and hot Tub Year Round
- Guest Laundry
- Cable TV, On-Demand Movies, Nintendo Games
- Coffee/Tea Makers, Iron/Board, Hair Dryer
- WIFI through-out/Business Center w/Computer/Conference Room
- Kitchenettes available
- Walk to Dining, Shopping and Movie Theaters

445 Muir Station Road, Martinez, CA 94553  
925-229-1010 or 1-800-338-1191  
[www.BWMartinez.com](http://www.BWMartinez.com)  
[www.heritagehotelgroup.com](http://www.heritagehotelgroup.com)  
[www.bestwestern.com/johnmuirinn](http://www.bestwestern.com/johnmuirinn)



## Auto Parts Emporium



*Your Hometown Parts Store  
Where Value Meets Service*

**Friendly & Professional Staff Here  
To Help You 7 Days A Week**

**Monday - Friday 8 AM to 6 PM**

**Saturday 9 AM to 5 PM**

**Sunday 9 AM to 4 PM**

401 Escobar Street - Martinez, CA 94553

(925) 228-6060

(925) 228-9241 FAX



## ALLIED WASTE SERVICES

**Waste Collection & Recycling Services  
For Home, Office or Industry**

- Solid Waste Disposal
- Construction & Demolition Debris
- Residential & Commercial Recycling Services
- Yard Waste Recycling

For Customer Service, call  
(925) 685-4711 or (925) 228-2717  
<http://awsccc.com>