



The Hawthorne HOTLINE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE HAWTHORNE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

February 2005

Mission of the Hawthorne Chamber of Commerce

Act as a spokesperson for the business and professional community and translate into action the group thinking of its members

Render specific services to its members and to the community as a whole

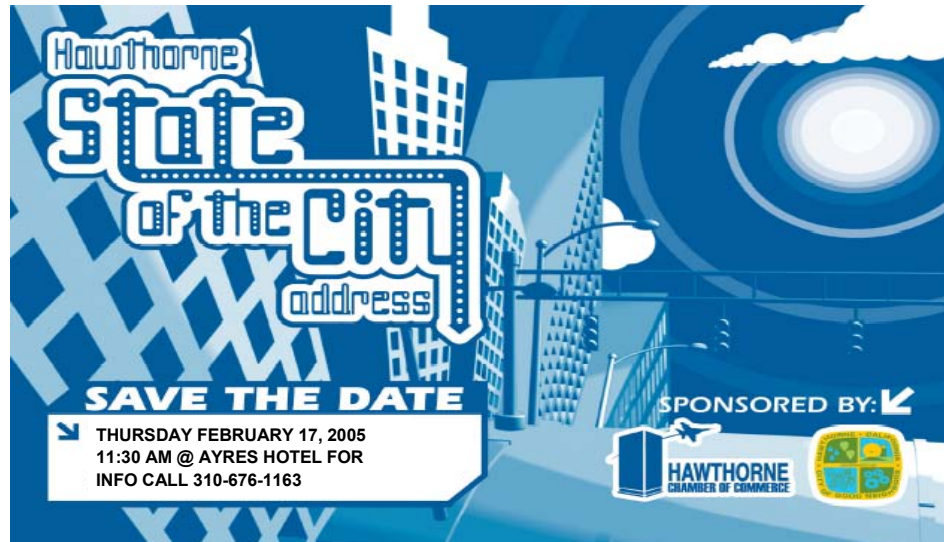
All businesses within and around the City of Hawthorne are invited to join the Chamber and participate in its various community events

Location and Hours of Operation

4444 W. El Segundo Blvd.
Hawthorne
310.676.1163
info@hawthorne-chamber.com

Monday and Wednesday
9:30 am—2:30 pm
Friday
10 am—3 pm



All Chamber members are welcome to attend the General Board meetings held the first Wednesday of every month, 8 am at the Chamber office.



Hawthorne State of the City address

SAVE THE DATE

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2005
11:30 AM @ AYRES HOTEL FOR
INFO CALL 310-676-1163

SPONSORED BY:  

Meet Susan Lanfre' - Our New Director!



The Hawthorne Chamber has a new Executive Director- Susan Lanfre'. Susan has a background in sales, and previously served on the Board for the Manhattan Beach

Chamber. She has done extensive networking and volunteering in many chambers in the South Bay area, and at one time, worked with six different Chambers simultaneously! Susan has received the Volunteer of the Year, Business Woman of the Year, and Small Business of the Year awards.

One of the reasons Susan received Business Woman of the Year, was that while she was working with her families printing company, she was also battling breast cancer; a battle that was thankfully won. Consequently, she is an unwavering advocate for mammograms.

"It is really a dream come true for me to become the Executive Director of such a well-known Chamber," states Lanfre' when asked about her coming to Hawthorne. "With my background and skills, the Hawthorne Chamber is where I

can best use my talents."

Susan believes that the Hawthorne Chamber is growing and expanding, and has a strong President and Board of Directors. Her goal is to continue to make the Chamber an intricate part of the community, where businesses big and small join the Chamber because of the benefits it provides them.

Susan also plans on starting a small business committee, aimed at home based businesses and entrepreneurs. "They have specific needs that other businesses do not, and are a large and growing percentage of our business today.

Presently, Susan is most excited about the State of The City Luncheon, and happy that there has been tremendous response from the community. Later this year, Chamber activities will include Earth Day, the Beach Boys Memorial, and a Farmers Market.

Stay tuned for information on these events and more, and feel free to call or come to the Chamber office and meet Susan. "My office is always open- I look forward to meeting, and working with all of you!"

Presidents Message

Center Stage- Act V

The Rain is Gone

The only good thing about getting all this rain is how beautiful and clear things are afterwards. Driving around the South Bay we have crystal clear views of the mountains, the Hollywood sign, and my personal favorite, the Pacific Ocean. We are so fortunate to live in this area with everything so close to us!

Another thing that has become crystal clear to me is the mission of this Chamber – YOUR Hawthorne Chamber of Commerce. In my message last month, I praised everyone for the accomplishments of our Chamber during the first 6 months of my term. Let me say again how proud I am of everyone's efforts and the results we have achieved. But you know what – our journey is just beginning!

At our State of the City Luncheon on February 17th, Mayor Guidi will deliver a message to a sold out capacity crowd of just how great our city of Hawthorne is! Many corporations and major employers

such as Levitz Furniture, 24 Hour Fitness , Office Depot and Golds Gym are discovering Hawthorne as a premier place to do business, and we take pride in this fact!

As of January 10th, 2005 we have a new Executive Director at the Chamber. Susan Lanfre has come aboard with a lot of great ideas and positive energy and we look forward to growing our membership under her direction. Upcoming events of importance in our City and Chamber are Earth Day in April; Beach Boys Memorial unveiling in May; the Hawthorne Air Faire in August and something entirely new for us and the City – a Farmers Market. Stay tuned for announcements on these events! We also have openings for volunteers to help at events. If any of these upcoming activities sounds interesting to you please contact the Chamber office to sign up. We would love to have you aboard.

At a Regional level, we will continue to support the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce (SBACC). The two major areas of concern to the SBACC are efforts to retain the Los Angeles Air Force Base and keeping the 310 area code

for the South Bay. These are two very important issues which affect the business community of the entire South Bay. If these issues are important enough to you to help, again please contact the Chamber office and we'll get you hooked up with the SBACC so you can help.

So that's it. We are at the beginning of a brand new year full of exciting activities and challenges. An invitation has been sent to all who want to "step up to the plate" and join us in this very rewarding mission to improve the business climate in Hawthorne and the South Bay. Please contact me at don@donharrisagency.com if you are interested. I would appreciate hearing from you.

Don Harris,
President



Happy
President's Day!

Upcoming Events - Also published at
<http://www.hawthorne-chamber.com>

February Events

****No February mixer****

- 2/2 Monthly Board of Directors Mtg, 8 am, Chamber Office**
- 2/15 Women in Business Mtg, 12 noon, El Torito Restaurant, 11855 Hawthorne Blvd., Hawthorne Pat Feldman (310) 342-7676**
- 2/17 State of the City Address, Ayres Hotel**

March Events

- 3/2 Monthly Board of Directors Mtg, 8 am, Chamber Office**
- 3/17 March Mixer, Thursday March 17, Cerise Auto Body, 13020 Cerise Ave., Hawthorne**

- 3/15 Women in Business Mtg, 12 noon, Pat Feldman (310) 342-7676**

April Events

- 4/6 Monthly Board of Directors Mtg, 8 am, Chamber Office**
- April Mixer *Date And Time To Be Announced***
- 4/14 Latino Business Reception, 5 pm, El Camino College Marsee Auditorium, Nelly Rodriguez (310) 660-3311**
- 4/19 Women in Business Mtg, 12 noon, Ramada Plaza Hotel, Pat Feldman (310) 342-7676**

The Hawthorne Hotline would like to list your community or business events. Please contact the Hawthorne Chamber at info@hawthorne-chamber.com

Government Affairs

By Pam Fees

At the Food Official Inspection Report workshop held the morning of August 31, 2004, at Hawthorne City Hall, inspectors from the Department of Health Services presented materials and answered questions about proper food handling and the inspection process. It was evident that the bar owners in the city have a special interest in the inspection process, but this particular workshop did not meet their needs.

It was suggested a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet be prepared with some of the common concerns and that it be submitted to Terrance Powell of the Consultation and Technical Services branch of the Department of Health Services for review and responses. Subsequently, Hawthorne City Councilman Gary Parsons arranged for Mr. Powell to be a guest on Hawthorne's local cable program and the questions were asked during the interview. Here are the questions and answers:

What does an owner do if there is a disagreement with the findings of an inspector?

Not all owners agree with the findings of inspectors. A dispute resolution program is available to mediate the dispute.

Why can an inspector during a re-inspection follow-up cite the owner for more items than initially identified?

Re-inspections are standard to be sure there is compliance with the first inspection findings. The re-inspections are not done to change the first inspection grade. The owner can request operator-initiated inspections once per year. The cost of the inspection is approximately \$200.

Why might two inspectors might write-up different violations at different times?

A food business isn't a stagnant operation. Every production of food is different.

These are processes in action, so there may be fluctuation in terms of performance observed at different times.

Why can't some violations be treated as warnings instead of written as a point deduction that could lead to a lower grade?

All violations written are noting a risk to public health. There are 3 risk categories: High risk—6 points—most often associated with food-borne illness, Moderate risk—4 points—no immediate risk of illness, Low risk—1 point—usually related to facility hygiene and building maintenance.

Why are things like a missing tile on the bathroom floor, a trash lid in the parking area being open, or a hole in the wall being written as deductions? Accumulations of minor items not directly in the food service area could lower the grade and they don't have a direct effect on the customer's health.

All of the above, though not in the food service area, could be access or harborage points for vermin or insects. These are considered Low Risk violations and one point is deducted from the inspection report, no matter how many tiles are missing or holes are seen in the walls of the entire facility.

The Department of Health inspectors often tell owners they are coming back for a re-inspection on a given date. The owner changes plans to be available on that date, but the inspector doesn't show up and fails to call to cancel or re-schedule the inspection. What can be done?

Supervisors monitor auditors and go to the inspection sites to follow-up on inspectors. They always operate in a state of improvement. A 24-hour hotline for owners or the public is available to call with complaints.

It is (888) 700-9995.

Many owners don't own the property, just the business. How can the business owner be expected to make property repairs without the cooperation of the property owner?

How can a business owner be asked to be accountable for things they have no control over, such as being told to raise a bar height? Some things like that will ultimately result in a need for a repositioning of wiring or have an affect on other areas.

A person goes into business with the intention of complying with the State law. A renter has the responsibility to ensure the facility they rent is appropriately maintained.

What can be done to make the inspections consistent?

Inspectors are audited once a month by a supervisor as part of a quality assurance program. Standardization programs of side-by-side inspections are done and the outcomes are compared for consistency, comprehensiveness and accuracy.

Can owners request the return by the same inspector as a means of attaining consistency?

Inspection outcomes are monitored for all the inspections done. Unscheduled inspections occur at least 3 times per year.

How should owners deal with the Fire Department and Health Department inspectors when given conflicting compliance standards?

Contact each and share the reports and ask them for recommendations or proper solutions. At the Department of Health Services, Terrance Powell is an ombudsman who can assist with questions such as this. The website for the department is www.lapublichealth.org.

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info@hawthorne-chamber.com for information**



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Community News

Stem Cell Research in California- What does it Mean for the South Bay?

On March 11th The Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau and the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce is will host a panel discussion on Stem Cell Research in California.

We are now beginning the implementation stage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Bond Issue Initiative. Expectations are running high as we enter a new stage of scientific research in California.

Our panelists will discuss how Proposition 71 can be a true catalyst for change. Questions to be addressed include:

How can the Los Angeles/South Bay area take advantage of and benefit from Proposition 71?

Spending during the first five years of the program is expected to total \$974 million, consisting of \$634 million in research funding, \$282 million in facilities funding, and up to \$58 million in administration funding. Tax revenues generated from the \$974 million in spending include income tax revenue from spending on salaries and wages, sales tax generated by employee spending, sales tax on supplies and equipment, and income and sales taxes generated by research facilities construction.

How could stem cell research help reduce health care costs?

If stem cell research results in a single cure that reduces healthcare costs by just one percent, it would pay for itself several times over during the following decade. For example, a non-surgical coronary bypass procedure that was developed for \$37 million now saves up to \$800 million annually. The hepatitis B vaccine cost \$32 million and saves nearly \$150 million annually. The development of a polio vaccine is estimated to have lowered U.S. healthcare costs by about \$30 billion a year.

Our team of biomedical experts will address

these and other issues in a panel and question and answer format.

What: Stem Cell Research Luncheon

When: March 11

Time: 11:30 – 2:00

Where: Crowne Plaza Redondo Beach

RSVP: 376-6911

Workers Comp Rates Drop by Gilbert Chan, Bee Staff Writer

California business owners saw the average annual premium for workers' compensation insurance drop between 13.9 percent and 16.6 percent in the last six months, according to records from the state Department of Insurance.

These would be the first double-digit percentage rate cuts since deregulation in 1995, savings that arose out of legislative overhauls the last two sessions.

"Rates are coming down. Right now, it appears medical cost inflation has been impacted by the reforms. Medical costs were one of the primary drivers pushing rates up," said Jack Hannan, a spokesman for the Workers' Compensation Insurance Rating Bureau of California, an industry research group.

Still saddled with the highest costs in the nation, however, employers are hungry for more. Small-business owners, in particular, say they remain under tremendous financial strain because their workers' compensation premiums doubled or tripled in recent years.

Sylvia Compton, owner of Dust-Tex Services Inc. in Sacramento, will be shopping for new coverage this March after her rates fell by just 2 percent in 2004. The company's \$80,000 workers' compensation insurance bill is still four times larger than a few years ago, she said.

"Two percent is nothing," said Compton, who employs 30 people. "We're still in a

very dangerous situation as far as (staying in) business."

A year ago, after legislators imposed new regulations in 2003 to reduce medical costs, employers saw a cut that was smaller than many anticipated - 8.5 percentage points less than the recommendation from Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi.

Consequently, lawmakers went back to work on the state-run program in spring 2004, passing a landmark overhaul embraced by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. It required independent medical reviews, established employer-selected doctor networks and imposed uniform standards to determine benefits for permanent disabilities.

Until this package was approved, the biggest carriers held back on making deeper reductions. The behemoth in the marketplace, the quasi-public State Compensation Insurance Fund, reduced its average rates by a meager 2.9 percent in January 2004 but came back with a 7 percent cut in July 2004 and 5 percent this month.

Since Jan. 1, 2004 - when the first legislative changes took effect - Garamendi has recommended insurers cut rates by about 24 percent. But State Fund's cuts totaled just 14.9 percentage points, on average.

Insurers have written policies with six-month durations because of the rapidly rising costs. In renewals since the start of 2004, the annualized rates fell between 13.9 percent and 16.6 percent, according to state Department of Insurance numbers.

The lower premiums haven't silenced proponents who are calling for regulating workers' compensation insurance. Last week, state Sen. Richard Alarcón, D-Sun Valley, reintroduced a bill to cap rates despite strong opposition from Schwarzenegger and other Republicans.

For entire text visit http://www.sbaction.org/news/news_detail.cfm?id=34

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And Get

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