



The Solano Avenue Association

Annual Newsletter - January 2012

1563 Solano Avenue #101 Berkeley, California 94707 510.527.5358 Info@SolanoAvenue.org

Annual Meeting / Mixer!

Tuesday - March 20

California Bank and Trust
1451 Solano at Sante Fe

Meeting will include the Installation of the Board of Directors; adjustments to Association by-laws and our budget / annual report becomes available per California Corporations Code 8321

We Would Like to Acknowledge the 2011 Board of Directors.

President – Sang L. Rowand
Farmers Insurance, Albany

Vice President – John Cowee
Architectural Concepts

Treasurer – Jason Alabanza
Mechanics Bank, Albany

Secretary – Jan Snidow, Mane Alley

Immediate Past President – Harry Pruy
Solano Cleaning Center

Ken Ancell, Ancell Financial
R H Anderson, Estate Liquidation Services
Jason Bellevue, RAF Investments
Alaina Palega, Solano Kids
Romy Jue, By Hand
Debbie Perkins-Kalama, KNA Copy Centre
David Krebs, Whole Health Apothecary
Memo Robles, Casa Oaxaca
Robert Cheasty, Attorney
Angela Santiago, Andronico's
Tom Taylor, Art Thou Graphics

Allen Cain
Executive Director and Events Manager

2012 Calendar of Events

March 20: Annual Meeting / Mixer

August 09: Solano Stroll Kick-Off Party

September 09: Solano Avenue Stroll

October 31: Halloween on Solano

First Three Weekends in December:
Santa on Solano

Thank You Allen Cain

Our Executive Director who has now been cleaning-up Solano Avenue (as a volunteer) every weekday morning now for over 3 years.

The SAA E-Newsletter

Twice a month the SAA produces an "E-Newsletter" putting people in touch with what is happening on Solano Avenue. We keep you posted on current events, crime alerts, and much more! Please join our E-Newsletter subscription list!

Winter Lighting Update:

Lighting is \$15,000 and the Solano Avenue Association is willing to cover half the cost – the rest is up to the merchants. Please see more on the reverse (page two).

We need to collect \$750.00 from each "block" of Solano Avenue or we will be dark in 2012 as well.

2012 Membership Information

Dues are not going up for 2012! This year's adjustments to the membership structure include a finale to the Albany membership "rotation adjustment". Albany membership used to be from June to June, we made an adjustment to bring it to January/January - to mirror Berkeley. Albany merchants will be invoiced either a full years' dues, or half – depending on how much was contributed in June of 2010. (Some of you have paid all the way up until 2013!) Membership renewals are due by March 31st, before Solano Avenue Stroll registration begins for the general public.

Solano Avenue Stroll and SAA Member Participation

It has come to our attention that some merchants were "sub-letting" their space to "outside" merchants who sold similar products to other vendors who have been pre-screened, and have completed the Solano Avenue Association "jurying" process. (Excessive hats and sunglasses are an example from this year's Stroll.) Expect to list everything you are selling (on your membership registration form).

We would also like to remind you that food (consumable liquids and solids) distribution of any kind (whether for sale or free sampling) outside of your front door is illegal without a permit, at the Solano Avenue Stroll.

Violators will be dealt with by refusing Solano Stroll participation in the future.

2012 Adjustments to SAA By-laws (Notice)

The Solano Avenue Association operates in accordance to by-laws that were last updated in February of 2007 (to version 2.0). We intend to make adjustments to these by-laws and present them to our membership at our next annual mixer (near St. Patrick's Day). Please contact us if you wish for a copy of our current by-laws and or have any input regarding any changes.

2011 Highlights

- Successfully navigated out of an unstable financial condition with better than anticipated results
- Addressed/relocated blighted newspaper display racks (still working on Berkeley)
- Addressed Albany "planter boxes"
- Assisted with planning/executing an experimental "farmer's market" at the east/Albany end.

2012 Goals:

- Address the desire for "complimenting" business-types to fill existing/future vacancies
- Develop a long-term plan to cope with homeless and poor "street behavior" (Albany)
- Enhance our banner program (Berkeley)
- Increase our presence and use of social networking websites (Facebook / Twitter)

We would like to acknowledge those who helped us produce the 2011 "Unsung Heroes" Solano Avenue Stroll.

First, our Major Sponsors: **John Nakamura at Albany Ford, Saleen, and Subaru**, Safeway, and the Cities of Albany and Berkeley. Our Media Partners include Comcast, the Daily Californian, KGO-TV Channel 7, Oakland Magazine, Parent's Press and Patch.com (Special thanks to Tom Taylor / Art Thou for the poster artwork. Tom has donated his art/talent to the last five Solano Stroll posters – thank you Tom.)

Thank you to those who provided delicious food to the volunteers on the day of the event and electricity to the performers: Bua Lang, Cactus Taqueria, Law Offices of Cheasty and Cheasty, China Village, The Church on the Corner, Fonda, Furniture Oasis, Jean's Realty, KNA Copy Centre, Noor and Sons, Schmidt's Tobacco Pub, Shoes on Solano, Solano Oriental Rug Gallery, Tannahill Realty and Zand's Market

Thank you to the generous Solano Avenue restaurants who donated food to the kick-off party and the volunteers (including the SAA Board of Directors) who make it happen.

A special thank you to the host of the 2011 kick-off party, **Mechanics Bank, Albany and Jason Alabanza**. We would also like to acknowledge **Richard Hong at California Bank and Trust** and his staff for opening the bank's doors on a Sunday and acting as the Stroll headquarters, for over a decade.

East/Berkeley end Business Improvement District (BID)

Yes, there is a beautification/pedestrian safety plan in place for the eastern-most four blocks. The cost is being shared by grant money, funds from the City of Berkeley; and yes, the merchants will need to chip-in. This re-incarnation of the "BID" has little to do with the Solano Avenue Association.

BID 101: A Business Improvement District is an automatic assessment collected by the City along with your actual business license fees. The BID money is administrated by a BID Board of Directors formed and managed by the City (of Berkeley in this case). The Solano Avenue Association and the City of Berkeley had a BID in place; however the assessment was discontinued in 2006.

There is a new BID Board of Directors being formed / coordinated by Berkeley City Council Person Laurie Capitelli. Mr. Capitelli is also part owner of Red Oak Realty (headquartered on Solano Avenue.) The new BID Board envisions wider (more intimate) sidewalks with more "cement bulb-out" seating (like Pete's), trees and more! If you are interested in this subject now is the time to let your voice be heard by contacting City of Berkeley, District Five Councilperson, Laurie Capitelli at 510-981-7150 or lcapitelli@ci.berkeley.ca.us

The Street goes dark for Winter Season – Lighting Update

The Solano Avenue Association has hope for winter LED lighting in 2012.

We need an average of \$750 from each "block" to reach our goal. We need your commitment by June and SAA representatives (as well as merchant volunteers) will be going door-to-door to solicit donations.

In 2009 the Solano Avenue Association entered into a three year contract with the "Christmas Lighting Pros", locally/family owned and based out of San Francisco. The contract was for three years, \$15,000.00 per year. That is \$200 per pole, 85 poles.

In 2009 the Solano Avenue Association covered the entire cost of the lighting, \$15,000.00; 2010 we generated \$1,000 from the merchants, and had to take-out a \$13,000 loan to cover the costs; in 2011 we are paying off the loan and simply did not have the resources to light the Avenue – we collected \$700 from the district (see below). Let's be honest, Solano Avenue did not shine as bright as the surrounding districts in 2011 and we are hoping for a turn-around in 2012. The Solano Avenue Association is willing to contribute \$8,000.00 for lighting, it is up to you for the rest. Despite tripling our efforts, donation numbers reduced from 21 in 2010, to 8 in 2011.

Thank you to the following businesses for trying in 2011:

Bone Room / By Hand / Kenneth Hickey - Berkeley / KNA Copy Centre / Mane Alley Salon / Oaks Jewelers
Sue Johnson Lamps / Zachary's Pizza (we can talk about your un-cashed checks later)

Have you Considered Joining the SAA Board of Directors?

We meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 8:15 am; weekly during "Stroll season". You can make a difference! The Association Board of Directors consists of (around fifteen) business owners in and near the district who care dearly about Solano Avenue and hope to help shape its future. We are a goal-oriented, organized group that operates collaboratively and have focused sub-committees. Can't commit 100 percent? Perhaps you would consider joining a sub-committee or just helping out part-time. Contact us to commit!