



# The Solano Avenue Association

Annual Newsletter March 2014

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

## Annual Meeting / Mixer!

Thursday - March 20 5:30 – 8:30 pm

**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 2014 Board of Directors.

President - John Cowee,  
Architectural Concepts

Vice President Jason Bellevue,  
RAF Investment Services, Inc.

Secretary - Jan Snidow,  
The Mane Alley [Salon]

Treasurer - Jason Alabanza,  
Mechanics Bank – Albany

Audi Constance, CFP Financial Solutions

Jason Haight, North Berkeley Resident

(and Solano Avenue Consumer)

Richard Hong, California Bank and Trust

David Krebs, Whole Health Apothecary

Debbie Perkins-Kalama, KNA Copy Centre

Memo Robles, Casa Oaxaca

Your name can be here also!

Allen Cain  
Executive Director and Events Manager

## 2014 Calendar of Events

March 20: Annual meeting / mixer

August 14: Solano Stroll Kick-Off Party

September 14: Solano Avenue Stroll

October 31: Halloween on Solano

First four weekends in December:  
Santa on Solano

## Thank You Allen & Co.

Our Executive Director has been cleaning-up Solano Avenue (as a volunteer) weekday mornings now for over 6 years. We leave from the corner of Solano and Masonic at 7:55 am - company is always welcomed.  
Facebook.com/BlueGlovedCrew

## Our Mission

The Solano Avenue Association is dedicated to promoting and improving the Solano Avenue business district and to building community spirit and identity through events, marketing, and aesthetic enhancement.

## SAA Launches First Ever District-wide Branding "Eat Shop Play Live"

We are proud of the logo, the message and the backbone of the program, the onSolano mobile APP. To become more focused on the district we integrated the message into the 2013 Solano Avenue Stroll theme (discontinuing the theme/tag-line for the event) as well as replaced the rotating artwork for the event to a more consistent branding of Solano Avenue. We discontinued the sale of Solano Avenue Stroll specific t-shirts and have produced new t-shirts and "grocery" red bags proudly featuring the new district-wide rebranding while promoting the new website and mobile interface onSolano.com

## In Five Years We Have Sold \$133,870 Dollars Worth of Solano Avenue Gift Cards

(AKA school scrip.) We sell the cards at ten percent off to non-profits, mostly public schools. This means in the last five years we have A) Directed \$133,870 worth of sales to the Avenue; B) Donated \$6,700 to local non-profits (via the discount) and C) You, the 60 plus program participants on Solano also donated \$6,700 to local non-profits/schools so job well done!

## Welcome to Solano Avenue

Café Valparaiso (Chilean/Latin cuisine) 1403 Solano  
Delhi Diner (Indian cuisine) 1373 Solano  
Albany Fresh Produce (produce and Halal foods) 1240 Solano  
North Berkeley Investment Partners (financial services) 1820  
Spa Je' Moi (beauty bar) 1702 Solano  
Therapy (gifts/variety) 1575 Solano  
Troy Greek (Greek cuisine) 1843 Solano

Andronico's is about to undergo a full remodel!

## Keeping Solano Avenue Youthful

One of Solano Avenue's many assets is the fact that we have two public elementary schools. In addition we have several preschools and private-schools on the Avenue. Solano Avenue is also traversed by the hundreds of families that walk to other public schools that are near-by! We are the center of a perfect storm of K-12 kids and their families, which is why all of our events are free and family friendly.

We should encourage a youthful presence on the Avenue if for only one reason: you "eat, shop, play and live" in the neighborhood in which you grow up.

We should engage the kids and treat them like our customers of the future because they are just that. Realizing we sometimes wish they would go to El Cerrito Plaza and stay there, we suggest the opposite approach: hire them so their parents and friends will come visit – connect them to Solano Avenue in every way you can. We should embrace and market our youth orientation / relationship and bond them to the street. It is even good for graffiti and crime prevention if they take ownership in the Solano Avenue community.

## 2013 Highlights

- Completed first ever district-wide branding
- Launched mobile website: onSolano.com
- Established a relationship with the Albany FilmFest

## Look at All These Rumors:

- A kids clothing store (used and new) will be going into the "Furniture Oasis" location (1545 Solano)

- A spa/salon coming to the street, this one taking the old Sarber's (2.0) location (1483 Solano)

- Safeway on Solano Avenue: What's happening? Last Patch report indicated they plan on light surface remodeling (repainting, etc.) while the chain itself is up for sale, what is the future of our Solano Avenue store now that the chain itself is up for sale?

- The Oaks Movie Theater will remain dark, there are no plans for development at this time.

## Thank you Berkeley Merchants/BID for the fall lighting

We appreciate the pole lighting that was installed for the fall season. The Berkeley Business Improvement District brought stars to Solano Avenue in October/December. We look forward to the coming years and are excited about the momentum as the district becomes more closely lit with its peers.

## 2013 Solano Avenue Stroll Credits

First, our Major Sponsors: **John Nakamura at Albany Ford**, Rocky the Range / Rosy the Organic Chicken and the Cities of Albany and Berkeley. Our Media Partners include Berkeleyside, the Daily Californian, KGO-TV Channel 7, Marketplace Magazine, Parent's Press and Red Tricycle.

**Thank you to those who provided delicious food to the volunteers on the day of the event and electricity to the performers:** Anytime Fitness, Bua Lang, Cactus Taqueria, Law Offices of Cheasty and Cheasty, The Church on the Corner, Fonda, Furniture Oasis, KNA Copy Centre, Noor and Sons, Schmidt's Tobacco Pub, Shoes on Solano, 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 2013 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.

## Walgreens 101

Walgreens is hoping to replace the gas station at the corner of Colusa and Solano with a new store:

**"Friends of Solano Avenue"** (<http://friendsofsolano.wix.com/friendsofsolano> / [friendsofsolano@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsolano@gmail.com))

indicate reasons to support the Solano Avenue Walgreens project include:

- The gas station will be torn down and the hazardous environmental contamination will be cleaned up, developers indicate the financial investment involved with the clean-up/associated expenses is significant.
- They claim Walgreens will bring pedestrian shoppers to the area, creating "linked shopping trips".
- 20 new parking spaces will be added to the shopping district and open to the public.
- This development may attract new businesses to a district that has numerous/significant vacancies.

**"Say no to yet another Walgreens"** (<http://www.nowalgreens.com> / [nosolanowalgreens@gmail.com](mailto:nosolanowalgreens@gmail.com))

According to their site they want to:

- Ban national chains
- Encourage you to shop locally (ie. Greetings; Payn's and Sal's Pharmacy)
- Solano Avenue would lose it's only gas station

Have an opinion? The Solano Avenue Association is taking an electronic (online) survey of all Solano Avenue Businesses via email (SAA members or not) and encourage you to participate in the poll:

**Please look for a survey email. It will go out on the morning of Wednesday March fifth (03/05/2014)**

## Have you Considered Joining the SAA Board of Directors?

We meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month; weekly during "Stroll season". You can make a difference! Can't commit 100 percent? Perhaps you would consider a sub-committee or helping out part-time. Have a bright idea? Please share it with us; we are open to your comments/questions/suggestions.

## The SAA E-Newsletter -

The SAA "E-Newsletter" keeps you posted on an assortment of subjects! Please join the email group (if you have not already) by emailing the Solano Avenue Association.

## 2014 Membership Information

Dues are not going up for 2014 (we have not made a dues adjustment for over three years now,) and yet we are doubling our array of services and taking the organization to new heights! Please commit by March 31st, before Solano Avenue Stroll registration begins for the general public (April 16<sup>th</sup> annually).