

## *annual meeting / mixer*

**Thursday, March 19**

5:30 – 8:30 pm

**California Bank and Trust**  
1451 Solano at Sante Fe

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

## *2014 board of directors*

### **President**

John Cowee  
*Architectural Concepts*

### **Vice-President**

Jason Bellevue  
*RAF Investments*

### **Treasurer**

Jason Alabanza  
*Mechanics Bank (Albany)*

### **Secretary**

Janet Snidow  
*The Mane Alley*

Audi Constance  
*CFP Financial Solutions*

Carrie Adams and Tracy Toler  
*Pharmaca Integrative Pharmacy*

Jennifer Hansen-Romero  
*Daniel Winkler and Associates*

Jenny Schmidt  
*Frank Bliss Insurance*

David Krebs  
*Whole Health Apothecary*

Debbie Perkins – Kalama  
*Albany Resident*

Ken Ancell  
*Ancell Financial Advisors*

Memo Robles  
*Casa Oaxaca*

Anthony Porter  
*Berkeley Resident*

### **Executive Director & Events Manager**

Allen Cain

## *Welcome to Solano!*

Albany Arts Gallery	1251 at Masonic
Allstate Insurance	1758 at Ensenada
Boss Burger (burgers and fries)	1187 at Stannage
Bikes on Solano	1554 at Stannage
Chloe's Closet	1545 at Curtis
Feagley Realty	1373 at Stannage
Himalayan Tandoori Curry House	1645 at Ventura
Oori Foods (rice triangles and more)	1247 at Masonic
The Sunny Side Cafe	1499 at Curtis
Swan Song (gifts)	1751 at Ensenada

**The Oaks Movie Theater** will remain dark: There are no plans for development at this time.

**Safeway on Solano Avenue:** What's happening? Last Berkeley side report indicated they plan on remodeling.

**La Farine** will be replaced by a "vegan" deli (1820 Solano at Colusa)

## **SAA Continues first ever district-wide branding "Eat Shop Play Live" and launches a new state-of-the-art website**

We are proud of the logo and the "eat shop play live" message. The backbone of the branding is our new Solano Avenue Association website! Thank you to **Almost Everything Communications** for the redesign and technical/structural upgrade. Please visit [SolanoAvenue.org](http://SolanoAvenue.org) to make sure your listing is there and that your information (including web-links) are current. Also please be sure to verify that you are listed within the gift card menu as well (if you accept them).

## **In Six Years We Have Sold \$161,110 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 directed \$161,110 worth of sales to the Avenue. Please be sure to check out our new website to make sure you are on the list of almost sixty merchant who participate in the gift card program. Thank you Five Little Monkeys and the Mane Alley Salon - where you can purchase the cards today!

## **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 as the district becomes more closely lit with its peers.

There are three ways to stay informed and share your updates! The Solano Avenue Website: [www.solanoavenue.org](http://www.solanoavenue.org), "Like us" on Facebook at Solano Avenue Association and Stroll, and of course the SAA "E-Newsletter" by emailing the Solano Avenue Association at [info@SolanoAvenue.org](mailto:info@SolanoAvenue.org)

## 2014 Solano Avenue Stroll Credits

THANK YOU! Major Sponsors: **John Nakamura - Albany Subaru**, Rocky the Range / Rosy the Organic Chickens and the Cities of Albany and Berkeley. Our Media Partners: Berkeleyside, The Daily Californian, KGO-TV Channel 7, Marketplace Magazine and Parent's Press.

**Thank you:** Anytime Fitness, Bua Lang, Cactus Taqueria, The Law Offices of Cheasty and Cheasty, Fonda, Noor and Sons, Schmidt's Tobacco Pub, Shoes on Solano, Tannahill Realty and Zand's for **providing food to the volunteers on the day of the event and electricity to some performers.**

A special thank you to our Grand Marshall, Henry Pruyne of Solano Avenue Cleaning Center and to the host of the 2014 kick-off party, **Mechanics Bank, Albany and Jason Alabanza**. We would also like to thank and 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.

**And in addition, 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.**

## Make a great FIRST and LASTING impression

*The main and most critical marketing objective for a brick-and-mortar business is generating awareness.*

We've been excited to see some nice changes and stores refreshing their storefronts on Solano! What do *your* potential customers see when they walk or drive by your business – is it time to refresh and re-organize?

Here are some ideas if you think it may be time for a refresh.

- » Does the exterior of my store reflect what I want people to think about the inside?
- » Is my storefront fresh or, or is it fading? When is the last time we refreshed our signs, awnings, doors, paint?
- » How often do I change my window display? Has my store become "invisible" to the eyes of those who walk-by?
- » Could technology make my windows more eye-catching? Flat panel displays increase interest.
- » Is my business engaging at night? Customers often do mental retail shopping at night, and notice inviting, well-lit businesses (not to mention that lights deter crime).
- » Is my business welcoming – or is the primary message potential customers see "restrooms are for customers only?"

- » How many stickers or outdated posters do I have clogging and covering up my windows? Taking credit cards is a selling point for some potential customers – but just one sticker should do it – and change it out from time to time to keep it from looking faded. Posters advertising past events give the impression that the business is slow.
- » Is my business social media worthy? What can we do to get noticed and "tagged" on FB, Twitter, Snapchat?
- » Does my business have a Facebook page? Have I "liked" the Solano Avenue Association and Stroll's Facebook page?

Once or twice a week you should walk by and into your business as if you were a customer. What do you notice about the windows? What's the first thing you see when you step inside? If you immediately notice something unappealing -- you should move it or get rid of it. If you notice a spot that a customer's eyes naturally focus on -- be sure it looks great, and consider putting a featured item or message there. Train your staff to sweep the sidewalk at the start of each shift. It will just take a minute or two, but can have a big impact on making Solano Avenue appealing.

Is there something the Solano Avenue Association can do to help promote your business, give tips or guidance or answer a question? We are here to help!

*Solano Avenue Association Director Allen Cain will be speaking at the Thousand Oaks Neighborhood Association (TONA) meeting on Thursday, February 26th - 6pm at the Thousand Oaks Baptist Church. Please join us!*

## Join 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. [info@solanoavenue.org](mailto:info@solanoavenue.org)

## 2015 Membership Information

Dues are not going up for 2015 (we have not made a dues adjustment for over four 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. Open to General public April 16th.

*thank you blue gloved crew!*

*They have been cleaning-up Solano Avenue (as volunteers) weekday mornings since 2008*

[Facebook.com/BlueGloveCrew](https://www.facebook.com/BlueGloveCrew)

### *2015 calendar of events*

Lunar New Year Celebration & Parade	February 8
Albany FilmFest	March 21
Solano Stroll Kick-Off Party	August 13
Solano Avenue Stroll	September 13
Halloween on Solano	October 31
Santa on Solano	First 3 weekends of December

**Do you know of a business looking for space on Solano? Give us a call, we are here to help! 510.527.5358**