



# The Solano Avenue Association Annual Program:

## Raising the profile of Solano Avenue

Solano Avenue Association utilizes event-based promotions to market Solano Avenue. Unlike conventional advertising, our popular event line-up guarantees foot traffic on the Avenue. Our free, well-executed, family friendly events bring hundreds of thousands of people to Solano Avenue annually. Our four primary events are:

### **The Solano Avenue Stroll**

This is our flagship event, and a time honored tradition, held the second Sunday in September since 1974! This event subsidizes the below services and represents a distinctive opportunity for association members to showcase their business to a crowd of over 250,000 Avenue guests, most of them from the immediate area!

### **Halloween on Solano**

This wonderful event includes a costume contest and free “treats”. It is one of the many ways that the Association, event sponsors and merchants give back to the community. We offer trick-or-treating on Solano, drawing hundreds of local families to the Avenue – all FREE!

### **Santa on Solano**

We bring Santa (and sometimes Mrs. Claus too) to Solano Avenue and compete with all of the expensive regional mall Santa's. We coordinate entertainers, provide free popcorn and FREE photos with Santa (not to mention “take your own”). In addition, we ask the merchants to help decorate the Avenue - all FREE!

### **Lunar New Year Celebration in February**

Co-Sponsored by Landmark Theater's Albany Twin and the Albany Unified School District \*CASP. This event features a parade and two hours of stage performances - all FREE!

### **2005 - 2015 our highlights include:**

- Created the first-ever district-wide “eat, shop, play, live - do it here” branding
- Negotiated the existence/design of the bulb-out seating area in front of Peet's Coffee.
- Creator in part of three key City of Albany Economic Development reports.
- City of Albany Economic Development Committee Chairperson fulfilled by appointed ED Allen Cain
- Saved the Landscape Post Office (with a full-time contingency of signature collectors and other coordination).

**When our community speaks, we listen!** Many groups have come to us to request our support and consultation. These community members and associations include but are not limited to the: Albany Film Fest; Art Attack; Art Walk; Dinner with Albany; enhanced district-wide mobile coverage; the farmer's market (Albany); news-rack maintenance; parking meter “holidays” during the winter; signage at the exit of westbound Interstate 80 directing you to “Solano Avenue”; street beautifications and an updated Safeway store. Our history includes: Albany Little League sponsorship to promote Solano Avenue at the fields; monthly electronic newsletters; monthly social-hours; sidewalk steam-cleaning; seasonal street banners; the Solano Avenue Gazette; a summer sidewalk-sale and winter street lighting.

**The Solano Avenue Gift Card / Scrip Program:** We sell over twenty-five thousand dollars worth of gift cards annually. Non-profits get them at ten percent off. They can be used at over 60 locations on Solano Avenue.

**The Solano Avenue Email Groups:** We promote events to our “SAA events” email group. News, public safety warnings and more are sent to our “SAA membership” email group of 1,000 plus. Make sure that you (and your staff) are receiving our emails.

**We are a voice for independently owned (not “small” business):** You are not small to us! We perform many behind-the-scenes activities during and including attending Albany and Berkeley Council and Commission meetings. We coordinate with the Albany and Berkeley Police Departments to help maintain a safe environment on the Avenue, synchronize a volunteer trash pick-up and work with the SAA membership to coordinate other functions on Solano Avenue. (2016.01 V3.1)