

Annual meeting / mixer

Thursday, March 23

5:30 – 8:30 pm

California Bank and Trust
1451 Solano at Sante Fe

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Welcome to Solano!

Citizens for Eastshore Parks	1604 at Ordway
Elegance Brows and Lashes	1410 at Santa Fe
Fern's Garden	1831 at Colusa
Gill's Furniture	1252 at Masonic
Hal's Office	1207 at Cornell
La Crema	1106 at Kains
Mathnasium of Albany-Berkeley	1007 at Madison
Mountain Mike's Pizza	1746 at Ensenada
New Day Pediatrics	900 Colusa
Rose Oriental Gallery	1573 at Peralta
Riveter Café	1707 at Tulare
Sweat Strength and Cycling	1510-B1 at Curtis
Twirling Princess	1820 C-2 at Ensenada
Yaza Couture	1535 at Nielsen

Andronico's has been purchased by Safeway

Bistro 1491 is now **Bo's California Cuisine** 1491 at Curtis

King Tsin is now **Sichuan Style** 1699 at Tulare

Orange Theory Fitness (coming soon) 1495 at Curtis

Retirements...

Hannah's Children's Resale
RE Loan and Mortgage
Sal's Pharmacy
Sacred Rose Tattoo

Sisters Antiques
Soccer Basics
Whole Health Apothecary

2016 Overview

First Wednesday of the Month Social Hours ARE BACK! (*see article*)

2016 was our 10th annual **Lunar New Year Celebration** and was held at the Landmark Albany Twin Theatre. We truly appreciate the community involvement of the Albany Twin, the wonderful performances of Al-Lan Dance studio, Golden Lion Martial arts, the Cornell Chinese program and many others. Every year the show is in full attendance, and ends with an exciting Lion-led parade east bound on Solano via sidewalks (weather permitting).

Thank you to the businesses who allowed **Solano Avenue Stroll** guests to use their restrooms. We appreciate your community spirit when things don't go as planned! (*see article*)

Halloween on Solano saw record attendance and was covered by KPIX / CBS Television.

Holiday Décor on Solano for the Winter Season: a joint venture with the SAA, Albany Chamber of Commerce, the City of Albany, and the Berkeley Business Improvement District (*see article*)

Santa on Solano Coloring books! Thank you to our family of businesses that participated in our 2nd annual holiday coloring books! This year we expanded the size of the book, the number of pages, and included an incentive by offering a free \$10 Solano Avenue Gift Card to any participant that visited businesses that participated as coloring book sponsors! Did your business miss out this year? **Would you like to be included in 2017 or possibly a springtime coloring book promotion?** Let us know and we will put you on the list to contact first!



The SAA Program

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. We have four primary events including our flagship event, the Solano Avenue Stroll.

- » Solano Avenue Gift cards drive thousands of dollars to the district: \$20,000 in 2016 (solanocards.com)
- » Mixers and Social Hours offer an opportunity to connect with your fellow business owners / professionals
- » Our Strong social media presence keeps Solano Avenue on the radar

Please see our “Annual Program” document for a more detailed list of what we do for Solano Avenue. **Do you have any suggestions / thoughts / other promotions you would like us to consider?** Don't be shy.

First Wednesday of the month Social Hours are BACK!

What a fantastic way to engage with your fellow business owners and professionals. Co-hosted by Solano Avenue Association and the Albany Chamber of Commerce. Prior hosts include: Mathnasium, Mechanics Bank Albany, Britt Marie's, Abrams Claghorn Gallery, Solano Oriental Rug Gallery, Zaytoon, Everest Café, Little Star Pizza, and King Tsin. **Would you like to host a mixer?**

2016 Solano Avenue Stroll Credits

Major Sponsors: John Nakamura at Albany Ford, Rocky the Range / Rosy the Organic Chicken, the School of the Madeleine, and the Cities of Albany and Berkeley. We are pleased to announce that Floor Dimensions in Albany has also become a primary sponsor of the event.

Congratulations to Albany Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year **Alexa Hauser**. The Youth of the Year is **Dylan Kurzer-Ogul**, an Albany High School Student.

Thank you to **Denise Grimshaw** from Arrow Glass Company (Albany) for being the 2016 Solano Avenue Stroll Grand Marshal - *now accepting future nominations*.

Parade winners include: First place: Albany Preschool, Second place: The El Cerrito Preschool Cooperative and the School of the Madeleine (a tie), Third place: Head Over Heels Athletic Arts and Honorable mentions go to: Albany High School Cheerleaders, Albany Armada Aquatics, Berkeley Chess School, Cornell School Chinese After-School Program, Montessori Family School, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley.

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, the Law Offices of Cheasty and Cheasty, Daniel Winkler and Associates, Fonda, Schmidt's Tobacco Pub, Shoes on Solano, and Tannahill Realty.

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 Mechanics Bank in Albany, Jason Alabanza, and Richard Hong at California Bank and Trust for hosting the kick-off party and event headquarters.

Winter Lighting and Décor Plans

With over a mile-long shopping district spanning two cities it's often a challenge to come up with and provide a uniform and pleasing holiday décor program...however, we are diligently working every year to partner with other groups to provide better solutions.

In 2016 we began working on options and ideas with the Albany Chamber, the City of Albany Recreation Department and the Solano Berkeley Business Improvement District to help provide a uniform Winter Holiday Décor program for Solano Avenue and part of San Pablo Avenue.

Unfortunately, we were only able to bring forth a portion of our desired plan for this year and some of the decorations were at the mercy of the professional installation company that was contracted. (Hence why some of the décor went up in October versus later in the season)

For those of you who were wondering, the overall infrastructure of Solano Avenue within and between the two cities adds to the level of complexity in providing uniform holiday decorations. Some side streets don't line up evenly for swag type decorations spanning the street. At the same time, poles are at a variety of heights, sizes, and styles, and electricity isn't available on large parts of Solano. Currently, electricity is only available on poles west of the BART tracks — which is why you only see illuminated trees on that end of the street. If your business is interested in providing power in future years, please let us know. We are continually looking for ways to improve the beauty and spirit of Solano Avenue through this holiday program, and we appreciate any input you may wish to provide.

We appreciate everyone's efforts in providing decorative pole wraps, hanging of holiday banners and wrapping trees with beautiful lights when power was available.

If anyone is interested in volunteering to assist in this program for the 2017 Holiday season, please contact us.

Additional Appreciations

Thank you to the Blue Glove Crew for helping keep our business district clean! Since 2008, this group of volunteers has been hand-cleaning Solano and San Pablo Avenues, from McDonald's restaurant to the El Cerrito Plaza. Please visit [Facebook.com/BlueGloveCrew](https://www.facebook.com/BlueGloveCrew) for more information

Thank you to Anthony Porter, prior Vice President of the Solano Avenue Association for his newsletter production skills, contributions and collaborations in helping to produce this newsletter for you!

2017 calendar of events

Annual Meeting / mixer	March 23
Solano Stroll Kick-Off Party	August 10
Solano Avenue Stroll	September 10
Halloween on Solano	October 31
Santa on Solano	First 3 weekends of December

Partnerships

Albany Arts and Green Festival
Albany High School Venture Program
Albany FilmFest
City of Albany Economic Development Committee
Diverse Housing Working Group
Berkeley Safe neighborhoods Committee
YMCA - Albany