South County Chamber is Working for You

Jocelyn Brennan
President l CEO
South County Chambers of Commerce

As a Chamber, it is very difficult to see our business community struggle through this challenging time. We are doing all we can to help assist you. Please let me know how we can work together. Look to us as a resource, liaison, and boots on the ground (with the appropriate social distancing of course). Our Chamber is fully operational and working around the clock to serve you. Below are just a few of our current efforts:

- We created a COVID-19 resource page with curated information for businesses on our website.
- We hosted a webinar with the Small Business Administration on March 25 with 200 businesses participating. We want our members to be very well prepared to successfully and expeditiously utilize the Economic Injury Disaster Loan, which is also available to nonprofits and the CARES Act resources.
- We launched a “business impact survey” to find out how our local businesses are faring and to plan for the recovery phase.
- We started a new social media campaign "South County Eats and Drinks" to promote the local wineries, bars, breweries, and restaurants that have closed except for take-out/delivery. Please like and share the Facebook South County Eats and Drinks page and the Instagram account: south_county_eats_and_drinks/
- We started a “Takeout Tuesday” campaign to encourage the entire community to order takeout on Tuesdays. This weekly campaign is garnering success stories from local businesses.
- We are personally calling our 700 members to offer our assistance.
- All committee meetings are now Zoom meetings, which is allowing more people to attend. It is very reassuring and helpful to see our elected officials on camera answering questions in real time.
- We speak weekly with Visit SLO Cal regarding travel restrictions and impacts to lodging partners.
- We are in touch with SLO County leaders, Coalition of Chambers, REACH and the SBDC task force on a weekly basis.
- We will continue the Wednesday Webinars at 11am. These are open to anyone and free.

We are here to help you through this difficult time. Please do not hesitate to reach out by calling our office (805) 489-1488 or Jocelyn@southcountychambers.com

April Business of the Month: SLO County Farmers’ Markets

The San Luis Obispo County Farmers’ Market Association (SLOFMA) is a not-for-profit corporation. They provide several market places for family owned and operated farms, and they provide fresh quality products directly to consumers. Normally, SLOFMA operates five weekly markets throughout the county. The Thursday night SLO Market is closed temporarily, but the two markets in Arroyo Grande, Wednesday mornings and Saturday afternoons, are still scheduled. Our local farmers are being recognized for their commitment to providing fresh food during the COVID-19 crisis as an essential business and for implementing these best practices. To ensure the safety of patrons and vendors, these precautionary measures have been put in place:

1. Shop at a safe distance. Market managers will be enforcing the six-foot rule to all customers in attendance.
2. No sampling.
3. Do not touch or pick up produce.
4. Use automatic hand sanitizer stations.
5. Do not linger. Purchase and return home to eat, cook, and enjoy.

Please visit solcountyfarmers.org.
Update from Supervisor Lynn Compton, District 4: Oceano, Nipomo, and Arroyo Grande

Update on COVID-19 as of March 30th:

1. Contractors started working on the Cal Poly ACS, alternate care site, or our new “step down site”. The scheduled date for accepting COVID-19 positive patients is April 8th, and the facility will be able to accept 165 patients in Phase 1. The site will have a 931-bed capacity.

2. The estimated time of arrival for the ordered ventilators is April 13th. These ventilators will be distributed to our 4 local hospitals for acute care patients in the hospital. We will use the Cal Poly Alternate Care Site for a less severe patients, and will have oxygen, fluids, etc. but it is not an “intensive care” facility and they will not be ventilating patients at this site. Ventilated patients will stay in the hospitals.

3. Currently have two sites open for overnight parking for the homeless. Last night we had 9 homeless individuals who utilized the facility in Los Osos, and 7 vehicles in Oceano. We are looking to open a third parking site in San Luis Obispo later this week.

4. COVID-19 case count as of today is 77. There seems to be a pattern and a steady tick upward. We have performed over 400 tests. One individuals remains in ICU and six others are in acute care beds (non ICU). The number of recovered individuals is 27. And there are now 43 at home.

5. We are working with EMS to be able to transport people from home to the ACS, and there are some challenges with the law, etc.

6. Regarding COVID-19 testing: We are expanding the rate of testing in the county as a whole. We are still waiting on a high throughput testing machine we are purchasing in conjunction with Dignity Health and Santa Barbara County which will enhance our testing capabilities, but are still looking at about 5 weeks out for arrival.

   We continue to add additional equipment at the Public Health Department labs, and there is a new point of care test that has a 15-minute turnaround time, however it is not as reliable as other testing methods, meaning we might have to perform a lot of confirmatory testing. We are seeing an uptick in the private sector because now labs have to report ALL test results to the state, not just positives...this will give us a much better idea of where we sit.

7. Our goals still remain the same, limit the spread of COVID-19 within the county to allow our healthcare system to accommodate the additional patient demand. We will continue to emphasize implementing the Shelter at Home Order, identify infected individuals, quarantine exposed individuals, and close destination points to discourage out of town individuals from entering the county.

8. We continue to provide our healthcare workers and first responders with PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) if requested via the readyslo.org website.

9. We will continue to try to mitigate the impact of the Shelter at Home Order by executing Food Drop Off Programs for our Seniors, augmenting the Food Bank capabilities (with people and food), supporting our homeless shelters and implementing safe parking sites, and implementing our Virtual Assistance Center.

10. We are also planning to transition to a "virtual EOC" (emergency operations center) and away from the current facility so that our EOC team can physically distance themselves to the greatest extent possible, and to protect them so none of them become COVID-19 positive. At the current site we monitor all of the individual’s daily temperatures, physically distance, and assess their physical temperature so that our EOC team can physically implement the Shelter at Home Order and away from the current facility so that our EOC team can physically distance themselves to the greatest extent possible, and to protect them so none of them become COVID-19 positive. At the current site we monitor all of the individual’s daily temperatures, physically distance, and assess their health daily.

11. Also, daily press briefings are now in Spanish. You can watch them (if you missed them live) at readyslo.org.

Please contact our office if you have any concerns or needs. My district phone number is (805) 781-4337. The phone assistance line for COVID-19 related issues is (805) 543-2444.

My office email address is: lcompton@co.slo.ca.us.

Please continue to stay safe, socially distance, and respect the Shelter at Home Order so we can all get through this epidemic safely.

San Luis Obispo County Supervisor
Lynn Compton, District 4
**Arroyo Grande News**

**Free puppies!** Now that I have shamelessly tricked you into reading my article, I want to share my sincerest concern and sympathy for you, our business community. There just aren’t words for what is happening worldwide. I know you are struggling more than you let on. I, our City Council, and our city staff are here to support you. Just ask.

The first question I got as we started the shelter-at-home order was from a business owner calling my cell and wanting to know if their restaurant could use the space in front of their business for curbside pickup. My response was, “Just do it. I’ll back you. Let me make a call. I know the City will back you. Just get the cone out there, and people will understand. We’ll figure out the legal part later.” City Manager Bergman, and our new Community Development Director Whitney McDonald got right on it, and within 24 hours we had not only a program ready to go, but printable signage available for download. That kind of fast response makes me proud.

I’ve also received questions that required the involvement of people higher up the decision-making chain: at the county, state, or federal level. In those cases, I’ve worked to connect people with the right resources to get their questions answered as quickly as possible, without people having to figure it all out on their own. If I don’t have the answers, I will get you help ASAP.

Your elected representatives are working together so efficiently, it would honestly make you proud. Congressman Carbajal, Assemblyman Cunningham, Supervisor Compton, and myself are in daily contact, working collaboratively on your behalf. This is how it is supposed to be!

I can’t do much about the situation. But what I can do is get government out of your way as best I can so you can find a way to make it through this gauntlet. This is why you elect us to make your life easier, not harder. If you have an issue, even if it’s not a city-level one, don’t hesitate to call me, whether we’ve ever spoken or not. I don’t care if you are in Arroyo Grande or Timbuktu. I’m here to help whether I officially represent you or not. Let’s just get ‘er done. My cell is 805-234-1270.

Caren Ray Russom  
Mayor, City of Arroyo Grande

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**Grover Beach News**

- Utility bills are still payable to the City by the listed due date; however, pursuant to City Council action on March 30, 2020, the City has suspended service disconnections until further notice so customers will not have their water turned off due to non-payment.
- The City Council also took action to waive late payment penalties for utility billings sent in February-May 2020. This means that customers will not be charged late fees for utility bills sent in February-May 2020 up until August 31, 2020. Payment plans are available and any payments on these bills made after August 31, 2020 will be subject to late fees and service disconnections, including door hanger fees and reconnection fees. These temporary measures are designed to provide assistance and flexibility to customers during this difficult time though we still advise customers to plan accordingly with making their utility payments.
- Transient Occupancy Tax pursuant to City Council action on March 30, 2020, the City is temporarily delaying late penalties and interest until no later than August 31, 2020.

**Pismo Beach News**

The City of Pismo Beach has been conducting conference call updates for our local businesses on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1 PM. On March 31, we had Judy Mahan who is Director of the SLO County Small Business Development Center. Judy gave a briefing on the grants and loans available from Small Business Administration along with the new programs from the recent Congressional action. On April 2, we have Fiona Ma, the Treasurer of the State of California. These calls have been well received and we hope it will help our businesses survive during these tough times.

The City has closed its pier and shortened parking downtown to one hour to encourage walking or purchasing take out from restaurants, but not to congregate.

We passed an urgency ordinance over a week ago to give the lodging industry more time to pay TOT for February and March. The TOT for these months is now due at the end of August. Construction continues on the Pier Plaza and Shell Beach Streetscape along with repaving of some streets.

Police have been conducting security checks on businesses that have been closed. Generally, our residents are following the shelter at home provisions and we are hopeful that it will significantly reduce the impacts of COVID-19. Be Safe.

Ed Waage  
Mayor, City of Pismo Beach

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**Thank You**

**Renewing Members**

**Arroyo Grande Community Hospital**  
Dignity Health

**Chairman’s Circle: Founding Level**

**Sentinel Peak Resources**  
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**City of Arroyo Grande**  
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Arroyo Grande Seventh-Day Adventist Church  
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When it’s time to travel again, contact the local representatives for Cruise Planners. Travel is their passion and area of expertise. Their experience, travel knowledge and preferred access to special offers can lead you to a stress-free vacation plan.

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Central Coast Living
Arroyo Grande
fb.me/centralcoastlivingllc

Central Coast Living is a glossy, high-end, premium magazine that will be published soon in South County. For more information, please contact mitchelfriedeck.bvm@gmail.com.
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For more information, please contact our South County Chambers of Commerce office at (805) 489-1488, or e-mail info@southcountychambers.com.
March got off to a healthy start with the South County Chambers of Commerce’s Leadership cohort being hosted at Arroyo Grande Community Hospital’s beautiful Matthew Will Memorial Building. The day’s theme, Health and Wellness, and the leadership focus of “balance” was timely as the group discussed all aspects of wellness.

- President & CEO of Marian Regional Center and Arroyo Grande Community Hospital, Sue Andersen, spoke on her fantastic leadership journey and also lead a discussion about COVID-19 facts and prevention.
- Hospital Administrator Ken Dalebout presented the history of the hospital, it’s growing plans for proving the Central Coast with evolving and inclusive care and gave the cohort a tour of the hospital.
- Former President of MRMC Medical Staff and Physician Champion for Behavioral Health Services, Dr. David Ketelaar led an eye-opening discussion about behavioral and mental health.
- Owner of Sloco Wellness Spa, Natasha Prybyla. She shared with the group her journey as a person and as a business owner of finding balance in life, understanding holistic wellness and how to differentiate being responsible for people versus being responsible to people.

In the afternoon, the leaders in this group discussed the importance of balance in the work place and beyond, making the tie between workplace balance and the potential impacts on physical, mental, and emotional wellness. When leaders find themselves out of balance it can have detrimental impacts to their team; their organization; their families and their community.

Everyone walked away agreeing that while we reside on the Central Coast, we would all commit to living in the present.

If you have any questions about the Chamber’s Leadership South County program, please contact Marty Imes, Leadership South County Executive Director, at marty@southcountychambers.com.

— Wes Love, Co-founder/Culture Cultivator CultureStoke (photo by Michelle Love)
Join our new Facebook group to show your love for local stores!

SOUTH COUNTY SHOPS

Support local retail businesses through their online sales, phone sales, and curbside delivery.

Still want a paper copy of our newsletter?

Let us know.

Every month we send our Chamber newsletter digitally and through direct mail to nearly 700 Chamber members who are local businesses and nonprofits. We are reducing our printing costs for 2020, so please let us know if you would still like a paper newsletter direct mailed to your address by calling us at (805) 489-1488. Thanks for reading!
JOIN US ONLINE

MEMBERSHIP COFFEE

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, FROM 9 - 10 AM

MAKE NEW BUSINESS CONNECTIONS, AND LEARN ABOUT ALL THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP WITH SOUTH COUNTY CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

RSVP at southcountychambers.com to receive the login.
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- Jeff Chambers, Tommy Hilfiger
- Nicole Moore, SeaCrest Oceanfront Resort
- Eric Daniels, PG&E
- Ken Dalebout, Dignity Health/AG Hospital
- Mary Gardner, SLO Regional Transit Authority
- Shari Barnhart, Mechanics Bank, Arroyo Grande
- Lynne Schlenker, The Great American Melodrama
- Michael Specchierla, SLO County Office of Education
- Jill Quint, Quintessa Coffee Roasters
- Rudy Stowell, Pure Bliss Spa
- Jake Barnick, Kautz Chevron

**Chamber Staff:**
- Jocelyn Brennan, President I CEO, jocelyn@southcountychambers.com
- Ligia Zavala, Chief Operations Officer, ligia@southcountychambers.com
- Audrey Powell, Director of Membership, audrey@southcountychambers.com
- Holly Leighton, Marketing & Tourism, holly@southcountychambers.com
- Marty Imes, Executive Director of Leadership South County, marty@southcountychambers.com
- Michelle Lea, Bookkeeper

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