

October 24, 2005

Message from the Chair Emeritus—Dick Johanson

One of the restrictions of a newsletter such as this is our inability to capture the internal motivation that unites us. We can only describe the progress of those external programs and policies designed to improve our tomorrows. There is no better forum for accenting this distinction than attendance at a Board of Directors meeting of our Business Council. To sit among the men and women in attendance, as I did last week, and witness their individual core commitments in a variety of arenas, is an ever-inspiring experience. We are all interdependent. Perhaps this is best expressed by a Native American, Chief Seattle, who put it this way:

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

"All Things Are Connected. Whatever Befalls The Earth Befalls The Children Of The Earth,"

Steward Leadership Awards Inspirational

Those who attended last week's award luncheon honoring steward leadership no doubt left inspired. One after another, the speakers presented a vision for servant leadership and the results of such an approach. Did you know that the City of Fresno has experienced three consecutive years of crime decreases and that last year the crime rate reached its lowest level since 1972? Did you know that as a result of structural realignment, there has been a 42% reduction in traffic collisions? Those are the department's accomplishments under the leadership of Chief Jerry Dyer. Personally, he was acknowledged at "The Most Inspirational Student" by his peers at the California Command College. Chief Dyer, this year's recipient of the Excellence in Public Service Award has led his team to measurable results as a result of his ability to inspire the best from them.

The Rose Ann Vuich Award for Ethical Leadership was presented to Harry Armstrong, a long time public servant in Clovis. The many letters supporting the nomination and his accomplishments clearly demonstrate that Mr. Armstrong has had the interests of his community in mind throughout his long career. Clovis is fortunate to have had such a talented and committed steward helping to guide the way during the years of rapid growth and increasing challenges.

It is remarkable that academia, business and the media have joined together to honor public leadership. Those willing to serve in the glaring limelight of the political arena have burdens unlike those of the other sectors. As every speaker noted, they cannot do it alone. It is only by working together across sectors and interests that we can meet the challenges presented to us today. Thank you to our partners, the Maddy Institute and the Fresno Bee, for making such an exceptional event possible.

Air Quality Summit: A Focus on Solutions—October 27, Valdez Hall

Operation Clean Air's (OCA) mission is to clean the air and promote prosperity in the San Joaquin Valley. In recognition of the interdependence of these issues, the organization is targeting action plans that embrace both agendas. The organization is broad-based and Valley-wide and the focus is on voluntary and sustainable strategies each sector can implement to take responsibility for both cleaning the air and building the economy. On Thursday, October 27 from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., OCA is convening an air quality summit entitled: A Focus on Solutions. Much work has been done to understand the problem. It's time to gain clarity and unite around solutions. The summit will include panels from key sectors with an eye toward the future. What role will technology, alternative fuels and alternative transportation options play? The registration deadline is October 20. The fee is \$25.00. Make checks out to OCA and mail to OCA, 2622 N. Vagedes, Fresno, CA 93705. For more information email feleena@romancandle.org.

The First Domino--ReadFresno

It should be no surprise that insuring that all of our children can read proficiently by third grade became the number one goal of the Collaborative Regional Initiative. From this intention, Kurt Madden, who chaired the Human Investment Task Force, built ReadFresno (<http://www.readfresno.org>) Whether you want to invest time, money or books, there is an answer to the question, "What can I do to help?" "Reading is the fundamental skill upon which all formal education depends. Research shows that a child who doesn't learn the reading basics early is unlikely to learn them at all. Any child who doesn't learn to read early and well will not easily master other skills and knowledge, and is unlikely to ever flourish in school or in life."