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Weekend Weather Forecast

Friday

Sunny

82°



Saturday

Sunny

78°



Sunday

Mostly Sunny

72°



Remembering Those We Lost



Photo by Rob Fiore

El Segundo, Manhattan Beach Chambers Join Forces for Business Expo

By Brian Simon

Dozens of local companies and organizations representing a diverse array of categories and industries will showcase their products and services next Thursday afternoon at the first-ever joint business expo and mixer co-sponsored by the El Segundo and Manhattan Beach Chambers of Commerce. Expo 2009 will take place at El Segundo's Hacienda Hotel between 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. on September 17 and is open to the general public.

Officials from both chambers hope the expanded Expo will maximize exposure for their members, provide great networking and socializing opportunities, and increase awareness of the many quality businesses in both communities. "Bringing both chambers together increases attendance and gives people more bang for their buck," said El Segundo Chamber Executive Director Marsha Hansen, who noted that the response has been very positive so far. "It's a great way for businesses to promote themselves during these tough times." Hansen added that during this year's Expo, exhibitors will also be able to sell products for the first time. Food sales are prohibited, though free food samples are permitted.

Admission to the Expo is free to attendees. The Hacienda Hotel will provide various appetizers as well as a no-host bar. The festivities will then continue with an after party running from 7 to 9 p.m. in the hotel's large courtyard. The brainchild of the Hacienda staff and the first event of its kind to follow a business expo in either El Segundo or Manhattan Beach, the after party will feature wine tastings, dessert and a coffee bar. Wines will be provided by Battaglini Estate Winery (based in Santa Rosa, California and specializing in old vine Zinfandels as well

as other varietals) and four prominent local restaurants each well known for their wine lists: Il Fornaio, McCormick & Schmick's, Paul Martin's American Bistro, and Second City Bistro. Desserts will be provided by Bristol Farms and Godiva Chocolatier. Performance artist Bill Patterson will also be on-hand to entertain guests. Admission for the after party is open to the general public and is complimentary for the first 150 who RSVP.

"We're really excited about this event and feel it's a great opportunity for face-to-face marketing and to showcase businesses, particularly the smaller ones, for a reasonable price," said Manhattan Beach Chamber Vice President Kathe Reiken. The fee for exhibitors is only \$100 for a three foot by six foot table where they can display their wares. Electricity is an additional \$25, and businesses must provide their own backdrops. Due to heavy demand and given the ample size of the venue, the chambers have extended the deadline for businesses to sign up for booths.

"This is a rare opportunity to bring the best of our business communities together in one place," said Manhattan Beach Chamber President/CEO Helen Duncan. "The list of exhibitors runs the gamut and includes some of the area's finest restaurants, hotels, health and wellness professionals, financial experts, retailers, non-profit groups and other services. It's an event not to be missed."

The following businesses were scheduled to have tables at the Expo as of press time:

Alliant Credit Union; Armored Credit Union; At Home With Care; Automobile Driving Museum; Battaglini Estate Winery; Bristol Farms; Britt's BBQ; Classic Party Rentals; CSimplicity Design; Crowne Plaza LAX, Curves El Segundo; Del Rey Transporta-

tion; DoubleTree Hotel; Dr. Smile; Embassy Suites Los Angeles International Airport/South; Godiva Chocolatier; H & R Block; Hacienda Hotel; Hyatt Summerfield Suites; Inconen Staffing Solutions; Il Fornaio; Konica Minolta Business Solutions; Los Angeles World Airports; Loyola Marymount University Extension; McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant; Murad Inclusive Health Center & Spa; Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore; Natural Simplicity; NaturWell Holistic Center; Neptune Society; Paul Martin's American Bistro; Portofino Hotel and Yacht Club; Residence Inn; Rock Goddess Jewelry; Second City Bistro; South Bay Business Lawyers; South Bay Environmental Services Center; South Bay Workforce Investment Board; South Cal Electric, Inc.; Suzy Prudden International; Von Flue Studio; Waste Management; Xceed Financial Credit Union.

Hansen believes a general policy of collaboration among South Bay area chambers will help spur business for everyone, and she hopes to coordinate additional cooperative events in the future. "We need to be creative in this economy and look beyond our own boundaries," she said. "Members of neighboring chambers are looking to extend their reach, and programs like the Expo are one way to do just that. We're pleased to partner with Manhattan Beach Chamber to make this a win-win for all concerned."

For more information on Expo 2009 or to RSVP for the after party, contact the El Segundo Chamber at 310-322-1220, or the Manhattan Beach Chamber at 310-545-5313. Applications for table sign-ups are available online at ElsegundoChamber.org or ManhattanBeachChamber.net. The Hacienda Hotel is located at 525 S. Sepulveda Boulevard at the corner of Mariposa Avenue.