

A vibrant field of purple and orange flowers, likely poppies and thistles, stretches across the landscape under a clear blue sky. The flowers are in full bloom, creating a colorful and textured scene.

BUSINESS VOICE

ISSUE 171 | APRIL 2023

A PUBLICATION OF THE
RIDGECREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Business Voice is a publication of the
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Issue 171 April 2023

BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE

Chairman Message – April 2023

Chris Hill

Ok, I may have been a little premature in last month's newsletter when I said Spring was here. I should have listened to the groundhog it appears. Though with April I can confidently say the weather has changed, and what a new season we're in for! I'm excited for the bloom that's begun in our valley. I strongly feel you can find beauty in even the most barren places, but a pop of color every now and then is a welcomed sight.



Another view you WON'T want to miss is the amazingsness that will be happening on stage during this year's 29th Annual Ridgecrest Star Follies! We're so excited that it's Follies season again, and the cast and crew are putting in so much effort to show you a great time. This year's performances will be in Joshua Hall, which proved to be a great venue for the EOC. Tables are filling up fast, though general admission tickets will be available at the door. Looking forward to seeing you in the audience April 28th and 29th!

Before the Follies, come and partake of some treats and good conversation at our first Coffee Club of the year, during the morning of Thursday April 6th. It's another networking opportunity that we provide, helping you get the most out of your Chamber membership! Then, we'll see you again Tuesday April 11th for our April Luncheon at the USO Building. The China Lake Museum Foundation will be presenting on all that's going on and upcoming in their organization.

As a reminder, May's luncheon will be another Sound Bites. If you're interested in having a few minutes to share about what's going on in your world, reach out to the Chamber office soon. Again, this is another great opportunity that your Chamber membership provides you! Put it to use and help us help you!

I'm thankful for the investment you put into our wonderful community. Your time, your dollars, and your effort truly matter in making this area amazing. Together, we WILL do great things!

With gratitude,

Chris Hill, Chairman

An advertisement for State Farm Ridgecrest Life Insurance. It features a hand holding a red heart. The text reads: "Small Business Owner? Life Insurance can protect your family and business." Below this is the State Farm Ridgecrest logo and contact information: "995 N Norma St Ste A (760)446-4279 myridgecrestagent.com CA Lic#0496421".

Small Business Owner?
Life Insurance can protect
your family and business.

State Farm
Ridgecrest

995 N Norma St Ste A (760)446-4279 myridgecrestagent.com CA Lic#0496421

CHAMBER LUNCHEON

RSVP today!



CHAMBER@RIDGECRESTCHAMBER.COM

April 11, 2023— China Lake Museum Foundation

Join the Ridgecrest Chamber at the **Historic USO** for our monthly luncheon at **12 noon on April 11, 2023** and hear a presentation from the China Lake Museum Foundation about what is happening with their new building and recently awarded grant!

**Please RSVP by
noon on Friday,
April 7, 2023.**



**CHINA LAKE
MUSEUM**
SCIENCE • ARMAMENT • TECHNOLOGY

Join the Ridgecrest Chamber at the Historic USO Building on Tuesday, April 11 at 12 noon.

Lunch will be provided by Catering Thyme.

\$25 w/RSVP, \$30 for non-members or without an RSVP.

Your Chamber
is dedicated to:

Building community

Strengthening the economy

Providing networking
opportunities

Representing the interest of
business to the government

Political action

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(760) 446-2796

**1600 N. Norma, No. 4
Ridgecrest, CA 93555**

NEW MEMBERS



IMMANUEL
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Immanuel Christian School is a private college preparatory school established in 1975 as an alternative to public education and has been serving the Indian

Wells Valley and surrounding areas for over 40 years. It provides students with a Christ-centered environment while teaching them the morals and values of the Christian faith. We have faithfully instilled within our students the knowledge, character, and spiritual foundation for success in high school, college and in life.

The program and curriculum at ICS is practical and relevant, fostering skill development in moral-based reasoning, effective communication, critical thinking, originality, self-discovery and self-government. ICS is fully accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. We are also members of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The school is a member of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) Hi-Lo League and participates in a variety of competitive sports.

We welcome the opportunity to show you our campus and meet our staff.

To schedule a Free Educational Success Consultation, call our office at 766-446-6114 or visit <https://icsk12.org/>

The **Mr. Crane** team prides themselves on providing the most innovative crane solutions. Customers, with unique projects that require sophisticated planning and operations, trust Mr. Crane to safely provide the most efficient and cost-effective services. Their

mission statement is that they are “committed to providing their customers the safest, most innovative lifting solutions, by high performing, experienced people working together to earn the privilege to be invited back.” The vision statement they share is “to be the number one growth oriented provider of safe and innovative gravity defying services.”

Services that Mr. Crane offers include Planning & Engineering, General Construction, Tower Cranes & Hoists, Wind Power, Tilt-Up Construction, Industrial, Refinery & Energy Services, and Civil Construction & Infrastructure

For more information, contact Roger Sanchez at (657) 650-8763 or at roger@mrcrane.com

Britta Covert Creative produces high quality branded content for small businesses. Get in touch for all kinds of marketing design needs, whether it's starting out with your first logo, promoting an event, updating your digital presence, refreshing your brand collateral, or anything in between.

For more information, visit brittamedia.com or on socials @brittacovertcreative



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Catering Thyme

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Mayor Bruen



PathPoint Ribbon Cutting

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Meith Operational Solutions

Scholarship applications due April 7
for more information visit ridgecrestchamber.com/scholarship

Chamber Coffee Club

Coffee & Conversation
Outdoors @ the Chamber Office

Thursday April 6
@ 7:30am

ribbon cutting!



Friday,
April 14
at 12:00 PM

Jewelry to Go
115 E. California Ave

April 20 @ 5:30pm

Business After Hours

MIXER & NETWORKING

Host: Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
Location: 1081 N. China Lake Blvd

presented by Ridgecrest Chamber



RIDGECREST STAR FOLLIES

APRIL 28 -29, 2023

@ 7:30PM

DESERT EMPIRE FAIRGROUNDS
TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW!

CALL FOR INFO (760)375-8331

RIDGECREST
CHAMBER

Community Award Nominations Open Now
ridgecrestchamber.com/awards

The China Lake Museum Foundation



Honoring the Past - Building for the Future

21st Annual Dinner & Auction

Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 3:00 pm

Kerr McGee Center

\$60 Per Person - \$100 Per Couple

Early Bird Special: Purchase Tickets on or before April 18th

\$55 Per Person - \$85.00 Per Couple

\$300 Sponsor Seating for 2

\$1,200 Family/Small Business Table for 8

\$2,500 Corporate Table for 8

If unable to attend a tax deductible donation is appreciated

*Send Donations and Purchase Tickets at
China Lake Museum*

130 E. Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555

or by phone (760) 677-2866

Come One, Come All – Community Invited

(CLMF Membership Not Required)

Program Ad Sponsors

\$600 Full Page

\$350 1/2 Page

\$200 1/4 Page

\$75 Business Card

**Live Auction
Silent Auction
Raffles**

(Winners must be present)

**Auction and Raffle
Donations Needed**



The China Lake Museum Foundation is incorporated in the State of California as a non-profit foundation for educational purposes. The Foundation is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a charitable organization as described in Section 501(c)(3). Tax ID #77-0340083. www.chinalakemuseum.org

LABOR LAW CORNER

Employer Tips for Utilizing Internships, Hiring Minors

This article is reprinted from CalChamber (03/23/2023) By Mike McCluskey, Senior Technical Editor

During the spring and early summer months, many employers add to their staff by bringing on students who are on break from their studies. This can provide great opportunities for both the employer and students — but employers should be aware of the many requirements they must meet, which differ depending on whether they're bringing on unpaid interns or hiring minors (individuals under the age of 18).



The Ins and Outs of Internships

Internships can be a win-win for employers and learners alike. Students can gain valuable knowledge in their chosen profession, and employers can invest in the student's future success while simultaneously providing mentoring opportunities for current employees. Students can be an enthusiastic addition to your workplace, and providing them with real-world experience can be rewarding. Employers may even spot their next great talent to bring aboard when the student graduates, and the fact that the former intern will more easily assimilate is an added bonus.

Many employers ask if they can use unpaid internships, and the answer is that it's complicated.

For starters, employers should never try to fill a position with an unpaid intern simply because it's cost effective. Some employers have used interns as a source of "free" labor, and the law doesn't look kindly upon such practices: Interns who do the same work as regular employees without pay or benefits have successfully sued employers for unpaid wages and other violations.

Both state and federal law emphasize that for an intern to be unpaid, the student must gain the most benefit from the arrangement, and both the U.S. Department of Labor and the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement use the "primary beneficiary" test to determine this. In determining whether an individual is an intern or an employee, courts have identified seven factors, which include the extent to which:

- The intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee — and vice versa.
- The internship provides training similar to that given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
- The internship is tied to the intern's formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.
- The internship accommodates the intern's academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
- The internship's duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
- The intern's work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
- The intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a

paid job at the internship's conclusion.

No single factor is determinative, and the question of whether an intern is actually an employee for purposes of receiving state and federal wage and hour protections will depend on the unique circumstances of each case.

Even if an individual is correctly classified as an unpaid intern, California's Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) provides the intern protections against harassment and discrimination, and it extends protections and accommodation requirements around religion.



Given the fact-specific analysis that is involved in applying the “primary beneficiary” test, it is highly recommended that employers who are considering bringing on “unpaid” interns consult with legal counsel before doing so.

Hiring Minors

Some employers might not be looking for unpaid interns, but may still wish to bring aboard student workers — and they can do so by directly hiring them and following California's various wage and hour laws, including paying at least the minimum wage, paying overtime when required, and ensuring compliant meal and rest breaks, to name just a few.

When hiring minors under the age of 18, however, some additional requirements and limitations exist. Employers must ensure that:

- They have a valid *Form B1-1 (Statement of Intent to Employ a Minor and Request for a Work Permit)* for the current school year and it is on file with the school district.
- The school district has issued a work permit, *Form B1-4 (Permit to Employ and Work)* for the current school year and the employer has it on file in the workplace.
- The minor's work schedule complies with the legal number of hours allowed.

Employers also should keep in mind that state and federal laws place significant restrictions on employing minors:

- Who are under the age of 14 (with very limited exceptions);
- Working in hazardous occupations (explained in the Department of Industrial Relation's Child Labor Laws Summary Chart);
- Driving on public highways and streets; and
- Who are in the entertainment industry.

There are also limits on working hours for minors. With limited exceptions, such as minors working at professional baseball games and in specific agricultural packing plants, a minor cannot work more than eight hours in a day. An employer can be charged with a misdemeanor if they fail to abide by this law.

Employers with five or more employees that hire minors also have mandated reporter training requirements. Under the law, two categories of employees within such organizations are labeled “mandated reporters,” which are defined as individuals who must make formal reports of suspected child abuse and neglect to law enforcement authorities. These two categories of employees are:

- “Human resource employees,” defined as any employee designated by the employer to accept any complaints of misconduct (i.e., discrimination, harassment, retaliation, etc.) made under the FEHA; and

- A person whose duties require direct contact with and supervision of minors' duties in the workplace.

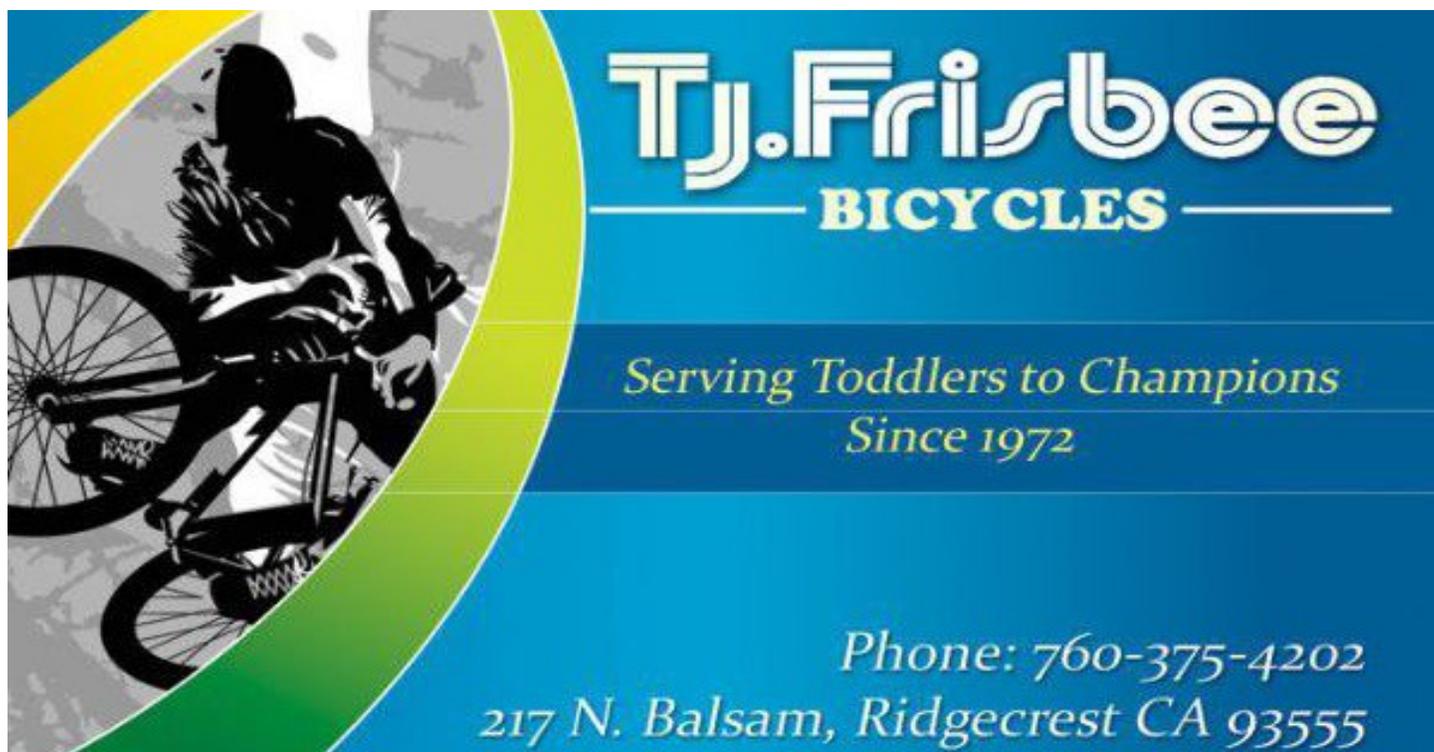
Covered supervisors' reporting obligations are limited to instances of sexual abuse; however, HR employees are not subject to this limitation and must report all types of child abuse and neglect. Covered employers must provide these employees with training in both identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect, and the training requirement may be met by completing the Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training offered by California Department of Social Services' Office of Child Abuse Prevention.

Employer Takeaways

Bringing on interns and hiring minors can be a win-win for employers and learners alike — but there are key things to remember when doing so.

- When considering bringing an unpaid intern on board, start by using the “primary beneficiary” test to determine whether the individual would truly be an intern or should be an employee, and consider consulting legal counsel to help with the analysis.
- Interns have the same protections against harassment and discrimination as your regular employees.
- When hiring minors, ensure that they have a valid work permit and that the hours worked account for the minor's school schedule.
- Know and abide by restrictions for the type of work minors can perform.

For expert explanations of labor laws and Cal/OSHA regulations, not legal counsel for specific situations, call (800) 348-2262 or submit your question at www.hrcalifornia.com.

The image is a promotional graphic for Tj. Frisbee Bicycles. On the left, there is a circular inset showing a silhouette of a person riding a bicycle. The background of the graphic is a gradient of blue and green. The text 'Tj. Frisbee' is written in a large, stylized white font, with 'BICYCLES' in a smaller, bold, white font below it. Below the name, the tagline 'Serving Toddlers to Champions Since 1972' is written in a yellow, cursive font. At the bottom right, the phone number '760-375-4202' and the address '217 N. Balsam, Ridgecrest CA 93555' are listed in a white, serif font.

Tj. Frisbee
BICYCLES

*Serving Toddlers to Champions
Since 1972*

Phone: 760-375-4202
217 N. Balsam, Ridgecrest CA 93555

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FURNITURE



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Knights of Columbus Council 3199

Conveying Awareness

Law Office of Wayne Silva

Electronic Warfare Associates, Inc

Mariposa Construction Inc

Firequick Products, Inc

Pacific Development Group, Inc.

Grace Lutheran Church

Ridgecrest Chamber Music Society

Greg Perry Safecracker

Saalex Solutions Inc

Immanuel Baptist Church

THANK YOU!

Official Notice - Chamber Board Elections

The Nominating Committee chaired by Bernie Mondragon has met and selected **five** candidates to run for three positions on the Chamber Board of Directors. The term for these positions will be from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2026. Each of these persons has agreed to serve if elected.

The nominees are (selected in random order from drawing of all nominees):

Chip Holloway – Desert Empire Fairgrounds and Event Center

Todd St Laurent- New Directions Technologies Inc

Amanda Diaz Akam- Desert Valleys FCU

Bernie Mondragon- Bernie's Landscaping

Eric LeBarbé- Oasis CapK Family Resource Center

Christian Salviejo– Bella Sera, RRH

As the bylaws stipulate, this notice notifies all voting Chamber members of the list of names of nominees. Nominations by petition may also be made according to the following bylaws procedure:

Additional names of candidates for Directors can be nominated by petition bearing the genuine signatures of at least twenty-five (25) qualified members of the Chamber. Such petitions shall be filed with the Nominating Committee within ten (10) days after notice of the names of those nominated has been mailed. The determination of the Nominating Committee as to the legality of the petition and the eligibility of the candidates shall be final.

Petitions must be received in the Chamber office, 128 E. California, Ste. B, by April 15, 2023

Ballots and voting instructions will be sent by April 17, 2023.

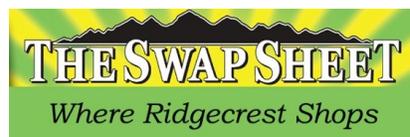
Polls will close at 5 p.m. on April 28, 2023.

At the May 11 meeting, the board will declare elected the **three** candidates with highest number of votes.

New board members will be Installed at the Meeting on June 9, seated at the June board meeting and will be eligible to vote July 1.



CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE MEMBERS



PLATINUM & GOLD MEMBERS

RIDGECREST REGIONAL
HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

SIENNA PODIATRY - DR. HOLLY
SPOHN GROSS, DPM.

SYNECTIC SOLUTIONS, INC.

TEYA DEVELOPMENT, LLC

Bowman Asphalt, Inc.

Burkey, Cox, Evans & Bradford

Cerro Coso Community College

Desert Empire Fairgrounds

Guaranteed Rate

Holiday Inn Express

Immanuel Christian School

IWV Water District

JT4, LLC

Liberty Ambulance

MWR (Morale Welfare & Rec.)

Oliver Law

Opportunities For Learning

PG&E

RBD California Restaurants / KFC

Saalex Solutions

Sabre Systems, Inc.

Sierra Sands Unified School District

Southern California Edison

Southern Inyo Healthcare District

T-Mobile

Toyota of Ridgecrest