

## Ramona Chamber of Commerce

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### Mission Statement

The mission of the Ramona Chamber of Commerce is to develop and maintain a climate for viable economic growth, to promote loyalty to, and networking for local businesses and to demonstrate an outstanding leadership role in our community.

### Officers

President ..... Karen Clendenen  
Century 21-San Vicente, 787-3210  
1st Vice President ..... Chuck DeMund  
DeMund Foundation, 788-1011  
2nd Vice President ..... Bill Jenkin  
Ramona Vintners, 788-1388  
Secretary ..... Sharon Davis  
Silk Decor Interiors, 788-7215  
Treasurer ..... Patrick Meskell  
Edward Jones, 787-1113

### Directors

Scott Field ..... Farmer's Insurance, 789-0664  
Carol Fowler ..... 522-1777  
Century 21 - San Vicente  
Jo Fox ..... Prudential California Realty, 803-8306  
Joseph Hegan ..... 789-9030  
Visual Communications Design  
George Romero ..... (858) 947-2318  
Landmark National Bank  
Jeff Ruland ..... Sears, 788-8080  
Dave Smithley ..... Albertson's, 789-0023  
Daniel Vengler ..... 789-1155  
Daniel's Liquor & Deli  
Randy Waitman ..... RAE Automotive, 788-4912  
Bryan Woods ..... Ramona Pharmacy, 789-0180

### Staff

Sharon Uran ..... Executive Director  
Dolores Garcia ..... Receptionist

### Advertising

The Ramona Business and Community News is published monthly by the Ramona Chamber of Commerce.

Membership includes a monthly newsletter. To advertise in the newsletter, or to submit an article, please call the Chamber office at 789-1311. First priority goes to Chamber, business and member information. Meeting listings are on a space-available basis. **Deadline for all copy and advertising is the 5th of the preceding month.** Inserts for the newsletter are due at the Chamber office by the 20th of the preceding month, with a check for \$55 for each set of inserts.

Postmaster, send address changes to Ramona Chamber of Commerce, 960 Main St., Ramona, CA 92065. Periodical postage paid at Ramona, CA 92065 USPS-004701.

### Production:

Walker Communications & Media Services  
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## SPOTLIGHTING NEW MEMBERS

### "A" Street Tax & Financial

**Pamela R. Adams, E.A. • 787-9696**  
adamstax@aol.com • 705 A Street  
Pamela is an eight-year resident of Ramona and has been in this business for the last 24 years. She has her own income tax practice and offers a variety of financial services. She is an enrolled agent (E.A.), which means she is qualified to defend taxpayers who are asked to appear before the IRS or the Franchise Tax Board. Other services include retirement planning, and she is a securities representative.

### Countrywide Home Loans

**Jennifer S. Kremp • (619) 322-2631**  
jennifer\_kremp@countrywide.com  
1175 Main St.  
Countrywide Home Loans specializes in mortgage loan services and programs.

### Don S. Kovacic,

### Attorney at Law & CPA

**788-4788 • donkovacic@aol.com**  
16833 Quail Crossing, Ramona  
Don has more than 20 years of experience in the accounting, finance, law, taxation, human resources and information systems fields. His practice includes formation and transfers of businesses, tax return preparation, tax planning, tax audit defense,

estate planning and financial planning. He is an adjunct professor at Cal State San Marcos and at the California Western School of Law. As an attorney, he is licensed to practice before the California, Minnesota and Wisconsin supreme courts and the US district courts. He also is a California-licensed real estate broker.

### Precision Eye Care, A.M.C.

### Gordon Montgomery • 788-3622

### vtmont@hotmail.com

### 1662 Main St., Suite B

Precision Eye Care offers complete eye-care services for children and adults, including Lasix and treatment for glaucoma, cataracts and dry eye, as well as other medical problems. Gordon Montgomery has 28 years of experience in this field. The office includes an ophthalmologist and an optometrist.



Ramona Chamber Ambassadors welcomed Martha Bernsen and Lyn Hawkins and their Crazy 9 Patch quilt shop into Chamber membership.  
Photo courtesy of Ramona Sentinel

## A Note from your Executive Director:

### By Sharon Uran

This is a first in a long time: a note from your Executive Director. I am extremely pleased with so many of the things that have been happening within the Chamber, and I feel a great need to let our Chamber members know about them.

I have not had the opportunity to meet all of you, so please let me introduce myself as Sharon Uran. Most of you already know my husband, Jeff, who served as first vice president of the Chamber for many years.

I come from San Jose, after living there for more than 20 years. My most recent professional years in San Jose were spent with the San Jose Police Department, where I served as a crime prevention specialist and a 9-1-1 police dispatcher. I moved to Ramona two and a half years ago.

My family (the Whitcombs) has been in Ramona for 37 years. I remember always saying that some day I would make this my home town. Thank goodness that has finally happened. I celebrated my first anniversary with the Ramona Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 23, my son's birthday.

Obviously, there have been several changes at the Chamber office. We have been extremely fortunate to add Dolores Garcia to our staff. She is a long time resident who formerly worked with the Ramona Sentinel. Dolores is a forward-thinking person who gets things done and has made some positive changes in our office. She sees no obstacles in her way, and she handles everything she does in the way she would want things handled for herself.

Continued on page six

## Information You Can Use

## Consider issues objectively when making layoff decisions involving older workers

By Dana Leisinger  
Labor Law Advisor  
California Chamber of Commerce

**Q.** Our company is undergoing a series of layoffs. May we take the cost of wages into consideration if the targeted employee is over 40?

**A.** Employers who terminate employees with higher salaries may be liable for claims of age discrimination if those terminated are over the age of 40.

Employers previously could rely on a 1997 case to help defend claims of age discrimination where the decision to lay off a person over 40 was made for pure economic reasons. But that case was specifically rejected by the state Legislature shortly thereafter.

The legal theory is not that the employer intentionally discriminated against the employee, but that the employer's policy unintentionally had a discriminatory impact.

Discrimination can occur in two ways: by unequal treatment or unequal impact.

The latter can appear neutral on its face, but the reality might result in a negative impact on a certain protected class—those individuals

covered by anti-discrimination laws.

The situation reflected in the question above could easily result in such a negative impact, since older workers typically are paid higher salaries.

### Positive Defense

What can an employer do? An affirmative defense to such a claim in this type of situation is available when the employer can prove:

- An overriding legitimate business purpose such that the practice is necessary to the safe and efficient operation of the business; and
- that the challenged practice effectively fulfills the business purpose it is supposed to serve.

### Be Objective

However, it is best not to be placed in a situation to have to assert such an affirmative defense. Times of layoffs trigger many emotions; therefore, it is wise to consider all issues objectively when making your decision.

When you make layoff decisions on an individual basis using experience, skill and efficiency, you should determine if there is a negative impact on a protected class.

If your criteria affect a protected class, it is wise to re-evaluate your reasons for choosing those individuals for layoff.

Where you lay off an entire division or group of employees, the chances of a negative impact on a protected class are reduced. Decisions are relatively easy if you are laying off an entire division or group of employees, but issues arise as you target specific individuals.

If you have concerns about any decision, it is best to contact legal counsel before proceeding. Employers who make decisions carefully can more easily defeat any claims of age discrimination.

If an employer shows strong evidence of legitimate reasons for the alleged discrimination, and if the employee has only weak or circumstantial evidence of discrimination, the employer might prevail without going to trial.

## Uncovering 2004's "legislative surprises"

Are you aware of all the "legislative surprises" awaiting business owners in 2004? The North County Chamber Association is hosting an event on Tuesday, March 20, designed to bring you up to date on some of these.

Dave Kilby, vice president of the California Chamber of Commerce, will be the guest speaker for the event that will be held from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Quails Inn Conference Center, 1025 La Bonita Drive in the Lake San Marcos area.

Topics will include: How do new laws affect your business? Is your business in compliance? and, How can chambers impact legislation?

This event is for anyone interested in these issues, and North County chamber members are especially encouraged to attend.

The North County Chamber Association is an association of North County chamber executives. Co-sponsors of the program are Design Fabrication, Inc., and North County Coastal Career Centers.

Ramona Chamber members can call the Chamber office at 789-1311 to sign up. The fee for Chamber members is \$20.

## From the President, continued

Jenkin is our new chair for this event.

I would like to say Thank You to every volunteer and sponsor for the support you have shown to the Ramona Chamber of Commerce. Needless to say, the Chamber could not exist without the support of our members.

Karen Clendenen  
President