

Business Plus



Senior Editor/News: James Meier • (760) 778-4623 • business@thedesertsun.com

Only at mydesert.com GET LIVE STOCK QUOTES • FIND A NEW JOB • SEARCH MLS LISTINGS • START A BUSINESS BLOG

Keynoter takes summit to new level

Todd Buchholz to headline annual CVEP meeting

BY DEBRA GRUSZECKI
The Desert Sun

Todd Buchholz correctly predicted the 2001 economic slowdown.

For an encore, he sounded an early-warning bell on pitfalls facing the stock market before the Great Recession hit

Wall Street.

And now the former director of economic policy at the White House who managed the \$15 billion Tiger Hedge, advised President George W. Bush, appeared frequently on PBS, CBS and ABC news and wrote noted books, will share his wit and wisdom with the Coachella Valley on Friday.

Buchholz is the keynote speaker at Climate For Success: the Coachella Valley Fall 2010 Economic Summit.

Held by the Coachella Valley Eco-

nomic Partnership at the Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa in Indian Wells, Buchholz's appearance brings a new level of excellence to the summit, said Wesley Ahlgren, chief operating officer of CVEP.

"We've never had a keynote speaker the caliber of Todd," said Clifford Daniels, who chairs the CVEP executive board. "Hearing his take on a global, national and local perspective will promise to be very entertaining and interesting, as well."

Besides Buchholz, others on the invitation list for the morning event will be:

- Longtime Inland Empire economist John Husing, who will present the Coachella Valley 2010 Economic Report.

- Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who has not yet confirmed whether he will attend.

- Michael Picker, a partner for Lincoln Crow Strategic Communications since 2001 and senior adviser to

Temperature check

CVEP's Wesley Ahlgren talks about the summit. **D4**

Schwarzenegger on renewable energy facilities since October 2009. Picker said Wednesday he was asked to consider standing in for Schwarzenegger, but had a scheduling conflict to work out to make the trip.

Ticket sales to Climate For Success **Please see CVEP, D2**

SUNDAYCEO ■ Nick Bozick

Executive keeps grounded with hands in fields



PHOTOS BY CRYSTAL CHATHAM THE DESERT SUN

Lemons move through a conveyer belt system at Richard Bagdasarian Inc. on Wednesday in Mecca. Most of the lemons are sold and packaged in Sunkist boxes. **ABOVE:** Nick Bozick, president of Richard Bagdasarian Inc., is a 1978 graduate of Indio High School and started working at the company as an assistant general manager after college in 1982. He became president in 2005.

Competition from imports, immigration major issues

BY K KAUFMANN
The Desert Sun

The lemon harvest is in full swing at Richard Bagdasarian Inc. in Mecca and, on a recent morning, the packing house was filled with workers shepherding untold tons of the clean-smelling, bright yellow fruit down conveyor belts into bags and boxes, ready to ship.

In the midst of the noise and activity, Nick Bozick, the company's president, grabs a couple of lemons off the line to show visitors, looking infinitely more comfortable than he did just a few minutes before sitting at a conference table to answer questions about the Coachella Valley's agriculture.

That's not surprising for Bozick, 51, who's been working in east valley fields since he was a middle school student in Indio, taking part-time jobs during the grape harvest.

"My grandmother's family farmed in west Texas," he said. "It probably goes back further than that."

Bozick's rise through the ranks at Bagdasarian, a

family-owned farm that's been around since the 1950s, started when he was fresh out of the University of Southern California in 1982 and was hired as an assistant general manager.

Since then, he has been an integral part of the business's success, helping the farm expand into citrus in the 1980s, growing for Sunkist, and more recently into vegetables.

Today, in addition to overseeing Bagdasarian's 4,000 acres and two packing plants, he also is chairman of the board of Sunkist, the citrus growers' cooperative based in Sherman Oaks.

Which is to say there's not much about Coachella Valley farms and agriculture in general that Bozick doesn't know, from the ground up.

During an interview Wednesday, he pulled no punches on the core issues facing east valley farmers — competition, labor and immigration, which he said the country as a whole needs to address.

"A key question for the American people, and they **Please see CEO, D5**

What Bagdasarian grows

- **Grapes:** Mr. Grape
- **Red grapes:** Flame, Red globe
- **Green:** Perlette, Sugraone, Princess, Thompson
- **Blue-black:** Beauty seedless
- **Watermelon**
- **Lemons:** Pasha, Rising Star, Citraflora
- **Fairchild and Royal mandarin tangerines:** Pasha
- **Minneola tangelos and Valencia oranges:** Pasha and Rising Star
- **Rio red and Oroblanco grapefruit:** Pasha and Rising Star
- **Vegetables:** Pasha
- **Green, red and yellow peppers**
- **Eggplant**
- **Green beans**

SOURCE: Richard Bagdasarian, Inc.

All ABOUT BUSINESS



debra gruszecki, k kaufmann & mike perrault

DHS joins other cities in WestJet campaign

The crisp air — finally falling below 100 degrees — has desert-dwellers rolling out the welcome mat for our Canadian counterparts, including flying more maple leaf flags.

Roadside billboards by real estate companies such as **Tarbell Realtors** that welcome snowbirds to the valley are sure to sprout along our busiest byways.And this year, the city of Desert Hot Springs is chipping in \$5,000, for the first time, to **WestJet Airline's** air service incentive campaign. That makes it the first time that all eight cities that make up the Joint Powers Authority of the **Palm Springs Desert Resort Communities Convention and Visitors Authority** have united for the air service program.

Getting loonie

California's spa city isn't the only government entity that's singing, "Oh, Canada."

The **Spa Resort Casino** in Palm Springs and **Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa** in Rancho Mirage — both operated by the **Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians** — will become the only casinos in the valley to offer a Canadian currency exchange 24 hours a day.The rates, issued by **Union Bank**, will be posted outside the cashier's cage in the casino each morning for transactions that will involve a small fee. Currently, it follows Union Bank's exchange rate of an additional three cents on the U.S. dollar.

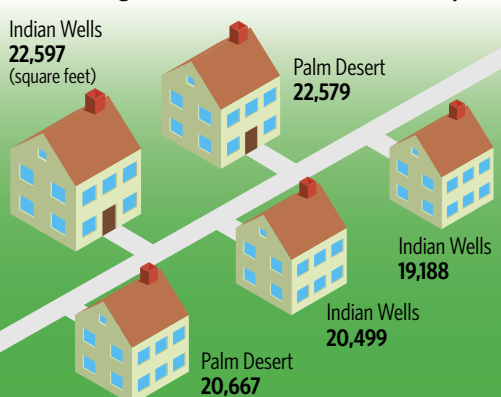
The first stop could also reap bigger dividends.

Phil Cooper, executive director of marketing, said that's not the only amenity in play to get snowbirds to land at the casinos. For those who produce a Canadian ID, there's a chance to latch on to \$25 in free cash play. That promotion is part of a **WestJet** and **Alaska Airlines** ad campaign for inbound travelers. **Please see ALL ABOUT BUSINESS, D5**

BUSINESSFACT

The Big House

The five largest homes in the Coachella Valley



SOURCE: ASSESSOR-COUNTY CLERK-RECORDER, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

THE DESERT SUN

Foreclosure leaves renters in a quandary

BY MIKE PERRAULT
The Desert Sun

A group of residents at the gated, upscale Villorrio Village in Palm Springs are discovering just how much a property owner's financial woes can impact their lives.

Default notices were recently posted on 13 condo doors, confirming what many tenants already knew or suspected: Owner Maurice Monnig and his firm, Palm Springs Gardens LLP, leased the condos to residents but ultimately defaulted on a \$3 million-plus loan.

Monnig's lender has started foreclosure proceedings, and court-appointed receiver Ross Crowe, who is executive managing director of CRC Impresa LLC, has stepped in to oversee the property.

A public auction to sell the property is scheduled by year's end.

Tenants such as Paul and Nezha Roide are left wondering what will happen to their security deposits, advanced rent payments and homeowners' association dues.

The couple and other tenants aren't sure whether to continue paying rent or sign a proposed new 12-month lease with rent hikes. They worry that persistent problems with plumbing, air conditioning and other issues will go unheeded.

"All we want is a fair shake," Roide said. "Indeed, the bank could sell the property. I don't know what happens if we sign a year's lease. The bank could say quite literally, 'Hey, that wasn't our deal.'"

Similar scenarios have played out across the Coachella Valley as commercial and home foreclosures mount in the slumping economy. Those in condos, apartments and houses often are unsure about their options.

Laws such as the federal Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act that went into effect last year, along with recent changes in California civil code, are designed to ensure tenants have rights and adequate time to find alternative housing, said Aurelia Wick, managing attorney for Inland Counties Legal Services' Housing Law Services Center in Indio.

California Attorney General Jerry Brown announced in June that he has launched an investigation aimed at protecting the **Please see FORECLOSURE, D4**

VALLEY BUSINESS

cathedral city

JFlint sets up local base

JFlint Products has established its national headquarters at 68-805 Perez Road, F-42, in Cathedral City. The company, which provides environmentally safe, advanced cleaning technologies and protective coatings, was founded by former Intel executive **Jeff Flint**.

Flint said the company's vision is to create "a system of maintenance products to simplify sensitive surface cleaning and protect surfaces once they've been cleaned in homes, boats, cars, janitorial and cleaning industries."

Call (760) 770-3014 or visit www.jflintproducts.com.

— MIKE PERRAULT

coachella valley

Energy upgrades offered

Small businesses in the **Southern California Edison** service area can now qualify for up to \$10,000 in free energy upgrades courtesy of Edison's **Direct Install** program.

To qualify, businesses must be in Desert Hot Springs, Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage and Indian Wells and use less than 100 kilowatts of power per month.

Edison-approved contractors will visit qualifying businesses, conduct an energy survey and make recommendations for free upgrades, such as installing window film, occupancy sensors and programmable thermostats.

"We know the business community has seen some tough times, and the lower electric bills resulting from these free energy-efficiency measures will help save money," said Lisa Cagnolatti, vice president of Edison's Business Customers Division.

For information, call (760) 736-4777 or visit www.sce.com/directinstall.

— K KAUFMANN

Soroptimist luncheon set

The **Soroptimist International of Cathedral City-Rancho Mirage** will hold its 16th annual "Holidays in the Desert" luncheon and fashion show on Nov. 13 at **Westin Mission Hills**, 71-333 Dinah Shore Drive, Rancho Mirage.

The honoree for the 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. event is **Maggie Montez**, senior vice president and retail specialist for CB Richard Ellis.

Montez will receive the Soroptimist Ruby Award for her work helping women through the **Sheltering Sisters Auxiliary of Shelter from the Storm**.

Tickets cost \$55 for lunch and the show featuring **Coldwater Creek** fashions.

Patrick Evans, KPSP Local 2 News senior meteorologist, will preside as master of ceremonies.

Attendees will get a discount coupon, a chance to bid on 12 live auction packages and entry in a drawing for raffle prizes that include a Big Bear retreat.

To purchase tickets, call (760) 469-2487 or visit www.holidaysinthedesert.com.

— DEBRA GRUSZECKI

indio

Seminar for tax preparers

A seminar for tax preparers regarding the **Coachella Valley Enterprise Zone** will be held from 8 to 10 a.m. Nov. 10 at the Indio Teen Center, 81-678 Avenue 46, Indio.

Another seminar for businesses regarding the enterprise zones will be from 1 to 3 p.m. Nov. 10 at the Indio Senior Center, 45-222 Towne St., Indio.

Call (760) 391-5176 or visit www.cveza.org.

— MIKE PERRAULT

palm desert

CofC CEO named to panel

Barbara deBoom, president and CEO of the **Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce**, has been elected to serve on the **Institute for Organizational Management's National Board of Trustees**.

The institute is a professional development program of the **U.S. Chamber of Commerce**. DeBoom has been elected to a two-year term on the board.

She currently serves on the institute's West Board of Regents, the U.S. Chamber's National Accreditation Committee and is a member of the U.S. Chamber Committee of 100.

The committee is the primary advisory body for the U.S. Chamber dealing with matters related to state and local chambers of commerce.

DeBoom has been the CEO of the Palm Desert Chamber since 2006.

— K KAUFMANN

Landscape workshop set

The **Coachella Valley Water District** announced it will offer three sessions of its popular **Water Wise Landscape Workshop** for home gardeners Nov. 5-6.

The four-hour workshops on desert-friendly landscaping and efficient irrigation will be held from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. Nov. 5 and 8 a.m. to noon Nov. 6 at the **UCR Palm Desert campus**, 75-080 Frank Sinatra Drive.

Cost for the workshop is \$20. Online registration is available at www.cvwld.org or in person at the district's two offices, 85-995 Avenue 52, Coachella; or 75-525 Hovley Lane East, Palm Desert.

Information: (760) 398-2651

— K KAUFMANN

Celebrate conservation

The **Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument** is celebrating the culmination of 10 years of conservation, preservation, education and community outreach with a ceremonial Kick-Off Event at 10 a.m. Monday.

Held at the **National Monument Visitor Center** on Highway 74, and presented by the **Friends of the Desert Mountains, Southern California Edison and Palm Springs Life**, this event will launch a year full of events for the community and tourists.

Speakers include **Rep. Mary Bono Mack**, who introduced the legislation that created the National Monument in October 2000, and officials from the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, and Southern California Edison.

— DEBRA GRUSZECKI

Trendsetter meeting set

The **Trendsetter Chapter of the American Business Women's Association** invites professional women throughout the Coachella Valley to attend its monthly meeting on Tuesday at Desert Falls Country Club.

Networking will begin at 5:30 p.m.; the dinner begins at 6 p.m.

A guest speaker from The Apple Store will discuss "technology on the edge."

The cost is \$25. Call (760) 862-5577 or visit www.meetup.com/abwopalmdesert or www.facebook.com/abwopalmdesert.

— MIKE PERRAULT

palm springs

Guide to UFO's available

A Palm Springs publisher has released "The Total Novice's Guide to UFOs: What You Need to Know," a book written for novices.

The nonfiction publisher **2FS LLC** has released the 504-page book for \$35 at various bookstores through Amazon.com and www.2FSPress.com.

The book, written by aerospace engineer **T.L. Keller**, offers accounts of events and sightings across the country. Keller is a graduate of **UCLA's** engineering school and studied UFOs for about five decades.

— MIKE PERRAULT

Foundation gets grant

Directors of Desert Healthcare District have approved a \$200,000 grant to **Desert Cancer Foundation** for a comprehensive patient assistance project.

The grant will support a one-year program to help offset cancer-related medical costs and will provide matching funds for pledges and donations raised at **Paint El Paseo Pink**, the organization's annual walk that took place Oct. 9.

"Desert Cancer Foundation has an excellent reputation for providing much-needed financial assistance to those who are at a critical juncture in regard to their health," said district president **Dr. Glen Grayman**.

The grant will be use for patient services that include insurance premiums, medications, outpatient services for uninsured clients and inpatient hospital cost.

It also allocates \$50,000 to the Suzanne Jackson Breast Cancer Fund for free screening and diagnostic services to low-income, uninsured district residents.

— DEBRA GRUSZECKI

Petula Clark at Annenberg

The **Annenberg Theater**, located within the **Palm Springs Art Museum**, is offering "An Evening with **Petula Clark**" for its eighth annual Opening Night benefit on Nov. 6.

Clark has sold well over 68 million records, appeared in more than 30 British and American films and is best known for her songs "Downtown," "Don't Sleep

in the Subway," "This is My Song" and "I Couldn't Live Without Your Love."

Members are \$265 and nonmembers are \$295. It includes après concert party catered by Spencer's.

There are a limited number of performance-only tickets costing \$95.

Tickets: Contact the museum's Box Office at (760) 325-4490.

— DEBRA GRUSZECKI

rancho mirage

Shelter gets \$50K grant

Shelter from the Storm, the Coachella Valley's only provider of emergency services for victims of domestic abuse, has received a \$50,000 grant from the city of Rancho Mirage.

The grant will be used to fund hiring of a new full-time teacher for children served year-round through the agency's onsite school facility, located in its emergency shelter.

Shelter from the Storm serves 2,000 women and children annually through five valley locations.

Key operations include a 72-bed emergency shelter with two onsite schools, substance abuse and life skills programs, a medical clinic, transitional housing, crisis intervention centers and education in schools.

— DEBRA GRUSZECKI

riverside county

County has new vendor

Riverside County has approved Portage, Mich.-based **Manatron Inc.** as the vendor for a new \$16.5 million property tax system to replace the aging system put in place in 1972.

The current system was designed for a maximum of 400,000 properties, not the nearly 1 million properties that county tax officials deal with every year.

It will take three years to build the system, but portions will be completed and operational at various times during that period.

The system includes key upgrades to improve efficiency and access for property owners, officials said.

Online access to historical tax information will allow property owners to review payments from past years.

— MIKE PERRAULT

CVEP: Officials hope 1,000 will attend economic summit

Continued from D1

have been reported to be brisk.

"We're hoping to reach a goal to have 1,000 attendees," Daniels said, citing ticket sales that approached 700.

CVEP officials also had hoped to introduce its new chief executive at the event.

While the list has been winnowed to two candidates, an announcement isn't likely to come on Friday.

"One thing we've been adamant about: We'll get it right, not fast," Daniels said, noting final interviews for the top candidates are set for the next few weeks.

Pivotal post

Lee Morcus, a longtime valley restaurateur and past co-chair of CVEP who is on the search committee, has defined the CEO post as pivotal for the entire valley economy.

It is part-and-parcel to the 106-page Economic Blueprint that was unveiled a year ago and was kicked off on July 1, focusing on four areas:

- Regionalism
- Economic diversification
- Workforce excellence
- Quality of place

The five-year plan zeroed in on four key economic growth initiatives—health care and life sciences; logistics; film and cre-

ative arts; and renewable energy — and sought public and private investment and grant funding commitments of more than \$2.5 million.

In its initial roll-out, proponents likened the blueprint to a living, breathing document for change.

"It's not about the goals we've achieved, but about the work that is yet to be done that's important," Morcus said.

CVEP has, over the last year, been building capacity and laying the foundation for what lies ahead.

"A lot of what we've done is under the surface, foundation-building stuff," he said. "What's important going forward is jobs

— attracting capital to our valley through investment."

Ahlgren said he is prepared to weave a story, as part of the summit, that presents the range of opportunities that face the Coachella Valley.

"I plan to introduce representatives and CEOs of several companies with real potential to move to the Coachella Valley.

"We're six months into the implementation and I'd say we've essentially completed our first-year goals — by 90 percent," Ahlgren said. "We've started on the second-year goals, and we've had a lot of support from the community."

The names are being withheld until the day of the event.

Business survey highlights also will be discussed.

What is expected to be disclosed is CVEP's new regional office location.

"We'll make some positive announcements about CVEP's ability to procure continued funding of its Workforce Development programs," Daniels said. "We (also) will invite participation as investors."

"What I'm really excited about is the number of folks we're getting from out of town," Ahlgren said, estimating that as many as 80 attendees are top executives and decision-makers from out-of-area organizations and companies that see opportunity in the valley.

What is CVEP?

The Coachella Valley Economic Partnership was established in 1994 as an action-orientated, nonprofit corporation.

It is dedicated to expanding the Coachella Valley desert region economy while maintaining the quality of life for a resort environment. Its members include cities, government associations, tribes, utilities and private business.

Tidbits from Todd

The Desert Sun took five with Todd Buchholz on Friday, for a few preview thoughts:

■ On the economy: "The whole U.S. economy is in a valley, but we're not going down for a double-dip. It's going to be a slow climb out, but the economy is pulling itself out..."

■ On an economic initiative: "The Coachella Valley is not just in competition with other regions in California..."

"It's now a worldwide race. When jobs aren't being attracted to the Coachella Valley, it's not because they're showing up in San Diego. It's because they may be showing up in places like Shanghai. We're all in this worldwide race to look attractive to money; that requires a better education system, a better tax system."

Climate for Success

What: Coachella Valley Economic Partnership's Fall 2010 Economic Summit.

Where: Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa, 44-400 Indian Wells Lane, Indian Wells

When: Registration begins 7:30 a.m. Friday, with presentations from 8 to 11:30 a.m.

Keynote speakers: Todd Buchholz; Inland Empire economist John Husing

Vendors: 27 booths, representing city, county and tribal government, banks, utilities, hospitals, media and private companies.

Cost: CVEP investors, \$75; future investors, \$105. Tables of 10 available at a discounted rate.

RSVP and tickets: (760) 340-1575 or www.cvep.com

Beautiful Lake Arrowhead
OPEN HOUSEFall Season Colors
Spring Mountain AirSnowy White Winters
Summers at the Lake

**4 Bedrooms - 4.5 Baths - 5,200 SF - 1.75 Ac. Lot - Lake View
OPEN HOUSE - This Weekend Fri. 15th 4-7PM & Sat. 16th 1-4PM**

Get away to this gorgeous home wonderfully nestled in the woods at Cedar Ridge Estates. It's only an hour and a half from the Coachella Valley and L.A. Just 3 minutes to the Marina, too! Enjoy quiet times, family gatherings, and lake activities every day in this house that has it ALL in a gated community. OPEN HOUSE visitors shall receive a \$500 Gift Certificate good toward the purchase of a new electric car, redeemable at LUXE Electric Cars in La Quinta, CA. Door prizes and refreshments. Plus, local accommodations for only \$99/night. Call today!

Priced at only \$1,750,000

For details, directions and access, you must call (909) 800-4343

David Vail, Realtor Associate

"Simply Your Best Choice In Lake Arrowhead Real Estate"

(909) 800-4343

David@DavidVail.com

DRE# 01136816



Gloria Whitman
(760)
485-8111

gwhitman@dc.rr.com
www.gloriawhitman.com

PGA WEST™



Over 3300 sq. ft.
4BD/4.5BA
incl. Casita.
Pool/Spa,
Beautifully furnished!!

\$779,000

