

Richmond Main Street is dedicated to revitalizing downtown Richmond as a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly urban village, offering products, services, and arts and entertainment that reflects the community's rich and diverse heritage.

In This Issue

Farmers' Market Comes to Downtown	1
Summer Youth Entrepreneurs 2012	1
Main Street Welcomes New Neighbors	2
Downtown Updates	3
Celebrating Downtown with Music & Health	3
Ambassador Program Successes	4
Getting Fit with Zumba	5
Start & Grow Smart	
Returning this Fall	5
Art In Windows Spring 2012	5
Message from the Executive Director	6

1000 Macdonald Avenue,
Suite C
Richmond, Ca 94801
P: (510) 236-4049
F: (510) 236-4052
www.richmondmainstreet.org

HEARD ON MAIN STREET

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

SUMMER 2012 EDITION

The Richmond Main Street Farmers' Market is a Hit!



"Wow, what a lovely Farmers' Market! The whole set-up was beautiful and the prices were great." –April

The grand opening of the Richmond Main Street Farmers' Market on Wednesday, June 27, 2012 featured more than 25 vendors offering seasonal fruits and vegetables, gourmet foods, local honey, fresh cut flowers, baked goods, orchids, live music, and handmade jewelry from Richmond-based business woman Viveca Jones. More than 600 residents, downtown workers, and visitors attended the market and reveled in the bounty that the farmers had to offer.

"The goal of the market is to increase access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables in downtown Richmond," says Amanda Elliott, Executive Director of Richmond Main Street Initiative. "This is something that the community has been

asking for and we are so happy to be sponsoring it."

The weekly certified farmers' market is produced by the Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to establish and operate community-supported markets that provide local access to farm fresh products and support for local businesses and community organizations. The Richmond Main Street Farmers' Market takes place every Wednesday from 10am – 2pm in the Nevin Plaza (located at 13th Street and Nevin Avenue) through October 31. In addition to purchasing California-grown produce and specialty goods, shoppers can also enjoy food and handmade items by Richmond-based vendors.

Main Street Makes History with Formation of Downtown Business District

More from our Executive Director on back page.

Richmond Youth Explore Entrepreneurship

The office was abuzz with activity on July 13, 2012, as 11 Richmond youth put the final touches on their business plan presentations. After two weeks of work readiness training with an emphasis on entrepreneurialism development, the Summer Youth Entrepreneur Program (SYEP), Class of 2012 was ready to show off their visions for potential downtown businesses. From an animal exploratorium to a college-prep center, these youth demonstrated a demand for innovative and socially responsible businesses.

(This story continues on page 4)



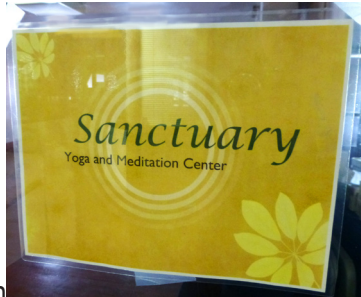
SYEP 2012 youth celebrating their completion of training with program coordinator Vaneese Johnson (top, left) and members of the RMSI board (from left): Gary Bell, Xavier Abrams, Janet Johnson, Arnie Kasendorf, Cindy Haden, and Cynthia Haden.

Main Street Welcomes New Businesses

Sanctuary Yoga & Meditation Center

Market Square Mall
322 Harbour Way, #24

Nestled in a corner suite on the second floor of the Market Square Mall resides Downtown's first yoga studio. The Sanctuary Yoga and Meditation Center, which opened in February, offers classes that promote relaxation and meditation for beginners and more advanced students. The classes are led by Iron Triangle resident Doria Robinson and are offered on a "pay what you can" basis. For class schedule and information: call (510) 778-5886, email sanctuaryyogacenter@gmail.com, or become a Facebook friend at www.facebook.com/sanctuaryyogacenter.



BART Mart & Deli

1551 Nevin Plaza

Balloons, music, and a special Middle-Eastern BBQ lunch marked the grand opening celebration of the BART Mart & Deli on March 23. Just steps from the entrance to the Richmond Transit

Village, the deli is a move in the right direction for meeting the demand for markets in Downtown, especially those that are locally owned and operated. The BART Mart is open daily and offers made-to-order sandwiches, coffee, snacks, sodas, and pantry basics such as fresh fruit, yogurt, and milk. To place to-go deli orders, call (510) 234-1519.



Building Blocks For Kids Collaborative

Market Square Mall
322 Harbour Way, #10

In April, Building Blocks for Kids Collaborative (BBK) relocated their office to Downtown Richmond. BBK is a collaborative of over 27 community-based organizations, elected officials, and residents that support families in the Iron Triangle seeking to transcend cycles of poverty and violence. They offer comprehensive wrap-around services related to health and wellness, safety, self-sufficiency, and digital literacy. For more information, visit www.bbk-richmond.org.



Planned Parenthood

340 Marina Way

340 Marina Way, one of Metro Walk's long-empty retail spaces is empty no more. The Planned Parenthood Central Richmond Health Center opened its doors to patients on May 23.

This brand new facility offers a wide range of family planning, reproductive health care for men and women, and LGBT services, with fees based on household income. With the addition of Planned Parenthood, Downtown Richmond is quickly becoming a hub for health care services in Central Richmond. Hours: 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday. For inquiries and appointments, call: (510) 232-1250



Read on for more downtown updates...

Downtown Celebrates Summer with Music & Health

Getting Down at Music on the Main



Fitness break at Music on the Main with Zumba led by Willa "Bontle" Willis. Photo by Ellen Gailing.

More than 350 people jumped, bumped and kicked up our heels on June 27 to music by some of our old and new favorite performers at this summer's first Music on the Main concert. Richmond's newest youth group, RPAL's The Originalz, wowed the crowd by performing some of pop music's latest hits. Reed Fromer kicked the jubilation into high gear with high-energy classic R&B that had everybody out of their seats and

dancing along. By the time Reed Fromer left the stage, the crowd was ready for the legendary bluesman Jesse James. And the "I Can Do Bad All By Myself" singer did not disappoint: dressed in his signature black suit, James excited the crowd by delivering his greatest hits in his trademark soulful style amongst the audience.

In between acts, concert-goers explored the outdoor bazaar atmosphere created by the various retail, informational, and food vendors in attendance. "This is the 12th year we've done Music on the Main," explains Janet Johnson, one of Richmond Main Street's board of directors, "and every year it gets bigger and bigger. This is what Main Street is about—bringing the community together and bringing downtown back to life."

The Music on the Main series continues throughout the summer with two more concerts taking place on Wednesday, June 25 and Wednesday, August 22 in the FoodsCo Parking Lot (12th Street and Macdonald Avenue) from 5–7:30pm, featuring more local performers, food, shopping, and family fun.

Creating a Healthy Village with Food & Fun

The LatinoMix DJ tent was in full swing bringing Downtown to life with energetic music on July 1 at the 3rd installment of Healthy Village Farm Stand, RMSI's free health and wellness community event. As a family made their way into the park, Andromeda Brooks, longtime RMSI volunteer, pointed out the free healthy food samples courtesy of Liberty Ship Café, pony rides at the PonyVille corral, fresh produce at the EcoVillage produce stand, and information booths promoting wellness and energy efficiency resources.

2012 marks the 3rd year that RMSI has hosted Healthy Village Farm Stand—which takes place every first Friday of the summer months—in Downtown through its partnership with the West County Healthy Eating Active Living Collaborative (HEAL). This year's Healthy Village events began in May and have provided access to health and wellness resources to over 400 individuals thus far. "RMSI is working to revitalize Downtown and this is one of the ways that we're doing it: we believe that a healthy community is a thriving community," says Amelia Segi, administrative coordinator.

The final Healthy Village of the summer will take place on August 3, from 12–2pm in the Community Green Space Park (Harbour Way and Macdonald Avenue).

Downtown Updates

The East Bay Center for the Performing Arts opened the doors to its newly renovated home in October 2011 with a month of special events. The Center quickly settled in and continued offering youth courses in music, dance, and theater, and attracting world-renowned artists to Richmond. **First 5 celebrated**

one year in downtown on March 23rd with an outdoor party

filled with fun and education activities for kids. **Bay Area Legal Aid upgraded its façade**

and office with

a brand new reception area, now located along Macdonald Avenue.

The storefront also boasts new floor to ceiling windows and a fresh coat of paint. Keep an eye out for a new sign coming later this year. **BART Parking Lot Nears Completion:** residents and visitors alike are looking forward to its completion later this summer, which will add 700+ parking spaces and 9,000 square feet of commercial space to Downtown.



Shyaam Shabaka passing out free produce at Healthy Village.

More About SYEP 2012

SYEP is an annual program offered to area youth between the areas of 16 and 21 in collaboration with Richmond YouthWorks. Additionally, this year's program was made possible through the support of Wells Fargo, Mechanics Bank, and Kaiser Permanente.

Annually, SYEP offers youth the opportunity to develop comprehensive work readiness skills, learn financial literacy principles, and explore a career path in small business ownership. Additionally, the training includes interactive presentations by local entrepreneurs and business managers. This year's guest speakers included Myeasa Allen, store manager of the Check Center and Stephanie C. Harper of Career Magazine.

After completing the two-week training, each youth put their new skills to use by working in a local business, which this year include Richmond Spokes Bike Lounge, Building Blocks for Kids Collaborative, Bay Area Legal Aid, Check Center, and Rolling Hills Memorial Park.



Levonna Mayfield, Luis Berriere, and Taijanique Foster present their All In One Family Plaza business plan to the RMSI board and their peers.

Neighborhood Ambassador Program: Cleaner Streets & Employment Results



Ambassadors Annetreece Carter and Lance Wright help keep the district clean by picking up litter and abating graffiti.

Earlier this year, the Richmond Main Street Neighborhood Ambassador Program (NAP) was recognized locally and national for its contribution in maintaining a clean and safe Downtown. This program has been one of the most successful endeavors for RMSI. Our Ambassadors provide much needed cleanliness and outreach services that help enhance the appearance of downtown.

In May 2011, we strengthened NAP by partnering with Rubicon Programs. Previously, RMSI had relied solely on volunteers to perform the cleanliness duties outlined in the program. "Our volunteers are the best," says program coordinator Alicia Gallo. "They love Richmond so much that they donate their time to pick up litter and clean graffiti. But we realized that we needed a bigger presence on the corridor."

Enter Rubicon Programs, a local nonprofit that provides a wide range of services to low income individuals seeking financial independence. With this partnership, RMSI has been able to expand the NAP significantly: ambassador hours increased tenfold and the presence of persistent blight issues, such as graffiti and litter, dropped significantly.

In return, the ambassador candidates sourced through Rubicon receive valuable work experience which, has thus far resulted in a number of employment success stories. Upon completing his time as an ambassador for RMSI, Lance Wright gained employment at Smoke, a new BBQ restaurant in Berkeley; Deonte' Anderson, a current ambassador, is working towards completing the employment process for an oil responder position at Global Diving and Salvage. Other ambassadors have gone on to janitorial and landscaper position at local companies.

"The next step is establishing a fully-funded ambassador program similar to those in Downtown Berkeley and Oakland, which we hope to do by using funds raised through the recently passed business improvement district. Nothing would please me more than to offer these positions to our past and current ambassadors", concludes Gallo.



Deonte' Anderson
Richmond Resident, Neighborhood Ambassador, and future employee of Global Diving and Salvage.

Downtown is for Art Lovers

On Friday, June 22, Richmond Main Street held an art walk and closing reception for the Spring 2012 Art In Windows Exhibition featuring paintings by artists Stephen Bruce and Tracy Ricks. The reception marked the third year of this innovative project which brings together local business owners and merchants, residents, organizations, curators, and Bay Area artists to create living, breathing 24-hour art galleries in downtown Richmond.



Reception guests enjoying Tracy Ricks' paintings installed at 400 Marina Way.

"We began to incorporate these art walks into Art In Windows last Fall when we installed work at 400 Marina Way for the first time. We wanted to include the trip to this space in an engaging manner," recalls outreach coordinator, Alicia Gallo. And so the art walk, which highlights the historical markers, murals, and public art works installed during the Macdonald Avenue streetscape upgrades and Metro Walk development, was born.

In addition to learning about the history of the arts in downtown, reception guests also met the artists, who spoke about their work: Mr. Bruce deconstructed his ephemeral acid paintings as studies in experimentation and chemical reactions; and Ms. Ricks revealed the personal story behind her large-scale abstract paintings which are a "testimony to spiritual reflection."



Amanda Elliott leading the art walk through Downtown Richmond, with stops at historical markers along Macdonald Avenue, the BART murals, and 400 Marina Way.

Getting Fit in Downtown with ZUMBA



Downtown residents working up a sweat with free Zumba Fitness classes courtesy of Richmond Main Street and HEAL.

From March 15-June 28, RMSI offered bi-weekly Zumba Fitness classes in Downtown Richmond, free of charge thanks to funding from West County HEAL. The classes were led by certified Zumba Fitness instructor Willa "Bontle" Willis and took place at the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts and the RMSI office.

Word spread quickly and soon the registration lists for the classes filled up days in advance. On average, 50 local residents attended the class each week, with many returning on a regular basis. RMSI has successfully secured funding for additional classes and is currently working on coordinating a class schedule for the Fall. For the most up-to-date information about this fitness program, visit www.richmondmainstreet.org/news-events/zumba-classes.

"This is sheer, exquisite fun where I also work up a sweat. It energizes me for the next day!" -Francis

Back by Popular Demand: Start & Grow Smart

Last Fall, RMSI provided business assistance to 12 aspiring entrepreneurs and established business through "Start and Grow Smart", an innovative educational program focused on providing entrepreneurship training through business modeling and support with individualized one-on-one consulting sessions. "The response to this program was overwhelming," says program coordinator and businesswoman, Vaneese Johnson.

RMSI is pleased to offer these courses again this year. The first 2012 Start & Grow Smart course series, which consist of three, 3-hour classes and one, 4-hour private consulting session, begins Wednesday, August 8th. Visit www.richmondmainstreet.org/business/classes or call (510) 236-4049 for class dates and information on how to enroll.

Message from the Executive Director

It's an exciting time for Richmond Main Street. As we embark on the implementation the newly approved Downtown Richmond Property Based Business Improvement District (PBID), we are thrilled to have accomplished something some thought was virtually impossible to do—engage a group of property and business owners to support the revitalization efforts of Downtown. Not only are these stakeholders willing to get involved, they understand the importance of protecting their investments and are willing to financially support the effort. Neighboring cities (Berkeley and Oakland, for example) have used similar revitalization mechanisms to transform their districts into thriving commercial centers. The Downtown Richmond PBID will build on the momentum and investments already made in Downtown such as the new, beautiful streetscape on Macdonald Avenue and plaza on Nevin Avenue implemented by the former Redevelopment Agency and the newly renovated East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, which has brought a state of the art performing arts institution to Downtown. Ultimately, the PBID will create lasting results, making Downtown more economically viable, attractive, and safe.



Amanda Elliott
Executive Director

Thus far this year, RMSI has experienced great success with our signature activities: promoting the arts and Downtown with Music on the Main and Art In Windows; developing job skills through the 5th Annual Summer Youth Entrepreneur Program; and, with the support of West County HEAL, increasing access to healthy foods and fitness opportunities with Healthy Village Farm Stand and free, bi-weekly Zumba classes. Additionally, we accomplished a long-standing goal of establishing a full-scale, weekly certified Farmers' Market downtown. Through these events and many others, we have attracted more people downtown than ever before and we only expect this trend to continue.

As the executive director for Richmond Main Street, I have the distinct pleasure to work with a diverse group of stakeholders who support our work, including residents, business owners, city government officials, and community-based organizations. I am delighted to work with a group of committed, hard-working staff, board members, and volunteers who have helped RMSI attain remarkable achievements, such as our Neighborhood Ambassador Program, which has been recognized locally and nationally for the remarkable positive difference it has made in keeping Downtown clean and safe.

Richmond Main Street is growing by leaps and bounds. We have a bright future ahead and expect to continue to be the catalyst for positive change Downtown. We invite everyone to join our efforts building on this momentum as we implement the PBID that will provide a strong public/private partnership to revitalize Downtown.

Warm wishes,

Amanda Elliott

Our Board of Directors

Cindy Haden, Chair
Xavier Abrams, Vice Chair/Treasurer
Maria Alegria, Secretary
Arnie Kasendorf, Past Chair
Jerrold Hatchett
Michael Davenport
Gary Bell
Charlene Smith
Janet L. Johnson, Ex-officio
Amanda Elliott
Joanne King, Advisory Member
James Goins, Advisory Member
Mary Lavergne, Advisory Member

Our Staff

Amanda Elliott, Executive Director
Alicia Gallo, Outreach Coordinator
Amelia Segi, Administrative Coordinator
Johnasies McGraw, Development Consultant



Our Volunteers are the HEART of Main Street

Richmond Main Street acknowledges and thanks all of the wonderful individuals who donate their time and effort to making our events and programs successful. You are the heart and soul of downtown and we are forever grateful for your dedication to the revitalization of Downtown. THANK YOU!!!

Join the efforts to Revitalize Downtown



www.facebook.com/RichmondMainStreet



Twitter: @RMSI

www.richmondmainstreet.org
admin@richmondmainstreet.org
(510) 236-4049