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(All photos provided by the Weslaco Area Chamber of Commerce)

CHAMBER NEWS

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TechSoft course instructor Carlos Fortin demonstrates how to build a Facebook business page during the Social Media seminar.

Weslaco Chamber hosts hands-on seminars for chamber members

The Weslaco Chamber of Commerce hosted two half-day seminars at the Rio Grande Valley Partnership on Tuesday, Oct. 4. TechSoft Training Center from Houston, taught both sessions on Social Media Marketing for Businesses and Graphic Design 101. These were both hands-on courses with laptops and materials provided.



Efrain Arce, left, and Marco Ramirez, right, from USA Now, one of six EB-5 Regional Centers in Texas.

October Lunch & Learn Seminar discusses investment program targeting Mexican investors

The Weslaco Chamber's October Lunch and Learn Seminar featured the EB-5 Program, presented by USA Now. The Employment Based: Fifth Preference (EB-5), created by the U.S. Congress in 1990, allows foreign nationals to qualify for permanent residency status in the United States once they've met certain requirements. Foreign investors must invest at least \$500,000 and create ten full time jobs.

USA Now is one of six regional centers in the state of Texas that facilitate the investment process and connect Mexican investors to potential investments here in the U.S. Marco Ramirez, USA Now talked about the growing violence in Mexico that is causing investors to cross over in order to escape the danger. He also discussed the fact that there are several major investments pending for Weslaco, and he is very hopeful about this area and its growth.

"We're starting to see a lot of movement in Weslaco," remarked Ramirez. "You're going to start seeing the economic impact in the marketplace."

He says that the key is to promote the Rio Grande Valley to the countries that are having some type of turmoil. In addition to Mexico, Ramirez pointed out that Japan has a lot of potential investors looking to leave after the devastating tsunami and nuclear crisis the country just experienced.

Ramirez noted that all the promotion and marketing USA Now does for the Rio Grande Valley is privately funded and will continue to be. "We're pushing very hard for this region and we're going to continue to do so," stated Ramirez. He also pointed out that with these investments come the necessity for other services like advertising and marketing which in turn stimulates local economy even further.

Ramirez sees a lot of potential for this area, and believes that the Rio Grande Valley is an attractive region to investors who are looking to relocate.

"There's a lot going for us," commented Ramirez. "I see nothing but hope."

The clock is ticking!!

A very special thank you to **Steve Jennings, Benchmark Outdoor Advertising**, for fixing our clock outside on Texas Blvd. It now displays the correct time!

Green Tip

By CHRIS WARREN

Did you know that you can buy native plants right here in Weslaco at Valley Nature Center (in Gibson Park)? When doing your fall planting, consider natives that generally need less water and maintenance than exotics. Heart-leaf hibiscus and Drummond's Turk's cap are two choices with colorful red flowers that you and the butterflies and hummingbirds will love.



David Equity Building receives Commercial Beautification Award



Pictured L-R: David McDaniel, Davis Equity Realty; Rudy Salinas, Salinas, Allen & Schmitt, LLP; Chris Warren, Weslaco Beautiful; Lance Kirby, Jones, Galligan, Key and Lozano, LLP; Bob Davis, Davis Equity Realty; Randy Summers, Davis Equity Realty.

The Weslaco Beautiful Committee selected the Davis Equity building at 2300 W. Pike as its latest Commercial Beautification Award recipient. Bob Davis and members of the Davis Equity Realty team were on hand to receive the award, as well as one of the tenants of the building, Rudy Salinas from Salinas, Allen & Schmitt, LLP.

"It's always very nice for us to receive the recognition, we appreciate it very much," remarked Bob Davis of Davis Equity Realty. "We're proud of Weslaco and what it means, and we plan to beautify every corner if we can."

"We've been fortunate enough to have over ten years of growth here, but it's always a challenge keeping

things looking nice," commented David McDaniel, property manager. He said that native plants that grow well in the Valley were chosen not only to minimize maintenance costs, but also so the plants would remain green and healthy. "We love to help Weslaco be aware of

the potential and the possibilities of keeping Weslaco looking green and beautiful," he added.

Rudy Salinas of Salinas, Allen, & Schmitt, LLP, also commented on winning the award. "I'm really grateful to Mr. McDaniel, our property manager, and we're honored

to have won this award."

Weslaco Beautiful, a committee of the Weslaco Chamber of Commerce, was established to develop and expand the awareness of recycling and litter prevention and work for the beautification and preservation of Weslaco's natural resources.



Pictured L-R: Joanne and C.C. Sherwood (with pets Sasha and Sadie), and Chris Warren, Weslaco Beautiful.



Ready for Halloween! The Sherwood residence is decked out in festive yard decorations.

Weslaco Beautiful selects festive home for Residential Beautification Award

The Weslaco Beautiful committee presented the Residential Beautification Award to C.C. and Joanne Sherwood, who live at 205 Mills. In addition to keeping up their yard looking beautiful and healthy, the Sherwoods have adorned their yard with all kinds of wooden Halloween decorations

made by Mr. Sherwood himself. Pumpkins, witches, ghosts and other festive items are displayed throughout the front of the house as well as the back yard. "Halloween is my favorite [holiday]," remarked Joanne. "C.C. makes the decorations and I put them out in the yard." Joanne says she enjoys doing

yard work because it keeps her busy. Weslaco Beautiful, a committee of the Weslaco Chamber of Commerce, was established to develop and expand the awareness of recycling and litter prevention and work for the beautification and preservation of Weslaco's natural resources.

Leadership Mid-Valley rescheduled

The Leadership Mid-Valley Class VII has been rescheduled to begin in January. Sponsored by the Weslaco Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Mid-Valley is a nine-month program which seeks to identify and motivate emerging leaders and develop their potential for community leadership by exposing them to the realities, opportunities and problems of the community.



Leadership classes will begin in January and conclude in June. Participants meet once a month for tours, seminars and hands-on learning experiences. Session topics include government, healthcare, education, media and other important community issues.

There are still a few slots available for anyone interested in participating. The application is available online, www.weslaco.com, or at the Chamber office, 255 S. Texas. Deadline for submissions is Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 5 p.m. at the Chamber office. For more information about Leadership Mid-Valley, contact Martha Noell, Chamber President, at 956-968-2102 or e-mail chamber@weslaco.com.

Chamber Banquet set Nov. 11

The Weslaco Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting and Luncheon will be held on Friday, November 11 at the Knapp Medical Conference Center. There will be an awards presentation for Man or Woman, Citizen and Business of the Year. \$20 admission; RSVP at 968-2102.



Elsa State Bank celebrated their new location at 3124 E. Business 83 with Red Coat Ambassadors in attendance.



Jon Albright, MFS Investment Management shows a past Time Magazine cover during an economic downturn.

Edward Jones seminar addresses financial security in troubling times

Special to MVTC

The Weslaco Chamber's September Lunch and Learn seminar, sponsored by Edward Jones Investments, was titled "Remaining Calm When the Markets Go Wild", presented by Jon Albright, MFS Investment Management.

Albright began the presentation by showing different covers of Time Magazine in decades past during economic downturns. One cover read, "That Monster Deficit: America's Economic Black Hole" while another read, "Unemployment: The Biggest Worry". The point Albright was trying to make was that the country has experienced several different periods of major economic uncertainty that caused a lot of worry and concern. Rather than reacting in a state of panic, Albright reminded the audience that the economy always naturally becomes stable again after a certain time period. Keeping a diverse investment portfolio, he says, is a great way to keep your money invested rather than not having anything invested at all.