

Morgan: Making the 50th anniversary of 'Middletown Days' a historic occasion

Contributed by Lamar Morgan
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With the passing of the 48th annual "Middletown Days" festivities, the time for preparation for the 50th anniversary of the event needs to be considered.

More often than not, both the state and federal government are slow to respond to specific needs of communities. Why? Because they are constantly being pulled in so many different directions at the same time.

The Middletown Central Park Association needs to request a proclamation from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger honoring its 50th anniversary NOW. A proclamation from a state governor is something that is possible every five years, beginning with the 10th year a nonprofit organization celebrates an anniversary. But, to my knowledge, such a distinction has never been bestowed on any local nonprofit organization here in Lake County.

Last year was the 25th anniversary of the Middletown Area Business Association. Unfortunately, the Middletown Merchants never bothered to update their Articles of Incorporation and has been suspended. (See <http://kepler.sos.ca.gov/corpdata/ShowAllList?QueryCorpNumber=C1229250> .) Perhaps that is why the request for a proclamation was never seriously considered? Hence, the opportunity for the Middletown Area Business Association to be included in the state archives for that anniversary was forfeited.

During that same time period, a special business relationship was cultivated with Marty Keller, Small Business Advocate for the State of California.

Keller was asked to come attend the Harvester's Shopping Center's Spring Fling on May 16 on behalf of Gov. Schwarzenegger.

Keller was unable to attend, but must have been impressed with the the Squidoo lens created to help promote the festival. Why? Two reasons. First, because he actually signed the Squidoo lens. See the second page of guest book comments at <http://budurl.com/familyfun> .

Second, he obviously shared the site's information with Gov. Schwarzenegger, who in turn wrote a letter to the Hidden Valley Lake Community. This letter is posted online. You can download your very own copy of this special document at <http://budurl.com/GovLtr> . (A limited supply of suitable-for-framing copies of that letter on photo paper are also available at Ting's Thai Kitchen in the Harvester's Shopping Center in Hidden Valley Lake.)

Less than a month later, the marketing arm for Lake County revealed it had forged a business relationship with Doug McConnell of "Bay Area Backroads" fame regarding his new venture, "OpenRoad with Doug McConnell," a TV series broadcast by affiliates of the Public Broadcasting System. Lake County is now among the advertisers for McConnell's show.

Despite a challenging economic climate, Lake County is now making a serious attempt to attract more tourist dollars. What is interesting about Doug McConnell and Lake County having a business relationship is that two years earlier 110 Middletown school children participated in a letter-writing campaign to high-profile folks residing in California. The idea was to convince those high-profile individuals to come for "Middletown Days 2007."

Among the folks written were Steve Jobs, George Lucas, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger ... and Doug McConnell. You can still read some of those amazing letters online at www.squidoo.com/MDF . A year earlier, just 30 Middletown High School students were successful in getting the Fox News Channel – in the person of news correspondent Adam Housley – to come for Middletown Days 2006.

In November of this year, Gov. Schwarzenegger plans to have the second annual Conference on Small Business & Entrepreneurship somewhere in San Francisco. Now is a good time for Middletown folks to reach out to both Doug McConnell and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Doug McConnell asked for pictures of "Middletown Days" two years ago to be showcased on his OpenRoad.tv site. The Middletown Central Park Association never took action in that regard. Please encourage them to do it now.

But, let's do more than just send pictures to a Web site. Let's collectively invite OpenRoad.tv to come and help host Middletown Day's 50th Anniversary. Let's ask Gov. Schwarzenegger to come, be in our parade, address the crowd and issue a proclamation – a copy of which will remain in the California archives.

For more on how to orchestrate this amazing opportunity that is before us, email lamar@mchsi.com .

History matters. Let's help make Middletown Day's 50th Anniversary a real and positive "memory-maker."

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