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Worth Noting in business: More than 1,100 businesses line up for bullet train project

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The California High-Speed Rail Authority reported Thursday that it has received more than 1,100 expressions of interest from a variety of businesses hoping to play a role in the proposed 800-mile project linking the Bay Area with Southern California by way of the Central Valley.

According to a news release from the rail authority, a variety of self-employed entrepreneurs, small businesses, multinational corporations and large construction firms met a Wednesday deadline for submitting requests to participate in the project, officially estimated to cost \$43 billion.

"The size of this response sends a clear signal that the private sector sees great opportunity in California's high-speed rail project, the first of its kind in the nation," rail authority CEO Roelof van Ark said in the release. "True high-speed rail systems are profitable, competitive and spur near-term job creation and long-term economic growth."

The authority stated that it is reviewing and compiling the responses and that it plans to post a list of respondents next week on its website, www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov.

The Downtown Business Association plans to commemorate the opening of two new businesses -- Majestic Vanity and Juicy Burger -- at a pair of on-site celebrations Friday and Monday.

Majestic Vanity is a full-service day spa and beauty salon at 1631 19th St. Guests are invited to a 6 to 9 p.m. reception Friday featuring wine tasting, refreshments, tours and services.

Juicy Burger, at 1201 24th St., has scheduled a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Mayor Don McCarthy, R-Bakersfield, is slated to participate. The event is to include a reception as well as lunch and dinner discounts.



The state Franchise Tax Board is offering special tax relief measures for Kern County taxpayers affected by the Dec. 17 to Jan. 4 winter storms, declared a federal disaster in 10 California counties on Jan. 26.

Taxpayers affected by the storms can claim disaster losses in the current or existing tax years. People who do so on a previously filed tax return can expect their state tax refunds to arrive more quickly than normal.

To claim the disaster loss, taxpayers should write "California Winter Storms 2010" in red ink atop their tax return.

Instructions for claiming a disaster loss are available by calling the tax board at 800-852-5711.

The state Franchise Tax Board and the California Tax Education Council are warning California taxpayers to choose carefully when selecting a tax professional.

In a Thursday news release, the two organizations noted that some of the state's roughly 44,000 registered tax preparers operate outside the law, running the risk of penalties "for themselves and their clients."

The release specifically cautioned taxpayers to avoid tax preparers who:

- * claim they can get bigger refunds than other tax preparers;
- * base their fee on a percentage of the refund amount;
- * refuse to sign the tax return as the paid preparer;
- * don't provide a copy of the tax return for the taxpayer's records.

The groups further advised taxpayers to make sure the preparer is a certified public accountant, enrolled agent, attorney or registered tax preparer.

Last year the tax board fined 45 tax preparers because they were not properly licensed or registered. The penalty for working as an unregistered tax preparer is \$2,500; that doubles if the individual then continues to prepare returns.

Anyone who suspects a tax preparer is fraudulent was advised to notify the tax board by going online at ftb.ca.gov.

The tax education council is a nonprofit established by the state Legislature.

The HomeTown Buffet at 4221 S. H St. recently completed a major redesign that added several new ethnic food bars and allowed the restaurant to introduce 17 new menu items.

Among the additions are bars featuring Italian food, Mexican, Asian and "all-American."

Bakersfield financial advisor Lance Howard is partnering with Gradient Financial Group to offer a local family a year's worth of mortgage or lease payments and various financial counseling services.

The offer comes with counseling on debt reduction, retirement planning, tax filing and career choices, according to a Thursday news release.

For information on the offer, go online at www.gradientgivesback.com/lancehoward.

Sprocket Websites, a website developer with operations in Bakersfield, has become a certified reseller of the LightSpeed Point of Sale system for retail stores.

The software provides purchasing, inventory management and front counter sales support, as well as an online store integration system.

A Sprocket news release states that there are more than 300 certified resellers of the software, but that Sprocket is the only one in Bakersfield.

The Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce's Spring Trade Show Mixer is scheduled for March 24 at the DoubleTree Hotel, 3100 Camino Del Rio Court.

Part of the chamber's Business After Hours series, the 5:30 to 8 p.m. event is sponsored by Bright House Networks. A number of local businesses are expected to be represented.

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"More than 1,100 businesses line up for bullet train project." I can't wait to see how "our" Rep. McCarthy spins this one to rationalize his lack of support for this local public/private project -- and thus prove he cares more about scoring points with his cronies in DC than helping Kern County.

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drilnliftcrude 1 week ago

If the headline read, "1,100 people line up for free government cheese" you guys would be saying that we need to build more dairy's. This article doesn't tell us anything we don't already know, there will be plenty of people wanting to get some "cheese" from this big government fiasco.



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