

**TAFT DISTRICT  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

400 Kern Street Taft, CA 93268  
661.765.2165 www.taftchamber.com

**OUR BOARD**

**President**  
Jan Ashley  
Nurse Practitioner

**First Vice President**  
Michael Long  
The Taft Independent

**Second Vice President**  
Dennis Schertz  
Asian Experience

**Treasurer**  
Ray Hatch  
Retired

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Elk Hills Power

**Bob Colston**  
Colston Construction

**Clint Deckert**  
Deckert Consulting

**Willy Duncan**  
Taft College

**Bob Hampton**  
Westside Waste Mgt

**Kathy Herm**  
State Farm Insurance

**Orchel Krier**  
Tumbleweed Cafe

**Cherie Layton**  
Chevron Valley CU

**Bob Leikam**  
Domino's Pizza

**John Neuman**  
Accelerated Environmental

**Dan Tosti**  
Aera Energy LLC

**Our Staff...**

Fred Schell  
Executive Director

Judy Olson,

Administrative Assistant

661.765.2165

661.765.6639 Fax



*Our Platinum Sponsors*



MARCH 2010

## Chamber Dawns a New Look !

I am pleased to unveil our new look and new attitude. The Taft District Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau is blossoming into a different Chamber of Commerce.

I invite you to read through our new Newsletter and see the new features, departments and information that we feel is beneficial to our members.

You will find our new "Government Affairs" Committee report that informs you of the latest news from various government sources. You will also find information for you, the business partners of the Chamber.

It is our goal to provide you with the tools necessary to help you succeed.

Not only do we have a new newsletter look, other things are changing around the Chamber as well. We are taking our Chamber up a few notches with such things as an improved website, branching out in alternative media forms as Facebook and Blog Posts. We have even revised our in-house publications and promotional material to a higher level.

We are on the verge of opening the first "TAFT STORE" where we will be selling merchandise from the Carrizo Plains National Monument, the Oilworker Monument, Oildorado and Taft Souvenirs. Additional Chamber Exclusive items will be available as well. The items will also be available for purchase online.,

Our Sit-N-Sips are evolving as well. The second Wednesday of each month is an informative session provided by Taft College to help you build upon your business skills. Other members have offered to help our members with lessons on Facebook and Social Media.

We are reminding you that the Chamber IS here to serve you, our customers. I invite you to stop by and see for yourself the opportunities that exist for you.

You can help support this letter by advertising your business in our issues. Call for details !

## Downtown Business Association Established

It has been a long time coming but the Downtown Business Committee has been re-established with a serious agenda to address the downtown issues. We are eager to have our first meeting to formulate an agenda of issues.

The committee will be composed of prominent business owners and concerned citizens who are desirous in taking an active role in the downtown area.

The Committee will meet regularly and have an open dialog with the City of Taft who has given their full support and cooperation .

The Executive Committee is so far composed of Mr. Bob Hampton, Mr. Edward Herrera, Mr. Dennis Schertz and Mr. Gary Joyce.

If you are interested in joining this committee or have any issues you would like addressed, please contact the Chamber.

## The Chamber Celebrates 100 Years!



**Dennis Schertz raises a toast and signs happy birthday in celebration of our 100th year of serving the community**

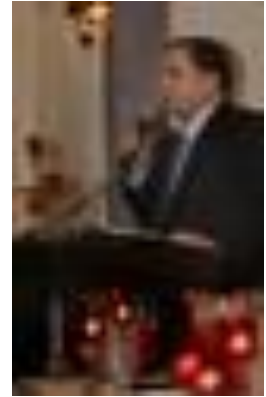
The Chamber's 100th Anniversary Dinner and installment of officers took place on Thursday February 4th at OT's Cookhouse.

The foyer was transformed to showcase the many opportunities here in Taft. The City, the Oil-worker Monument, Oildorado and the Chamber were all on display and well represented.

Many dignitaries and community partners were there to raise a toast and join in singing "Happy Birthday" lead by our own Board Member, Dennis Schertz..

Joining us in our celebration were our 100 year partners. These are the companies that have stayed with us since our inception back in January of 1910. The Midway Driller, Chevron and Cavin's Oil Well Tools all received honors for their 100 years of service and commitment.

The keynote speaker Mr. George Martin had a very inspiring offered us a simple reminder "Taft, stay Taft",



Speaker George Martin reminding us to "stay Taft"

## Meet your Chamber Board Members / Cherie Layton



Cherie Layton came to the Chamber board in 2009. Cherie began working for Chevron Valley CU in 1985 when it was Sovale and is now the operations supervisor at the Taft Branch. Cherie was born in Taft. Her mother is Betty Shelby, who Cherie says is her hero, giving her the foundation, morals and values for her life. Cherie is married to Blake Layton who has also been employed in the

Taft area for the Chevron Corp for 25 years. They are parents of twin daughters, Alysha & Heather who are attending Taft College. Cherie and her family share a love of cars and adventure. When I talked to Cherie, she stated her hopes here at the Chamber were to get more of the community involved in the Chamber events., expand membership, and continue our commitment to the members.

Cherie was the chairperson for the very successful 1st Annual Car Show last June and is busy planning the next one. Cherie also served on the 2009 Gala Committee. Cherie said her first year at the Chamber went by very quickly and she looks forward to another successful year of community events.

### More Chamber Members Renew

McKittrick Waste Mgt  
 Roger Miller Insurance  
 Passion for Nails  
 Westside Friends of Library  
 Dr. Charles Walker  
 Westside Mosquito Abatement  
 Employer's Training Resource  
 Taft Union High School  
 Taft Midway Driller  
 VSPS / Sue Jensen  
 Jack's Flower & Trophy Shop  
 Motel 8 Maricopa  
 Colston Construction  
 Southern Sierra Boy Scouts

Westside Economic Development  
 DreamMaker Bath & Kitchen  
 So. Sierra General Engineering  
 Plains Exploration & Production  
 Anderson Bookkeeping  
 RiteAway Carpet Cleaning  
 Aera Energy LLC  
 Miller's Beauty Supply  
 Emy's Variety  
 Taft Motorcycle Club  
 Judy Watson Realtor  
 Tumbleweed Café  
 Goodyear Tire  
 Westside Furniture  
 Costco wholesale

Taft Chevrolet  
 Domino's Pizza  
 Coldwell Banker, America West  
 Judy Miller  
 Heritage Park  
 DoClose Cleaning  
 State Farm, Julie Franks  
 Taft City School District  
 Papa Murphy's Pizza  
 A Hint of Class  
 The Taft Independent  
 RAM Environmental  
 Rotary Club  
 SkyDive Taft  
 Hotstone Pizza



661-765-4003



Chamber GOLD SPONSORS

## Government Affairs Report

### Chamber Opposition Contributes to defeat of oil severance tax

A coalition of local nonprofits and businesses traveled to the State Capitol in January to protest a proposal to place a tax on oil production. Hundreds of Kern County workers in redshirts, with "SAVE OUR JOBS" printed on them, filled in the Rotunda, waiting to testify in front of the Assembly's Revenue and Taxation committee to oppose AB 656 sponsored by Assembly

Member Alberto Torrico (D-Milpitas)

The tax, known as an oil severance or depletion tax, will adversely impact Kern's Economy, where 70% of the state's oil production is located.

Chamber leaders and members clearly made their cases to legislators, emphasizing that an oil severance tax would have wide ranging consequences, including fuel price hikes statewide, thousands of jobs lost, and the reduction of local property tax dollars, which largely

go to K-12 education.

Fortunately this bill stalled, not because legislators realized the economic harm it would cause, but because enacting the tax would exacerbate the state's fiscal problems. There are at least two other similar proposals in the works, and the Chamber will continue to watch and work on our community's behalf to protect and sustain Kern County's economy.

## Labor Law Corner

### Employer Has Right to Assign Employee Unused Vacation Time

*Question: We ask that all employees submit their vacation requests by March 1, but most do not. Can we assign vacation time to employees who do not sign up to take vacation?*

Yes— The employer has the right to schedule vacations. Labor Code Section 227.3 provides, in brief, that vacation is vested and requires unused vacation to be cashed out at termination. Further, there can be no forfeiture, such as a "use it or lose it" policy, however, the employer does have the right to manage the vacation program by setting vacation dates.

The Labor Code section states the following:

"Unless otherwise provided by a collective-bargaining agreement, whenever a contract of employment or employer policy provides for paid vacations, and an employee is terminated without having taken off his vested time, all vested vacation shall be paid to him as wages at his final rate in accordance with such a contract of employment or employer policy respecting eligibility of time served: provided, however, that an employment contract or employer policy shall not provide for forfeiture of vested vacation time upon termination. The Labor Commissioner or a designated representative, in the resolution of any dispute with regard to vested vacation time, shall apply the principles of equity and fairness"

#### Send Out Requests

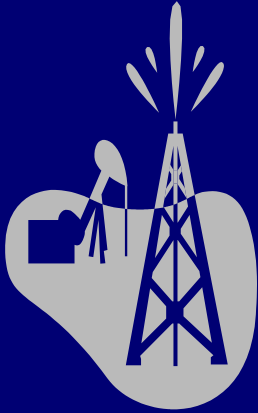
One suggestion is to send out requests around the first of the year, giving the employees two choices of dates and make it clear that in any case of conflict, seniority or and non-discriminatory method will be used to determine who gets their preference. Also make it clear that company needs will prevail.

If an employee fails to respond, the company has the right to assign vacation dates. Managing vacation programs in this manner will help to alleviate end-of-the-year problems and high vacation balances. Exempt employees can be required only to take vacation in full week increments. The State Labor Commissioner takes the position that exempt employees should be given at least 90 days notice of mandatory vacation. Exempt employees can voluntarily take vacation for shorter periods without notice with employer approval.

#### Exemptions

Employees may have been scheduled for vacation, but events occur such as Pregnancy Disability Leave, Family medical Leave Act, California Family Rights Act and Paid Family Leave. Depending on the timing, this could affect vacation schedules.

This article is summarized from HR California, a publication of the California Chamber of Commerce



## From the City of Taft

On April 01, 2010 the United States Government will begin counting the people of Taft. The U.S. Census Bureau has made it extremely easy to understand and fill out the form which will be sent to each household. Just remember to mail it back after you fill it out. The form itself has been condensed to only ten questions. Questions such as how many people are living in the home, age, race and gender provide the government with data that determines how many schools, hospitals, senior centers, public works projects and more that are needed for each area. The government spends over \$400 billion dollars each year on infrastructure and services: Taft needs your help to bring some of the money here for our community.

The City of Taft has partnered with the Census Bureau, local businesses and organizations to create the Taft Area Complete Count Committee (TACCC). The TACCC helps to promote the 2010 Census. Our goal is to make sure that everyone, citizens and non-citizens alike, in the Taft area is counted. This will ensure that Taft receives the proper amount of funds/grants to provide the community with services needed. The Census is an extremely important element of our government. Could you imagine trying to provide for your family if you did not know how many family members you have.

The TACCC will be going door to door on March 13, 2010 to hand out flyers. If you would like to be involved; please contact the Chamber of Commerce (661) 765-2165 or Taft City Hall (661)763-1222.

If you would like more information on Census 2010 log onto [www.Census2010.gov](http://www.Census2010.gov).



### 2010 Annual Sponsorship Members

#### Platinum

Westside Waste Management  
Synagro

#### Gold

Accelerated Environmental  
Aera Energy LLC  
Chevron

Occidental of Elk Hills

#### Silver

Chevron Valley Credit Union  
Colston Construction  
Elk Hills Power  
Huddleston Crane Services  
McKittrick Waste Mgt  
Plains Exploration & Production

Taft College

TRC Operating Co.

Friends of the Chamber

General Production  
Sunrise Petroleum

# Taft Chamber of Commerce

## 2nd Annual Rails to Trails Car, Truck & Bike Show

### Saturday June 12, 2010

### At 6th Street between Main & Supply Row

### Registration from 7am to 9am

### Judging Begins at 10am

For more Information  
Contact the  
Chamber of Commerce  
661 765-2165  
or Cherie Layton



Pre-Registration \$25 includes Event T-Shirt

Live Bands, 50/50 Drawing, Beer Garden, Food & Vendor Booths, Raffles

## Taft Chamber of Commerce Annual Golf Classic

Sponsored by

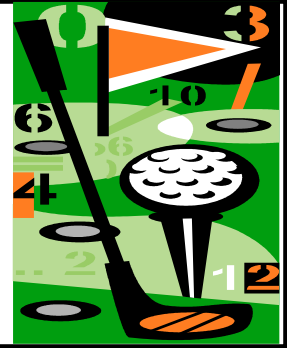
**Westside Waste Management / Synagro**

In Association with area Business & Sponsors

Saturday, May 15, 2010 / Buena Vista Golf Course

Entry Fee : \$100 per player

Contact The Chamber @ 765-2165 for sponsorship opportunities & registration



**Jump for the Red Cross and Blood Drive for Houchin Community Blood Bank**

**Saturday, May 22nd**  
At: Skydive Taft  
10am - 4pm  
500 Airport Road in Taft

Join this community event and celebrate Taft's 100th Birthday!

- Enjoy Skydive discounts, BBQ and Raffle - fun for the whole family.
- Proceeds from BBQ will support the Red Cross
- Blood Donations will support and save lives in your community!

Contact Amy Sherrill to Sign Up to give blood at: 765-5867

www.hccb.com  
Hours of Operation: 8901 Truxtun - M-F: 9a.m. - 6p.m. - Th.: 9a.m. - 6p.m. - Sat.: 9a.m. - 3p.m.  
Call Toll-Free: 1-877-364-9844 or contact our Truxtun facility at 661-323-4222.

**HOUCHIN**  
COMMUNITY BLOOD BANK  
Right Now When You Need It

**Skydive Taft** is sponsoring a first skydive fundraising event at the Taft airport on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2010. Skydive Taft has been a proud part of the Taft community for 15 years. We have brought in tourism from counties all over California, out of state and even tourist from other countries. We send our tourist straight into Taft where we know our local restaurants and hotels will provide them with the excellent service that we have always received. We're excited to be able to give back to the community that has supported us for so long.

After some deliberation we chose the Kern Chapter of the American Red Cross and their often partners and providers, the Houchin Blood Bank, to receive the proceeds from the fundraising event. Red Cross comes to the aid of so many people, from Kern County to any where in the world, during their most harrowing time of need and in the time of so many tragedies blood donations are in a high demand. The Houchin Blood Bank is there to make sure people receive their life-saving support whether it's at our local hospitals or keeping supplies on hand to ship where it is most useful. What better way could we give to our community then to give to the organizations that help so many?

Skydive Taft will be donating portions of our proceeds from tandem skydives to the Red Cross. The Kern Chapter of the Red Cross is excited about the event and will be here offering first aid safety courses for \$35. A minimum of ten people are needed and we do have a sign up sheet in the Taft Airport office. Houchin Blood Bank will be having a blood drive at the Taft Airport and there is also a sign up sheet for that for which we need at least 56 people to donate blood.

We are hoping everyone will really take part of this event. With Taft celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, it's a great time to come out and see all aspects of our town and show our support for our community. We're looking for business donations, items to raffle, booths to set up, a barbeque sponsor and people to come out and have fun. The staff at Skydive Taft is extremely friendly and we love having people out here to enjoy our sport, whether as spectators or first time students. For more information, sign up or give support, please call Amy Sherrill @ 661-765-5867.

## Taft College set to build a new T.I.L. Center

Taft College's TIL Program (Transition to Independent Living) began in August, 1995 to meet the needs of students with autism and intellectual disabilities. The TIL Program provides an educational experience that focuses on acquisition of skills necessary for independent living. In addition, students are taught strategies for problem solving as well as how to make informed decisions. Emphasis is put on accepting responsibility for decisions and choices made.

Starting with eighteen (18) students the program now encompasses forty-eight (48) students, thirty-six (36) classes and specialized activities in a structured program that takes twenty-two (22) months to complete. Their current budget is \$1.2 million annually.

In moving forward and expanding, the TIL program is on the cusp of becoming a National Model Program with the development of the new Taft College Campus TIL Center. This state of the art complex will have thirty-two (32) dorm rooms. This design is the only project of its kind ever funded for higher education for people with disabilities. Starting three years ago, the Taft College Facilities Committee met with architects to conceptualize and design the proposed facility. Current projected costs are approximately \$11.5 million; \$9.5 million of which has been provided by a bond measure from the State of California. A two million dollar campaign for funding will begin this fall.

For further information on the TIL program campaign, please contact Sheri Horn-Bunk, Director, Foundation and Development, at 661.763.7936 or email at [dshornbunk@taftcollege.edu](mailto:dshornbunk@taftcollege.edu).

**Transition to Independent Living Program**

The Transition to Independent Living Program provides an educational experience that focuses on acquisition of skills necessary for independent living. In addition, students are taught strategies for problem solving as well as how to make informed decisions. Emphasis is put on accepting responsibility for decisions and choices made.

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**TAFT COLLEGE**  
The Kern Community College District

**ap** architects

# Welcome Chamber Members !

The Taft District Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau encourages ALL businesses to become involved. Let your neighbors, new and old, know and bring them to Wednesday meeting. Help us welcome...



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Edward J. Herrera Insurance

The Taft District Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau attends the groundbreaking ceremonies at the Edward J. Herrera Insurance Agency's new Center Street Location

**Rabobank**  
 William Jeffries  
 3990 Gosford Rd, Bksfld  
 661 283-7608  
 Safe & Healthy Business Banking

**Performa**  
**Solutions for Printing & Promotions**  
 Gary Bunk  
 5330 Office Center Court  
 661 633-1117

**G.S. Graphix & Hobbies**  
 Allen Jones / Brandon Farkas  
 421 Center 661 745-4923  
 Battery Operated Cars  
 Www.gshobbies.net

**Taft Midway Sunset Lions Club**  
 Steve Stratton, Pres  
 PO Box 566 / Taft, Ca  
 661 763-1675

Terrence S. Close  
 Banker's Life & Casualty  
 324 E. San Emidio / Taft  
 661 623-7575  
 Specializing in Seniors

**Girl Scouts Westside Service Unit**  
**Margaret Lee, Leader**  
**661 763-1661**

The Chamber also welcomes The Taft Petroleum Club Membership

## Welcome Edward J. Herrera Insurance

The sun came out just for the occasion of Edward J. Herrera Insurance Agency's Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting. A great turnout for a respected business owner and humanitarian. Edward's 420 Center Street was the toast of the town as we welcomed him to the community. Although Edward's business has only been open for a few weeks but he has been connected with Taft for many years. Edward's wife, Cathie Ong-Herrera is a graduate of Taft College and also a

graduate of Taft's excellent Dental Hygiene Program. The Edward J. Herrera Insurance Agency is an Independent Agency that was established in 1974 that offers their clients the best selection of insurance from some of the most pre-eminent insurance companies in California. Edward has another location in Bak-ersfield and currently serves

on several boards in Kern County. For more information contact Edward J. Herrera Insurance Agency at 745-4920.

## Chamber Sit & Sip Schedule

- Wednesday March 3 9:00AM @ The Chamber**  
 Terrence Close w/ Bankers Life & Casualty / Ribbon Cutting following Sit & Sip
- Wednesday March 10 9:00AM @ The Chamber**  
 Dr. David Lane from Taft College presenting customer service class  
 Girard Loaiza representative from Senator Roy Ashburn's office will be at the Chamber from 10am—noon
- Wednesday March 17 9:00AM @ The Chamber**
- Wednesday March 24 9:00AM @ Jo's Breakfast or donation \$10**  
 Speaker: Josh Tims / just returned from Iraq
- Wednesday March 31 9:00AM @ The Chamber**

March 3 Taft City Council 7 pm  
 March 3 Sit & Sip @ Chamber  
 9:00 am  
 March 3 Ribbon cutting 10:30  
 @ Chamber / T. Close  
 March 7 WS Christian Ministers  
 Fundraiser BBQ  
 March 10 Sit & Sip @ Chamber  
 9:00 am  
 March 10 Together We Can  
 4pm @ Chevron Valley  
 March 17 Sit & Sip @ Chamber  
 March 17 Pioneer Building  
 Dedication 4-6pm  
 March 17 St. Patrick's Dinner  
 @ Fort 5:00pm  
 March 17 Taft City Council 7pm  
 March 19-21 Maricopa Gusher  
 Days  
 March 24 Sit & Sip @ Jo's 9 am  
 \$10 Breakfast  
 March 30 Chamber Board meet-  
 ing 7:00am  
 March 31 Sit & Sip @ Chamber

March 2010						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## Taft Community Events

### Pioneer Merc Building Dedication & Reception / March 17 4-6:00pm.

The Taft Pioneer Mercantile Building received the special honor from the Taft City Council designating the restored structure as a local historic building. The building was built in 1926 and purchased by Gary Joyce of Joyce Properties



### The Historic Fort / St. Patrick's Dinner / Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Social 5pm / Dinner 6pm / Tickets \$15 / RSVP by March 12-765-7371

Soroptimist \$500 Shamrock Wreath Raffle & Drawing \$5.00 Donation

March 19-21 Maricopa Gusher Days / Saturday—Parade / Car Show  
 Live Music / Food & Craft Vendors / Rock Climbing Wall / Raffles



### Westside Christian Minister's Association Fundraiser BBQ / March 7, 2010 / 11:30

Tri-tip or Chicken Sandwich lunch \$10

City Park @ Kern St & Hwy 119

Proceeds to go to Live Concert Fund / Kick-off For Oildorado Celebration / Tickets available @ The Chamber 765-2165

### West Side Recreation & Park District Community Theater

Presents the musical production of

## Annie

Friday, March 19 & Saturday, March 20, 7:00PM / Sunday, March 21 3:00PM

Taft High School Auditorium / Tickets: Children \$5.00 Adults \$7:00

**Free Federal & State Income Tax Help/Wednesdays 11:30 am—6pm through March 31st @**  
 Taft Branch of the Kern County Library. For more information call 763-3294



## Taft District Chamber of Commerce

400 Kern Street  
Taft, CA 93268

Phone: 661.765.2165

Fax: 661.65.6639

E-mail: [taftchamber@bak.rr.com](mailto:taftchamber@bak.rr.com)

**Our Blog: [Taftchamber.wordpress.com](http://Taftchamber.wordpress.com)  
On Facebook Taft District Chamber of  
Commerce and Visitors Bureau**

**The Best of Places to Live, Work & Play**

## Kathy Herm, State Farm

Cars and trucks far outnumber motorcycles on the roadways. No matter what type of vehicle you're driving, everyone needs to follow the rules of the road and watch out for other vehicles. But, drivers of cars and trucks often don't recognize or see motorcycles. Because of their smaller size, motorcycles may present special concerns for motorists.

To help motorists better understand the need to share the road with motorcyclists, here are some safety tips from the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF-USA):

- Motorcycles may look farther away than they really are. When preparing to make a turn, assume that the motorcycle is closer than it appears.
- Take extra caution in checking blind spots, as a motorcycle may be hidden from sight by the body of your car or masked by objects such as bushes, fences and bridges.

- Motorcycles may appear to be going faster than the rest of the traffic, but don't assume every motorcyclist is a speed demon.

- Motorcyclists can slow down without activating the brake light. Turn signals may not cancel after a turn.

- Allow greater distance between your car and a motorcycle for stopping and don't assume turn signals mean they are going to turn again.

Motorcyclists often adjust their position in a lane so they can be seen more easily, avoid debris or minimize the effects of passing vehicles. Don't assume that this adjustment is a reckless maneuver.

Although motorcycles have greater maneuverability than cars and trucks, don't

expect a motorcyclist to always be able to dodge out of the way or be able to stop on a dime. Continually scan the road in front of you for all types of vehicles and allow more following distance behind a motorcycle, for your safety and that of the motorcyclist.

**Advertise your business in  
our newsletter! Call the  
Chamber for details.**

**State Farm®**  
Providing Insurance and Financial Services  
Home Office, Bloomington, Illinois 61710

**Kathy Herm**  
Agent Lic. # 0749871

1018 West Kern Street, Taft, CA 93268-2739  
Bus 661 763 4300 Fax 661 763 4393  
Cell 661 699 8394  
[www.kathyherm.com](http://www.kathyherm.com)

