

# Easy Reader

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## Internet calendar is right on schedule

by Brian Simon

Bill Fisher was truly in a bind. Last summer he promised to take his kids to the Rotary Club's annual Movie in the Park at Chevron scheduled for August 3, but learned he had already committed to chairing a Kiwanis bowling event the same evening. He attempted to change the date, but it was too late. Well, at least he threw a couple of strikes.

Afterwards Fisher's wife lamented about time conflicts in general. With so many activities in the area, how could people be expected to keep up? "There should be a calendar where everyone's stuff is in there," she suggested. A month later, there was.

Thanks to Mrs. Fisher's brainstorm, SouthBayCalendar.org was launched last September and has become a popular guide for listing events and information for various organizations in the cities of El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, Torrance, Inglewood and Hawthorne.

Fisher, an El Segundo resident who owns a computer engineering and network design firm in town, has created an Internet-based regional master calendar that provides immediate, real-

time access to information. Now school districts, chambers of commerce, youth organizations and service groups such as Rotary and Kiwanis can list their events and programs on the master calendar, allowing website visitors to see what is happening in the South Bay at a glance. Each group also has its own calendar separate from the master version.

Organizations can sign up free of charge and can insert the information directly into their own websites. "Each organization gets a user name and password, can access the calendar and add their events themselves," said Fisher. "It's completely interactive—even the general public can send in information as long as someone in the organization approves it."

El Segundo's master calendar features information provided by the city, chamber of commerce, school district, and Rotary, Lions and Kiwanis clubs. In the works is a special calendar outlining youth sporting events.

Tomorrow's schedule lists a Kiwanis weekend trip to Laughlin, a 4 p.m. ribbon cutting at the Purple Orchid and reminders that Tree Musketeers and the American Cancer Society are look-

ing for volunteers for upcoming events.

Fisher said the website has grown tremendously since its inception. What started with a modest three calendars has swelled to 33. There are four more on the way, including the Boy Scouts, he said.

Though the service itself is free, Fisher hopes to eventually garner sponsorship from community leaders and supportive companies to help pay for maintenance of the site and his growing time investment.

"This has really taken off like wildfire," he stated. "The minute an organization sees the possibilities, it wants to get online with us immediately."

Local officials already swear by the calendar. Mayor Mike Gordon called it "an indispensable tool" in planning his busy schedule. El Segundo Chamber Executive Director Kathryn Lourtie also praised it as an ideal vehicle for listing all of her organization's events and keeping members current.

Meanwhile Fisher can rest assured he will get to that movie this summer.

To learn more about how to use the calendar or to add information, log on to [www.SouthBayCalendar.org](http://www.SouthBayCalendar.org). ER