Well on Wheels:
Medicine chest for the road

Home Town, Home Grown:
Your local farmers’ market

Return of the Bedbugs:
Now playing at a motel near you

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Greetings from the New Director

I am very excited to assume the directorship of the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA). Leading the more than 40 DCA boards, bureaus, programs, and committees whose duty it is to protect California’s consumers will be one of the most demanding in California State government—and one of the most rewarding.

Fortunately, I feel my background can help me effectively serve this Department and its many consumers and licensees. Previously, I worked for Coro Southern California as a trainer, curriculum and program developer, and eventually, executive director. Coro, a 62-year-old nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, is one of this nation’s most effective training resources for effective and ethical leaders serving both the private sector and public affairs arenas. Coro emphasizes the importance of forming partnerships between business, government, and communities to solve the problems and fulfill the needs we all share.

It is easy to see that this has also been DCA’s approach to fulfilling its mission—to combine the talents and resources of government, community-based organizations, and businesses to tackle such issues as identity theft, children’s cyber safety, and the needs and concerns of seniors.

I intend to continue this cooperative tradition at DCA and ensure that all of its leaders have the necessary tools and resources to effectively serve our fellow Californians. One of these tools is the CONSUMER CONNECTION, which has been providing consumers with timely warnings and useful information for more than a year. It is no wonder that the CONSUMER CONNECTION was one of the two gold and two silver awards presented to DCA’s Policy & Publications Development (PPD) Office at this year’s State Information Officers Council Awards. I wish to express my hearty congratulations to the staff of our PPD Office for their hard work and dedication.

This summer issue continues in that tradition. Within these pages, you will find detailed coverage of this year’s Identity Theft Summit and LifeSmarts Nationals, as well as up-to-date information on the latest security issues such as “bump keys.” Summertime health issues are featured in stories about how to stay healthy while on vacation, outdoor health risks, and the latest word on how to protect yourself from the effects of the sun. This issue also has a story that warns consumers about man-made hazards, such as unlicensed satellite dish installers. Last, but by no means least, CONSUMER CONNECTION introduces readers to the delights of California’s more than 500 certified farmers’ markets. It is my pleasure to bring you all this and more in this issue of CONSUMER CONNECTION.

Carrie Lopez, Director
Department of Consumer Affairs
Real-world solutions to virtual world problems was the theme of the Third Annual Identity Theft Summit held in South San Francisco on April 11, 2007. This year’s event, titled Protecting Privacy Online: A California Identity Theft Summit, was attended by more than 400 people, including attorneys, business and government leaders, members of law enforcement, and the general public.

The theme of the free event responded to recent increases in security breaches and online fraud; the location, the heart of California’s Silicon Valley, was a logical choice. Nine specialized workshops were offered, and attendees were presented with updates and solutions to protect Californians—and help them protect themselves—against online fraud, identity theft, and other online dangers. Among the many featured speakers and presenters were J. Clark Kelso, Chief Information Officer for the State of California; Michelle Jun, Associate General Counsel for Google; Scott Shipman, Senior Counsel of eBay, Inc.; and Ron Gabrielson, Deputy of Internal Affairs for the Geek Squad.

Each year, approximately one million Californians are victims of high-tech crime. With no warning and just a few bits of stolen information, thieves can completely empty a victim’s bank account. And, because these crimes occur in the virtual world, they can remain undetected for some time. Identity thieves, hackers, and other online bandits continually change their methods in order to escape detection. “It’s important to keep California’s consumers, and those who protect them, supplied with the most up-to-the-minute information regarding online predators,” said Scott Reid, then-Acting Director for the California Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA).

The Conference was presented by DCA, the Department’s California Office of Privacy Protection (COPP), the District Attorneys Association, and the State and Consumer Services Agency. COPP offers tips and information about online fraud and identity theft at www.privacyprotection.ca.gov. For more information about the Identity Theft Summit, visit www.idtheftsummit.ca.gov.
New Things That Go Bump in the Night?

According to the Internet and network news, our homes and personal security are now threatened by a new menace—“bump keys.” Unlike master keys that are fabricated by locksmiths to fit a series of locks, bump keys can be made and used by criminals with little or no training.

A bump key is a normal key filed down so that it can slide into any keyhole it fits. Most household locks are held fast by pins that pass between the body of the lock and the cylinder that turns the bolt. Each pin is actually two stacked sections held down by a spring. The sheer, where the sections meet, varies in height along the three or more pins in a lock. To work, a key must lift each pin so that all their sheers and the sheer between the cylinder and the lock meet. This allows the cylinder to turn freely in the lock and withdraw or extend a bolt. Unlike a “pick” that involves teasing each pin to its sheer level and requires training and practice to use, a bump key is supposed to accomplish the same thing by hammering a ground-down key and twisting open the lock during the brief instant the tops of all the pins fly up.

According to the California Locksmiths Association (CLA), bump keys are far from cutting edge, having been around for 75 years or more. Crime statistics do not indicate an upsurge of bump key burglary. According to the California Department of Justice, between 2000 and 2005, 61.3 percent of the 1.4 million burglaries reported involved the use of force to break in. This underscores the CLA’s longtime advocacy of sturdy deadbolts for businesses and residences. Many deadbolts have a throw (length) of less than two inches and are secured by a thin section of wood in the door’s frame.

More mania than menace, bump key hysteria may serve consumers by reminding them to have their locks and security systems evaluated by a licensed locksmith. You can verify the license of a locksmith located close to you by visiting the Bureau of Security and Investigative Service’s Web site at www.dca.ca.gov/bsis/lookup.htm or by calling (800) 952-5210.
Would you like to support California’s family farms? Meet the people who grow your food? Pick over the cream of the crop without bumping shopping carts with someone?

You can do all those things, and maybe even find some vegetables you remember from grandpa’s garden, at a neighborhood Certified Farmers’ Market. There are nearly 500 Certified Farmers’ Markets in California, from Alameda to Yucaipa, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the number is growing. A USDA directory lists 4,385 farmers’ markets operating in the United States in 2006, an 18 percent increase from 2004.

“The statistics show farmers’ markets continue to be an increasing source of income for our nation’s farmers,” said Lloyd Day, administrator of the USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, in a December news release. “Their popularity with consumers is growing, and buyers enjoy fresh, locally grown products.”

Certified Farmers’ Markets (CFMs) re-establish the traditional link between farmers and consumers, according to the California Federation of Certified Farmers’ Markets, and benefit small farmers, consumers, and the community. Farmers gain an outlet for their crops, consumers gain access to locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables, and communities gain a stronger sense of identity by bringing both groups together.

To operate, a Certified Farmers’ Market must be approved by the county agricultural commissioners’ office, under regulations established by the California Department of Food
Certified Farmers’ Markets (CFMs) re-establish the traditional link between farmers and consumers, according to the California Federation of Certified Farmers’ Markets, and benefit small farmers, consumers, and the community.

But not all produce sold at farmers’ markets is unsuitable for grocery store produce bins. According to the Pacific Coast Farmers’ Market Association, many farmers chose to only sell their wares at farmers’ markets. Growers of organic, culinary, or specialty crops, including heirloom vegetables, are often found at farmers’ markets. Many people consider heirloom varieties better-tasting than the hybridized varieties that tend to be favored by major grocery retailers, the Association says.

So what can you buy at a Certified Farmers’ Market? Because the commodities are locally grown, the selection will be seasonal. In fact, most markets operate only from April to October. In addition to fruits, unshelled nuts, and vegetables, markets can also offer herbs, plants, eggs, and cut flowers. Noncertified commodities such as dried fruit, shelled nuts, juice, meat, poultry, cheese, jams and jellies, ocean fish, and baked goods are sometimes offered. Some markets even sell wine. The markets range from simple folding tables set up in a parking lot to something more elaborate, with booths, hot food vendors, crafters, children’s activities, and even musical entertainment. Under State law, a Certified Farmers’ Market can only be operated by local governments, by certified producers (farmers), or by a nonprofit organization. Vendors selling processed foods, hot food, packaged goods, or craft items, need special permits or licenses, and must meet your county’s health department regulations. Organically grown foods must also meet all federal, State, and local food safety regulations and requirements.

No matter how elaborate the farmers’ market is, the most popular attraction is always the simplest—seasonal bounty, fresh from the earth.

[See Tips On How To Find A Market Near You, and Shopping Tips; Next Page]
How to find a Certified Farmers’ Market

The California Federation of Certified Farmers’ Markets has a “Find a Market” feature on its Web site to help you find markets in your area. Go to www.cafarmersmarkets.com.

The Southland Farmers’ Market Association has a list of Southern California Certified Farmers Markets. Go to www.sfma.net.

The Pacific Coast Farmers’ Market Association has a list of markets in the State’s northern coastal region. Go to wwwpcfma.com.

The USDA’s Marketing Services Branch has a Web site on farmers market activities, with links to publications, research reports, and a list of markets throughout the country. Go to www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets, or call the Farmers’ Market Hotline at (800) 384-8704.

For information on the Certified Farmers’ Market program or the Certified Farmers’ Market Advisory Committee, go to www.cdfa.ca.gov, or contact the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s Certified Farmers’ Market Program, 1220 N. St., Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 445-2180.

Certified Farmers’ Market Shopping Tips

- Bring lots of small bills and change. You’ll be paying at each farmer’s stand, and there is no central checkout or ATM.
- Bring cloth or net reusable shopping bags to carry your purchases.
- These are outdoor markets; remember to dress for the weather. Use sunscreen or wear a hat, and wear comfortable shoes.
- Most of the produce is field run and unsorted, meaning it may have blemishes.
- Take a minute to talk to the growers; you may come away with a new recipe or growing tips.

—from the California Federation of Certified Farmers’ Markets
Summer travel should be full of eye-popping scenery, unforgettable adventures, abundant relaxation—and maybe lots of shopping. It should not be full of unexpected sickness or disease. Fortunately, there are things you can do before you leave home to help you prevent or minimize illness or injury while you’re away.

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) has several recommendations that will help keep you safe and healthy when you travel. The first step is to visit your physician. ACEP suggests that you ask your doctor for a medical summary listing any medical problems, allergies, and operations. Take the summary with you, along with a list of your medications, using both the generic and brand names. You may also want to carry a copy of your prescription for verification if you are going out of the country. Be sure to take the medication you will need for your trip—and maybe a little extra—so you can avoid having to fill a prescription at a non-U.S. pharmacy. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warns that filling prescriptions abroad may have adverse health consequences because of confusion with drug brand names that could inadvertently lead consumers to take the wrong medication.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggest you review your routine vaccinations to be sure they are up to date. Additional vaccines may be recommended, or required, for visits to other countries. Your doctor can tell you what you need, or you can check with the CDC online at www.cdc.gov.travel for specifics. Call the CDC at (877) FYI-TRIP or (877) 394-8747 for recorded messages on immunizations and other health-related topics. Remember that most vaccines take time to become effective, so plan to get your shots at least four to six weeks ahead of time.

Also, if you wear corrective lenses, take an extra pair of glasses or contacts with you, and take your contact lens solution from home.

For travel out of the country, the CDC is your source for up-to-date health information and advisories, and the U.S. State Department is your source for information on safety concerns, travel advisories, and other matters. The State Department also has a list of the U.S. embassies in more than 160 capital cities of the world. If you run into trouble in another country, contact the nearest U.S. Embassy. Embassies can help you in emergencies, medical or otherwise. Go online to www.travel.state.gov for contact information, travel advisories, document requirements, embassies, and more.

Sources: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American College of Emergency Physicians, Travel Industry Association
U.S. medical insurance is generally not accepted outside the United States, so you should review your health insurance policy before traveling to find out if it is accepted at your travel destination. Obtaining medical treatment and hospital care abroad can be expensive, and medical evacuation to the United States may cost more than $50,000, according to the State Department. If your insurance policy does not cover you abroad, you may want to look into travel insurance. Your travel agent will have information on travel insurance, or you can purchase a policy yourself. Insuremytrip.com has information on policies available from a variety of major travel insurance companies. Call (800) 487-4722 or go online to www.insuremytrip.com for details.

What’s in a Travelers’ Health Kit?
All these precautions still may not keep you from becoming ill on a trip. In that case, a well-equipped first-aid kit can keep a minor medical emergency from becoming a major pain in the neck. Below are some ideas for what to take in a traveler’s first aid kit. Remember, if you plan to carry these items on board a commercial airplane, the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has limits on the amount and type of liquids and gels allowed in carry-on bags. Most items are acceptable for stowed luggage, however. Contact your airline or go online to www.tsa.gov/311 for specifics.

Travelers heading for wilderness areas may need additional supplies. Many sporting goods stores, especially those specializing in outdoor recreation, sell first-aid kits for wilderness areas.

Of course, the chief weapon in the hiker’s arsenal is knowledge. That starts with a visit to your local park ranger who can advise you on a wide range of hazards from unusual weather conditions to bad trails. Checking in and providing an itinerary to park staff can also be a lifesaver in the event of an incapacitating injury. According to a recent California study, the main causes of injury and death in the wilderness are heart disease (heart attack), drowning, and falls. Because of that, it makes good sense to take a course in first aid, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Your local chapter of the American Red Cross can advise you about classes in your community.

Call (800) 438-4636 or go online to www.redcross.org/where/chapts.asp#CA for information on classes and local chapter.

Hand Washing: Simple but Critical
Experts say simple hand washing is the easiest, but most effective, way to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.

Hand Washing Tips
If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, use a waterless, alcohol-based hand gel containing at least 60 percent alcohol.

Wash your hands AFTER
• Using the toilet.
• Coughing or sneezing into your hands.
• Touching anything that could have contaminated your hands.

Wash your hands BEFORE
• Handling food.
• Eating or drinking.
• Brushing your teeth.
• Smoking.

Wash your hands frequently throughout the day, even if you think they don’t need it.

How to wash your hands thoroughly
• Wet hands with warm water.
• Apply a generous amount of soap.
• Lather well.
• Rub hands together for 20 seconds, paying attention to fingernails and areas between the fingers.
• Dry hands with a disposable towel.
• Use the disposable towel to turn off the faucet and open the door.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Travelers’ Health Kit (Suggested Items)

- Antacid
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antiseptic wipes
- Decongestant and/or antihistamine
- First aid supplies (adhesive bandages, gauze, elastic bandages)
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Insect repellent (containing DEET)
- Lip balm
- Lubricating eye drops
- Moleskin for blisters
- Motion sickness medicine
- Pain reliever such as aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen
- Small scissors
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher)
- Throat lozenges
- Tweezers
One of the best parts of travel is making new friends. It can also be one of the worst, especially when your new friends are the parasitic Cimex Lectularius, or temperate bedbug.

Compared to modern threats like ticks with Lyme disease, bedbugs seem a nostalgic nuisance, more the stuff of wayfarers’ tales and nursery rhymes than biohazard. Part of the reason for this is that bedbugs have been out of site and mind for the last fifty years, virtually extinct as a result of generous applications of DDT after the Second World War.

Guess what? They’re back, and in a big way. In Australia they first reappeared in budget motels and hostels, later spreading to five star hotels, cruise ships and single-family homes. In the U.S., the blood-sucking insects are well established from coast to coast according to the National Pest Management Association. The resurgence has also hit Western Europe especially hard.

No one is clear as to why this is occurring, as reported in a recent study by the Institute of Biology, London.

The good news is that although bedbugs are bloodsuckers, they have not been implicated in the spread of disease. They are, however, a nuisance, especially if they hitch a ride home with you and become well established in your home.

**Here are a few tips for the traveler:**

Before checking into a hotel, ask what precautions they take to ensure a bedbug-free environment. They should be sensitive to the matter since several major hotels have been sued for inadequately protecting their guests from this pest. Moreover, across the country some law firms are adding bedbug litigation as a specialty.

It’s difficult to tell a bedbug bite from that produced by other biting insects such as fleas or gnats. Nor is there any immediate danger posed by bedbug bites unless you have an allergy to them. On the other hand, rarely used bedding, such as that in a vacation cabin, has been host to black widow spider nests. The nearly invisible babies can deliver life-threatening stings.

If you have been exposed to bedbugs during your vacation, you may wish to wash or dry clean your clothes before you return home. To fumigate your luggage, you may wish to choose from a number of insecticides on the market. Some experts say leaving your luggage in a hot car fully exposed to the sun for a day will kill any “stowaways”.

Your vacation is long over, and you discover “friends” have followed you home and have begun to colonize. What should you do? You may purchase an insect bomb. On the other hand, the more thorough the infestation, the more difficult it will be to exterminate. In that case, it will pay to bring in a professional—a licensed pesticide applicator. To find out if the applicator of your choice is legitimate, you can look up his or her license through the Structural Pest Control Board by visiting their Web site at www.pestboard.ca.gov/license.htm. Sleep tight.
Sun Safety: Coping with UVA Rays
For years, medical experts have warned us about the dangers of sun exposure. We’ve been told to wear hats, sunglasses with ultraviolet (UV) protection, and apply sunscreen with a high Sun Protection Factor (SPF). We have been told that if we take these precautions and avoid getting sunburned, we should, for the most part, be safe from the effects of the sun’s ultraviolet rays. These precautions are especially important for those of us living in the Golden State, the land of outdoor adventures, surf, and endless summer days filled with sunshine.

New findings by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, however, indicate that we need to do more. The majority of sunscreens currently on the market only block ultraviolet-B rays. Studies by the FDA now show that sunscreens need to also block ultraviolet-A (UVA) rays, which penetrate the skin at deeper levels and are linked to skin cancer and wrinkles. UVA rays can penetrate glass, which means that there is good chance of lifelong exposure.

Researchers also found that overall sun exposure, especially in childhood, has powerful, irreversible effects later in life, which can lead to melanoma and skin cancer.

What to do? The FDA suggests that you shield both your children and yourself from the sun. Consumers now need to check the daily weather forecast to find out the daily “UV” index for their town. Why? Because you get the most danger from sun exposure from daily activities—such as shopping, driving, recess, and sports—where you live, not where you visit on vacation. UVA rays vary from day to day and town to town depending on conditions such as ozone coverage, altitude, and weather conditions.

Sun worshippers and non-worshippers alike are advised to take the following precautions:

- Use plenty of sunscreen with super-high SPF (above 15) protection and use it liberally.
- Put your sunscreen on at least a half hour before you go outside. It takes about that long to start working.
- Look for sunscreens with Helioplex, which protects longer, and Mexoryl, which specifically protects against UVA rays.
- Keep your kids in the shade, especially during the peak UV hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Avoid the sun during days of high exposure. You can find this information by zip code by going online to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Web site at www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html.
Los Banos’ San Luis Wolves were one of 30 high school teams competing for the title of consumer champions at the LifeSmarts Nationals in Orlando, FL, in April. The Wolves earned the right to compete at the Nationals by beating Los Angeles’ Soledad Enrichment Action Girls’ Academy (SEA) Dolphins at the State Finals in March, but failed to place in the top 10 in Orlando. Top honor at the Nationals was taken the second year in a row by the team from Piedra Vista High School in Farmington, N.M.

LifeSmarts is a program run by the Washington, D.C.-based National Consumers League (NCL), a nonprofit organization that has been championing consumers’ rights since 1899. Each year, students from across the country test their knowledge of personal finance, health and safety, consumers’ rights and responsibilities, and the environment.

The quest for the national title begins each year with teams participating in an online competition. The two highest-scoring teams in each state then compete in the state finals, and the winners advance to the Nationals. According to the NCL, more than 20,500 teens answered more than 2.6 million consumer-related questions in this year’s online competition. California’s State Finals were held at the Department of Consumer Affairs’ (DCA) headquarters in Sacramento on March 15. Rosario Marin, Secretary of the State and Consumer Services Agency (photo at left), addressed the students and the crowd, then presented each competitor with certificates from legislators in each of the team’s respective districts. DCA has been LifeSmarts sponsor and host for the State Finals since California teams began competing during the 2000-2001 academic year. The winners of California’s State Finals earn an all-expenses paid trip to the Nationals. Teams that finish in the top three spots in the Nationals earn valuable prizes such as savings bonds and gift cards. For more information about LifeSmarts, visit NCL’s Web site at www.lifesmarts.org.
CONSUMER CONNECTION honored as “Best of the Best” in California

The staff of the Department of Consumer Affairs’ (DCA) Policy & Publications Development (PPD) Office would like to thank the California State Information Officers Council (SiOC) for bestowing top honors on CONSUMER CONNECTION as Best Magazine Publication in State government for 2007.

The PPD Office received a total of four awards—two gold and two silver—from SiOC’s yearly contest. PPD’s second gold award, for the best brochure/pamphlet, was given to DCA’s Cyber Safety Summit registration brochure. The two silver awards presented to PPD were given in the “Best Bang for your Buck” category for the Board Member Appreciation Day postcard that was produced in-house for under $100, and for the “Looks to Die For? Cosmetic Surgery Risks” article that appeared in the spring 2006 edition of the CONSUMER CONNECTION.

A panel of 20 distinguished judges from the fields of education, private business, broadcasting, and other fields not related to State service determine each year’s winners. After the awards were tallied, DCA ended up in a four-way tie for the most number of awards. This was the first year DCA entered the contest.

Founded in 1970, SiOC is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing support, education, information, networking, and other opportunities to communication, editorial, and publication professionals in California State service. Each year, the organization sponsors the SiOC awards in order to recognize the best work produced in State government.

In addition to publishing CONSUMER CONNECTION, the PPD Office edits, develops, and manages distribution and inventory of more than 200 DCA publications. The Office is also charged with the formulation and development of DCA policy.
Dishing out on Satellite Service
So you’ve decided to make the switch from cable to satellite television, but with all of the ad hype, how do you know you’ll be getting a legitimate and reliable satellite service? We spoke with the experts at the Bureau of Electronic Appliance Repair (BEAR), who offered the following tips for arranging satellite TV installation:

1. Make sure the company or contractor performing the work is licensed. Go to BEAR’s Web site at www.bear.ca.gov to see if a business has a valid Electronic Service Dealer’s license and how long it has been operating. Also, do not forget to check the Better Business Bureau for any complaints or corrective actions.

2. Check for referrals and references. These can give you an added assurance that the company has done good work for other customers.

3. Ask the technician or contractor what is being installed before the job begins. Afterwards, inspect the work to see if it meets with what was agreed upon.

If you have a complaint about the satellite dish installation, the first step is to contact the installer directly to see if the staff can remedy the issue. Many times, a business will be glad to correct problems or issues to ensure that the customer is happy and satisfied. If the problem cannot be resolved, then file a complaint with BEAR, who will either refer it to the Department of Consumer Affairs’ Mediation Program to assist in resolving your complaint, or open an investigation in the matter. Call the Consumer Information Center at (800) 952-5210, or BEAR at (916) 574-2069 for assistance with filing a complaint. Your local Better Business Bureau is also a good place to report rebate issues and complaints concerning poor service or workmanship.

Like any industry or service, satellite television providers have their share of bad apples. Rebates seem to be the most common problem; often, they are offered as part of an incentive to sign up. Then, after the installation is complete, the customer learns that clauses and conditions in the fine print prevent him or her from being able to cash in on the rebate.

Let’s say you signed up for service but changed your mind or are unhappy. Are there ways to get out of a signed contract? That depends, because every contract or agreement can differ. The best course is to carefully read the terms and conditions BEFORE you sign anything. Look at the cancellation policy, and find out if there are any penalties for bailing out early. Do your homework before you commit!
Consumer Connection Survey

Welcome to the Department of Consumer Affair’s Consumer Connection newsletter survey. If you have a few minutes, please take our survey. Data from this survey will be used only to improve future newsletters.

1. Did you find the information in our newsletter useful?
   ○ Very useful
   ○ Somewhat useful
   ○ Neutral
   ○ Not useful
   Comments:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

2. On a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the best, how would you rate the overall content of the newsletter? (circle one)
   1 2 3 4 5
   Comments:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3. Identify the article(s) you found to be the most valuable.
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. What topics would like to see covered in future issues? (Select all that apply.)
   ○ Medical/health related
   ○ Identity theft
   ○ Auto repair
   ○ Landlord/tenant issues
   ○ Home repair scams
   ○ Other:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

5. How would you describe yourself?
   ○ A media representative
   ○ A legislator or legislative staff member
   ○ A member of a consumer group
   ○ A member of the general public
   ○ A staff person from a District Attorneys Office
   ○ A member of a Consumer-Based Organization
   ○ A staff person from a governmental agency
   ○ A Department of Consumer Affairs employee
   ○ Other:
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

6. Where are you located?
   ○ Los Angeles area
   ○ Orange County
   ○ San Diego
   ○ Riverside/San Bernardino
   ○ Central Valley
   ○ Bay Area
   ○ Northern California
   ○ Sacramento
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

Thank you for taking the time to answer our survey. If you have any additional feedback about the Consumer Connection, please let us know.
2007 Outreach Calendar

August 2007

10–19
San Mateo County Fair
An event for families that provides a great lineup of exhibits, attractions, good food, great music, and free consumer information.
Location: 2495 South Delaware Street, San Mateo, CA
Sponsored by: County of San Mateo, AT&T, Ben & Jerry's, Comcast, Sprint, and numerous other organizations at the private, local, and State level.
Web: www.sanmateocountyfair.com

17–Sept. 3
California State Fair
The California State Fair is a 16-day multi-event with a wide range of attractions and activities for everyone including traditional competitive exhibits, agriculture, home art and technological competitions, thrill rides, big name entertainment, and specialty foods.
Location: Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, CA
Sponsored by: Department of Consumer Affairs, Coca Cola, Pontiac, Department of Conservation, SMUD, Golden1 Credit Union, AT&T, and numerous other organizations at the private, local and State level.
Web: www.cdf.ca.gov

September 2007

5–7
2007 Refugee Summit
This Summit will feature sessions regarding refugee resettlement concerns, keynote speakers, a town hall meeting led by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement, workshops on a variety of topics, forum discussions, and exhibits.
Location: Renaissance Hotel, 111 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, CA
Sponsored by: Department of Social Services
Web: www.cdss.ca.gov

7–30
Los Angeles County Fair
The Los Angeles County Fair is an eighteen-day event featuring hundreds of exhibitors, vendors, and carnival rides.
Location: 1101 West Mckinley Avenue, Pomona, CA
Sponsored by: LA County Fair Association
Web: www.lacountyfair.com

28–29
California Black Expo & Diversity Conference
This event will feature various tributes and awards to local community leaders, hundreds of exhibitors, entertainment, and great food.
Location: San Diego Concourse (downtown), 202 C Street, San Diego, CA
Time: 10am-6pm
Sponsored by: The Observer Media Group
Web: None available

October 2007

3–14
Big Fresno Fair
The Big Fresno Fair is a 12-day event with exhibitors, vendors and carnival dedicated to the residents of Fresno County.
Location: 1121 South Chance Avenue, Fresno, CA
Sponsored by: The Big Fresno Fair
Web: www.fresnofair.com

12–14
E. Contra Costa County Home and Garden Show
The Home and Garden Show is geared toward educating homeowners about home improvement tips and safety, and will feature live auctions and seminars.
Location: Contra Costa Fairgrounds, Antioch, CA
Sponsored by: Liberty Shows, Inc.
Web: www.libertyshow.com

Information on the events here was accurate at the time Consumer Connection went to press. Some items were tentative. Readers are encouraged to verify information with event sponsors. The listing of an event does not necessarily represent sponsorship or endorsement of the event by the California Department of Consumer Affairs.