

# SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BUSINESS JOURNAL

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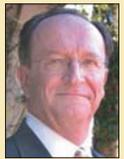
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## Number of Civil Filings Plunges in Courts

### Action in Injury Cases Takes Notable Decline

By SHELLY GARCIA  
Senior Reporter

Civil court filings have dropped considerably throughout the Los Angeles Superior Court system causing both consternation and concern among attorneys, judges and administrators.

**LAW UPDATE**

Although the reasons for the drop-off, especially notable for personal injury firms step up marketing.....Page 10

**A Lull in Civil Litigation**

Superior Court civil filings decline

Type of Complaint	Location	'03-'04 Filings	'02-'03 Filings	Percent Change
Personal Injury/Vehicle	North Valley	827	1,059	-22%
Personal Injury/Vehicle	N'west Valley	1,102	1,544	-28
Personal Injury/Other	North Valley	499	556	-10
Personal Injury/Other	N'west Valley	576	770	-25
Malpractice	North Valley	72	90	-20
Malpractice	N'west Valley	159	167	-5

Source: Superior Court data

cases related to motor vehicle incidents, are not yet entirely clear, many believe the numbers reflect a trend to settle these

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### Computer Forensics Plays Role in Litigation

By SHELLY GARCIA  
Senior Reporter

When two attorneys charged with misappropriating trade secrets denied any wrongdoing, David Gurnick headed straight for a computer expert.

Gurnick, an attorney and shareholder at Lewitt, Hackman, Shapiro, Marshall & Harlan LLP in Encino, wanted to show that

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## Getting Motivated

### Personal Growth Gurus Become Big Resource For Valley Executives

By JEFF WEISS  
Contributing Reporter

FEELING disorganized? Not adequately juggling your personal and business life? Do you feel unfocused? If so, you're not alone.

Expressly designed to combat these business maladies, personal growth coaches are becoming almost common in the corporate world. While most people have heard of pioneering "gurus" such as Tony Robbins and Zig Ziglar, fewer are aware that numerous lesser-known growth coaches have cropped up to specifically cater to the business community. Many local executives and company presidents attribute a great deal of their success to coaches that have aided their managerial abilities.

Stepping into Marx Acosta-Rubio's Chatsworth office, one notices the autographed framed photos of the nine personal growth coaches that have heavily influenced the One Stop Shop's president and CEO's life.

"These coaches have played a major role in my business and personal life. I have learned to always have a positive mental attitude. The coaches that I have used teach discipline,

**WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT THEIR ADVISORS**



Acosta-Rubio

'The coaches I have used teach discipline, focus and integrity.'  
- Marx Acosta-Rubio  
One Stop Shop



Robbins



Bishara

'I've become more focused and more accessible.'  
- Marc Bishara  
Venbrook Risk Management and Insurance



Edwards



Wood

'It has let me be more confident in taking risks.'  
- H. David Wood  
Willis North America



Pearlman

focus, and integrity. The philosophies embedded in their teachings help me to achieve my goals," Acosta-Rubio said.

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## 'Growth' Aids Firm's Move To Inc. 500

By JEFF WEISS  
Contributing Reporter

Chatsworth-based One Stop Shop has made for the first time Inc. 500's list of the 500 fastest growing companies in the country - partly a credit to the influence of personal growth coaches, according to its president and CEO Marx Acosta-Rubio.

The company ranks No. 383 on the magazine's recently published list.

Also making the list from the Valley are Canoga Park's DSL Extreme, which was ranked at No. 13, with a staggering four/five year average annual sales growth of 1,214.5 percent. Chatsworth's Millennium Rugs finished at 115, with annual growth of 258.5 percent, while Glendale's Red Peacock International placed 164 with 202.5 percent growth. Calabasas' iHomeowners came in at 389 with 94.2 percent annual growth, followed by La Crescenta's Pacific Paving-stone (403, 92 percent growth), Chatsworth's Micro Solutions Enterprises

**Seven other local companies make magazine's rankings**

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## Kaiser Plans Ambitious High-Tech Records Revamp

By JONATHAN D. COLBURN  
Staff Reporter

Throughout Kaiser Permanente's Southern California hospitals, doctors and patients are experiencing a transition into the future of medical records and information.

As part of a nationwide project linking all of the company's hospitals and doctors, the company will be keeping records of every patient's doctor visits, medical tests and prescriptions ordered. The data will then be accessible to anybody in the company's computer systems.

Matthew Gerlach, senior vice president of business development for Kaiser, is heading up the project in Southern California. He said the company sees itself to be excelling in almost every area, with the notable exception of electronic records.

"We consider ourselves to be one of the most integrated health care delivery systems in the country, yet our information systems weren't really paralleling that," Gerlach said.

When the new system is in place, Gerlach said, patients and doctors will have appointments based less

upon patients trying to recall their medical history, since everything will be available on a computer, regardless of how many doctors a patient has seen.

"Patients tend to forget," said Gerlach. "You go to a doctor, and you don't know exact specific information. That information will be in the system. Instead of a doctor having a patient come in and starting to ask questions, it will become a situation of confirming the information that's already in there."

Please see KAISER page 38



## Health Care Leadership Awards

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2004  
Warner Center Marriott Hotel • Woodland Hills  
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For reservation and sponsorship information call: 818-676-1750 or email: events@sfbj.com

# Personal: Executives Get Boost From Coaching

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He said nine coaches have benefited him. They are: Jim Rhon, Steven Heller, W. Clement Stone, Napoleon Hill, Daniel Inosanto, Zig Ziglar, Tom Hopkins, Tony Robbins, and Harvey McKay.

The chief executive officer of **Willis North America's** Western Region, Woodland Hills resident H. David Wood, has worked extensively with **TEC**, a company that aims to increase the effectiveness, enhance the lives and reduce the stress of business owners, CEOs, presidents and senior level key executives.

"It's helped me to be clearer on my strategic direction. TEC has let me be more confident in taking risks and given me a forum to bounce negative things off of," Wood said. "That old adage it's lonely at the top is not inaccurate. You don't want to confide in peers, your superiors or people below you in the company. It's almost natural to have a coach to hash out issues with."

In existence since 1957, TEC has offices scattered across five continents. Its website maintains that people should join the company only if they embrace change and growth, they are open to honest and candid feedback, they are energized by challenges, and they are "creative and innovative" thinkers. Wood's TEC group meets at locations scattered throughout the Valley.

"We try to increase the effectiveness of business owners, CEOs and presidents," Mitch Pearlman, Chairman of TEC Group 134 said. "What may differentiate us is that we work on personal and professional growth. If someone works too much then we help them with their balance. If they need help with business then we help their business skills. The magic behind TEC is less of what I have to offer, it's more the brainpower of the talented individuals that we bring together. I harness their energy as they problem-solve through their daily issues."

## Paying the price

While numerous businessmen have been helped by TEC, it's not cheap to have one's energy harnessed. All-day meetings occur once a month, with CEOs forking over \$950 a session, while key executive groups cost \$475.

Though often marketed otherwise, many of the techniques used by personal growth coaches are directly related to therapy, albeit therapy with a business tint to it. Woodland Hills psychologist Angela Rukule believes that businessmen blanch at the idea of going to a psychologist, thinking that it connotes weakness.

"It's not in vogue for businessmen to go to a therapist because it invokes weakness. But these

coaches have become a social and business phenomenon. It's the result of the stressful evolution of our world that people are looking for a sense of grounding, a sense of stability, and a place and a way to deal with all the intense changes," Rukule, the clinical director of Integrated Awareness Programs, said. "The truth is that there's less of a stigma to it, you get a psychological perspective to deal with managerial issues and trends that are changing. It's all psychologically based but couched in a way that's less threatening. Therapists have found that if they write "personal training coach" on their card, and they understand business, it's an effective marketing tool."

Marc Bishara, a partner in Woodland Hills' **Venbrook Risk Management and Insurance**, has also seen dividends from working with personal growth coaches.

"I've worked with personal growth coaches for at least six years. I've had good experiences. I went to a coach not because I was failing, but because I wanted to take it to the next level. To get into the zone. I've become more focused and more accountable. My communication has also improved markedly," Bishara said.

Bishara's coach, Andrea Edwards of Altadena-based **Edwards Associates**, estimates that 70 percent of her business is performance coaching. Edwards asserts that though coaching possesses similarities with psychotherapy, key differences remain.

## Business oriented

"Psychotherapists can get much deeper as to why people behave a certain way. A coach talks more about their business life and how the personal life impacts the business life," Edwards said. "Coaches don't need a license to practice. It's similar to therapy in that most good coaches provide a safe non-judgmental place to talk about the issues."

Ultimately, Rukule advised caution to those seeking out a personal growth coach of their own. Though many people have prospered from external guidance, without any set training standards one always faces the risk of dealing with an unqualified coach.

"Coaches take the premise of creating a healthy environment in your world and market it to you. One should ask themselves, 'Do I need to do this and are these the right steps to move forward?'" Rukule said. "Many coaches, particularly the famous ones, are very dynamic and enticing because of their theories. If you are a growth centered person, change can happen. But be sure that you are provided with the right tools to achieve success. Anything that promises success without giving you real tools is giving you a temporary high."

## VALLEY BRIEFS

### Local Earnings Reports

**PS Business Parks Inc.** reported operating results for the three months ended September 30. Net income for the third quarter was \$2.8 million on revenues of \$55.2 million compared to income of \$7.8 million on revenues of \$48.9 million for the period a year ago.

**K-Swiss Inc.** announced the results of its third quarter ended September 30. Net income increased 36.9 percent to \$20.6 million compared with \$15.1 million in the same period a year ago. Net income for the first nine months of the year increased 34.5 percent to \$55.6 million compared with \$41.3 million a year ago.

Worldwide revenues for the third quarter increased 12 percent to \$135.7 million compared with \$121.2 million in the same period a year ago. Domestic revenues increased 5.3 percent to \$110.9 million and international revenues increased 55.7 percent to \$24.8 million.

**Health Net Inc.** reported third quarter net

income of \$71.8 million compared to a net loss of \$2.2 million in the third quarter of 2003. The third quarter net loss in 2003 reflected a settlement of litigation arising in connection with Health Net's 1998 sale of its workers' compensation business.

Health Net's total revenues rose 4.2 percent in the third quarter to \$2.9 billion from \$2.2 billion compared with the third quarter of 2003.

Calabasas-based **Beverly Hills Bancorp Inc.**, the parent company of First Bank of Beverly Hills, F.S.B. reported consolidated net income for the quarter ended September 30 of \$3.0 million, or \$0.14 per diluted share, compared with \$2.7 million, or \$0.13 per diluted share, for the comparable period last year.

Woodland Hills based **Optical Communication Products**, a manufacturer of fiber optic systems and storage area networks, reported a net loss of \$673,000 for the fourth quarter ended September 30.

That compares with a net loss of \$2.2 million for the comparable period a year ago.

Revenue for the fourth quarter was \$13.2 million, a 26 percent increase over the comparable period last year. - *Jonathan D. Colburn*



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## 1ST QUARTER 2005 EDUCATION OUTLOOK IN THE VALLEY

On January 3, 2005, the San Fernando Valley Business Journal publishes its first quarter "2005 Education Outlook in the Valley" Spotlight. This supplement features articles offering advice, emerging trends, and new opportunities, on a variety of educational topics. Learn about the advantages, opportunities, and curriculum of the valleys leading private schools, as they help shape our next generation of leaders.

Looking for your next superstar executive? Been thinking about graduate school lately? Take an in-depth look at some of the most innovative graduate and continued education programs in the country, located right here in the valley. Is your company in need of specialized training? See how dynamic workforce development programs can successfully impact your talent pool, which is any thriving companies most valuable asset.

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Call Kevin Reed at 818-676-1750

Publication Date: January 3, 2005  
Space Reservation Deadline: December 27, 2004