



MORRISON & COMPANY

IN THIS ISSUE:



INDUSTRY NEWS

Take a look at exciting news and announcements our clients have to share as well as industry related topics. The photo above was taken by KQED News and captures Oroville Dam's damaged emergency spillway. Oroville caught nationwide attention this February as extensive flood warnings were in place, causing many concerns for our neighbors and the industry.



MORRISON SNAPSHOTS

Catch up with the Morrison team on what we've been involved with.



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS

My first business got its start in 1964 when I talked someone with a truck into taking me to a local egg operation that was closing to see if they might cut me a deal on a few laying cages. Instead they gave them to me, along with as many hens as I could catch in an old poultry barn in which they had simply been turned loose.

I began selling eggs to family and friends and at the age of nine usually had \$50 or so in my pocket. In high school I switched to yard work and then fence building after I learned how to build barbed wire fences. While still a newlywed, I sold Kirby vacuums door-to-door on a straight commission for a year and a half (an extraordinarily useful experience and an article in itself).



So after over 20 years with great companies like Deloitte, Butte County Rice Growers Association, and Sunsweet, the idea of starting my own business back in 2002 wasn't entirely foreign. Working alone had its plusses—I really liked the dress code—but after a few years of relying on subcontractors for help the inspiration to build a "real company" came in an odd form: a heart attack. That might motivate some to slow down but for me it was a signal to get serious about where I was going.

My pastor introduced me to Geoff Chinnock in 2006, who became Employee #001 in 2007. Geoff got his training by osmosis, working by my side on every project. I began rudimentary marketing and after a year we needed more help. Today, having learned all I could teach him and more, Geoff oversees the CPAs in our Interim/Outsource practice, serving clients with accounting, financial, and management assistance. In January, he assumed day-to-day firm management as Managing Principal.

In 2002 I attended a conference where Karen Rich of USDA Rural Development described a grant for agricultural producers and related organizations. I'd never written a grant but two clients let me try and each received \$500,000 in funding. I learned that makes people really happy and the service took off.

A client was once informed they were the largest inception-to-date recipient of funding from a well-known USDA program, competing against giants and employing just an Executive Director, a part-time assistant, and us. Before the recession required cutbacks in outside grant services, the University of California came within \$5,000 of being our largest client. Today, Principal Toni Scott and her fulltime team are dedicated to writing and administering agricultural grant proposals that bring our clients millions of dollars.

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CELEBRATING 15 YEARS



Geoff and Brent's earliest professional headshots, 2008.



2011



2017

Morrison team in 2011 and today; my how we've grown!



2007



2017

A look at our original office for two to our recently expanded full office building.



Sibyl and Brent Morrison.

Our People Solutions services began when the occasional client asked us to find permanent replacements for the accounting and management positions we filled on an interim basis. The first was for California Olive Ranch, then a start-up with the bold mission of creating a California olive oil industry. We recruited a talented fellow named Gregg Kelley as their first controller and he became CEO soon after. Today, Gregg and his team have built the nation's largest domestic olive oil company. (Gregg came from the tech industry and installed our first server shortly after he started as a favor. I hope! I never paid him anyway.)

Years later, Geoff recalls me breaking a long silence during a phone chat about why our recruiting service was growing seemingly without effort by asking "Are we missing something?" We were—the fact that our outreach for candidate referrals also generated interest in our unique approach, and we now do dozens a year. Our People Solutions team, led by Shawn Miller, also advises in human resource areas including employee relations, employee engagement, compensation and incentives, talent development, regulatory compliance, and regular HR "checkups."

When we moved to our current location in 2012, we were one of three tenants; today, we have expanded to the entire building (photo to the left) and are looking for additional space. It's safe to say we're a "real company" now and have much to be grateful for, but the risk of thanking people is that it is impossible not to leave some out. Still, I would be remiss not to thank some of the folks who are an important part of our story.

My last employer, Sunsweet Growers, was our first client and we have served them continuously since. I will always be thankful to then-CEO Harold Schenker, subsequent CEOs Art Driscoll and Dane Lance, CFO Ana Klein, People VP Sharon Braun, and others.

California Olive Ranch is a great client and has been instrumental in our becoming a key consultant to the olive oil industry. While she was Executive Director of California Association of Winegrape Growers, current California Department of Food and Agriculture Secretary Karen Ross was equally important in introducing us to the wine industry and we now serve many. Ken LaGrande and Sun Valley Rice gave me my first lengthy interim CFO engagement and it has served as a model

since. Adin Hester at Olive Growers Council and Greg Thompson at Prune Bargaining Association were critical early clients, and I am grateful for the trust of Rabobank, Taylor Brothers Farms, Brendon Flynn of Pacific Farms & Orchards (and several other clients), and Brad Moorer and Lorrie Ford Merker of Michigan Blueberry Growers. Karen Rich at USDA not only inspired our grants practice but has been a tremendous resource, as she and her team are for all who ask. I tease her that she's from the government but she really is here to help.

I have been blessed to work with a lot of great people in my career but I have never worked with a team as talented and dedicated as the people we have at Morrison. I am thankful for every one of them.

There are two people without whom none of this would have happened. Geoff Chinnock left a rock solid job that supported his young family to join a guy who had a heart attack three months earlier and was working out of the back of his house. Through ups, downs, challenges, and triumphs, Geoff has not just stuck with it—and me—but excelled. Words can't do justice to my trust in and friendship with Geoff.

My wife Sibyl never wavered. Our kids were in high school when I started; it took three years before I earned what I had at my last job. We had to draw on our home equity line after I started hiring. Once, during a slow stretch, we held hands and prayed for God's grace and if this was His will for us; the phone rang with a project while "amen" was hanging in the air. I am grateful for her support and much, much more.

The best part is that it's just beginning. I can't be sure what we'll be writing for our 20th anniversary newsletter but I truly can't wait to see it.

OPEN HOUSE

You're invited to our Open House event! Please join us in celebrating our 15 year anniversary with an ice cream social.

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FRIDAY, MAY 12TH

Join us anytime between 4 & 6 p.m.

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INDUSTRY NEWS

Here you'll find updates on industry news, a number of our clients' achievements and milestones, and the great things happening in their organizations or companies. We invite

you to share your business highlights in this space. Send any press releases, newsletters, or endeavors to Camille at chogan@morrisonco.net.



COMMUNITY GRAINS PARTNERS WITH ONE OF THE NATION'S LARGEST ORGANIC BREAD BRANDS



Morrison client Community Grains recently announced the launch of two new breads in partnership with Rudi's Organic Bakery®, one of the country's largest organic bread brands. Rudi's Organic Bakery® Whole Wheat Bread made with Sacramento Valley Whole Grain Flour and Whole Wheat Bread made with Hungry Hollow Whole Grain Flour will launch at Whole Foods Markets nationwide in March 2017, made with whole grain wheat flour grown by Community Grains farmers' and whole milled by Community Grains. The new breads allow consumers to trace the grain used in each loaf back to the farm where it was grown.

For more details visit: bizjournals.com/prnewswire/press_releases/2017/03/16/NY37429

for emergency shelter. Morrison & Company staff and family members volunteered at an evacuation site to help clean-up after residents were able to return home. It was encouraging to see all the support given during a time of need and how everyone played a part, big or small (including Consultant Hilary Triccerri's sons, photographed on the bottom left). We are all grateful the evacuation warnings have been lifted and the officials continue to investigate repairs to the spillway.

<http://morrisonco.net/blog/article/everyone-plays-a-part>



PATRICK LENCIONI PRESENTS AT A MORRISON CO-SPONSORED EVENT

On March 30, 2017, New York Times best-selling business author and founder of Table Group Inc., Patrick Lencioni, presented at Chico Executive Group's 2017 Symposium. Morrison & Company was proud to be one of many businesses to help sponsor the event. Photographed are Morrison team members with Mr. Lencioni (middle).

chicoexecutivegroup.com/events/



VOLUNTEERING AT AN OROVILLE DAM EVACUATION SITE

Northern California hit national news this February. After years of drought and then heavy rains, Lake Oroville (the state's second largest reservoir) hit maximum capacity at 901 feet and the dam's emergency spillway was used for the first time since its

construction in 1968. Shortly after, the initial erosion that was already on the spillway quickly escalated causing extreme damage and an emergency evacuation to the area due to extensive flood concerns. Residents of the area were evacuated to Chico and surrounding areas



2018 FARM BILL LISTENING SESSION WITH CDFA SECRETARY KAREN ROSS

In February, California Department of Food and Agriculture Secretary Karen Ross hosted a listening session in Chico, CA (along with a number of other cities in

California) to seek input from farmers, ranchers, and other stakeholders on priorities for the 2018 Farm Bill. Photographed are Morrison team members with Secretary Ross (second from the left).



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MORRISON SNAPSHOTS



Butte County Farm Bureau’s Young Farmers and Ranchers’ Annual Sporting Clay Shoot was held in March in Corning, CA. Morrison sponsored a team; photographed above (from left to right) is Tim Peters and Jesse Converse of Morrison & Company, Brendon Flynn of Pacific Farms & Orchards, George Nicolaus and Rory Crowley of Nicolaus Nut, and Dustin Coughlin of Hart Farms. (Photo Credit: Butte Young Farmers & Ranchers.)



2017 California Specialty Crop Block Grant Reviews were held in Sacramento, CA. This year, Founder & Principal Brent Morrison (far left) served on one of the technical review committees for CDFA’s Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. The program is unique in that reviewers are public volunteers, led by CDFA staff. Morrison has had team members serve as reviewers for grant programs in the past (we never review our own proposals!) and each year we learn more valuable information about the grant review process and the great work of others in the industry.



It’s the Season for Conferences and Special Events and we sent our team to several to connect with others. From left to right is: 1) a Morrison table at Butte County Farm Bureau’s Centennial Gala at Gold Country Casino in Oroville, CA; 2) Guest Speaker Ben Saunders—Endurance Athlete and Polar Explorer at CoBank’s Pacific West Customer Meeting and Agricultural Council of California’s Annual Meeting in Carlsbad, CA; 3) the Morrison team at this year’s California Center for Cooperative Development Conference on Agricultural Cooperative Directors and Executives Leadership Training in Sacramento, CA; 4) Principal Toni Scott with the award recipients at the Chico Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Dinner & Business Awards Ceremony (Photo Credit: MC2 Design Group); and 5) the team at California FFA Blue and Gold Gala in Galt, CA where guest speaker Mike Rowe from Dirty Jobs stole the show!