



## Perris Press Release

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer  
Phone: 951-956-2120  
[jvargo@cityofperris.org](mailto:jvargo@cityofperris.org)

### Annual Perris Chamber Dinner Celebrates a Year of Growth

The Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce doubled its membership last year and expects to do so again 2012.

The ambitious goal will be met through better marketing and outreach efforts and through cooperation of existing chamber businesses to promote each other as they go about their daily activities.

The business climate should improve in the next couple of years as the economy recovers from its woes, unemployment decreases and revenues from sales and property taxes rebound.

So it was with an air of confidence and optimism that the 2012 Business Awards and Installation Dinner took place Saturday. The annual event provides the opportunity to thank the movers-and-shakers in the business community, chamber businesses and volunteers and to swear in the Chamber of Commerce's new board of directors.

"We are on the edge of greatness and we are committed to working together to show off the best parts of Perris," said Chamber President Grant Bennett. "We want to collaborate with each other to make Perris the best possible place it can be. Hard work and determination can make things happen."

Bennett thanked the City of Perris, Mayor Daryl Busch, members of the City Council, City Manager Richard Belmudez and Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager Michael McDermott for their ongoing support of the Chamber. He said the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce hopes to add 100 new members in 2012.

Bennett and Chamber CEO Ted Norton said work continues on a "Passport to Perris," a program in which businesses would tout the many cultural and recreation venues available in Perris—auto racing, skydiving, boating, swimming, cycling and hiking at Lake Perris, the just-completed Big League Dreams sports complex, the Orange Empire Railway Museum and the Perris Valley Museum at the Downtown Depot building.

"Perris has more activities than any other city in the Inland Empire and my goal is to make Perris the playground of the Inland Empire," Norton said. "Perris is second to no community in the Inland Empire. Sports, schools, shopping, churches and recreation, Perris has it all. Perris is a great place to live and raise a family."

Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley swore in the new board of directors and offered additional good news in remarks to the sellout crowd of 150.

The Chamber of Commerce is the business voice of the community and this community is on a roll," Ashley said.

Ashley predicted that the next three years will produce "substantial gains in property taxes" as values stabilize and then rise. New freeway interchanges at Fourth Street, Ramona Expressway and Van Buren Boulevard and an additional lane in each direction of I-215

from Murrieta to Riverside will improve traffic flow through Perris. The construction of an aquatics center in Perris will provide more opportunities for the City to showcase its activities. Perris is slated to receive two Metrolink stops when service begins in the not-too-distant future.

"You haven't seen anything yet," Ashley said. "We are on a roll."

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, Mayor Pro-Tem Al Landers, City Council members Joanne Evans, Rita Rogers and Mark Yarbrough and City Clerk Judy Haughney represented Perris at the Chamber of Commerce installation dinner. Mayor Busch led the crowd in the Pledge of Allegiance. Moreno Valley City Councilman Bill Batey, who is running for the 61st Assembly District, also attended.

"It's nice to honor members of the business community who get a lot of things done for our City," Busch said.

Mayor Pro-Tem Al Landers, a two-time president of the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce, said the installation and awards ceremony allows the chamber to "make the business community aware of what it does."

"The awards go to people who make a difference in our community," Landers said.

Perris City Councilwoman Joanne Evans agreed that the recent ceremony allows the chamber "to toot its own horn" and educate people about what it does to promote business.

Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers said the evening's venue at the Motte Museum provided an outstanding opportunity to network.

"The Chamber of Commerce is fortunate to have a very good board of directors," she said.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough took advantage of the line-dancing lessons offered as part of the evening's entertainment. The theme of the night's event was "Roping the Future" and dress was cowboy casual.

"What a great venue and it's right here in the heart of the Perris Valley," he said. "It's less formal, more fun. What a great setting to bring in the new board of directors."

The 2012 chamber board Grant Bennet, president; Ali Mazarei, vice president; Pete Peterson, treasurer; Danette Moore, secretary and members Rita Rogers, Joanne Evans, Yolanda Williams, Troy Hernandez, Albert Renteria and Celia Smith.

CR&R Inc. was named Business of the Year. The Perris Pride Award went to Iral Evans for his work with the American Legion and as the City's Parade Chairman for the last 17 years. He also has played Santa Claus at many Perris events during that time. Retired Navy Capt. Quinn Hawley received the Partner in Education Award. Eagles Wings Community Outreach Center received the Good Neighbor Award. Gilbert Williams, a member of the Inland Empire Buffalo Soldiers Heritage Association, was named the Chamber of Commerce Ambassador of the Year.



Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley (right) swears in the 2012 Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Chamber President Grant Bennett is among those taking the oath.



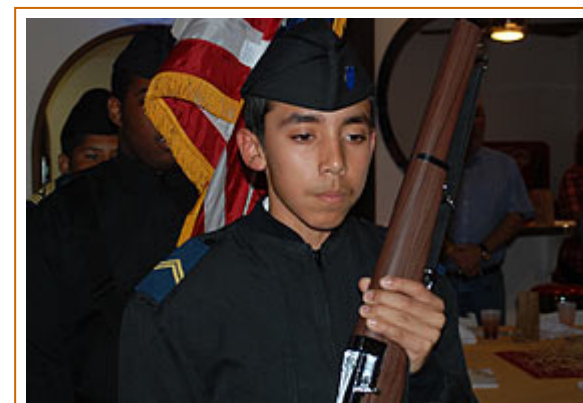
The Chamber of Commerce Board takes the oath of office.



Chamber CEO Ted Norton presents a plaque to Ambassador of the Year Gilbert Williams.



Line-dancing lessons were provided as part of the entertainment at the 2012 Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Awards and Installation Dinner.



Students from the California Military Institute served as the Color Guard.