



Perris News

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Perris Valley Chamber Award & Installation Dinner

Membership in the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce offers several crucial benefits, advantages to local businesses that are even more vital during tough economic times like the present.

Those include monthly mixers, meetings with newsmakers and legislative representatives, participation in the Chamber's ambassador and Student of the Month award programs and developing contacts with other businesses to form common strategies for survival.

Those were among the highlights among the remarks made by Chamber President Vince Agnifili during the 2010 Business Awards & Installation Dinner held recently at the Southern California Fairgrounds.

"Chamber membership is more valuable than ever," Agnifili said during remarks to about 200 dignitaries who attended the installation dinner. "Both well-established businesses and new businesses benefit from introductions, referrals and Chamber-sponsored events. "These new connections are key to the continued growth of our local businesses. We are the visitors' bureau for the City of Perris. We see a lot of different people and we share the things that are going on in this City."

Several other speakers praised the Perris Valley Chamber's long and determined commitment to the City and its businesses.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch said the Chamber "is the heartbeat of a community."

"We thank you for what you have done, what you are doing and what you will do in the future," Busch said.

Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley, a Perris resident, said that "without a strong Chamber of Commerce, you don't have much of a community." Perris, he said, has no worries in that regard.

"You have always had a strong, vibrant Chamber," he said. "As long as we do, we will have a strong, vibrant community."

Outgoing Board of Director Carl Sarjeant said he moved to Perris in 2003, brought a car wash, got involved with the Chamber of Commerce and gives the organization high marks for attracting new businesses and keeping existing ones thriving. He said the City continues to prosper in other areas despite the rough economy. The historic Train Depot was restored and reopened to the public last year. The Perris Station Transit Center was dedicated earlier this month. Construction later this year will remake the intersection of Interstate 215 and Fourth Street, making much easier access to the historic Downtown area.

"There is so much upside to this community," Sarjeant said. "It continues to grow. It's really coming along and I am very impressed."

Lori Stone, executive director of the March Joint Powers Authority, said the Perris Chamber of Commerce serves as a vital conduit between the agency, which is charged with redeveloping property around the former March Air Force Base, and the public.

"They have been very supportive of our mission, to bring good jobs to Riverside County," Stone said of Chamber members.

The Chamber's outgoing directors—City Councilmembers Al Landers and Mark Yarbrough, Sarjeant, Robert Turner and Gail Martin—were honored for their service. Also honored were the incoming members, who include City Councilmembers Rita Rogers and Joanne Evans, Danette Moore, Judy Haughney, Pete Peterson, Grant Bennett, Anita Crespin and Ali Mazarei.

Other awardees included:

Member of the Year: Express Travel Solutions

Partner in Education: Arbor Oasis Youth Employment Center

Perris Business of the Year: Arco Travel Zone Center

Good Neighbor: Perris Citizens Patrol

Pride: Exceed

Small Business of the Year: The Perris Progress

Ambassadors of the Year: Dawn Elzhold, Garrett Yarbrough



Don Kazarian, promoter of the world-renown Perris Auto Speedway, chats with Perris Mayor Daryl Busch.



City Councilman Mark Yarbrough with Lori Stone, executive director of the March Joint Powers Authority and Danielle Wheeler, assistant director.



The new board of directors of the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce is sworn in.



Chamber Board of Directors President Vince Agnifili presents an award to Mary Tortomasi of Perris Valley Indoor Skydiving.