



home > city hall > press releases

## Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce Installation



Perris City Clerk Nancy Salazar, City Councilman David Rabb, City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, Mayor Pro-Tem Tonya Burke and City Councilman Julio Rodriguez attended the annual Chamber of Commerce Business Awards and Installation Dinner on Jan. 30.

Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce members used the organization's annual awards ceremony to restate their commitment to bring new businesses to the City while advocating for those already in Perris.

President Ali Mazarei said the chamber has stepped up its efforts by hosting regular business seminars and a "business boot camp" and will be increasing its social media outreach. Chamber members are attending City Council meetings as well, informing the elected body of ongoing projects and developments. Liaisons are being developed with state and national organizations to lobby on behalf of local businesses in Sacramento and Washington.

Mazarei also unveiled the chamber's "Win Some Wheels" fundraiser, which aims to collect \$200,000 through the sale of \$2 raffle tickets for a pair of Chevrolet Sparks and other prizes. Ticket-sale revenues also would go to support Perris schools and non-profits.

Mazarei said he would like to send some of the proceeds to the Riverside Sheriff's Association to help obtain another canine unit.

The chamber's 104th Annual Business Awards & Installation Dinner drew a number of heavyweight guests. Those included Riverside County Sheriff Stan Sniff, District Attorney Michael Hestrin, Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley, Mayor Daryl Busch, Mayor Pro-Tem Tonya Burke and City Councilmembers Rita Rogers, Julio Rodriguez and David Rabb.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch chats with Police Chief Mike Judge at the chamber ceremony.

A new group of chamber officers was sworn in during the Jan. 30 dinner at Harrison Hall. Mayor Busch thanked the new board members for "their time, efforts, commitment and their endeavors they have put forth into the community."

"The Chamber of Commerce is growing," Busch said. "The Chamber of Commerce helps businesses find out about and get information about our City. These are exciting times as the City of Perris expands and grows. My best wishes go to the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce for a very successful 2015."

Mayor Pro-Tem Burke said she is looking forward to working with the new chamber board.

"When you have a thriving chamber of commerce, you have a thriving business community," she said. "That's why it is important for us as a City Council to support our chamber of commerce."

Councilwoman Rogers praised the Chamber of Commerce as the "pump that primes our economic engine." The Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce turns 104 years old in 2015, the same as the City.

"It is an honor to work with our Chamber of Commerce to make sure our business community is sustained and our business retention is on point," she said. "We work hand-in-hand with our chamber to facilitate growth and bring jobs to Perris."

Councilman Rodriguez said it is important to support the Chamber of Commerce because it "supports the small businesses that are the backbone of our City."

"They have really stepped it up in recent months by attending our City Council meetings," Rodriguez said. "They are showing their commitment to City businesses and it is important to show our commitment to the chamber."



Keynote speaker, Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez, R-Lake Elsinore, urged business owners to make their concerns known to local, regional, state and national officials.

Councilman Rabb said as the economy continues to recover from the Great Recession, the Chamber of Commerce will play an important role in attracting new companies to Perris and retaining existing ones.

"The Chamber of Commerce has become much more pro-active in recent months," he said. "They are becoming much more of a presence, much more of a force in our City."

Perris City Clerk Nancy Salazar attended the installation dinner with her husband, Cesar, who operates a pest-control company.

"It's great to see the chamber of commerce involved with so many business owners," she said.

Supervisor Ashley, a Perris residents, echoed the sentiments of the City Council.

"The chamber has gotten its mojo back," he said. "It is making the case for economic growth throughout the Perris Valley.

"We need jobs in the Perris Valley and you have to have a strong chamber to bring economic development. The Perris Valley chamber is strong and vibrant."

The evening's keynote speaker, Assemblywoman Melissa Melendez, R-Lake Elsinore, urged business owners and the chamber of commerce to develop an active voice as they lobby for laws and regulations beneficial to them.

"The chamber of commerce needs to be the voice of business," she said. "You've got to speak up for yourselves and stand up for yourselves."

She urged the business community to hold accountable elected officials in Sacramento and elsewhere if they fail to listen.

"Tell us what you want over and over again," she said. "if politicians don't listen, replace them with someone who will!"

In addition to Mazarei, other chamber board officers include Matt Johnson, vice-president; Cindy Espinoza, secretary and Rogelio Rawlins, treasurer.

The following businesses and individuals also were recognized for their contributions to Perris: Partner in Education, Sizzlers; Non-Profit of the year, Time Is Creeping Up Productions, Inc.; Small Business of the Year, Castrol Premium Lube Express; Medium Business of the Year, Skydive Perris; Large Business of the Year, Sam's Club; Perris Pride, Cindy Chambers; Coach of the Year, Aurelio Correa and President's Choice, Rogelio Rawlins.

### Media Contact

Joe Vargo  
Public Information Officer  
951-956-2120  
jvargo@cityofperris.org



Perris City Hall  
101 N. D Street  
Perris, CA 92570

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