

Business Connection



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Pleasanton Chamber Celebrates 75 Years of Supporting the Community

It all started back in 1907 when a small group of Pleasanton's influential citizens met at City Hall for the purpose of organizing a civic body that would do work to further the progress of Pleasanton and to communicate with the citizens and businesses of Pleasanton an ambition to enhance and grow the town.

This was the genesis of the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce as it is today. The formal incorporation was completed on September 30, 1946, and the reason for celebrating the chamber's 75th anniversary in 2021. "This gives us the opportunity to thank and remember our past leaders that were instrumental in guiding the chamber to continued success," said Steve Van Dorn, President/CEO of the Pleasanton Chamber. "After all, the chamber would not be where it is today without the support of our members and our awesome community," he said.

"Great communities have great chambers," said Dave Kilby, President and CEO of Western Association of Chamber Executives (W.A.C.E.) and executive vice president of corporate affairs at the California Chamber. "I think a case could definitely be made that Pleasanton is what it is today – a great community – because of the work of the chamber for the past 75 years."

About the Chamber

The Pleasanton Chamber is a non-profit voluntary organization currently made up of roughly 700 members ranging from small mom-and-pop type businesses to major corporations located in the Tri-Valley. Each member organization pays annual dues based on the type of business and the number of employees.

The chamber takes great pride in helping Pleasanton remain among the very best cities in the country in which to live, work and raise a family while providing support, services, and value for its member organizations. Programs such as Leadership Pleasanton and committees within the chamber including Economic Development, the Ambassadors, and the Pleasanton Young Professionals all involve working together for the betterment of the Pleasanton community. As it states in Pleasanton 2025: A Community Vision, "Our strong local economy and extraordinary quality of life happen by design, not by accident."

History of Growth

Frank Capilla, 1984 chamber board chair, recalled a significant time where "the chamber was flat broke, no money." Over lunch at LaRoche's restaurant in 1979, Wells Fargo agreed to loan \$7,000 to the chamber, thanks to the efforts



of Larry Lindsey and Jim Barri.

"I think the best thing we did was hire Debra Strong to be the full-time manager," said Joyce Shapiro, 1979 chamber board chair, referencing upgrading the Chamber office staff. Prior to this time, Chan Anderson was the lone manager of the Chamber as a part-time employee.

In the meantime, Hacienda Business Park came to town and the chamber really started gaining momentum. "Joe Callahan said if you're going to do business at Hacienda, we want you to belong to the chamber. We just really started to take off," said Capilla.

Marty Inderbitzen, 1983 cham-

ber board chair, expressed a similar sentiment. "I remember the 1980's as the decade that the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce really came into its own. In those years, we set a goal for membership development and grew the chamber to 1,000 members. This was a remarkable achievement made possible by the approval and development of Hacienda Business Park and the Stoneridge Mall," said Inderbitzen.

"No matter what the circumstance, when there is something that needs to be addressed, the community comes together and sees that it happens," said James Paxson, 2015 chamber board chair and current general manager of Hacienda. "So often, the convening force or common thread to that collective response has been the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce through their active civic engagement and care for those things that make Pleasanton, Pleasanton," he continued.

Supporting the Pleasanton Community

Leadership Pleasanton, created by the chamber in partnership with the City of Pleasanton in 1989, is a program to develop community leaders. Comprised of individuals from all sectors of the community,

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SILVER



BRONZE

