

# Business Connection



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May 2023

## Ice cream with a side of milk

*Takens Family continues the legacy of Pleasanton's Meadowlark Dairy*

The Meadowlark Dairy was founded more than a century ago, on 153 acres on Foothill Road in Pleasanton by Walter Briggs Sr. It was the first certified dairy in California.

Jannes and Janna Takens immigrated to the United States from Holland after World War II and moved to Berkeley. Eventually, the Takens settled in Pleasanton and began working on the farm where Alviso Adobe Community Park is today.

In 1958, the Takens signed a 10-year lease for the Dairy and eventually bought it. In 1968, the 680 freeway was going to be built, so the Takens moved the cows from Pleasanton to Tracy and built a milk processing plant at 57 W. Neal Street, where the Dairy remains today.

The Dairy has been a drive-through since it opened in July 1969, replacing the former drive-through Dairy on Foothill Road. Jannes and Janna's son Bruce and his wife Patti took over the business in the 1980s, and they are the ones responsible for starting the soft serve ice cream cones that are still wildly popular to this day.

After running the Dairy for more than 30 years, Bruce and Patti turned things over to their son Jesse and his wife Kelsey in 2017. The third-generation, husband and wife team from the Takens Family was

no stranger to the business. "I was 14 and Kelsey was probably 16 when we started working there," said Jesse.

"I think I knew pretty early on, maybe age 9 or 10, that that's what I wanted to do," said Jesse. "I'm not a great student, and for whatever reason this piqued my interest. I like to talk to people, and if you ask anyone that works here, they'll tell you I'm always the one that's holding up the line."

Jesse can be found at the Dairy every day during the week and every other weekend, while Kelsey does more of the behind-the-scenes work, making sure bills are getting paid and tracking payroll. The couple also stays plenty busy with their three kids, ages 10, 5 and 3.

The Dairy currently has 115 part-time employees, a large number of which are local high school students. The most tenured staff can be found working midweek during the day. "I can't even call them old," Jesse says of his few college-aged workers.

"For most of these kids, this is their first job," said Jesse. "I'll be the first to admit, at 15, I didn't know a whole lot. But we have a system that helps guide them. They're all eager to work and they're happy to be here."

Open daily Monday through



Jesse and Kelsey Takens (on the left) with their children Grace, Caleb and Mason along with Bruce and Patti Takens (middle) and Katie and Mike Talton with their daughter Jaeda.



The soft-serve ice cream cones at the Dairy are a popular treat with vanilla, chocolate, orange and strawberry available year round. Additional flavors are also introduced on a weekly basis.

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#### GOLD



#### SILVER



#### BRONZE





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The positions and views advocated here are solely the responsibility of the Chamber.

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Stay connected with the Chamber



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# Pleasanton Young Professionals thriving

The Pleasanton Young Professionals, a networking group for emerging and established professionals ages 21-40, strive to help other young professionals to learn, empower, and grow from their mastermind lunches, volunteering and fundraising opportunities, and monthly networking mixers. Scan the QR code to learn more about the Pleasanton Young Professionals, follow us on social media, and stay updated with our future events.



The Pleasanton Young Professionals at their April networking mixer at Neighborhood Sports Bar & Kitchen in downtown Pleasanton.

## Lesser-Known Benefits of Chamber Membership

The Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce offers a number of benefits members and non-members alike can use to help their organization connect and grow. Our networking mixers are well attended and energetic, offering an opportunity to mingle with elected officials and other business professionals. Non-members are invited to attend a mixer to network with their local business community and elected officials. Chamber committees like the Pleasanton 2025 Forum (open to members and the general public) and Economic Development & Governmental Relations (EDGR) dive deeper into the important issues facing



**James Cooper**  
Pleasanton Chamber  
President/CEO

our community, from housing to water to transportation and more. Ribbon cutting ceremonies and grand opening events publicly celebrate business success, attracting media attention and higher community visibility throughout Pleasanton.

There are other, lesser-known benefits that can positively impact an organization and are accessible to non-members as well. One is our Pleasanton Young Professionals (PYP) networking group, which is made up of working adults between the ages of 21 and 40, and is open to the general public. The group holds a monthly mixer at a local business where they mingle while connect-

ing with each other and honing their networking skills. They also work on professional development through their Mastermind Lunches, which are held every other month. Do you have a young professional looking to grow in their career? You don't need to be a Chamber member to attend a PYP event. Find out more about the group and its upcoming events at [www.pleasanton.org](http://www.pleasanton.org).

Another benefit is the Leadership Pleasanton program. For over 30 years, the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce has run the program that gives attendees an in-depth look at how the community is connected. From City government to public safety to economic development and more, this nine-month program covers nearly all areas of Pleasanton and is open to all.

Many who complete the program get more involved in our community, especially as volunteers ready to give their time and effort to help Pleasanton shine. The next class starts in September and class space is limited. For more information, please visit [www.pleasanton.org/leadership-pleasanton](http://www.pleasanton.org/leadership-pleasanton) or email [yianna@pleasanton.org](mailto:yianna@pleasanton.org).

The Chamber offers members a wide array of benefits, and you don't have to be a member to connect with us. Join a networking event, celebrate business success, and learn more about the inner workings of your community. We would love to see you. If you have questions about membership or would like to join, please email me at [james@pleasanton.org](mailto:james@pleasanton.org) or come by our office at 777 Peters Avenue in Pleasanton. We are here to help.

## Chamber Members Support Next Generation Workforce

A big thank you to Chamber members who helped Pleasanton Unified (PUSD) high school students gain insights from industry experts this spring! Representatives from Omron, 10x Genomics, BFK Engineers and SideTrack Bar & Grill met with students in Engineering, Culinary Arts, and BioMed Career & Technical Education (CTE) classes to help them with special projects and answer questions about career paths.

At Amador, students in second year engineering classes, Honors Principles of Engineering, designed a prototype of an automated material sorting machine to sort commingled materials. The culmination of the project was to present their solution to their client. Omron employees were the first to sign up

to act as "clients" and give live, real-time feedback to students.

At Foothill, BioMed students got to hear from a Foothill graduate currently working at 10x Genomics. Foothill Culinary Arts students were tasked with writing a business plan for their dream restaurant or catering business, and SideTrack Bar & Grill owner Todd Utikal met with students to talk about his own business plan.

The Pleasanton Chamber's Vision 2025 document specifically mentions PUSD's CTE program as one of the essential ways we prepare students for the 21st century and maintain a strong business environment in Pleasanton. In August 2022, based on the recommendation of the Economic Development & Government Relations (EDGR) committee, the Chamber Board of



Herb Ritter, representing the Chamber's Economic Development and Government Relations committee (EDGR) and Omron employees working with the engineering students at Amador Valley High School in April.

Directors approved the formation of a volunteer working group to match Pleasanton businesses with relevant PUSD career programs to give students access to industry experts.

In September and October 2023, we will be looking for Chamber

members who can offer field trips to CTE classes to see manufacturing, laboratory, retail and restaurant operations. If your company is interested in getting involved, please send me an email at [chamberjillbuck@gmail.com](mailto:chamberjillbuck@gmail.com).



Business Spotlight

# Unique gifts with a personal touch

Grace Carr started making wreaths for herself and her family during the Covid-19 Pandemic. “I have always been a ‘crafty’ person and enjoy decorating for the holidays and making special little party gifts,” said Grace.

She remembers walking into a local craft store in November 2019 looking for a Christmas wreath and was very disappointed in what she found. “It was very plain, looked fake and was over-priced.” She decided she could make much nicer wreaths for less and ended up giving them as gifts for Christmas that first year. When her family posted photos of her wreaths on social media, she received 40 additional orders. “I discovered I had a passion for this and have not stopped creating,” said Grace.

As the owner of Gracie Custom Creations, Grace makes custom-made wreaths for all seasons and occasions. She also creates faux floral arrangements, bottle bouquets, and home décor using silk



and plastic florals. She is constantly expanding her knowledge to include different materials such as: grapevines, deco mesh, hoops, and swags. The advantage of silk and plastic flowers is that they don’t die.

A unique offering is her bottle bouquet, which is a small, removable floral arrangement attached to any bottle such as wine, champagne, or sparkling apple cider. “It makes a wonderful hostess gift and can also be used as a centerpiece,” said Grace. She also mentions a home-sweet-home wreath as a thoughtful house-warming gift.

Her products allow you to choose the desired materials – flowers, colors, and signage – or she can assist you in creating your desired design. “Whether you’re trying to transform the appearance of your front door, your office, decorate for the holidays or wanting to add that personal touch with a unique gift for a special occasion, Gracie Custom Creations can help.”



Learn more about Gracie Custom Creations by visiting her on Facebook and Instagram or emailing [grace@graciecustomcreations.com](mailto:grace@graciecustomcreations.com)

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## Good Morning Maxwell Summer Meeting Promo

Book your next meeting within the month of May and receive a free coffee break package for your team. Restrictions apply.

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## Business Spotlight

# Making a difference in the lives of new parents

**M**elissa Dantzig and Diana Keller worked together on Trinity Lutheran Church's Outreach Team where they learned about various Tri-Valley nonprofits and the needs within our community. During the pandemic, the needs became more severe with fewer resources available.

In August of 2022, Dantzig and Keller co-founded Little Miracles, a 501c3 providing free baby essentials to Tri-Valley families experiencing financial difficulties. "We envision a community where all new parents are embraced, equipped, and empowered to care for their baby," said Dantzig.

"We live in a generous community with residents that have the desire and resources to help. In that same community, we have young families that need support to care for their babies. Bridging those two sectors elevates everyone," said Keller. Young families are given hope and tangible resources to care for their baby while donors are reassured their resources have made a difference in the life of struggling, yet grateful, recipients.

Dantzig and her husband Brian grew up in Pleasanton. "I want young parents to know their community is ready to embrace them and provide resources to make them feel hopeful and that their baby is celebrated," said Dantzig. Keller is excited to have found purpose and passion since her retirement from the hospitality industry. She is a reminder that following your dreams doesn't have an age limit.

Little Miracles operates by collecting new and gently used merchandise (clothing,



Little Miracles co-founders Melissa Dantzig (left) and Diana Keller (right) take pride in offering personal and confidential services in a dignified manner.

strollers, cribs, car sets, diapers, bouncers, breast pumps, etc.) from the community and re-gifting those items to qualified families in need. Tri-Valley parents (Pleasanton, Livermore, Dublin/San Ramon) requesting help are encouraged to fill out an application online. Once approved, clients collect their requested items at 1039-E Serpentine Lane in Pleasanton. This new 1,800-square foot donation center allows Little Miracles to reach more families and engage more volunteers, from local high school students to retirees, who assist with sorting incoming donations and order fulfillment.

To apply for help, donate, or volunteer, visit Little Miracles online at [littlemiraclespleasanton.org](http://littlemiraclespleasanton.org). Call or text (925) 623-5407.



## Business Spotlight

# Healthy, quality food that does not cost a fortune

Grocery Outlet has more than 440 stores across the nation with more than 1.5 million shoppers hitting the aisles each week. Did you know you can save 40-70% off name brand groceries every day without club cards, paid membership or coupons? At Grocery Outlet, the bargains are simply incredible, and you'll find thousands of them every day.

Each Grocery Outlet is family-owned and operated, and Richard Lipsit and his wife Julia run the Pleasanton Grocery Outlet. The couple is very passionate about their store and because they are local, they love supporting their community.

Pleasanton Grocery Outlet has a huge selection of quality produce, including organic fruit and vegetables for less than you'll find at other grocers. "We are also very proud of our meat department, where you will be impressed by the variety, quality and low prices," said Richard. Grocery Outlet was named one of the "50 Best Wine

Retailers in America" by Wine Enthusiast and the Pleasanton Grocery Outlet carries more than 400 different types of wine.

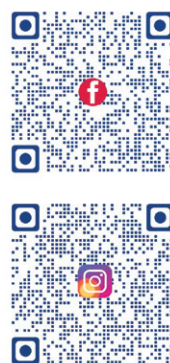
Richard and Julia are proud of their involvement with the Pleasanton community. They donate weekly to Tri-Valley Haven and run a special program—Independence from Hunger—to combat food insecurity and support families in need. In addition, they donate to local schools, Veterans organizations, and boy and girl scouts, and they partner with local organizations to provide work for people with disabilities. Kids visiting their store can get free oranges as well as visit their Free Little Library, where they change the books weekly. One of the latest projects is a donation to support 75 families in the area with food. Every first and third Thursday of the month, the store provides an additional 10% discount for seniors.

"We believe that everyone deserves healthy, good quality food, and it should not cost a



fortune," said Richard. "We love Pleasanton, and greatly appreciate all the support from the community. From our Mayor Karla Brown to all of the charitable organizations to the Pleasanton Police Association to the Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club, we want to say Thank You to our entire community."

Pleasanton Grocery Outlet is located in the Vintage Hills Shopping Center at 3550 Bernal Avenue in Pleasanton.



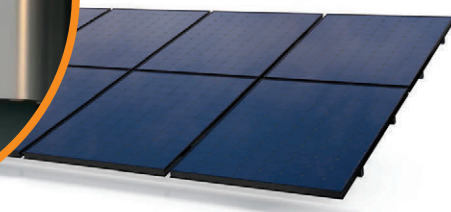
Pleasanton Grocery Outlet's Richard Lipsit (left) hosting elected officials including Alameda County District Supervisor David Haubert (second from left) and Pleasanton Mayor Karla Brown (right) to go through Grocery Outlet's process of supporting SB1383 and food recovery.

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Business Spotlight

# Helping families build lasting legacies

By Antonio P. Accardo Jr., MBA

Ever since the formation of Accardo Financial & Insurance Services in 2008, we've had a singular focus on one-on-one client relationships. Like family, we want to be there by your side through the triumphs and tribulations because that's what my family has always done.

My father, Antonio Accardo Sr. immigrated to America in the 1950s. After five years of tirelessly doing anything he could to earn and save every extra penny, he and my Uncle Frank opened the doors to Villa Romana Pizzeria & Restaurant in San Francisco.

The long hours and laborious hand-crafted cuisine were rewarded through the love from his loyal customers. It was something I was fortunate enough to witness every day since I began working alongside him at the age of six.

I continued to be involved with the family business through grade school, high school, college, post-graduate, and even into my adulthood, running the restaurant for my father.

It was a family legacy I was proud to be a part of but also required me to put my own

dreams on hold of becoming a financial advisor. Over the years, I had learned first-hand the value of a dollar and the even greater value of serving someone well.

Like all good things, in 2014 my father decided to retire and close-up shop. It marked the end of 60 amazing years, while opening the door for me to take that same passion and love for my families' business and extend the legacy he created.

Now, well over a decade after founding Accardo Financial & Insurance Services, it's amazing to look back and see how two vastly different industries can have so much in common because of the importance of what we do and who we do it for; amazing people and families.

Alongside my wife of seventeen years, Natalia, and four sons: Antonio, Angelo, Alessandro, and Adriano, I'm determined to pass along the success and values I learned from my father to my family and yours.

Accardo Financial and Insurance Services offers fee-based financial planning and is located at 325 Ray Street in Pleasanton. Learn more by emailing [aaccardo@financialguide.com](mailto:aaccardo@financialguide.com) or calling 415-203-9836.



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Membership Anniversaries



During the past two months, nearly 100 businesses renewed their investment in the chamber, thereby demonstrating their continued commitment to community excellence while realizing the benefits, services and representation associated with membership in Pleasanton's leading business organization.

We recommend that you look first to chamber members for your business and consumer needs.

- 46 years**  
Richert Lumber Company, Inc.

**40-45 years**  
Reynolds & Brown  
Stanford Health Care Tri-Valley  
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**35-39 years**  
Keller Williams Tri-Valley Realty  
DoubleTree by Hilton Pleasanton at The Club  
Livermore Amador Valley Transit Authority (WHEELS)  
Hacienda Child Development Center and School

**30-34 years**  
Black Tie Transportation  
MGR Assets Inc.  
Phillips Law Offices, A Professional Corporation  
Silmar Flooring  
Robert A. Tucknott, CFLC, CPE  
Sea Cliff Properties

**25-29 years**  
First Republic Bank  
Rotary Club of Pleasanton  
Fremont Bank  
Pleasanton Certified Farmers Market  
Westamerica Bank  
Faith Chapel Assembly of God

**20-24 years**  
Museum on Main Street  
AC Hotel Pleasanton  
Alexandria's Flowers  
Mark Sweeney  
Agape Villages Foster Family Agency  
Jue's Taekwon-Do  
Visit Tri-Valley

**15-19 years**  
Richard's Heating & Air Repair Inc.  
Dote, Tom - Farmers Insurance Group  
Haskett Law Firm, P.C.  
Safeway, Inc.  
Service Champions Heating & Air  
Window-ology  
Process Metrix, LLC  
Pleasanton Auto Mall  
Body Balance Fitness & Massage, Inc.  
Casa Real at Ruby Hill Winery  
Dutra Enterprises, Inc.

**10-14 years**  
Ruggeri-Jensen-Azar  
Servpro of Pleasanton/Dublin  
Leslie Wolf - State Farm Insurance  
The First Tee of the Tri-Valley  
Caledonian Club of San Francisco, The  
Integrated General Counsel, P.C.  
Blue Oaks Church
- Karlsson & Lane, An Accountancy Corporation  
Legacy Real Estate & Associates  
Baird Orthodontics  
Cellar Door

**5-9 years**  
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Fulcrum BioEnergy, Inc.  
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Hopkins & Carley A Law Corporation  
J. Boles, West Coast Backflow  
Mindshare Group Benefits & Insurance Services  
Unchained Labs  
Addiction Treatment Alternatives, LLC (ATA)  
ARCpoint Labs of Pleasanton CA  
Ballistic United Soccer Club  
Pacific Locomotive Association - Niles Canyon Railway  
JBI Insurance Services  
Nate Miley, Supervisor

**1-4 years**  
California Gold Advocacy Group  
Curtis Fleming - Farmers Insurance  
De La Torre's Trattoria  
Hospice East Bay  
Jeanette Schaub Health & Wellness by Design  
Leisure Sports, Inc.  
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Corporate eWaste Solutions  
Locanda Amalfi  
Lucky Stores Inc.  
Mom Relaunch Foundation  
ScannX, Inc.  
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The Go Green Initiative works with schools to protect children’s health from environmental toxins, conserve natural resources for future generations, and train the next generation of environmental stewards

## Making an Impact in Pleasanton

*Funding needed for sustainability internships*

The Go Green Initiative (GGI) is raising funds to offer its paid internships to Pleasanton High School students for the summer of 2023. They hope to get to their goal via contributions from Pleasanton-based businesses, executives, and community members. Your support can make this happen.

GGI’s flagship programs are centered on the reduction of waste sent to landfills. Helping schools and residents understand how they can recycle and compost in order to help combat climate change (via reduced methane gas emissions), as well as local water and air pollution, is GGI’s strength. Impact studies of the work done to date by GGI in its hometown of Pleasanton have shown measurable results.

In addition to deep learning about the

interconnectedness of environmental issues, GGI student interns engage in substantive and far-reaching community education and outreach to change behaviors in the community. An additional benefit is that by completing projects tied to sustainability policy and infrastructure, students learn skills for 21st-century careers.

For contributions at the \$10,000+ level, GGI will include a company logo on the outreach and education materials that are prepared, and go out to the community, during the course of the summer program.

Join Go Green Initiative as they train a class of student leaders who can be change agents for waste reduction and diversion in the city of Pleasanton. If you or your company have questions or would like to make a contribution via check, please reach out to [michelledeasy@gogreeninitiative.org](mailto:michelledeasy@gogreeninitiative.org).

## Crown Trophy selected as Small Business of the Year

Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan has selected Crown Trophy in Pleasanton as the 2022 Assembly District 16 Small Business of the Year. Crown Trophy is owned by the Rosenblatt family and is an exemplary model of a community minded small business.

Their friendly and experienced customer service staff is available to provide assistance and guide you through the award selection process. Their number one goal is to make your awards program and presentation a great success. You can visit their showroom at 5424-3 Sunol Blvd. in Pleasanton.



They were the first business to agree to host the Pleasanton Unified School District’s Adult with Disabilities Paid Internship program in 2018. Ever since then, they have hosted an Adults with Disabilities intern every year and been an enthusiastic supporter of adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The Rosenblatt family is also very plugged in with the local business community and Chamber of Commerce – helping to support the economic vitality of Pleasanton. Assemblymember Bauer-Kahan is proud to extend this recognition to Crown Trophy and the Rosenblatt family in celebration of their small business and all they do.

Locally owned and nationally known, Crown Trophy is owned by Jerry, Carol and Jeremy Rosenblatt. Successfully serving the Pleasanton and surrounding communities for many years, Crown Trophy has over 40 years of experience providing award and recognition items to thousands of leagues, organizations, corporations, and educational institutions to name a few.



Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan with Jerry and Jeremy Rosenblatt of Crown Trophy, accepting their small business of the year award.

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Now open at the former Pleasanton Hotel

**Rubys & Roses** — Rubys & Roses is a new dining experience located in the heart of downtown Pleasanton that offers an elegant atmosphere, specializing in American cuisine and cocktails. The restaurant is perfect for those looking to indulge in a luxurious dining experience. From the delicious starters to the mouth-watering entrees and decadent desserts, Rubys and Roses offers a culinary experience that is sure to impress. The restaurant’s signature cocktails are expertly crafted and perfectly complement the menu, making Rubys and Roses the perfect destination for a special night out. Learn more at [rubysandrosesrestaurant.com](http://rubysandrosesrestaurant.com). Located at 855 Main Street in Pleasanton.



Get healthier through specific, gentle chiropractic care

**Alexander Chiropractic and Wellness** — Is pain or decreased function leaving you feeling sidelined in life? Perhaps you’ve been searching for a chiropractor in town. However, you don’t want to waste your time, money, and health going to someone who doesn’t have your best interest at heart. We get it. At Alexander Chiropractic and Wellness, we have an excellent reputation for providing care that gets results. Our doctors are passionate about helping their community live happier and healthier lives. Friendly and caring, our doctors will provide the healing help you need. We welcome new patients, both young and old, with open arms. Our approach to chiropractic care is gentle and specific. Learn more at [alexanderchiro.com](http://alexanderchiro.com). Located at 7031 Koll Center Parkway, Suite 160 in Pleasanton.



Providing baby essentials that every child deserves

**Little Miracles** — At Little Miracles Inc., our vision is a community where all new parents are embraced, equipped, and empowered to care for their baby. Little Miracles Inc., a Christian inspired nonprofit, aims to provide essential baby supplies and clothing to every Tri-Valley parent in need. We count on little miracles, just like you, to help make a difference in the lives of struggling new parents. Little Miracles’ staff is entirely made up of volunteers. Donations will be used to purchase non-reusable baby necessities as well as to cover our operating costs. Most importantly, your gift will help bring hope to new parents with limited economic means. Learn more at [littlemiraclesPleasanton.org](http://littlemiraclesPleasanton.org). The new donation center is located at 1039 Serpentine Lane, Suite E in Pleasanton.

## Meadowlark Dairy

(continued from page 1)

Thursday 8:00 a.m to 8:00 p.m. and Friday through Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., the number of young adults working at the Dairy ranges from just a handful midday during the week to as many as 24 at a time on the weekends. Not to be forgotten is the afternoon (after school) rush, which is a busy shift for 16-17 staff at a time.

“I’ve always enjoyed it,” said Jesse of working with local high school students. “The kids make it fun; they all have their own personality and the atmosphere they bring keeps me going.”

As with so many things in today’s world, the pandemic really changed the day-to-day operations of the Dairy. In 2020 and 2021, nearly 90% of their business became groceries as opposed to ice cream.



Jannes Takens at the Dairy in 1951 when it was located on Old Foothill Road, now Alvise Adobe.

“Today, it’s probably back to about 60% ice cream. And really any time after noon, it is mostly ice cream,” said Jesse.

At the end of 2022, the Dairy started offering Meadowlark branded clothing (hats, sweatshirts, t-shirts) and accessories for purchase. “We

had a kid that was interested in design, and he was really good at drawing, so I asked him to draw some stuff for us. He still works here a couple of days a week.”

From being the first certified dairy in California to opening up the current downtown drive-thru



Bruce and Jannes Takens at the Neal Street dairy location in the 1980s just before the dairy stopped processing milk.

location, delivering milk to schools across the bay area, selling soft serve ice cream, and making merchandise, the Takens family has had quite the journey. The one constant that’s stood the test of time is the Takens family bringing joy to countless families in the area

through the old-town vibe that is the Meadowlark Dairy.

“We don’t change very much, but when we do it’s noticeable,” said Jesse. “As all the grocery needs change, we’ll have some different stuff. But the ice cream and milk products will always be here.”