

Updated: Sun, Apr 6, 2014, 7:11 am

Uploaded: Fri, Apr 4, 2014, 7:46 am

## **Chamber recognizes 6 for community leadership**

Awards ceremony fills Firehouse Arts Center

by Jeb Bing

The Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce has recognized individuals, groups and businesses that demonstrated excellence and community leadership in 2013.

The six awards were presented at the chamber's annual Community Services Awards celebration held at the Firehouse Arts Center with a reception and two-hour program that filled the auditorium. Since starting the program in 1962, the chamber has recognized 80 nonprofit organizations, 102 individuals and 103 businesses.

"Community leaders come in many different forms," chamber president Dave Stark said. "The chamber has honored these leaders for more than 50 years."

The awards this year went to Turman Commercial Painters, Hop Yard American Alehouse & Grill, Pleasanton Military Families, Greg Thome, Sarah and Claire Williams, and Hacienda.

Hacienda won the chamber's Green Business Award for its ongoing promotion of sustainable environmental business practices for the benefit of employees, customers and the community.

"With more than 11 million square feet of mixed-use space occupied by some 550 companies that locally employ approximately 18,000 people, Hacienda and its 875 acres is the largest development of its kind in Northern California," Stark said. "It represents the best and the brightest of contemporary corporate America."

Hacienda has been involved in numerous efforts with direct air quality benefits, including the nation's first transportation demand ordinance and being an active participant in the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Tri-Valley Air Quality Resource Team.

It has participated in a number of waste reduction efforts and has helped sponsor several special recycling events that have helped divert everything from paper to e-waste.

"Hacienda's efforts have received national recognition for providing various levels of environmental quality, which is why the chamber proudly recognizes Hacienda for its trail-blazing green practices," Stark told Hacienda general manager James Paxson, who accepted the award.

The chamber's Distinguished Individual Youth Service Award went to Sarah and Claire Williams for creating and conducting programs to help improve the lives of foster children, and to help children with reading and comprehension skills. Their programs, started while they were students at Amador Valley High School, benefited thousands of children.

"Both women are now in college, but the programs they founded continue to grow and help children in need," Stark said. "In fact, what's so special about this award is that Sarah and Claire's great grandmother, Lilly Fiorio, received a Community Service Award from the chamber in 1980."

Claire Williams was also honored with a Pleasanton Weekly Hero Award in 2012.

The Distinguished Individual Service Award went to Greg Thome for his service to the Pleasanton community for more than 30 years. He has worked with the Catholic Community of Pleasanton (CYO) as its basketball and track program as a coach and as co-athletic director for over two decades, until recently retiring from administrative responsibilities.

Over the years, he served hundreds of community volunteers and thousands of players and families.

While serving as a member of the Amador Boosters organization and through his CYO responsibilities, he supported major events for Special Olympics by providing and coordinating 60 to 80 volunteer referees for the event held last month in Pleasanton. He also participates on committees ranging in topics from school site size to year-round school schedule evaluations.

Stark presented the chamber's 2013 award for Business Philanthropy to Turman Commercial Painters (TCP), a company owned by longtime Pleasanton resident Dave Theobald.

"(Theobald) followed the lead of a philanthropist he once encountered and instituted TCP's own \$2 'People's Stimulus Package' whereby he disbursed thousands of dollars in packets of \$2 bills to his employees and encouraged them to spend the money stimulating the local economies where they lived and worked," Stark added.

In addition, last October, Theobald launched a company-wide campaign calling upon his employees nationwide to find and meet charitable needs in the communities where they do business.

"Locally his charitable activities included supporting a Valley View (Elementary School) family who lost everything in a fire, a contribution to Doctors Without Borders on behalf of a local teen killed by a drunk driver, support for two women for a year at Shepherd's Gate, financial support for Team Delaney and bikes for foster care teens in our valley," Stark told the audience.

The chamber's Excellence in Service Award went to the Pleasanton Military Families (PMF) and its co-chair Pat Frizzle.

"PMF was organized to provide support and comfort to Pleasanton families whose loved ones are in active military service, especially those deployed in the combat zones of Afghanistan and Iraq," Stark said.

The group, which meets monthly, sponsors a variety of events, including two to three "pack outs" each year where personal comfort and care items are bundled, boxed and shipped to as many deployed members of the armed forces as they can possibly reach. It also sponsors the Yellow Streamer program on Main Street.

"There's nothing greater than the safe return of loved ones, and as that happens, Pleasanton Military Families are on hand to help make that return special in every way possible," Stark said.

The chamber's final award for 2013 was for Excellence in Business and went to The Hop Yard American Alehouse & Grill for being a Pleasanton business that made a positive impact in the community through its achievements within the scope of normal business activity.

Eric "Otis" Nostrand, Barry Mori and Rob "Hilde" Hildebrand opened the bar and restaurant 20 years ago. Over the years, they have hired many local young adults, giving them valuable part-time work experience. The ownership group's other community contributions includes its annual Hop Yard golf tournament that has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Ryan Comer Cancer Research Library and more recently, Eric's Corner.