



TRI-VALLEY EXECUTIVE'S ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 985 ♦ PLEASANTON CA 94566

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SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

NEXT WEEK:

The next meeting of the Tri-Valley Executives' Association will be held on **October 4** at Vic's All-Star Kitchen at 7:00am.

You will be GREETED by **Chris Caballero** of Replacement Window Specialists and **Dave Silva** of Silmar Flooring.

The VALUE will be given by **Dr. Barry Winston** of Amador Valley Optometry.

The DISCUSSION will be led by **Jason Cooke** and **Dr. Rick Hume**.

There will be a BOARD MEETING directly following the regular meeting.

DID YOU GIVE A REFERRAL THIS WEEK?

BIG THANKS:

I'm sure you'd all agree, Ron Robinson of VIP Employer Services does an *excellent* job of organizing and running the Annual TVEA Golf Tournament. THANK YOU, Ron, for once again, putting together a fantastic outing!

MEMBER NEWS:

Pam Meyer of Design Works LTD. is making a change. She and her husband will be moving to Carmel and expanding her interior design business. In Pleasanton, Mona Fox will be taking her place in the business and at Tri-Valley Execs. Pam, best wishes on your move; you will be missed. Welcome, Mona!

SOCIAL:

Our next social event will be our holiday party on December 6. Skip Hinsley has graciously agreed to host us at Girasole Grill. The cost will be \$25 per person. A sign-up sheet will be going around next month.

CLASSIFICATION:

Skip Hinsley is 100% owner of Girasole Grill, despite what a past chef once claimed.

Skip started Girasole, which in Italian means "sunflower", in 1994. Their cuisine is fresh Tuscan-style Italian with a California attitude. Where the restaurant used to focus primarily on pastas, they've added prime rib and grilled meats to appeal to a broader clientele. Their dishes are very unique, like the Chicken Gorgi, but they do offer traditional pastas for those less adventurous.

When Girasole first opened, the town was much different. There wasn't really a Downtown to speak of and the new Dublin was still in planning stages. The restaurant is more off the beaten path then it was back then, but is now more of a destination restaurant. They have a "homey" décor with a cozy country villa setting.

Girasole used to be the exclusive caterer for a Livermore winery, which accounted for a very small part of the business. Then, a local chef, Bill Jess, wanted to get out of the catering business and offered to sell Pampered Palate. Skip bought the business and his business doubled overnight. Catering now accounts for 55% of their revenue.

Pampered Palate has consistent prices and caters at wineries, community centers and private



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homes. Some of their clients include the mayor of Pleasanton, the City of Pleasanton, Club Sport and the Golden State Warriors.

In 1995 a group of restaurateurs opened the Big Horn Grill with a celebrity chef and a lot of fanfare, and at the time you couldn't even get a table. Shortly thereafter, they replaced the celebrity chef with a younger, less experienced chef; the food quality diminished and the consistency was lost. Business plummeted and the owners decided to sell. A business broker called Skip and presented him with the opportunity to buy the restaurant. Skip took over in 1997 and turned the business around in 9 months.

The Big Horn Grill in San Ramon is a contemporary American steakhouse with a wood-fired grill and smoker. The restaurant was originally designed by Pat Kuleto and resembles a mountain lodge.

Both restaurants offer a spectrum of dining opportunities from an intimate dinner to a corporate event. They have banquet facilities perfect for rehearsal dinners, luncheons and business meetings.

Skip's son, James, went off to college telling his father that he never wanted to work in the family business. He got his degree and began a career with Ernst & Young. Not long after beginning his professional life, he became interested in working with his dad. James, who grew up in Pleasanton, is now running Girasole and will hopefully attract a new and younger crowd.

With two successful restaurants and a catering company, Skip is no longer just a restaurateur, he runs a food service company. His philosophy about business comes from his desire to make people happy: if you're going to do something, do it right and do it well, not half-assed. What drives a popular restaurant? Quality food, service, atmosphere and location. It's a factory and show-business all in one.

To plan your next catered event or business meeting, call Skip Hinsley at 831-4888.

ON THE COUCH WITH JIM MOOG, MFT:

If you consistently focus on something you really want, you will have better days; it gives you a sense of being. Once you decide what you truly want and who you really want to be or to become, and you start thinking along those lines to achieve that goal, you will achieve serenity in your life.
