

West Valley Chamber continues to help community

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Staff Reporter

Helping people within the community has always been a goal of the West Valley Chamber of Commerce for over 50 years. With a variety of services offered throughout the organization, the Chamber of Commerce looks to continue that goal and grow to help even more people in the future.

The West Valley Chamber of Commerce consists



Photo by Max Borsuk

West Valley Chamber of Commerce President Chuck Couture shows off the community birthday calendar.

of around 60 members who have a business in either West Valley, Ashford or one of the surrounding communities and is always looking for new members. The Chamber meets monthly throughout the year to keep its members updated on happenings within the community and hosts services including Christmas baskets for seniors and a disaster relief fund to help residents facing hard times.

"Businesses have been very good at keeping their membership," West Valley Chamber of Commerce President Chuck Couture said. "Many have been with us for a long time."

The Chamber provides about 80 baskets during the Christmas season to senior citizens throughout the West Valley area.

Baskets include items from assorted fruits to candies and the chamber offers both a single basket and a double basket for couples. The disaster relief fund gifts \$100 to people in the community who are going through a traumatic time, which Couture said is greatly appreciated in the community along with the baskets.

"The people in the community really appreciate [the Christmas baskets and relief fund]," Couture said. "If someone knocked on your door and saw a person standing there with a basket, it kind of overwhelms

them at times. But when you say it is a gift from the Chamber, it is really appreciated ... during a time of year where a lot of things are going on."

Keeping members up to date on what's happening in the community and doing what they can do promote members is another big goal of the West Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber offers a community birthday calendar, where residents can list birthdays, anniversaries and members can take out an advertisement for their business. Money from the cost of the ad, birthday listings and chamber dues goes toward helping fund the baskets, relief fund and other chamber offerings.

Meetings for the Chamber of Commerce move around to different restaurants or businesses throughout the community to help showcase the offerings within the area. Reports from West Valley Central School, the Town of Ashford and **West Valley Demonstration Project** are also given to help keep people informed on what's going on around them.

"One of the big goals is to keep in touch with what's going on around us," Couture said.

Those interested in joining the West Valley Chamber of Commerce can contact Couture at 942-3710 or cpcouture@hotmail.com.