



Westfield Chamber of Commerce Marking 50th Anniversary in 1998 ~ Celebrations Planned ~

The Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce is celebrating 50 years of service to the Westfield business community this year with a number of activities planned as the year continues.

The Chamber began as The Westfield Business Association on April 27, 1948, with dues of \$10 per year, and their meetings were held at the Rialto Theatre on East Broad Street.

According to the original charter signed by 26 members, "The aims and purposes of the organization are to create greater opportunities for business within the town, to cooperate in every way to further the interest of legitimate business and to assist in making Westfield a better place in which to live."

The goals of the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce are quite similar today, according to Chamber Executive Director Debbie Schmidt.

"The Chamber remains a voluntary partnership of progressive business and professional men and women, working together to build a healthy economy and to improve the quality of life for the Westfield area," she said.

The 50th anniversary celebration plans include a proclamation by the Mayor and Town Council of a special Chamber of Commerce Day in Westfield on Monday, April 27, commemorating the original charter signing.

The Rialto will have a special showing of a 1948 film that evening, and the community will be invited to help the Chamber of Commerce celebrate with a 1948-style dinner at Windmill Restaurant before the movie.

Many store windows will have displays of photos and memorabilia to add to the event, as well as trivia contests for the community to enter and win prizes.

Membership in the Chamber offers local businesses opportunities for promotion and referral, involvement in the business community, networking with fellow Chamber

members at meetings and education through various seminars held during the year.

Member businesses are listed on the Chamber's www.westfieldnj.com/wacc, and can be linked to the individual business' website. There are discount programs available for Chamber members on phone service, prescriptions plans and medical insurance.

The Chamber provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among local retail and service businesses and professionals. It administers an on-going schedule of programs and projects designed to keep local business people in contact with one another and with current information about the business community.

The Chamber organizes two street fairs every year in downtown Westfield for local businesses, charitable organizations, and crafters to present their products and services. Spring Fling will be held Sunday, April 19, from noon until 6 p.m., with FestiFall slated for Sunday, September 20, starting at noon on Elm, Quimby, East Broad and Prospect Streets. Each of the events offers arts, crafts, food and entertainment, attracting over 20,000 visitors to downtown Westfield.

"The Chamber is the voice of business in the community, monitoring local developments and regulation, keeping in regular contact with town officials and local legislators, and continually informing members about issues that may affect them," said Ms. Schmidt.

The Chamber represents both its individual members and the business community as a whole and acts on their behalf. It builds working relationships between business people and the larger community by working in coalitions with other town groups on charitable projects and civic events.

The Westfield Chamber of Commerce is located at 111 Quimby Street and can also be reached at P.O. Box 81, Westfield NJ 07091.

For more information, please call Ms. Schmidt at (908) 233-3021.

Established in 1923, the *Junior League of Elizabeth-Plainfield (JLEP)* is an organization of women committed to improving their communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. For 75 years, JLEP has worked to support needy organizations in Union County through the time and talent of its members. Membership is open to all area women interested in volunteerism.

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