

Morgan Hill Times

Note: Mike Johnson has been a member of Rotary Club of Morgan Hill for 12 years.

Johnson Lumber Named Business of the Year Tuesday, January 09, 2007

By Tony Burchyns (tburchyns@morganhilltimes.com)

Morgan Hill - Johnson Lumber Company has been named "Business of the Year" by the Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce.

It's the second time the company has won an award from the Chamber of Commerce after being recognized as "Small Business of the Year" in 1994.

This year's accolade reflects what the chamber sees as Johnson Lumber's high degree of community involvement.

For 26 years, the family-owned lumber yard - which also includes an Ace Hardware franchise - has been a presence in Morgan Hill.

Now in its second generation of "Johnsons," the company donates materials to Live Oak High School's Grad Night, gives thousands of dollars to the Relay for Life fundraiser, supports the local Fourth of July parade, contributes to the Morgan Hill Historical Society and sponsors the Friday Night Music Series.

"I'm thrilled to be getting the award," said 41-year-old owner Mike Johnson. "We do as much as we can. We've worked hard, and the town has supported us. There are good causes out there that need our support."

Started in 1980 by Keith Johnson - Mike's dad - the company started as a lumber yard on Railroad Avenue south of Tennant Avenue in Morgan Hill.

It moved to its current location in 1992, on Tennant Avenue near Butterfield Boulevard. That year, the company expanded its product line to offer decking material, moldings, building materials as well as engineered lumber, which is manufactured by bonding together wood strands, veneers, lumber or other wood fibers to create a composite that's more solid and stronger than the sum of its parts.

The company opened its first Ace Hardware store in 1992, launching two more in 1997 (in Hollister) and 2001 (in Salinas).

Today the company boasts a \$3 million lumber inventory - "The largest in the Valley," Johnson said.

This year, Johnson Lumber added a garden center to its collection of service outlets.



Johnson Lumber Co. has been named Business of the Year by the Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce. Mike Johnson is the owner of the business located on Tennant Avenue.

Photo by: [Chris Riley](#)

What's the secret to the company's success?

"It's a service thing," said Mike Seda, CFO for Johnson Lumber. "Whether it's in the lumber yard or in the hardware store, we want customers to have a lot of knowledgeable people to talk to."

The evolution from lumber-yard-only to hardware store may have required an additional focus on service, but Johnson's contributions to the community aren't always meant to draw attention from customers.

"We give money to local Boy Scouts and Eagle Scouts who are working on their projects ... that all comes from Mike Johnson," Seda said. "He tries to fly under the radar most of the time."

The Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce will present its annual community service awards to Johnson Lumber and local residents at a dinner Feb. 3.