

## LONG - TERM MEMBERS

# Midpoint Bearing: Challenges are opportunities

Photo by Jim Dorsey Photography

By Cynthia Schneider

Midpoint Bearing opened in Ontario in 1985. The company was established as a parts distributor for maintenance and repair facilities, specializing in electric motor repair. In 1999, the company opened its second office in Corona.

One of the first steps it took, in July 1999, was to become a member of the Corona Chamber of Commerce. Midpoint Bearing owners, Dan and C.C. Vest, realized that, "the likelihood of our company generating a direct revenue stream from Corona Chamber members was slim." But, beyond that, Chamber membership was important to integrating into the community, establishing relationships and finding out (when or if they experienced problems doing business) who the "go to" people were.

As C.C. puts it, "I could easily be one of those people who say that I don't join the Chamber or renew my membership because I don't get any business from it – but clearly I'm not." C.C. believes that the broad benefits of Chamber membership are definitely worth the investment for any company.

From the early days of Midpoint's Corona Chamber membership, C.C. Vest became a familiar face and a strong Chamber supporter. She was active for three years on the Corona Night with the Angels committee, served as a Board member from 2003-2006, and is currently a member of the Legislative Action Committee (LAC). She is a valued resource and often a source of information on how other chambers, in cities she does business in, are being innovative.

This year marked the opening of a third Midpoint Bearing store, in Converse, Texas. When asked why they would open an out-of-state store, C.C. replied that it was because the specialty market they deal with needed a partner in that area. Fortunately, one of Midpoint Bearings' established employees was looking at Texas as a retirement location and was able to transition into the management spot in the Converse store.

Midpoint's point of differentiation with




Dan and C.C. Vest, owners of Midpoint Bearing.

customers has been its service ethic. Its ability to move a seasoned Midpoint staff person into the management role will give it a leg up immediately.

The greatest challenge facing their business? C.C. quickly responded: "It's China, it's Mexico, it's businesses moving to other countries and other states. We've lost two solid customers this year. One went bankrupt and the other moved to a more business-friendly state." When asked whether Midpoint could continue to service customers using the Internet, C.C. replied, "Not really. Most of our customers need parts within 24 hours when they call us. Shipping long distances doesn't work for them." The migration of businesses out of California is an escalating issue that needs to be aggressively addressed, she said.

C.C. is a problem solver. Not one to let an obstacle deter her, she faces a challenge head-on, seeing the opportunity in it and making it work for her. Opening a store in Converse may not have been on Midpoint's radar screen, but now that they have, C.C. says, "We can really see ourselves expanding there."

Midpoint Bearing can be reached at (909) 391-1466 or visit its website [www.midpointbearing.com](http://www.midpointbearing.com). 



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