



Farm Bureau Member Profile

INNOVATIVE AND DOG FRIENDLY, VINEYARD INDUSTRY PRODUCTS IS A THRIVING SONOMA COUNTY BUSINESS

By Rachel LaFranchi, Farm News Editor

The concept of Vineyard Industry Products came about in the early 70's when Paul Downer was selling t-posts from the trunk of his car. By the late seventies, Paul and Laraine Downer were working out of the spare bedroom of their house and had six phone lines running to the room. They officially started Vineyard Industry Products in 1979.

The Downer's son, John, joined the business in the 1980's. Having known the family for a long time, Sunni Ashley started at the company in mid-90's to set up the computer systems. But Ashley, a business-minded person, quickly became more involved.

In 2000, John Downer and Ashley purchased Vineyard Industry Products from

Paul and Laraine.

Vineyard Industry Products grew quickly and steadily moving from a spare bedroom to an established office in Windsor. Now, they have expanded to three locations, with stores in Paso Robles and Los Alamos.

They employ 12 people full time across their stores, with the biggest location, Windsor, having 10 employees. Their stores have a friendly feel to them, and customers often find up to four dogs in the Windsor store – who all have their own roles, Ashley said.

For Vineyard Industry Products, how they treat other people is an important part of their business. "Paul and Laraine set standards for how we treat our employees, how we treat our vendors and how we

treat our customers," said Ashley, "John and I continue that and luckily we've been fortunate enough to do so."

Vineyard Industry Products takes pride in the fact that they are innovative. They strive to provide growers with products that make their life easier and they are always watching out for the best prices.

Supporting the community and local organizations is also important to Vineyard Industry Products. They have been Farm Bureau members since 1981, more than 34 years, and jump on any opportunities to sponsor events, provide equipment or help in any way they can.

"When I see all the things the farmers have to deal with, all the regulations and now the labor shortage, it reminds me that

it's important to continue to support the organizations that fight for farmers," said Ashley.

Vineyard Industry Products also supports local youth in agriculture by buying four to five animals each year at the Sonoma County Fair. "4-H and FFA is a wonderful learning experience for the children," said Ashley. "To see all these kids blossom into professional business people is amazing."

After 36 years in business, Vineyard Industry Products has built a successful company. With aims to support community and offices spread over three locations, they've come a long way from Paul selling items from the back of his trunk.



Paul and Laraine Downer in 1979, the year they started Vineyard Industry Products. Photo courtesy of Vineyard Industry Products.



Sunni Ashley stands in front of years worth of 4-H thank you letters and pictures from local youth who sold market animals at the Sonoma County Fair purchased by VIP. Photo by Rachel LaFranchi.

JOIN US FOR FAIR FUN DOWN ON THE FARM

HIGH FLYIN' ARENA SHOWS
Destruction Derby
Saturday, August 1

Monster Trucks
Saturday, August 8 & Sunday, August 9

BRIDGIT MENDLER
August 5

SNAKE OIL SINNERS
August 6

MONTGOMERY GENTRY + THOMPSON SQUARE
Tuesday, August 4

WINE COUNTRY HORSE RACING
July 30 - August 2
August 6 - August 9
PLUS BONUS WEEK
August 14 - August 16

Giant Carnival & Kiddy Carnival
"Barnyard Blossoms" Flower Show
Demonstration Kitchen
Kids Area & Farm Themed Fun

TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE OR AT THE FAIR BOX OFFICE

Additional ticket required for most concerts and events in Chris Beck Arena.

SONOMA COUNTY FAIR
DOWN ON THE FARM
JULY 24-AUGUST 9
(Closed Mondays)

Santa Rosa
(707) 545-4200
SonomaCountyFair.com

K & B MOTORSPORTS

MULE PRO-FXT | **TRANSFORM THE WAY YOU LIVE.**
THE FASTEST, MOST POWERFUL MULE™ SIDE x SIDE EVER.

K & B MOTORSPOTS
\$1,000 OFF Kawasaki PRO-FXT Mule!
20% OFF Accessories with this ad.

326 Petaluma Blvd. North
Petaluma, CA 94952
(707) 763-4658

OF PETALUMA
707-763-4658

KAWASAKI CARES: Always wear protective gear appropriate for the use of this vehicle. Never operate under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Protect the environment. The Kawasaki MULE PRO-FXT™ side x side is an off-highway vehicle only, and is not designed, equipped, or manufactured for use on public streets, roads or highways. Obey the laws and regulations that control the use of your vehicle. Read Owner's Manual and all on-product warnings. ©2014 Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A.

Kawasaki
Let the good times roll.™