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ClubSport of Pleasanton to become First “Green” Health Club in U.S.

Ralph S. Rajs, Pleasanton resident and Regional Vice President of Operations/Wellness for Leisure Sports Inc., is embarking on a cutting edge project to turn all five of the health clubs in his purview into Green Businesses. Three of the five mega-gyms are located in the East Bay: Fremont, Pleasanton and Walnut Creek, representing a total of 425,000 square feet of commercial property. A quick check of the Alameda and Contra Costa Green Business registries show no other workout facilities listed. Similarly, the registry of LEED certified projects under the U.S. Green Building Council lists no health clubs.

“Our business is health and wellness. We are committed to operating our facilities in a manner that promotes the well-being of our club members, our staff, and the environment around our clubs,” says Rajs.

Rajs called upon Pleasanton-based environmental consulting firm, Buck Consulting, to assist in the endeavor. The founding partner, Jill Buck, is best known for her nonprofit efforts with schools around the globe as the founder of the Go Green Initiative (www.gogreeninitiative.org). However, in 2004, she started her consulting firm to help businesses achieve what she calls “profitability through sustainability.” Rajs says choosing Buck Consulting was an easy decision. “Jill Buck is a results-oriented businesswoman who knows how to maximize positive environmental impact on any company’s budget. She pays attention to the bottom line, and I think that is what separates Buck Consulting from other choices.”

Buck sees the ClubSport project as truly visionary, and is impressed with Rajs’ connection between human health and environmental protection. “He is way out in front of similar facilities on this issue, and I expect it to be quite a competitive edge.”

Buck went on to explain the trend she sees in her industry. “Green business will follow the same growth curve that company websites did in the ‘90’s. If your company had a website in 1990, you were way ahead of the power curve. If you had a site up in 1995, you were running with the pack. But if you didn’t have a company website by 2000, you were non-existent to many consumers who saw websites as a credible means of assessing the company’s viability. Before long, green businesses will be the rule, not the exception, and consumers will come to expect it as a prerequisite to patronage.”

Pleasanton Garbage Service (PGS) will be a major partner in ClubSport’s efforts to “Go Green.” Bob Molinaro, owner of PGS, is very enthusiastic about the project. “PGS is proud to be involved, and we will assist Ralph every step of the way to provide recycling and waste management solutions that will help ClubSport meet its goals.”