

# Chamber fetes top businesses

## 4 Sterling Awards honor excellence

By Peter Corbett  
Scottsdale Republic

**SCOTTSDALE** — Exhibit Experts founder Susan Ratliff is feeling fortunate these days, since her tradeshow-displays company rebounded from a sharp downturn in conventions after the 9/11 attacks.

On Friday, she got a solid reminder of her business success with a Sterling Award from the Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce.

"I truly am the luckiest person I know," an emotional Ratliff said upon picking up her award in the new Micro Business category.

Exhibit Experts was one of four businesses honored by the chamber during its 18th annual Sterling Awards luncheon at the Hilton Scottsdale Resort. The honors are based on excellence, innovation and community stewardship.

Other winners were:

■ **Small Business** — Newport Furnishings, a warehouse furniture store that has prospered since Chuck and Denise Haney started it five years ago.

■ **Big Business** — Cox Communications.

■ **Non-profit** — Scottsdale Leadership Inc., which master of ceremonies Don Henninger called a sentimental favorite.

The Micro Business nominees were the Advanced Strategy Center at Pinnacle Peak and Celebration of Fine Art. Allegra Printing & Imaging and Applied Creative Inc. were the Small Business nominees. First National Bank of Arizona and Wireless Retail Inc. were runners-up in the Big Business category. The McDowell Sonoran Land Trust and Camelot Therapeutic were nominees in the Non-profit category.



Susan Ratliff

### Coming Monday

Closer looks at the Sterling Award winners.