August 2007

Tuesday, August 2
Ambassador Luncheon
Aloha Paradise Grill
11:45 am

Thursday, August 9
President’s Luncheon
Salvation Army Building
3001 “R” Avenue
11:30 am

Friday, August 10
Finance/Executive Committee Meeting
Chamber Office
10:30 am

Thursday, August 16
Business After Hours
Pelican Bay Books
9th & O
5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Tuesday, August 28
VIC Meeting
Chamber Office
9:00 am

Tuesday, August 28
Membership Division Meeting
Chamber Office
2:45 pm

Pelican Bay Books to Host Business After Hours

This month’s After Hours will be hosted by Pelican Bay Books August 16th at 5:30 p.m.. The company is a mecca for book collectors of all stripes, with a multitude of titles ranging from paperbacks to first editions. Plan on visiting their new location at 1104 9th Street, with festivities both inside the book store and outside in the garden (weather permitting). Please call 293-7911 to RSVP.

President’s Luncheon

The August 9th President’s Luncheon will feature Duane Knapp, an internationally recognized expert on branding. His company BrandStrategy, Inc. has advised over 300 brands in 14 countries worldwide, with a wide-ranging and diverse client base. Mr. Knapp is also the author of three books, including The Brand Mindset and Destination BrandScience. His talk at the luncheon is focused on helping members improve their business using common-sense strategies. This is the latest in our series of business improvement events and we invite you to take advantage. The President’s luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. at the Salvation Army Building; cost is $15. Please RSVP to the Chamber office at 293-7911.

Chamber and other key community leaders met with Governor Christine Gregoire last month at a groundbreaking at Skagit Valley College.
A Message from the President

As I write this monthly letter, the scene outside the window is summer—75 degrees, under a cloudless sky with little humidity—in a word, delightful! Our members tell me that business is brisk, replete with tourists coming to Anacortes to experience our climate, scenic beauty, and enjoy a taste of island living. We live in a great place and the word is getting out. Your Chamber is working hard to further this message and it’s through your active support that we are able to do so.

There are a number of initiatives in the Chamber Board’s pipeline. Specifically: Our Marketing & Promotions Division is working hard to craft an effective branding strategy. In fact, this will be the topic at the President’s Luncheon on August 9. Duane Knapp, an internationally recognized expert on brand marketing will be giving a talk to membership. I encourage you to attend, as this is information that is valuable to any business. We will be carrying this discussion into strategic planning sessions at the September Board retreat and incorporating it into 2008 operations.

The Economic Development Division is focused on a two-year Futures Project. While still under formation, this project will provide direction for future City growth by articulating a long-term outlook. The Division will seek input from a wide variety of sources, incorporating economic development with workforce issues, land use, and transportation considerations, among others. This feedback will then be integrated into a cohesive vision, which can be shared with various constituencies.

Vince Oliver

The Chamber continues to drive economic and cultural activity throughout the City. As you read this, Shipwreck Day will be in the rearview mirror and the Jazz Festival an upcoming event. We are working with the Island Hospital Health Foundation to sponsor/inaugurate a Celebration of Trees, benefiting free community health screenings. The trees will be on exhibit for the community to enjoy at the Port Building for three days in late-November, with a Gala/auction on December 1 to lead off the Holiday season.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge Bill Berry and his many years of Chamber leadership. As you may know, Bill sold KLKI and he will continue to fill his role on the Chamber Board as our immediate past President. We look forward to having Bill continue to be involved in our Chamber and its programs for many years—he is a key factor in our success.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at 299-1300 or via e-mail at voliver@islandhospital.org. Enjoy the remainder of the summer and thank you for your continued support of the Chamber.

Tourism Marketing

Just wrapping up is a mini tourism campaign in Vancouver, inviting our neighbors to the north to spend leisure time in Anacortes. Specifically, we ran “Couple Time” and “Leisure Time” ads in the Vancouver Sun and The Province, as well as a banner ad on the Sun’s website (vancouversun.com).

The Sun, a broadsheet newspaper, boasts a 50/50 male/female reader mix with most readers aged 35 or older and described in demographics material as “educated, urban, with higher than average household incomes.” The Province, printed in tabloid format, skews with a younger, suburban audience, “mid to high income, families with children.” Together, the two Vancouver newspapers have a weekly readership of more than 1.2 million adults. By adding the Sun’s website banner ad, we extended the reach of our message by an estimated 23 percent.

A favorable exchange rate, plus a 30 percent “summer bonus” from the newspapers, provided a $1,000 boost to this Vancouver campaign. On a related note, it is always helpful to the Chamber of Commerce to hear reports from members regarding how their customers/clients heard about Anacortes. A number of businesses, especially hoteliers and restaurateurs, make this inquiry a matter of routine.

As our peak tourism season draws to a close, we are up to our ears in marketing and promotion of the Anacortes Jazz Festival, conceived as a “shoulder season” event to bring more visitors to our community.

Much of our print advertising is “local” – focusing on Whatcom, San Juan, Island and Skagit counties. We have partnered in a major campaign between KLKI 1340 AM and two Seattle area FM stations: KPLU and KWJZ. Both FM stations have made commitments that include not only commercials but periodic references to the Festival by on-air personalities. KLKI provides invaluable support among regional listeners.

We have invested once again in a banner ad on NWSource.com, a popular website hosted by the Seattle Times and Post-Intelligencer. This ad serves as an instant link to our own website, which features schedule details, ticket prices and purchase options, as well as biographies, photos and web links of our talented lineup of performers.

In addition to radio, our Jazz Festival promotion includes tremendous local support from the Anacortes American (including publication of an excellent Festival program), the Skagit Valley Herald and the Clam-Digger. The American has partnered with us once again on a ticket contest. We also have a “front page” presence with a banner ad on the Herald organization’s new goskagit.com website.

Work continues on our recently redesigned website, an “evergreen” promotional source that features new information ranging from photographs to calendar items. I encourage you to check out this site and to take advantage of opportunities to promote your own businesses.

By Steve Berentson
Member Profile

Aloha Paradise Grill

We opened Aloha Paradise Grill September 17, 2006. After moving our ohana (family) here in November of 2005, we wanted to share authentic Hawaiian food and local flavor of Hawaii with the friendly people of the Pacific Northwest. It was always our dream to do this in retirement, but then it hit us - why wait?

Our family recipes come to life by taking the freshest ingredients available and combining them with seasonings and flavors flown in from Hawaii. All of our dishes have that unique local flair that makes you feel reminiscent of Hawaii; you can almost feel the sand between your toes. Our goal is accomplished when our customers not only receive delicious Hawaiian food, but an entire Hawaiian experience.

That experience has come one step closer to reality with the opening of our new Luau Garden. Nothing says island living like authentic Polynesian food served in the great outdoors under the light of a tiki torch.

Meet Your Board

Curtis Payne

Couples with young children often move to Anacortes to raise their families in a peaceful environment where they can live a high quality of life. Curtis Payne and his wife Nicoline are no exception.

Roughly 7 years ago, they were living in Richmond, British Columbia with a young daughter in school and a son about to enter kindergarten. Curtis received a call from his brother offering to sell his Farmers Insurance Agency business to him. The family had often visited Anacortes and Curtis was trained in the financial services industry. Although Nicoline enjoyed her profession as a Laboratory Scientist for a medical laboratory company, it was an opportunity for her to help Curtis run their own business and have the flexibility to spend more time with their children.

Further, Curtis grew up in Houston, Texas where his father was in the oil business. When he was 13, his family moved to Fort St. John, British Columbia - mile 50 of the Alaska Highway. He had always hoped to return to the United States, so they accepted his brother’s offer, left the city and moved to Anacortes.

There were immediate differences and trade-offs for sure. They were accustomed to all the amenities and services a cosmopolitan city such as nearby Vancouver had to offer, but in the end, the positives of their new community justified their move.

The entire family is active in the local community. Nicoline at their church, scouts and schools; the children in scouts and various sports and arts programs, and Curtis in a number of organizations. He is a member and past President of the Anacortes Rotary Club and the family has hosted several foreign students from Rotary’s Student Exchange program; most recently, a student from Denmark.

Curtis also serves as the current Chairman on the Anacortes Housing Authority Board and was proud to be involved as the Wilson Hotel project came to fruition. He said even though the hotel is fully occupied and has a waiting list, it is a challenge for the Authority to secure affordable housing when there is such an absence of jobs that would employ those living in this type of housing. Curtis asked, “How do you stop the ‘Sausalito-effect’? Land prices are not decreasing and the influx of the retired community all affect the probability of affordable homes being built.”

His role on the Economic Development Division and Board Member at the Chamber wrestles with the same challenge. “What industry/ies will bring jobs to town that will have a long-lasting affect? Once we identify those, we will work with the city to help foster the development of those new businesses,” Curtis stated.

As for his business, Curtis is an Insurance and Financial Services Agent for Farmers Insurance, providing Life, Home, Auto, Boat and Business insurance. He takes the time to educate his client’s on what coverage best suits their needs and takes a similar approach when helping them plan for their retirement.

Meet Your Board

By Michelle West

John and Liz Gabriel

We are featuring a blend of island music (both Hawaiian and San Juan) with entertainers like Aloha Danny, Jack Hamilton, and more as the summer progresses. This is the perfect date night destination.

Aloha Paradise Grill also offers catering. Big or small, we do it all! Ask us about our luau prop rentals to make your party complete! Need a unique place to hold your next party? Rent the entire restaurant on any Sunday. We will customize a menu to meet your needs and open the bar if you want it! Perfect for wedding showers, rehearsal dinners, baby showers, anniversaries or birthday parties and don’t forget the BABY LUAUS!

Last but not least, MAHALO to the people of Anacortes and all of our devoted customers. For without you, we would have woken from this dream long ago. Your continued patronage and ensuing friendships mean more to us than a simple MAHALO can convey, so ALOHA!
Jazz Festival

The Anacortes Jazz Festival has some great new features for 2007. The event will be held over the long Labor Day weekend, extending festivities for an additional day. Friday will see a community concert in Causland Park at 1:00 pm, high school jazz musicians downtown in the afternoon and a Jazz Walk Friday night. Saturday-Monday features a variety of talent on Curtis Wharf, with a free salsa dance at the Port Warehouse on Saturday at 6:00 pm with a Jazz Walk afterwards.

A key attraction every year is the Gala Dinner and concert on Friday night. This year’s celebration is no exception. The event begins at 6:00 pm and features Mary Stallings and the Mel Brown Trio. Lauded as “the best jazz singer singing today,” Stallings has performed with such luminaries as Count Basie, Earl Hines, Joe Henderson, and Tony Bennett. The Chamber invites you to one of the best parties of the year with great food, excellent music and a festive atmosphere. Tickets go quickly so please reserve a space by calling the Chamber office at 293-7911.

2007 was named “The Year of the Salmon” by the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce. A Salmon Derby kicked off the year, decorative salmon trash cans were placed downtown, an authentic salmon can label became the official poster of the Waterfront Festival and a mural declaring Anacortes “the salmon canning capital of the world” was mounted on the side of the chamber building. We asked local artist Jennifer Bowman to carry the theme through to the Jazz Festival. Bowman produced the official 2007 Anacortes Jazz Festival poster: “Jammin’ Salmon.”

Festival Sponsors

Thank you to all of our sponsors for making this year’s Jazz Festival possible:

- The Fidalgo
- Tesoro Refining & Marketing Co
- The Orcas
- Dakota Creek Industries
- Island Hospital
- The Lopez
- Anacortes American
- Mark Nilson Mortgage Consultant
- RiverCity Screenprinting
- Skagit Valley Herald
- ALLDATA Shredding
- The Cypress
- Anaco Realty
- Anacortes Family Medicine
- Barrett Financial, Ltd.
- Donatello Flowers and Gifts
- il Posto
- MacGregor Publishing
- Pacific Party Canopies
- Shell Puget Sound Refinery
- Swinomish Northern Lights Casino
- Whidbey Island Bank
- The Guemes
- Adrift
- Anaco Bay Inn
- Anacortes Financial Advisors
- Anacortes Interiors
- Flounder Bay Café
- Gere a Deli
- Hampton Inn & Suites
- Horizon Bank
- Majestic Inn & Spa
- Skagit State Bank
- People’s Bank
- Friend of the Festival
- Anacortes Inn
- Cap Sante Inn
- Epicure
- Medicap Pharmacy
- Reisner Distributor
- San Juan Lanes
- Steve & Linda Wilhoit

Mary Stallings
The 2007 legislative session was busy, with a variety of bills enacted into law. Please find below a brief recap.

- **Sales Tax Streamlining.** This measure, detailed at length in our last newsletter, affects sales tax sourcing, effective July 2008. In brief, for any goods delivered within the state, sales tax will be calculated based on the buyer, not the seller, with the buyers jurisdiction receiving the tax benefit.

- **Marine Skills Center.** Under a bill sponsored by Dave Quall, high school students in Skagit County will soon be able to enrich their learning through unique vocational and technical classes offered by a new regional skills center. The legislature approved $24.4 million for construction of a new Skagit County Skills Center, with a main campus at Skagit Valley College and a satellite campus for a Marine Technology Center in Anacortes. This is a welcome development, benefiting both students at risk of dropping out and in search of a trade skill and businesses looking for qualified workers.

- **Ferries.** The transportation budget and legislation passed provide guidelines to Washington State Ferries for developing operational strategies, terminal design standards, fare policies, and long-range capital plans. Included in this effort is funding for construction of a number of new ferry boats, helping replace an aging fleet.

- **Identity Theft.** Identity theft has become a major state-wide concern, costing individuals and businesses millions of dollars each year in losses. The State Attorney General, Rob McKenna, will be in town on October 18 to address this issue. (Please see detail elsewhere in the newsletter). Under a bill passed this session, any resident may place a freeze on their credit report, those over 65 free-of-charge. A separate bill prohibits employers from checking credit history of job applicants unless the credit check is job-related and the employer has notified the applicant.

- **Cell Phones.** Finally, after years of trying, the legislature passed a measure banning the use of cell phones while driving, which takes effect July 2008.

### Ribbon Cuttings

Executive Director Mitch Everton shares a ribbon cutting with Rich and Pat Lord and the RE/MAX brokerage staff at their newly opened office at 2216 Commercial Avenue.

Island Home Collection owners Steve and Apryl Hurley along with their children Parker and Nicole celebrate the opening of their new store at 810 Commercial along with Chamber President-elect Robin Pestarino and Mayor Dean Maxwell.
Thank You

Thanks to the following members for donating door prizes at the Epicure Business After Hours:

- Anacortes Window and Door
- Donatello Gifts and Flowers
- Epicure
- Homeplace Special Care Center – Burlington
- Maison et Jardin
- Mark Nilson Mortgage Consultant
- Pelican Bay Books
- Read Me a Story
- Scott Milo Gallery
- Upstage Boutique & Men’s Store
- Watermark Books
- Wildflower Home & Garden
- Windermere

Thanks to the following members for donating door prizes at the Business Connections Lunch:

- Cedar Creek Lumber
- Express Personnel
- Fidalgo Bay Coffee
- MacGregor
- Mark Nilson Mortgage Consultant

Shipwreck Day

Gray skies did not dampen the enthusiasm of Shipwreck Day vendors or purchasers. The streets of downtown Anacortes were filled with treasures and hunters.

Candidate Forum

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce, the League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women are hosting a local candidate’s forum on August 15th from 7:00 – 10:00 pm at the City Council chambers. This event will provide an opportunity to hear the candidates’ platforms and ask questions. Candidates participating are running for port commission, city council, Fidalgo Pool & Fitness commission, hospital commission and the school board. These positions are important to the continued health of our community. Vote responsibly - get to know your candidates.

U of W Satellite Campus

The University of Washington has appointed a 16-member work group to provide advice on an appropriate location, size of student body, and degree programs for a UW satellite campus to be located in Snohomish, Island, or Skagit county. While planning is still in a preliminary stage, the Chamber is following up with key contacts to determine whether an appropriate Anacortes site would meet criteria as developed over time by the committee and, as such, be considered. We will keep membership updated as options are narrowed.
My name is Heather Miller, one of the newest Ambassadors. I moved here with my family in 1999 and as soon as we arrived, we knew we wanted to stay. My husband Matt, is stationed here with the Navy and our two children, Alex and Brittany, will attend middle school next year.

Growing up, my family owned gas stations so retail and small business were a part of my life from a young age. I attended college in Washington DC, receiving both an undergraduate degree in Business Finance and an MBA. I worked for 7-Eleven in Virginia for three years as a Field Manager, supervising six stores, but then took a break to start our family.

When we moved to Anacortes, I obtained my real estate license and worked for Century 21, which then merged with Windermere a few years ago. While still working in real estate, I opened Read Me A Story in 2004, with a desire to work in retail. I have thoroughly enjoyed opening and growing our store over the last three years; it is truly a family business in a wonderful community that we will call home forever.
THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

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Chamber Officers

Executive Board
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President-Elect
Robin Pestarino / AllData Shredding
Secretary
Zee Hogan / Maison et Jardin
Treasurer
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Kristi Daniels/Kathleen Mitchell/Betsy Rogers
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Michelle West

There are new signal flags on the Chamber flagpole at 9th and Commercial. The message: “WELCOME VISITORS.”

CORRECTION
Please note the following correction to July’s interview with Chamber board member Robin Pestarino:
Robin was Chairwoman of the Joshua, Texas Planning and Zoning Committee; she served on the Joshua, Texas City Council, and was President of the Joshua, Texas Chamber of Commerce. The article indicated Robin served on the Fort Worth Planning and Zoning Committee and that she chaired the Fort Worth City Council and was President of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce. Robin served on many boards of directorship in Fort Worth but not the ones mentioned above. Further Robin was President of the Johnston County Republican Women versus the Texas Republican Women.