Sunnyside Up

Join us for Sunnyside Up Breakfast on December 13 at 7:00 am at Flounder Bay Restaurant. This quarterly membership meeting is half community update and half networking. Jeanne Youngquist, the Skagit County Auditor, will give us an election update and provide details on how the election process works. Additionally, Jade Barth, director of Youth Dynamics, will present how her organization is helping teens in our community.

Please note the changed time of the breakfast — many of you have said that you would attend this event if it were a little earlier. Come by Flounder Bay, have breakfast, get informed and network with fellow members — ALL BEFORE YOU GET TO WORK! RSVP to the Chamber.

All-County Installation Banquet

*Please mark your calendars: the county-wide installation dinner will be held on Thursday, January 17 from 5:30-8:00 pm at McIntyre Hall.*

For those of you who haven’t attended in the past, this annual event brings together Skagit County Chamber members, recognizing new additions to each Chamber Board. It’s a great mixer, combining a wonderful dinner with an engaging speaker. We had a full contingent last year—please plan on joining us in January.

Business After Hours: Ana-Cross Stitch

Join us for the December Business After Hours at Ana-Cross Stitch, scheduled for December 20 at 5:30 pm.

Chamber members will receive 10% off their purchases during the Business After Hours — a great time to stock up on gifts for the textile crafters on your list.

Please RSVP to the chamber at 293-7911 or online at info@anacortes.org. To further promote your business, donate a door prize.
As the calendar drifts toward the Holidays, I find myself looking back over a productive year and forward to a 2008 of challenge and opportunity.

The backward glance reveals increased productivity and a more expansive view from our Board—your Chamber acting as a "voice" for the business community. We published a number of position papers, effectively surveyed our membership and implemented change based on your responses. We increased the networking opportunities available to members, adding a quarterly breakfast. The speakers at our quarterly President’s Luncheon were upgraded, hopefully providing you with valuable information in running your business. Our events improved significantly, with a different tone to both of our festivals and continued growth at Shipwreck Day. Moreover, we were able to land a national boating festival—Trawler Fest—that will bring a large contingent of affluent tourists to town next May. We published a Membership Directory and significantly upgraded both our primary brochure and the Web site, which saw significantly increased traffic as a result.

As I look to next year, I see the opportunity to continue to expand on our successes. Specifically:

• The Chamber Board remains totally focused on our members and their needs. We will continue to work diligently to ensure that Anacortes remains vibrant and vital as both a tourist destination and in its business environment. To this end, we will continue to focus on effective long-term planning and partner with key constituencies to see that our vision of a vibrant waterfront community is realized.

• We will also continue to enhance member benefits. You will see a group health plan offered through the Chamber in the next several months. I encourage you to explore this opportunity and to take advantage if it meets your needs.

• You will continue to see improvement in the events that we sponsor. Waterfront Festival will re-emphasize its connection to our marine heritage, with activities and exhibitors that tie to the waterfront. The Jazz Festival will employ a reconfigured Curtis Wharf, with an accent on national acts. We will do everything in our power to ensure that Trawler Fest is a success and that it returns to Anacortes for years to come. We will also continue to encourage Canadian tourism, taking advantage of a stronger loonie and our close proximity to the border.

• Through our newly-formed Trades Division, we will foster cooperation between the various trades groups—merchants, hotels, restaurants, marine—operating in our city, providing both visitors and residents with enhanced service.

There are also a number of challenges that we will likely see, including threats to the International Ferry Run, the resilience of our economy, the effective use of our waterfront, and the seasonality/vulnerability of many of our local businesses. Be assured we will face these challenges together.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to serve as your Board President. It’s been a privilege and I’ve enjoyed it. Your incoming President—Robin Pestarino—shares my commitment to the Chamber and its good works. I look forward to a productive new year.

Comments/questions, please contact me at 299-1300 or voliver@islandhospital.org.

Vince Oliver, current President of the Board of Directors, presented outgoing Board Members and Chamber Award winners with gifts of appreciation.

Outgoing Board Members include Bill Berry, Berry Entertainment; Dave Storkson, San Juan Lanes; Carol Van Iterson, Horizon Bank; Nate Scott, Windermere Real Estate. Special recognition awards went to Robin Pestarino, ALLDATA Shredding; Mark Nilson, Mortgage Consultant; Kirk Kennedy, Individual Member; and Marilee Maricich, Beautification Committee.
Member Profile: Kim Wilson & Wildflower Home and Garden

My husband and I came to visit family in Anacortes about three years ago. We felt that Anacortes was such a wonderful little town, why not move here? Within one week of that decision, we sold our home and purchased one here. There is so much to do in this area with the water, islands and wonderful people. We Love It!

I have always wanted to own a store and this community seemed like the perfect place to start. I also always knew that my shop would have some sort of garden and décor theme. I love creating and need this type of outlet. The old historic building with its rich history is perfect for Wildflower Home and Garden. I teasingly say that the space has “Good Ghosties.” I have an eclectic sense of style and love creating vignettes to highlight a particular item, whether a bird’s nest found in the bushes or a vintage vase. I like the unexpected. Your surroundings should be a reflection of who you are and what makes you happy. I like to help my customers find that special object that can do the same for them.

My concept for retailing combines what I call a “perfect ambience.” I love a warm, friendly atmosphere with my favorite music playing in the background. Whether a gift for a friend, a new baby or even for yourself, I hope Wildflower Home and Garden can offer the special feeling of finding something just right.

Pat Meyer

My family ventured to the U.S. from Vancouver, B.C. in hopes of being an early pioneer, selling “TV’s” for Motorola in 1953.

I attended Everett Community College in ’65 but after two years was drafted for the U.S. military. I accepted (rather than go back to Canada) and chose service in the U.S. Navy. I managed to avoid Vietnam due to a football injury (Navy vs. Marines), got out early, and found a profession in Seattle working in transportation for Smyth World Wide Movers in 1967. The same year I met and married Vivian (Viki) Eaton in ’68, an old Everett High School grad.

Working for the moving industry gave me an opportunity to travel for 15 years throughout the world. I specialized in seeking overseas partners who could professionally handle U.S. military shipments. At the same time, I researched the cultures of various countries and fed information back to Corporate H.R. personnel for help in overseas relocations, determining “what to take, where to live, how to do this, not do this, etc.,” to assist U.S. executives move their families.

In 1988, we bought Quality Moving Systems in Bellevue, WA, then sold it to a major van line in 1993. We lived on Mercer Island for 13 years and our daughter, Amy, graduated from Mercer Island High. After being all over the world, including living in Hawaii four different times, two different islands, we finally realized that the Pacific Northwest was where we wanted to be. We started Viking Moving Services here in 2002 and the rest is history.

The highlights of my experience over the years are really a book. Assassinations, highjackings, closing of overseas airports, bombings, etc. have given me a respect for all things few and far. I am looking forward to a third year on the board in 2008. I have learned a lot from everyone and I am impressed with all the positive people on the board, coming and going, who contribute daily to building a “thriving” Chamber of Commerce for a blessed city. All chamber members should know this is a “positive, hard working” group, dedicated to improving the quality of life for all members and citizens of Anacortes.
The Holidays are always magical in Anacortes, with dazzling storefronts, sparkling lights and Rockwellian events. Here are some events the Chambers produces and/or supports:

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1 @ 6:00 PM — Celebration of Trees “The Magic of Christmas” Tree and Wreath Auction.
A brand new event organized by the Island Hospital Foundation and partially sponsored by the Anacortes Chamber and the Port of Anacortes. Port of Anacortes Warehouse.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4 @ 4:00 PM
White Light & Bright Colors judging begins.
Applications available at the Chamber.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7 @ 5:45 PM
Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration.
Join in the community festivities as we kick-off the holiday season. Local youth choirs and bands add to the merriment. Kids can chat with Santa and get a free Polaroid, courtesy of the Chamber. At the Chamber building.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7 @ 6:00 - 9:00 PM
Chamber sponsored Holiday Art Walk.
Visit the downtown galleries and businesses on this most joyous evening in town. The art walk continues on Saturday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8 @11:00 AM
Lions Club Christmas Parade
Call Wayne at 708-5205 or ktrendwayne@att.net. Applications are also available at the Visitor Information Center. Downtown Commercial Avenue.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15 @ 6:30 PM
Christmas Lighted Boat Parade
Along Guemes Channel.

EVERY SATURDAY: THANKSGIVING TO CHRISTMAS
Chamber sponsored Horse & Carriage Rides

Enjoy the holiday banners and white lights on the downtown trees courtesy of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce.
Welcome, Traci Harstad, New Director at EDASC

Traci Harstad is the new Director of Business Development at the Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC). EDASC provides a number of valuable services that benefit small business and could be of use to our membership.

Specifically, EDASC serves small business owners looking to expand or start a new business and/or assists businesses that are in danger of losing jobs. EDASC has contracts with the Small Business Development Center and Community, Trade, and Economic Development. This allows EDASC to provide business advising at NO COST to the business owner.

EDASC can help in a number of ways:
1. Assist businesses seeking financing. They will work with you to tailor your business plan, fitting the needs of lenders.
2. Assist in developing/improving marketing collateral.
3. Provide consulting services, with a focus on improving margins, efficiency, and business performance. This generally involves a review of financial statements, trends analysis, and industry comparisons.

Note: Meetings can occur in Anacortes.

Traci has committed to at least one day per month at the Chamber offices, assuming there is demand for her services.

Contact info:
Traci Harstad
Director of Business Development
SBDC Business Advisor
Economic Development Association of Skagit County
204 West Montgomery
P.O. Box 40
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
360-336-6114
traci@skagit.org

Retirement Thoughts

Steps to consider that may ease the transition:

**Step One: Lay out your vision.** Write letters to each other, laying out your respective “retirement dreams.” This facilitates communication and provides a focus on shared interests.

**Step Two: Consult reality.** Consider life’s realities—this may include family obligations, financial assets, or physical limitations. This is usually a great spot to insert the services of a competent financial planner, who can provide timely advice and a third-party (hopefully objective) opinion.

**Step Three: Experiment.** As the saying goes: “Don’t rush into it; let retirement come to you.” Potential relocation to another part of the country, playing golf daily, serving on a variety of volunteer boards—it makes sense to take a dry run, if possible, and to adjust as necessary.

**Step Four: Compromise.** The ability to work out potential retirement issues requires self-knowledge, generosity, flexibility, and good communication: the same qualities that make for a happy marriage.

*CFO Magazine, November 2007*

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Email: impactyp@gmail.com
Local yellow page directory. More coverage than any area phone book for half the price.

La Conner Drug
708 E. Morrison Street
La Conner, WA 98257
Phone: (360) 466-3124
Fax: (360) 466-4795
Contact: Aaron Syring
Email: wecare@laconnerdrug.com
Web site: www.laconnerdrug.com
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Nebeker, Brett, CSNA
Financial Advisor/Merrill Lynch
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Bellingham, WA 98226
Phone: (877) 576-2466
Fax: (360) 676-7610
Email: Brett_Nebeker@ml.com
Web site: http://fa.ml.com/brett_nebeker
Financial Advisor. Retirement planning, investing, special needs planning and advice.

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Financial Advisor/Waddell & Reed
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Bellingham, WA 98226
Phone: (360) 333-8451
Fax: (360) 671-0518
Email: jpetrich@wradvisors.com
Web site: www.jpetrich.wradvisors.com
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AMBASSADOR’S CORNER

I’m Matt McKay and I am the professional recruiter with Human Resources Inc. (HRI). I have been in the staffing and recruiting business for over three years. My prior work experience, during the past fifteen years, has been primarily in manufacturing management with companies such as BOSCH and Coors Brewing Company.

I am originally from a small farming community in Michigan. I attended Anderson College in South Carolina where I majored in both Business Management and Psychology.

I live in Anacortes with my wife, Kathy (married now 15 years), sons Collin, 10 and Evan, 6, and our 14-year-old golden retriever Murphy. We have lived in Anacortes for 3 years. Kathy is purchasing manager for a large horticulture company.

My enthusiasm to be an Ambassador with the Chamber is driven by my excitement to live in a community that has such great potential for economic growth. I am looking forward to being involved with projects that will attract new business into Anacortes. Fidalgo Island is such a great place to live. It would be great if there were enough jobs to allow the majority of our citizens to work here.

My hobbies are playing with my kids (which can be exhausting), camping, golfing and my greatest passion (outside of the family) is cooking. I have a goal to write a cookbook, with original recipes, with my sons at some point in time.

Member Renewals

- Anaco Bay Inn
- Anacortes Kayak Tours
- Berentson Public Relations
- Challenge Developments
- El Jinete Mexican Restaurant
- La Vie En Rose French Bakery
- LaConner Country Inn & Channel Lodge
- R Avenue House
- RiverCity Screenprinting, Inc.
- The Troll House
- United Way of Skagit County
- Wilhoit, Steven

Thank You!

We would like to thank the following members for donating door prizes at the October Business Connections Lunch:

- Alice Bohnker Insurance Services
- ALLDATA Shredding
- Anacortes Interiors
- Chandler’s Square Retirement Community
- CompuMatter
- Countrywide Mortgage
- Idearc
- John L. Scott
- Mark Nilson Mortgage Consultant
- Orca Information
- Pacific Coast Mats
Lisa and Peter Kuhnlein of KP Studios recently moved to their new location at 705 Commercial.

Olympic Communications celebrated their grand opening with a ribbon cutting on November 10.

$H O P \ A N A C O R T E S$

Don’t Know What to Buy? Let Them Decide!

The Retail Division of the Chamber of Commerce has a new program designed to make your holiday shopping easier. $hop Anacortes Dollars are gift certificates that can be redeemed at 24 merchants throughout Anacortes — and the list is growing. This gives you the variety of a shopping center with the convenience and charm of home. Do you need gifts for colleagues, clients, teachers, finicky relatives? Just come to the Chamber and buy $hop Anacortes Dollars and you are done!

$hop Anacortes Dollars are available in packets of $20 and $100, which are broken into $5 increments.

Ignore high gas prices and give loved ones a local treat.

$hop Anacortes Dollars make it easy to stay home for the holidays. www.anacortes.org/shopanacortes.cfm

Participating merchants:
- 2 Salmon Café, Starlight Lounge & Deli @ Swinomish Northern Lights Casino
- Ana-Cross Stitch
- Bayshore Office Products
- Bayside Sweets & Treats
- Boudoir
- Buer’s Floral and Gifts
- Compass Wines
- CompuMatter
- Digital Art Moments
- Donatello Flowers & Gifts
- Earth Bound Used Books
- Elisabeth’s Cottage by the Sea
- Epicure
- Gere-A-Deli
- Johnny Picasso’s
- KP Studios
- La Vie En Rose French Bakery
- Maison et Jardin
- Majestic Inn & Spa
- Penguin Coffee
- Read Me A Story
- Rockfish Grill
- Sheely’s Floral & Gifts
- Upstage Boutique & Men’s Store
- Wildflower Home & Garden

Upcoming Classes

The December schedule is shortened due to holidays. We will be offering four classes:
- Quickbooks (12/4 & 12/6) and
- Web Site Design (12/10 & 12/12).

All classes run from 6:30-8:00 and are held at CompuMatter (616 Commercial Ave). To enroll, please contact the Chamber at 293-7911.

We are also in the process of setting the winter quarter curriculum, which will expand into other disciplines. If you are interested in teaching a business course, please contact us.

THANK YOU AND CORRECTION

THANK YOU FOR TRICK OR TREATING
Thanks to all of the downtown businesses for participating in the annual trick or treat. Thanks also to Village Pizza for hosting the costume contest and to Read Me A Story and Bayside Sweets and Treats for donating prizes.

CORRECTIONS:
Anaco Bay Inn provided accommodations for the winners of the Sister Cities Associations raffle. Maria Papritz, Earth Bound Used Books, donated a door prize at the September Business After Hours.
Thank you Volunteers!
Visitor Information Center

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Vince Oliver/Island Hospital
President-Elect
Robin Pestarino/AllData Shredding
Secretary
Zee Hogan/Maison Et Jardin
Treasurer
Carol Van Irsen/Horizon Bank
Past President
Bill Berry/Berry Entertainment

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Patti Anderson / Captain’s Place
Chris Borgen* / ASD
Bob Hyde* / Port of Anacortes
Mike King* / City of Anacortes
Mark Lione / Cap Sante Inn
Pat Meyer / Viking Moving Services
Curtis Payne / Farmer’s Insurance Agency
John Pope / Tesoro Refinery & Marketing Co.
Joe Schlundt* / Shell Puget Sound Refinery
Nate Scott / Windermere Real Estate
Peter Steffen / ABC Yacht Charters
Dave Storkson / San Juan Lanes & Storks
Mike Trafton / Bank of the Pacific

*ex-officio

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Sheila Powell/Graphic Concepts

Anacortes Chamber of Commerce
819 Commercial Ave., Suite F
Anacortes, WA 98221

Wishing you a very joyous Holiday Season and a prosperous New Year!