State of the City

The annual “state of the city” presented by Mayor Dean Maxwell will be held on Thursday, February 11 at 11:30 am at the Anacortes Lutheran Church during the chamber’s President’s Luncheon.

Mayor Maxwell will touch on the budget, the economy, departmental accomplishments and goals, 2010 capital projects including an update on the Tommy Thompson Trestle and the largest capital project in the community’s history, a rebuild of the Anacortes Water Treatment Plant.

The luncheon is sponsored by Lynne M. Lang Accounting & Business Services Co. Dr. Lynne has a doctorate and over 30 years experience in business and tax preparation. Lynne believes in “accounting with a personal touch.”

Call the chamber to RSVP—$20 for both members and non-members for a full meal catered by Deception Café & Catering.

Swinomish Casino

Join us on Thursday, February 18 from 5:30–7:00 pm for the monthly Business After Hours at Swinomish Casino at 12885 Casino Drive.

Swinomish Casino is home to the loosest slots, best table odds and best gaming action in the Northwest. Now introducing the Cabaret Show Room as the premier local destination for comedy! Their award winning culinary team will provide a sampling of Swinomish favorites and raffle items for after hours attendees to enjoy.

Please RSVP to the chamber at 293-7911, or check out our Web site—become a fan of our Facebook page and RSVP there as well.
2010 – A Very Good Year

Like a winemaker, we are looking to grow our programs and are predicting a very good vintage year for the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce. While the world-wide economy looked dismal in 2009 there were already some signs of recovery in Anacortes. During the 1st half of 2009, accommodations sales revenue was up 4% and restaurant sales were up 8%. While there were many local businesses that had a rough year, most are ok and some other segments showed improvement.

For 2010, the early indicators look promising. While consumers are in a new “back to basics” and conservative spending mindset, we should be well positioned. From a tourism perspective, more families will be traveling by car and visiting beautiful places like Anacortes. Our marine trades are well positioned as Anacortes and the local area is still one of the best cruising areas in the world. We have construction projects at the refineries and around the city that will continue to stimulate the local economy. Our housing markets are showing some signs of life and all of us are beginning to adjust to our new more fiscally conservative world.

Your chamber of commerce is starting off the year with over 470 members. Our books are balanced and we have a reasonable reserve in the bank. With this foundation, the chamber will continue to work aggressively this year on your behalf. We are organizing separate committees for the accommodations, restaurant, marine trades and retail industries to work with each of our divisions to drive their initiatives. We are looking to work smarter by building on our successful “Coast In. Hang Out” ad campaign with new co-op ads for restaurants, hotels and the marine trades. By co-oping our ads we can all leverage our promotional dollars better and directly promote participating local businesses.

In Economic Development, we will be starting to build a campaign to attract and recruit appropriate businesses to Anacortes to fill out some of the industrial space that is now sitting empty and bring new businesses, jobs and families to our city.

Looking towards the future, we will be a key participant with the City and the Port on the Anacortes Futures Project, taking the initial steps to develop a master plan that will shape what Anacortes will look like by 2025.

Working hard allows us to play hard—with all of the work to promote and advance our businesses we will still be presenting our Wine Festival in April and the Waterfront Festival in May for our community and to encourage others to visit Anacortes. We will also be supporting the Anacortes Salmon Derby and its 800 anglers in March, Trawler Fest and its 500–800 participants in May and for the first time the Latitudes and Attitudes magazine Northwest Cruisers Party in August with 800–1000 fun-loving boaters. The boating community is a very good business generator for Anacortes.

2010—A year for optimism and hopefully a fruitful harvest. I encourage you this year to get involved with your chamber and fellow local businesses—help us speak with a common voice and use your chamber membership to improve your prospects through effective networking. Your chamber is a great spot to reap rewards while at the same time enjoying the experience.

—Mike Trafton
Bank of the Pacific

Marketing Update

The Marketing & Promotions division is in the process of constructing a 2010 marketing plan and budget, utilizing roughly $112K in 2% hotel/motel funding, which we plan to supplement through cooperative marketing ventures. While this remains a work in progress, current plans call for a continued focus on the international ferry run and the Seattle metro market. As in 2009, the chamber will advertise in both Seattle and Seattle Metropolitan magazines, as well as in Victoria, with Boulevard magazine and the Times-Colonist. We will use search engine technology to target specific messages. We will also pursue retail partnerships with various industry groups. 85,000 of our rack brochures will be distributed throughout the Puget Sound area, including the ferry system and the airport.

Finally, our Web site will continue to be upgraded, with new images. We’ll continue to keep you updated through this space in coming months.
Fidalgo Machine Shop

Fidalgo Machine, 1015 26th Street, has been a full service metal machine shop serving Anacortes and Skagit County since 2001. Bob Maryott and his wife, Jan, are the owner/operators. While the main focus has always been geared towards the marine industry, customers of all types are always welcome and encouraged to bring projects through the doors. Making new and repairing damaged propeller shafts and rudders has always been one of the most common jobs in the shop.

Machining services provided by the shop are done by mill, lathe, press, welding, plasma cutting (both by hand and cnc) and good old-fashioned manual labor. Mild steel, aluminum and stainless steel are the primary types of metal worked with, as well as occasional brass and bronze jobs. Most of these metals are available for purchase both on a retail and wholesale basis—as flat bar, round bar, sheet/plate, and some tube and pipe.

Customers vary from the local marine repair yards, to Dakota Creek Industries, to boat owners doing their own work. Local construction, contractors, and homeowners also benefit from the shop services. They have worked on RVs, electric wheel chairs, scooters, motorcycles and trailers.

Bob has been machining for over 41 years. He has done manual-style machining and also worked for a while in the tool and die industry.

Jan takes care of the office, and custom-designs signs and silhouettes. She also sells EyCatcher Windspinners in the shop, on the web, and sometimes sets up at local and area shows.

Be sure to check out www.fidalgo machine.com for more information about the services offered at Fidalgo Machine, and www.anacortesmetalart.com for metal art and EyCatcher Windspinners.

The shop is open Mon–Fri 7:30 am–4:00 pm. Phone: 360-299-2868.

Want It Made? Need It Fixed? Told It Can’t Be? Bring It To Us!

Andie McMakin

As manager and co-owner of Summit Park Covered Storage for the past ten years, Andie McMakin keeps up-to-date with both residents and newcomers of the city of Anacortes. She is delighted to serve on the board of directors and be a part of such an enthusiastic group. Like many other fellow Anacortes dwellers, McMakin is of Croatian descent (her maiden name is Jurkovich), and recently visited “Sister City” Vela Luka this past August where her children and family regularly spend summers. Only a year after her birth in Capua, Italy, McMakin and parents Branko and Maria immigrated to America, settling in what they described as the quaint seaside town of Anacortes. Ms. McMakin has gotten to know the city quite well over the years, loving the strong sense of community, its familiar faces and close-knit feel.

Though a new board member, McMakin has always had an intense desire to promote networking and foster friendly relations between the Anacortes business community, residents and tourists, in hopes that they might experience mutual benefit in whatever way possible. Due to the nature and need that the storage industry addresses, McMakin is often one of the first businesses in town that newcomers will inquire about “where to go” and “who to see” for a variety of different goods and services. She has many different local business cards on display in her office, putting in a good word for local businesses to customers whenever she gets the opportunity. Her goal for Anacortes as a city is to maintain and even improve the high quality of life that residents have always experienced through community awareness and accountability, making it one of the best places to live and visit in the Pacific Northwest.

Inspired by the majestic beauty of Skagit County and the San Juan Islands, McMakin spends her spare time—which she also likes to refer to as “rare time”—outdoors, either on the trails, on the water or in the mountains of the area. Summiting Mount Baker with friends is a recent accomplishment! She especially enjoys spending time with her four daughters, two of which are freshmen attending Anacortes High School. You can spot her at the gym or grabbing a cup of coffee downtown when she’s not at Summit Park Storage, so please feel free to introduce yourself as she loves meeting new people!
The 2010 legislative session began on January 11. The primary focus of this “short” session will again be the budget. In her supplemental budget, released on 12/9/09, the governor proposed a number of substantial cuts in order to balance a $2.6 billion projected revenue shortfall. The cuts focused on service eliminations, reductions, or suspensions, with no new taxes proposed.

Among the programs targeted for elimination are the state Basic Health Plan, Apple Health for children, and the General Assistance Unemployable program. In education, funding would be eliminated for the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, K-4 staffing enhancement which reduces class size in the early grades, and levy equalization.

Slated for reduction are $146M in the State Need Grant Program, as well as $89M in funding to the state’s community and technical colleges. The governor recently announced several reforms to make government services more efficient through consolidation or elimination of a number of boards and commissions. She is closing all or part of nine state institutions. She will be proposing measures to allow local government more spending flexibility and school districts the authority to access voter-approved levies. The governor plans on introducing a second budget at the end of January, which will restore several of the most critical programs that would be eliminated in the first draft, while at the same time providing a revenue package that would eliminate tax exemptions, close loopholes, and raise revenues. We will cover those elements more fully in the next newsletter.

On a separate topic, Washington businesses face a jittery start to 2010 with increases in both workers’ comp rates and unemployment insurance. The average UI rate will jump from 1.55% in 2009 to 2.38% in 2010, while WC rates are expected to increase an average of 7.6%. One bright spot: the minimum wage will remain unchanged at $8.55/hour in 2010—the first time it has not increased since voters approved an initiative 11 years ago linking it to the CPI. Washington’s minimum wage remains the highest in the nation.

Finally, Washington is likely to gain a 10th Congressional District after the 2010 census. In the past decade, Washington grew by 13% and is now the 13th largest state (up from 15th ten years ago.)
Stephanie Hamilton, Program & Events Director, has graduated from Institute for Organization Management (Institute), a four-year nonprofit leadership training program at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

“Institute provides the most comprehensive professional development available in our line of work,” said Hamilton. “The program allows attendees to share today’s best practices in an ever changing economic environment. After 20 years of non-profit work experience, earning this certification has provided me the opportunity to further assist our members as we continue to build a stronger and more competent organization.”

Our chamber is run through divisions that report to our board of directors. The required course work allows me to assist all areas of our chamber—giving guidance and sharing industry best practices to the divisions.

Since 1921, Institute has attracted association and chamber professionals from across the country to its five university sites. During the four years, most Institute participants attend the one-week sessions at the same site, building valuable relationships with others in the industry. Through a combination of required courses and electives, Institute participants are able to enhance their own organizational management skills and add new fuel to their organizations, making them run more efficiently and effectively.

“Institute graduates are recognized across the country as leaders in their communities,” said Raymond P. Towle, IOM, CAE, the U.S. Chamber’s vice president of Institute for Organization Management. “These individuals have the knowledge, skills, and dedication to achieve professional and organizational success in the dynamic association and chamber industries.”

Graduates of Institute receive the IOM recognition, signifying completion of 96 hours of a comprehensive course of study consisting of four annual one-week sessions focusing on professional growth and development in nonprofit management.

Institute is the premier nonprofit professional development program for nonprofit professionals, fostering individual growth through interactive learning and networking opportunities.
Seattle Boat Show

It’s always been big—the West Coast’s largest—and still is. The BIG Seattle Boat Show opens its doors this year on Friday, January 29th and runs through Saturday, February 6th. With 1,000+ boats (indoors and on the water), and hundreds of accessories exhibitors, it’s no wonder that it attracts visitors from 35 states and Canada. Boaters and would-be boaters mark their calendars and eagerly await the show every year. But boats and accessories are just one part of the big show. Many families have been coming to the show for generations as there’s always something for everyone at the show.

The Seattle Boat Show, Indoors + Afloat is also pleased to announce that the renowned 57-foot Nordhavn, Bagan, which took owner Sprague Theobald safely through the Northwest Passage on a five month epic journey, will be a feature exhibit at the 2010 Seattle Boat Show January 29-February 6, 2010.

Many of the vendors are our own Anacortes brokers, charter companies, builders, marinas and service providers in the marine services industries. Check out www.seattleboatshow.com for all the details, and be sure to say hi to our neighbors while at the boat show.

Chamber members have fun at the January Business After Hours at Ryan Chanel

Mary Staley (Chandler’s Square), Marilyn Stadler (Fidalgo Pool) and Joyce Anderson (Lighthouse Park RV Park and Mini Storage)
Anne Smith (Upstage Boutique & Men’s Store), Rachel and Patty Cox (Sound Health Chiropractic)
Linda McGuire (Bayshore Office Products) and Jack Darnton (Anacortes American)

member announcement

Chamber member honored

Anacortes chiropractor, Dr. Ben Jennings, DC received the “Chiropractor of the Year” award from TEAM CHIROPRACTIC of Skagit County in December 2009. Dr. Jennings is one of the founders of the organization, which exists to unite local chiropractors to benefit all of Skagit County. TEAM CHIROPRACTIC is organized to bring about educational enlightenment, both to its members and to their patients.

new members

LIL BITS OF EVERYTHING
2000 Commercial Avenue
Anacortes WA 98221
Cynthia Hill
(360) 770-8450
cynthiatup@comcast.net
Thrift Shop

ANACORTES HOUSING AUTHORITY
719 Q Avenue
Anacortes WA 98221
http://www.anacorteshousing.com
Theresa “Tee” McCallum
(360) 293-7831
aha@fidalgo.net
Low Income Housing

thanks...

We would like to thank the following members for donating door prizes to the December Sunnyside Up breakfast:
- Anacortes Clean!
- Fidalgo DanceWorks
- NW Computer & Network Solutions

We would also like to thank the following members for donating to the door prize at the Opulence Salon & Day Spa after hours in December:
- Bob’s Chowder Bar & BBQ Salmon
- Cap Sante Inn
- Chandler’s Square—A Retirement Community
- Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center
- Lervik Engineering
- Lil Bits of Everything
- McGregor Benefits
- Opulence Salon & Day Spa
- Port of Anacortes
- Raymond James Financial
- Read Me A Story
- Scribluz

member renewals

- Anacortes Financial Associates
- Anchor Signs & Awnings
- Bob Baker, John L. Scott Real Estate
- Coldwell Banker Island Living
- Construction Unlimited, Inc.
- Homeplace Special Care Center
- How It Works
- Island Hospital Foundation
- Marc L. Estvold AIA
- McCary Creative
- Mark Nilson
- Colleen Sargent, Coldwell Banker Island
- Skagit Valley College Business Resource Center
- Thrive Community Fitness
- Tri-County Recycling
- Trust Accounting Center
- Viking Moving Services, Inc
- WA Employment Security Department
- Wise Owl Opportunities
Chamber Board of Directors Urges M&O Levy Support

The Anacortes School District will be asking voters on February 9 to approve a four-year maintenance and operations levy, which will replace the expiring levy that was passed in 2006. At $6.82M annually, the proposed levy amount reflects a slight decrease from existing levels, currently projected at an approximate savings of 2.5% per year. Levy proceeds will be used to fund a variety of important classroom and support activities, including Staff & Instructional Support (64.8%), Technology (12.5%), Special Needs Students (5.6%), K-12 Activities & Athletics (10.5%), and Transportation (5.9%).

Well-functioning public schools are vitally important to the financial and cultural health of their communities, which directly benefits local businesses. With decreases in state funding support to school districts a current reality, passage of local levies has become more important than ever—were a levy to fail, the result would be crippling. As such, the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors fully supports the district’s levy request, believing it to be prudent, reasonable, and appropriate to district operations. We urge support from both our member businesses and the community at-large to secure passage of this important request.

Anacortes Spring Wine Festival
Sponsored by Tesoro Refining & Marketing Co.

Mark your calendars: the second annual Spring Wine Festival will occur over two days this year—the weekend of April 10-11—from 12:00-5:00 at the Port Warehouse. The event will offer tastings from 24 different wineries each day, with food provided by six local restaurants. A Saturday evening music walk will be offered for those staying the weekend. Tickets are $40 on Saturday, $30 on Sunday—passes for the entire weekend are priced at $60, a $10 discount.

This is a wonderful event to enjoy with friends—a great way to welcome in the new season. Of the 600 attendees last year, we estimate that roughly 50% came from out-of-town. This affluent group is an excellent potential revenue source. Sponsorship opportunities are available, providing increased visibility and the ability to distribute your marketing materials. Please contact Stephanie @ 293-7911 for more information.

Tickets may be purchased through the Chamber office or via Brown Paper Tickets.

Scoring Seats using Frequent-Flyer Miles

Landing the free seat you want using frequent-flier miles has long been one of the biggest frustrations for travelers. The prizes offered by airlines are enticing, but the seats never seem to be available on desired flights and routes. There are several new tools available to help you find that elusive reward. Some airlines have made it easier to find award seats—when they are available—and several Web sites have tools to help you search. MileageManager.com and another site called ExpertFlyer.com have award alerts that send you an e-mail when a frequent-flier seat or upgrade opens up on a flight you want. ExpertFlyer’s award alert feature works on 22 airlines worldwide, including Delta, American, Alaska, and Hawaiian. ExpertFlyer says that more than 50% of customers who look for an award actually find one that works for them.

MileageManager’s AwardPlanner function lets you put in up to five different itineraries and when availability is found, alerts you by e-mail so you can book it. The award service works with ten different airlines. Both award systems offer free trial periods but after that MileageManager is $14.95 per year, while ExpertFlyer costs $9.99 per month.

On the airline side, road warriors suggest checking alliance Web sites—StarAlliance.com, oneworld.com, and SkyTeam.com—that show flights on partner airlines that may not be displayed on your own airline’s booking site.

chamber officers

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PRESIDENT ELECT
Mark Bunzel  Fine Edge Nautical & Recreational Publishing
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Pete Kovach  Chandler’s Square, A Retirement Community
Matt McKay  HR Strategies
Andie McMakin  Summit Park Covered Storage
Heather Miller  Read Me A Story
John Pope  Tesoro Refining & Marketing Co.
Joe Schlundt  Shell Puget Sound Refinery
Erik Schorr  Anacortes Kayak Tours
Rick Star  Rockfish Grill

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Stephanie Hamilton  Program & Events Director
Mary Talosi  Visitor Information & Operations Director
Danielle Codara  Office Coordinator
Kristi Daniels & Crystal Johnson  Licensing Sub-Agents

Thank you, volunteers!  Visit us on the web at www.anacortes.org

vic (visitor information center) statistics

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SAT./SUN. APRIL 10–11  NOON – 5:00
AT THE PORT WAREHOUSE
48 PARTICIPATING WINERIES
12 PARTICIPATING RESTAURANTS
LIVE MUSIC

ADMISSION:
$60 BOTH DAYS  $40 SATURDAY  $30 SUNDAY

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE
ANACORTES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AND BROWNPAPERTICKETS.COM
(MUST BE AT LEAST 21 TO ATTEND)

SPONSORED BY
TOSORO REFINING & MARKETING CO.

2010 ANACORTES SPRING WINE FESTIVAL
INFORMATION AVAILABLE AT WWW.ANACORTES.ORG