Business networking, “speed dating” style

What if you could meet over 21 potential business prospects during your lunch hour? Sign up today for the chamber’s next luncheon and get ready to expand your network. RSVP to the Chamber Luncheon to be held on February 10, 2011 at the Anacortes Lutheran Church (22nd & O). It’s fun, it’s fast, and it’s free! Lunch is $15. Bring your marketing materials, your one-minute elevator speech, and donate to the door prizes and receive further promotion!

Bring a prospective new member and it’s two for the price of one!

Please RSVP to 360.293.7911

Tracys Furniture

Tracys Furniture opened in October of 1980 at its present location at 1920 Commercial Avenue. The first showroom was 2500 square feet and over the years the showroom has expanded to 14,000. Tracys is a full line, full service store that delivers throughout Western Washington. Primary markets are Anacortes and the San Juan Islands, which account for 80% of their business, Whidbey Island and the Skagit Valley. Over half of the business Tracys does is special order and they have recently added the Flexsteel Upholstery line that offers custom upholstery in over 1500 fabrics, with an average turn around of six weeks. Last summer Tracys installed a new Stressless Comfort Studio to offer the latest in display and product that the Ekornes Company has to offer. This fall Tracys will install a complete Flexsteel Gallery with an additional 900 fabrics from which to select your furniture. Tracys has on display every mattress made by Tempur-pedic and offers the full line of Tempur-pedic pillows, mattress protectors and sheets. Tracys also represents the full Serta line of innerspring, latex foam and pocketed coil mattresses to round out their selection of what they feel are the best sleep solutions on the market today. Tracy’s staff is professional and fun to work with and they strive first to understand your needs, and then meet them in a relaxed and comfortable way.

Bob, Lori, Brad and Stephanie look forward to hosting the next BAH on Thursday, February 17 5:30-7pm. Event will be catered by Gere-a-deli. RSVP to the chamber office 293-7911. Bring a give-away gift and your business cards!

Pacific Marine Center

At a time when many U.S. businesses have “battened down the hatches” in response to a recession, partners in a new Anacortes business have set an ambitious course that promises to have a positive impact on the local economy.

(see PMC continued on page 4)
February – some may say it’s a slow month, but at your chamber we are running full-speed ahead, and I hope you are too! Having the board of directors and division terms begin in November gave us a huge leap forward with a multi-faceted campaign to truly maximize our mission as spring approaches. Let’s take a moment to review and think about some of the work that is happening, as we set our course into the season of renewal.

Your marketing and promotions division under the leadership of Terica Taylor (Deception Pass Tours) met for a half-day last month to line out a public relations strategy. A major goal is to develop and maintain strong relationships with key destination influencers, one output will be an engaging bi-monthly e-newsletter. Thanks to this dynamic and talented group for all of their hard work and enthusiasm.

The economic development division has made great strides in connecting the dots for our community, working with the port and the city. Be assured that your chamber is focused on true north, with Pam Allen (Allen Collectibles) as the division head. Some of their projects include interactive maps encompassing the many great activities and features we enjoy on our island. This team represents the heart of your chamber, and I am truly excited by the possibilities inherent in their efforts!

We will continue to foster relationships with other chambers and business groups, to stay on top of best practices wherever we can find them. Each Monday on the Skagit Business Alliance conference call we are updated by the AWB and take a few minutes to check in with our legislators. This Friday we will head to Olympia for Chamber Day, and next week we will be in Port Townsend for a field trip to meet with their chamber leaders and study the new maritime heritage center there.

Plans for the Spring Wine Festival and Anacortes Waterfront Festival are well underway. There are still opportunities to partner with these events through various sponsorships. We are excited to bring visitors to town during the spring season, because their arrival is a call to each of you to renew your approach to welcoming them.

As for your chamber office, Mary Talosi will continue to be the visitor information and operations director – but will take on some new roles as well. Cecile Miller has been named the events and communications coordinator and we are in the process of searching for a marketing and office coordinator to round out our staff.

I am so excited to be taking the helm at this time of year! Spring is a time of creativity, possibility, and hope, and it is just around the corner! I strongly encourage you to spend some time this season thinking about positive change in each of your enterprises as we collectively begin again.

And—speaking of new beginnings—I would like you to join me in personally welcoming Peggy Flynn (pflynn+associates) to the board; she is filling one of our vacant board seats and brings a wealth of talent and insight to our table.

Finally, I want to sincerely thank your board of directors for their support and encouragement as we begin this new journey together. I also want to particularly thank the executive director search committee for their commitment during the selection process. The search process was led by chamber vice president Kristi Gabrielse (Ana-Cross Stitch) and included board members Karin Baldwin (Quantum Construction), Curt Oppel (John L. Scott), Robert Atterberry (Bob’s Chowder Bar and Barbeque Salmon) and Matt McKay (HR Strategies) along with chamber members Chris Terrell (How it Works), Pat Barrett (Barrett Financial, Ltd.), Mark Lione (Cap Sante Inn) and Robin Pestarino (past board president). The search committee team each invested over 40 hours into this process and we should all thank them for their time and dedication.

I look forward to spending time with each of you as we move forward together!

—Stephanie

BTW—Please mark your calendars for September 8 to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce! It will be a great time of remembering and recommitting. If you would like to be a part of the planning team, we would love to have you. Give us a call!
“A posse ad esse” is Latin for “from possibility to reality.” A business entrepreneur usually starts with a vision, then hard work, determination and a little luck, leading the vision into reality.

Lang Custom Concrete and Construction, a family owned and operated business, has been serving the Skagit and Island Counties since 2002. Vince and Kelli Lang began their business journey in Oak Harbor doing residential concrete and custom homes. Vince was handed a hammer and a trowel at a very young age learning the family business. After starting their own family, Vince and Kelli could appreciate the importance of living in a dynamic community with an exceptional school system. Lang Custom made their move over the bridge to beautiful Fidalgo Island. In Anacortes, Lang Custom has been blessed by the amazing business associates, customers, friends, and community members. Lang Custom proudly calls Anacortes home for their family and business!

Lang Custom is deeply involved in the community. They are members of Skagit Island County Building Association, National Association of Home Building and part of the Real Estate Community with Coldwell Banker Island Living. Vince and Kelli Lang are passionate about volunteering and helping with community projects!

Lang Custom is a respected leader in the concrete construction industry in Skagit County. Lang Custom specializes in the highest quality residential and commercial concrete, but we also accommodate the needs of our customers by incorporating new and different specialties.

With both Vince and Kelli’s eye to detail and style, they also excel at general contract- ing custom homes, remodels and additions. Lang Custom’s motto is “Creating a Customer For Life.” They pride themselves in building relationships during the construction process and earning referrals by exceeding their customer’s expectations and delivering a job well constructed, with timely completion and within budget.

Please visit Lang Custom at the Anacortes EXPO on March 12th from 11AM-4PM at the Educational School District Building. Stop by our booth and bring the kiddos. They’ll have something for everyone.

Lang Custom is ready to help you when you want to take your custom home possibilities to reality. For more Information please visit our website at www.langcustom.com. 

Bret Lunsford was born at Island Hospital soon after it opened, the seventh of eight kids raised by Frances (Maricich) and Floyd Lunsford, an elementary school principal throughout a long career in the Anacortes School District. Bret’s early work history includes strawberry and cucumber picking in the Skagit Valley, salmon fishing in Puget Sound and Alaskan waters, as well as local cannery work. Following graduation from Anacortes High School in 1981, Bret traveled around the U.S. and Mexico for a couple years before enrolling at The Evergreen State College. In Olympia he pursued writing, history and community studies while participating in the era’s vital music scene, recording and touring for several years with his band. He remains involved in music and is a founder of the annual What The Heck Fest.

Bret moved back to Anacortes, because there’s no place like home, after graduating from Evergreen in 1988. Over a fifteen year period, he was employed, managed, and became owner of The Business before selling the shop several years ago. He owns and manages the building currently occupied by Anacortes Beads. Lunsford is the author of Images of America: Anacortes, a history published by Arcadia. He is currently at work on another book focusing on the Croatian Fishing Community of Anacortes. In 2010 he was hired to manage the Skagit County Fair and used a theme of traditional local entertainment to increase attendance and earnings.

Lunsford is a past president of the Anacortes Museum Foundation and the American Croatian Club of Anacortes; he was recently appointed to the Anacortes Future’s Project Steering Committee and is focusing on downtown waterfront connectivity and the relationship between living wage jobs and affordable housing.

Bret is happily married to Denise Crowe and is the father of two daughters, Madelaine and Louisa.
Continued from page 1

Pacific Marine Center, established by Delta Marine and Gary Merlino Construction of Seattle, has already invested in a new Fidalgo Bay boat ramp and improvements to a previously vacant yacht construction facility on “T” Avenue. As this newsletter went to press, Pacific Marine Center managers Bill Filip and Ron Barkly were hosting a booth at the Seattle Boat Show, touting their new business and the community of Anacortes.

Filip and Barkly bring impressive experience, passion and connections to the Northwest boating community. The men worked 20 and 31 years, respectively, for U.S. Marine Bayliner. They also had periods of employment with Maxum, Meridian yacht divisions. Filip, whose career dates back to age 15 and a job at a marina in Illinois, also worked seven years for the PD&E Yacht Division of Sea Ray in Meritt Island, Florida.

Anacortes, notes Filip, boasts market attributes including proximity to the San Juans, North Puget Sound, and Canada. It also features other marine services businesses that can be tapped to meet the needs of Pacific Marine Center clients.

“We are basically a full marine yacht services center,” said Filip. “In addition to dry storage, which represents a savings over in-water moorage, we offer services ranging from yacht commissioning to finish rigging and warranty service. Our new boat ramp and 350-foot staging dock make it possible for us to respond to a client call by having their boat in the water and ready to go by the time they travel from home. When they return from their outing, we will tie up the boat and take it out of the water, almost like a concierge service.”

Pacific Marine Center, which will grow as the market demands, looks forward to a healthy working relationship with the chamber of commerce and other area businesses. From food to fuel, marine products to custom marine services, Pacific Marine Center clients will make a positive impact on the local economy.

“Early indicators at this time are that boaters are out and spending a little more money these days,” said Filip. “They are ready to relax and spend more time in the San Juan Islands and North Puget Sound, and we are ideally situated to accommodate their needs. Some of our clients will come from long distances. Others are likely to drive 60 to 90 minutes, and launch from our facility will cut down considerably on the “commute time” to their destinations.”

Filip, who is also a certified professional yacht broker, said he and Barkly intend to take advantage of relationships built over decades of work in the Northwest boating industry.

Barkly serves the company as service manager, responsible for client needs including mechanical, electrical and fiberglass. As operations manager, Filip’s responsibilities include engineering, testing, sales and service.

“Ours is a hands-on staff,” said Filip, “and we invite our clients to be personally involved in all aspects of our service to them. We offer walk-throughs, detailed estimates and opportunities to see firsthand what is happening with their boats at all stages of the process.”

Pacific Marine Center, now boasting one of the largest indoor services facilities on the West Coast, promises to contribute to the city’s reputation as a leader among marine services communities.

“We are all about client service built on a foundation of experience, commitment and a passion to grow,” said Filip. “We’ll not only ‘leave the light on for you,’ but meet you at the dock with engines warmed up and furnace turned on, if that is your request. We want everyone to feel welcomed to Anacortes.”

Skagit Business Alliance Conference Calls

The Skagit Business Alliance was formed to be a combined voice of chambers of commerce, the builders and the realtors in Skagit County. Recently the group went to Olympia to meet with our elected officials and educate them on our legislative priorities.

The Skagit Business Alliance has organized conference calls with our legislators every Monday during the legislative session in Olympia. During each call we will receive an update from Association of Washington Business Government Affairs Vice President, Gary Chandler followed by a session with a representative from the 39th, 40th and 10th districts. The weekly calls are scheduled to begin at 9:00 am, although from time to time there may be scheduling conflicts—check the weekly email to see who is scheduled next.

All chamber members are welcome to join in on the Skagit Business Alliance conference calls, which will be held throughout the legislative session. The call in number is 1-866-295-5950 passcode 68998.

Get 10% discount on membership with referrals

Your chamber of commerce is 465 members strong, and a long-time goal of the board is to reach the 500. To achieve that level of involvement, we need your help. Members who are recruited by their colleagues are more likely to get engaged in the organization then members who enroll on their own or by staff recruitment.

The membership division, chaired by chamber incoming president, Kristi Gabrielse (Ana-Cross Stitch), is offering an incentive for your recruitment efforts. For every paid member you recruit in 2011, you will receive 10% discount on your next year’s membership investment. Sign up—recruit 10 and your membership is paid! We have applications at the office and are here to help you.
We at the Anacortes Public Library invite chamber members to celebrate our Centennial with us. The library is a tribute to the value that the citizens of Anacortes have placed on literacy and culture throughout the years and it has evolved into a popular community center.

Our celebration begins with a “Love at the Library” fundraiser event on February 12, and goes into full swing with the community library birthday party on March 5. The March 5 birthday party will begin at 11 a.m. with Mayor Maxwell commemorating the library’s first 100 years, followed by refreshments and events for both adults and children.

Our March calendar is filled with programs sponsored by the library and organizations helping us celebrate. The month will culminate in an open house as we host chamber members in an “After Hours” event on March 31. A complete list of the Library’s March Centennial programs is included below.

**Celebrate The Library Centennial!**

**Centennial Community Celebration**
Sat., Mar. 5, 11am
Community party celebrating the Library’s 100th birthday!

**Centennial Dance Party**
Sat., Mar. 26, 7:30—10:30pm
Skyline Beach Club, $25/couple; $15/single
Dance to Skagit Swings, an 18-piece big band with vocalist Beth Wallace.

**Sister Cities Celebration & Open House**
Thurs., Mar. 3, 7pm

**Library Foundation Annual Membership Meeting**
Tues., Mar. 8, 7pm

**Luella & Her Neighbors in Old Town**
Wed., Mar. 9, 7pm
Anacortes Historic Preservation Board presents a program about our first librarian.

**Friends of the Library Centennial Meeting**
Thurs., Mar. 10, 2:30pm

**Library Movie: Music Man**
Fri., Mar. 18, 7pm

**Maritime Speaker: 100 Years of Boating**
Sat., Mar. 19, 4-5pm
Bret Lunsford speaks.

**Beach Watchers’ Movie: A Sea Change**
Tues., Mar. 22, 7pm

**Library Movie: Desk Set**
Fri., March 25, 7pm

**Transition Fidalgo & Friends**
Sat., Mar. 26, 2pm
The next 100 years, a low energy time.

**APL Book Club: Best Sellers & Their Influence in the Last 100 years**
Mon., Mar. 28, 7pm

**1939: Read the Book, See the Movie**
Wed., Mar. 30, 7pm
R. C. Christopher presents.

**Brick Laying Ceremony**
Thurs., Mar. 31, 11am
Hosting the Chamber of Commerce Thurs., Mar. 31, 5:30-7pm

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**ANACORTES EXPO**

March 12, 2011
NW Educational Service District Bldg.
1601 R Avenue • Anacortes, WA 98221
http://cbsislandliving.com/Anacortes-Expo

Speakers scheduled throughout the day.
If you would like to be one of our vendors, please contact Jean or Kristine at 360.293.4511, or email AnacortesEXPO@ColdwellBanker.com

City and port officials welcome Anthony’s owner and president, Budd Gould, at a special pre-opening dinner in January. Proceeds from the dinner were donated to Gentry House and the Boys and Girls Club of Skagit County.
Leah Hines

Leah moved to Anacortes six years ago from the Olympia area. She spent a lot of time as a child in the San Juan’s and in Anacortes. Drawn back to the area over the years, she and her husband Todd repeatedly visited and honeymooned in Friday Harbor. Wanting to stay longer after each visit, she jumped at the chance to relocate when her husband’s work offered him a position in Skagit County.

Her favorite part of living in Anacortes is the feeling of really belonging to our community.

“I love walking into the grocery store, pizza parlor or coffee shop, and folks know my name and say hello.”

Leah now works for Skagit Publishing as an advertising consultant in Anacortes. Her position allows her to work closely with the businesses of our town and as a result, gain a much greater appreciation for what our town has to offer.

Leah is currently promoting the advertising for Anacortes Chamber Directory, and has worked on the Chamber Cheers committee for the past two years. She has interest in working on the upcoming Waterfront Festival Committee and enjoys welcoming new members as an ambassador.

She is a proud mom of four beautiful children and has an English bulldog (Ms. Clementine).

She enjoys cooking for her family and friends, loves music and dancing.

**ambassador profile**

Leah Hines

What is your vision for the future of Skagit Valley?

Join your neighbors at a community meeting to engage in the Envision Skagit project

Learn about Envision Skagit 2060
Ask questions about the project
Share your views with neighbors, Citizen Committee members, and project staff
Get involved even if you haven’t before

**Wednesday, February 16, 2011**

City of Anacortes City Hall
904 6th St., Anacortes
5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

**What is your vision for the future of Skagit Valley?**

**member renewals**

- Anacortes Financial Associates
- Anacortes Housing Authority
- Anchor Signs & Awnings
- Caldwell Banker Island Living
- Construction Unlimited, Inc.
- Curt Oppel, John L Scott Real Estate
- Thrive Community Fitness
- Tri-County Recycling
- WA Employment Security Department
# Hearing Examiner

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce has decided to pose a series of questions to the City of Anacortes regarding the use of the hearing examiner on quasi-judicial matters. We have all heard about the issues and there appears to be some conflicting information on what a hearing examiner can and cannot do. A recent article suggested that the use of a hearing examiner would eliminate public participation (heading of article below). So we pose our first question to the City based on this article heading:

**Envision This:**

A politically appointed adjudicator with authority to render decisions on local land-use proposals without public participation.

**Question:** Does the hearing examiner system on quasi-judicial matters eliminate public participation, as suggest by the articles heading?

**City Response:** The hearing examiner system does not eliminate the public’s right to participate in the process, either in writing or by testifying in person at a public hearing. In fact, it is very similar to the existing system. Under both the current and hearing examiner system, here is how the process generally works.

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<th>Current System</th>
<th>Hearing Examiner</th>
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<td>An application is submitted to Planning, Community and Economic Development (PCED) and a determination of completeness is issued by staff.</td>
<td>An open-record public hearing is held before the Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner receives copies of all project-related documents, including all public comments received. The public is provided an opportunity to testify at the public hearing.</td>
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<td>A notice of application is distributed as required by code. The public is invited to comment on the application.</td>
<td>After the public hearing has been closed, the Hearing Examiner issues a final decision on the project.</td>
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<td>Once the comment period is over, a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) threshold determination is issued (if required). Public notice of the SEPA determination and Public Hearing is distributed as required by code. Again, the public is invited to comment during the SEPA comment period.</td>
<td>Appeals of the Hearing Examiner decision can be made to the City Council. The City Council then decides any appeals of the decision.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An open-record public hearing is held before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission receives copies of all project-related documents, including all public comments received. The public is provided an opportunity to testify at the public hearing.</td>
<td>Appeals of the City Council decision can be appealed to Superior Court.</td>
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### Chamber members are invited to an overview of the proposed Hearing Examiner process on Wednesday, February 9 at noon in the chamber board room. City Planning Director, Ryan Larsen and Don Measamer, Assistant Director will educate interested members in this informal gathering.

Brown bag lunch if desired. Please RSVP so we can expect you.

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**Marketing Opportunities:**

The Chamber is a great way to market your business.

We’re always working to provide additional opportunities for our members to market their products and services or gain exposure through chamber activities, publications or events. Please see our marketing opportunities section for more information on our website.

**Networking:** Come to our next mixer, attend a lunch membership meeting, or help out at a chamber event. It’s fun! Plus, meet future customers and make new business contacts. The Anacortes Chamber constantly promotes a “shop members first” philosophy and our members are great at supporting and referring each other. The impact of this philosophy alone provides an excellent return on your membership investment.

**Business Referrals:** The chamber receives thousands of inquiries each year from people looking for services in our area. Chamber policy is to refer business exclusively to our members.
Executive Board

PRESIDENT
Mark Bunzel  Fine Edge Nautical & Recreational Publishing

PRESIDENT ELECT
Kristi Gabrielse  Ana-Cross Stitch

SECRETARY
Pete Kovach  Chandler’s Square, A Retirement Community

TREASURER
Jody Barnett  Shell Puget Sound Refinery

PAST PRESIDENT
Mike Trafton  Bank of the Pacific

Board of Directors

Robert Atterberry  Bob’s Chowder Bar & BBQ Salmon
Karin Baldwin  Quantum Construction
Chris Borgen  Anacortes School District
Bela Berghuys  Islands Inn
Peggy Flynn  pflynn+associates
Bob Hyde  Port of Anacortes
Bret Lunstord  Skagit County Fairgrounds
Dean Maxwell  City of Anacortes
Vince Oliver  Island Hospital
Curt Oppel  John L. Scott Real Estate
John Pope  Tesoro Refining & Marketing Co.
Erik Schorr  Anacortes Kayak Tours
Katherine Sherman  Scott Milo at the Framemaker

Chamber Staff

Stephanie Hamilton  Executive Director
Mary Talosi  Visitor Information & Operations Director
Cecilie Miller  Event & Communications 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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February 23
March 23

Two routes —
Try five restaurants
All for only $25

Tickets are on sale now!

Go to www.anacortes.org to check out all the details.