Networking lunch opportunity

The holidays are behind us and it’s time to kick our marketing efforts into high gear. The Business Connections Lunch is designed to give you 20+ personal marketing opportunities in an hour and a half time slot – what better way to spend your time?

Plan to send your marketing and sales representatives to the January 14th Business Connections Lunch, which is held at the Anacortes Lutheran Church at 11:30 am. The cost of lunch is $15—we’ll throw in the networking opportunity.

This month our sponsor is Barry Harter from Central Payment Corporation. Barry is sure to rev up the meeting and bring excitement and energy.

Central Payment Corporation is your passionate, premium provider of all non-cash payments, helping your business grow with acceptance of credit cards.

business after hours

Ryan Chanel Hair

Ryan Chanel Hair looks forward to welcoming you to the business after hours on Thursday, January 21 at 5:30 pm. Beverages and light appetizers will be served. Hair fashion will be featured along with complimentary hand massages. Come enjoy the evening and enter to win some fabulous door prizes. Shawn Wright and her staff look forward to seeing you!

Ryan Chanel Hair offers cuts, color, hair extensions, lip and brow waxing. A relaxing scalp massage included with every haircut, and a relaxing hand massage while your color processes. The staff works to stay continually educated to inspire our clients to stay fashion forward. We use Logics color line, a sustainable product, as well as Alterna haircare, which includes an organic hemp line. Both luxurious product lines help to maintain a healthy, beautiful head of hair for exceptional results between salon visits.
Hope you found December to be both good for business and for finding some quality time with friends and family—with the multiple demands we all face, making space for the things that are really important is at times an afterthought. I’m sure you find as I do that keeping a healthy balance isn’t always so easy.

Your chamber has a new board and an updated direction for 2010. Perhaps of most interest is a focus on the formation and development of meaningful industry groups. Roughly three years ago, the chamber put in place a number of divisions, which have remained operational. In addition to the executive/finance committee these are: economic development, governmental affairs, marketing & promotion, and membership. The format of these divisions has been horizontal, i.e. they have had responsibility within their sphere of influence for representing all members, regardless of industry. While this has worked reasonably well, the feeling at the board level was that the chamber could benefit by a complementary vertical approach, layering appropriate industry groups on top of this structure. The goal is two-fold: (1) provide more industry-specific input into the divisional decision-making process; and (2) promote and support industry-specific initiatives that might not have a global resonance with all members.

As a follow-up, we will be organizing recurring monthly meetings with a number of industry groups, including accommodations, restaurant trades, retail, and marine trades. The focus of each meeting is to identify economic development and legislative issues specific to that industry, as well as to fashion a marketing plan that will assist and complement their efforts. We will also seek to fashion programming that promotes the industry—our recent Buy Close By efforts are an example—which industry members can support and the chamber can help make a reality.

I encourage you to get involved—member participation is vital to the success of this program. We will be publishing an industry meeting schedule shortly. If your industry does not have representation and you feel that it should, please contact the chamber and we will work toward inclusion. There are also available slots at the divisional level—if you are interested, please contact me and I will put you in touch with the divisional chair.

2010 is going to be an exciting year, with a large number of important initiatives going forward—the AFP task force, increasing enrichment programs, and a more proactive economic development approach, among them. I appreciate your support and the contributions that you make toward our success. As always I welcome your comments and suggestions.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous new year!

—Mitch

2010 Marketing Plan

Planning is in process for the 2010 marketing budget. As with last year, the focus is on regional coverage that speaks to consumers who are already aware of Anacortes and are in reasonably close proximity. Using 2% hotel/motel funding of approximately $107,000, the chamber will continue to establish our brand and to address the following priorities:

1. Regional publications. We will utilize print media in Seattle metro and Vancouver Island publications. Ads will stress the “Coast In. Hang Out.” message, emphasizing Anacortes as a desirable destination and driving readers to our Web site.

2. On-Line presence. The chamber will continue to maintain and improve our Web site (www.anacortes.org), as well as invest in social marketing tools.

3. Local retail publications. We will speak to potential visitors on Whidbey Island and the I-5 corridor, with particular focus on restaurants, nightspots, and retail.

4. Events. We will continue to market events that bring visitors to town and to focus on weekend getaways. As promotional programs are developed with the accommodations, restaurants, and retail industries (see above article), we will provide marketing support.

5. Co-operative marketing. We will partner with various industry groups to provide support, supplementing their marketing dollars and increasing reach.

6. Brochures. We will update and provide continued support to our brochure program and distribute to Seattle metro, ferry, airport, and I-5 corridor locations.

We will finalize this program in early January and will develop a media plan for the remainder of the year. Special thanks to Suzanne Knutson (Bunnies By The Bay), the 2009 chair of the Marketing & Promotions division, as well as our M&P divisional members, for their vision and efforts in this area.
At age 15, Robert Atterberry accepted his first job on a commercial fishing boat, fishing with Tom Savage, owner of Specialty Seafoods, which is now SeaBear. He was hired to be the cook and deckhand. Although cooking was nothing new for Atterberry (he grew up working with his Aunt Ruth at their family restaurant), he fine-tuned his culinary skills in the galley on the commercial fishing boat. Eventually, Atterberry became a commercial fisherman but worked in restaurants in the off-season. Robert and his wife, Barbara, purchased Avenue Catering in 2008. Owning the catering company provides Robert the opportunity to prepare a wide variety of foods. Bob’s Chowder Bar & BBQ Salmon is an expansion of the outreach created by Avenue Catering. Bob’s restaurant specializes in seafood where locals and tourists alike have come to experience his delicious food and enjoy his warm personality. For tourists, it is a roadside attraction with their signature logo: a mermaid in a huge clam shell. A local artist, Bill Mitchell, created the artwork and it’s truly eye-catching.

Robert is excited to join the board of directors and to be a part of the fantastic plans in developing the expansion of Anacortes while promoting the origins of this unique island.

Chamber Ambassadors

Do you ever wonder who those lovely people are that greet you at the business after hour events or collect business cards at the Sunnyside Up breakfast? Behind those smiling and welcoming faces is an Anacortes Chamber ambassador. The ambassador group is made up of 20 highly energized chamber members, whose primary responsibility is to carry out the goals of the membership division with specific emphasis on opportunities to network and communicate with other member businesses. The ambassador group is currently chaired by Matt McKay, who is the liaison to the membership division and the board of directors.

In 2009 the group took on the task of reaching out by assigning an ambassador to each member. By the end of 2010, each ambassador will have between 20–25 members to communicate with regarding special events, business after hours, luncheons etc. The group also delivers new member appreciation bags, welcoming members to the chamber and educating them on how to get the most out of their investment.

The ambassadors are a dedicated group that commits to a lunch meeting each month, sometimes at a member restaurant. Each ambassador is expected to attend at least nine of the 12 meetings each year and volunteer for one event per quarter. Other opportunities that ambassadors add value to the membership are: supporting staff in the office, taking on committee roles for the big events, and being informed of events and activities for all members. There are always opportunities for members to become ambassadors. Please call the chamber office if you are interested.

The goal of the Ambassadors for 2010 is to continue to be the face and facilitators of membership engagement of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce by supporting and informing members on all the great value that their membership brings to them.

Please join the Port Commissioners on Wednesday evening, January 20 from 5:15-6:30 pm in the meeting room at the public library.

The focus of the meeting is a roundtable discussion between the Commissioners and the business community—areas of mutual interest and concern, updates on Port operations, and the Port’s priorities in the year ahead. This is a great opportunity for information and to have your voice heard.
A growing number of businesses are making Facebook an indispensable part of hanging out their shingles. Small businesses are using it to find new customers, build online communities and dig into gold mines of demographic information.

“You need to be where your customers and prospective customers are. And with 300 million people on Facebook, and still growing, that’s increasingly where your audience is for a lot of products and services,” said Clara Shih, author of “The Facebook Era.”

For most businesses, Facebook Pages are the best place to start. Pages allow businesses to collect “fans” the way celebrities, sports teams, musicians, and politicians do. There are now 1.4 million Facebook Pages and they collect more than 10 million fans daily, according to the site.

Facebook offers an array of tools and networks, and it’s easy to wander down too many paths. Start by asking simple questions: What is your basic objective? Is it getting more customers in the door? Building brand awareness? Creating a venue for customer support? Once you have set your goal, you can strategize accordingly. As Ms. Shih notes: “start small and do things that help you accomplish your objectives.

Ask friends and family to become fans so that you can display a respectable crowd of supporters when you debut.” Pages can grow organically by word of mouth—the average Facebook user has 130 friends on the site—or by advertising or promotion. Enliven your site with photos, comments, and useful information, then integrate videos or business applications. Flaunt your personality with color and style.

It’s not all about selling. Well coordinated social networking moves away from pure selling to customer service and interacting with readers (and potential customers). Engage with fans and critics. Listen to what people are saying—good and bad. Keep content fresh. Use status updates and newsfeeds to tell fans about specials, events, contests, or anything of interest.

—Kermit Pattison
NY Times, November 11, 2009
Chamber Cheers

Members celebrated the year at the 2nd Annual Chamber Cheers: Coast in, Hang out, in Casual Elegance in November. Thanks to Comcast Business Class (Ann Marie Miles—360.661.1334) for their headline sponsorship and to all of the other signature, wine and martini sponsors.

Transforming the Port warehouse into a bright and festive evening took the work of our dedicated planning committee:
• Colleen Craig, Windermere Real Estate
• Barry Harter, Central Payment Corporation
• Cordelia Hightower, Aurinco-Marine

Solar Panels
• Leah Hines, Skagit Publishing
• Suzanne Knutson, Bunnies By The Bay
• Marilee Maricich, Arbonne International
• Tammy Masalonis, McGregor Benefits
• Matt McKay, HR Strategies
• Sandy Swartos, Steam Interactive
• Carrie Tisinger, Bank of the Pacific

We want to give special recognition to Kathleen Johnson, Anacortes Construction Services and Classic Image, for her hours of effort into making the center pieces—which were also used on our community Christmas Tree. Thanks also to Andy Schwenk and Kent Morrow of Northwest Rigging, Pat Barrett of Barrett Financial, and Shawn Maricich of Five Star Detailing for rigging the beautiful sails.

The 2009 Community Service Excellence award was given to Jim McNally for his contributions and dedication to our community and his unflagging mentorship of our youth. Notably, the next day, he and his Wrestler For Life volunteers were back on hand to clean up the port!

Our current board president, Zee Hogan (Maison Group), choose two recipients of the President’s Award: Pam Allen, Anacortes Bay Inn and Jim Clarke, John L. Scott.

Tree Lighting Event

The Christmas tree lighting event took place on December 4 in front of hundreds of community members.

We want to thank everyone involved who made the event spectacular: the Littell family for donating the tree, Kathleen Johnson of Classic Image/Anacortes Construction Services for heading up the decorating effort, and Pioneer Tree Service for their expertise in transporting and installing the tree. It takes many hands to pull this event off. Our wonderful set-up team: Brian Geer, Roy and Chad Renslow, Richard Boynton, Tammy Masalonis, Mark Nilson, Kae Eagling, Jan Hersey, Jack Hamilton, Kioni Bryant-Hines, Leah Hines, and John Hiles. Feeding the troops: Westside Pizza and Village Pizza. Thanks to our great singers: choirs from Mount Erie, Fidalgo Elementary, and Anacortes High School as well as Sarah Tisinger and the An-O-Chords. Thanks also to our great town crier, Richard Riddell and (of course) to Santa Claus for making an appearance.
The Visitor Information Center volunteers were treated to a special holiday party at Bellissima Ristorante. Owner Marianne Mach and her excellent staff served the group a wonderful family-style meal, which was fitting for such a special group of people.

This past year has been filled with many hardships for the group as they have suffered the loss of loved ones, multiple illnesses and retirement from some of our most senior volunteers. Through it all one thing has remained constant the dedication and devotion to the chamber business community they serve as well as every tourist and local that comes through the door. They truly are a family of special people.

Thanks to each of them for all they do, what they do and most importantly, how they do it!

new members

ABSOLUTE TOWING & RECOVERY BY JIM’S TOWING
(360) 293-4333
Anacortes, WA 98221
Louise Melvin
Towing Service

KERRY DYSON ALLEN
(360) 588-0660
kerrydysonallen@yahoo.com
4604 Cypress Drive
Anacortes, WA 98221
Individual Member

BEACHCASTLE SWEETS
(360) 293-5897
linda@sandcastlecandies.com
Anacortes, WA 98221
http://www.beachcastlesweets.com
Linda Lewis
Candy/Chocolates

I LOVE SKAGIT COUNTY VISITORS’ & NEWCOMERS’ GUIDE
(360) 424-5268
info@iloveskagit.com
PO Box 1441
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
http://www.iloveskagit.com
Guy D. Corp
Publishers: Directories, Visitor Guides

IDEARCMEDIA
(800) 448-2215
jeannette.ford@idearc.com
http://www.idearc.com
Jeanette Ford
Advertising: Yellow Pages

MANPOWER
(360) 671-1977
lisa.wohni@na.manpower.com
216 W. Champion Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
http://www.manpower.com
Dale Sprague
Employment Services

SKYLINE MOORAGE SALES
(360) 293-1255
steve@richardlsandsinc.com
2201 Skyline Way, #103
Anacortes, WA 98221
http://www.skylinemoorage.com
Steven McDermott
Boat Moorage

STRONG & ASSOCIATES
(360) 293-6571
strongkt@comcast.net
5601 Pacific Avenue
Anacortes, WA 98221
http://www.strong.isa.net
G. Kirk Strong
Internet Marketing

YOUNGLIFE - NORTH ISLANDS
(360) 840-8778
jars_fan@hotmail.com
1004 Commercial Avenue, #441
Anacortes, WA 98221
http://www.younglife.org
Liz Jenkins
Youth Services

member renewals

• Arbonne - Kae Eagling/Independent Consultant
• Bayshore Office Products, Inc.
• Broderick, Richard T. AIA
• Cascades Job Corps
• Classic Image
• Donatello Flowers & Gifts
• Earth Bound Used Books
• Employee Benefits Planning, LLC
• Fidalgo Bay RV Resort
• Gracious Living Interior Design
• Jennings Chiropractic, Inc., P.S.
• Lakeside Industries
• Madden, Philip W. D.D.S.
• March Point Cogeneration Co.
• OASYS, Inc.
• Olympic Legal Services, P.S.
• Pacific Rim Marine Surveyors
• Petrish, Nick
• PND Engineers, Inc.
• Quantum Construction
• Rasmussen, Daniel W. DMD P.S.
• San Juan Motel
• Ship Harbor Yacht Charters
• Skyline Marine Center/Skyline Marina
• Transpac Marinas
• Village Pizza/The Wheelhouse
• Whidbey Golf and Country Club

VIC Volunteers holiday party

VIC Volunteers holiday party

The Visitor Information Center volunteers were treated to a special holiday party at Bellissima Ristorante. Owner Marianne Mach and her excellent staff served the group a wonderful family-style meal, which was fitting for such a special group of people. This past year has been filled with many hardships for the group as they have suffered the loss of loved ones, multiple illnesses and retirement from some of our most senior volunteers. Through it all one thing has remained constant the dedication and devotion to the chamber business community they serve as well as every tourist and local that comes through the door. They truly are a family of special people.

Thanks to each of them for all they do, what they do and most importantly, how they do it!
brown bag lunch series

DETER...DETECT....DEFEND

Avoiding Identity Theft

In the course of a busy day, you may write a check at the grocery store, charge tickets to a ball game, rent a car, mail your tax returns, or apply for a credit card. Chances are you don’t give these everyday transactions a second thought. But an identity thief does.

Join presenter Carrie Tisinger from Bank of the Pacific on January 15 for the first of our 2010 Brown Bag Lunch Series at 12:00 p.m. in the chamber board room. Bring your lunch along and hear Carrie’s thought-provoking presentation on protecting your identity. She will give you tips on preventing identity theft from happening to you, how to effectively manage your identity on the internet and the fraud resolution process.

Identity theft is a serious crime and we want to help you prevent the fear, anger and frustration all victims experience when their identity is stolen.

Call the chamber to RSVP.

Tommy Thompson Trestle receives donation

Puget Sound Energy Foundation and the Samish Indian Nation combined to contribute $50,000 to the fire-damaged Tommy Thompson Trail bridge. The Anacortes Parks Foundation has set a $300,000 fundraising goal for the trestle project and is accepting donations. All money collected will be used for reconstruction – donations are tax deductible. A gift is the perfect way to honor the walkers and bicyclists in your life. Checks may be made payable to: “Anacortes Parks Foundation Trestle Project” and should be mailed to P. O. Box 1902, Anacortes, WA 98221. Any questions may be directed to Michele Pope @ 293-7837.

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Taste Anacortes

It’s that time of year again—time to Taste Anacortes. Three routes for three nights: January 20, February 17 and March 17.

Come into the chamber to purchase your ticket to try five restaurants for only $25.

The participating restaurants are:
• Bob’s Chowder Bar & BBQ Salmon
• Brown Lantern Ale House
• Cameron’s Living Room Dining
• Deception Café
• Flounder Bay Café
• il Posto Ristorante
• Majestic Inn & Spa
• Penguin Coffee
• Pizza Factory
• Randy’s Pier 61
• Rockfish Grill
• Star Bar
• Thai Season
• The Store
• Tokyo Japanese Restaurant
• Village Pizza/The Wheelhouse
• Westside Pizza

Grab your friends and Taste Anacortes.
Check it all out on www.anacortes.org

Tommy Thompson Trestle receives donation

Left to right: Bert Valdman, interim chairman of the Puget Sound Energy Foundation and executive vice president and chief operating officer of Puget Sound Energy; Mayor Dean Maxwell; Ray Trzynka, PSE community relations manager for Skagit County.
Thank you, volunteers!  Visit us on the web at www.anacortes.org

**taste anacortes**

January 20  
February 17  
March 17

Three routes — Try five restaurants  
All for only $25

Tickets are on sale now!  
(See list of restaurants on page 7)

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

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**vic (visitor information center) statistics**

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

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**It’s back again!**