Volume 16 / Issue 6

Calendar

June 2006

June 1
Chamber Ambassador Luncheon, 11:45 @ the Restaurant at the Majestic.

June 2-24
ACT Theatre, “An Act of Imagination,” 293-6829

June 2
Chamber Artwalk, Downtown 6-9 p.m., 293-6938

June 3&4
Relay for Life, 360-661-2307

June 3
Chamber, Downtown 10 a.m. — 5 p.m.

June 8
President’s Luncheon, noon at Salvation Army
Washington State Attorney Gen. Rob McKenna

June 10
DDA Board 4 p.m. at the Chamber

June 14
Finance / Executive Committee
10 a.m. at the Chamber

June 15
Business After Hours
5:30-7 p.m. at the Anacortes Arts Festival

June 17
Bark in the Park Dog Festival
10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Storvik Park, 588-8749

June 16-18
St. Mary’s “Merry Festival”
St. Mary’s Church, 293-2101

June 20
Combined Board Meeting 3:45 p.m. at the Chamber

June 27
VIC meeting 9 a.m. at the Chamber.

June 29
DDA Economic Development
4 p.m. at the Chamber

Attorney General McKenna to speak at President’s Luncheon

Washington State Attorney General Rob McKenna will visit Anacortes June 8 to speak to local business people about his priorities this year.

McKenna will speak at the Chamber of Commerce President’s Luncheon, sponsored this month by ALLDATA Shredding.

McKenna is Washington’s 17th Attorney General. As the state’s chief legal officer, he directs 500 attorneys and almost 700 professional staff providing legal services to state agencies, boards and commissions.

McKenna has stated he is “committed to providing statewide leadership in the battle against methamphetamine production, identity theft and counterterrorism activities, and to protecting communities – particularly children - from sexual predators.”

He convened the first statewide Identity Theft Summit last fall, bringing together more than 300 leaders from the public and private sector to discuss how to tackle what has become one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States. The panel issued a report of recommendations to prevent identity theft crimes, enable successful prosecution and improve victim services.

Call the Chamber, 293-7911, to make reservations for the President’s Luncheon. If you need to cancel a reservation, you must do so at least 24 hours in advance to avoid full billing.

The luncheon will be held at the Salvation Army, 3001 “R” Avenue.

ALLDATA Shredding sponsors luncheon

Sponsor of the June 8 President’s Luncheon will be ALLDATA Shredding, Inc. of Anacortes. This company, which is locally owned, provides its clients with secure, confidential, bonded, insured document and data destruction. For more information, contact Courtney Pestarino Orrock, 588-1616

Chamber of Commerce Summer Art Walk

Mark your calendars for the Summer Art Walk sponsored by the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce on Friday, June 2 from 6-9 p.m.

Approximately two dozen merchants will participate in the Art Walk, displaying the work of local artists between 2nd and 9th streets on Commercial Avenue.

There will be paintings, sculptures, jewelry, photography and other artistic creations to fill your needs. Shop for graduation and seasonal gifts, and enjoy visiting new stores and restaurants. Friday night’s event will be held in conjunction with the First Friday Gallery Walk.
A Message from the Acting President

Over the years, the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce has become well known for its extraordinary events and festivals, a reputation of which we can all be proud.

With some just-in-time help from the weather, this year’s Waterfront Festival carried on the tradition of excellence. For that we thank the Festival sponsors, the tireless Festival committee, the many wonderful volunteers and Chamber staff, the vendors and exhibitors, and the Port and the City for their partnership.

For those of you who visited the Festival, I am sure you share in the delight of seeing so many people, residents and visitors alike, enjoying their day in Anacortes.

June marks the beginning of the busiest part of the tourist season in Anacortes and the San Juans. An outstanding schedule of advertising is in place in newsprint, TV spots, web campaigns, and full color magazines which promote Anacortes as ‘A Natural Destination.’

Creating and managing these campaigns is a responsibility of the Chamber, and one that we take very seriously. Indeed, one of our mandates is to promote tourism, and attract visitors to our island home.

Tourists offer us a chance to meet people from other places. We have a chance to show off our friendly community with so much to see and do. And yes, tourism brings a significant amount of revenue to Anacortes. ‘Heads in beds’ is a phrase that comes to mind.

Another element of our mission is to create true and visible value for our members, and to improve the economic vitality of our community. The next time you take care of a customer from out of town, please consider that they may be in your place of business because of ‘an ad they saw somewhere about Anacortes.’

The staff at the Chamber, and the Board of Directors, look forward to seeing many of you at the events that are detailed in the calendar in this newsletter.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me at voliver@islandhospital.org, or at 360-299-1300 Ext. 2411 regarding any Chamber matter.

Vince Oliver,
Acting Board President

Update your business information

It may not have been on your spring cleaning list, but this is a good time to review and update information regarding your business.

Check our printed materials as well as the Chamber website at www.anacortes.org to confirm that our information regarding your business is still current.

Enjoy an early summer mix of fellowship, fun and the arts Thursday, June 15 when the Anacortes Arts Festival hosts the Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours event from 5:30 - 7 p.m. at their 505 “O” Avenue headquarters.

In its 45th year, the Anacortes Arts Festival is one of the oldest and largest in the Northwest. Since the early 60’s the Festival has been building a permanent collection which includes pieces from many prestigious Northwest artists.

The organization’s mission, promoting the arts in the community, reflects the Board of Directors’ desire to expand support of the arts, and continue to promote a high quality yearly festival with a commitment to produce an outstanding fine art show.

The Festival organization includes Director Joan Tezak, who supervises a year-round staff. The non-profit organization is also served by a working Board of Directors.

As is the case with Chamber events, a team of dedicated volunteers works throughout the Festival dispersing information, helping with production, and serving as ambassadors to out of town visitors and street artisans. Joining this important group is easy and offers multiple benefits. Festival Sponsors are a committed group of business partners and organizations that are involved in nearly every aspect of the Festival. Sponsors enable the Arts Festival staff to be innovative in programming and keep most events free to the public.

Call the Chamber at 293-7911 to make reservations for this event. Refreshments will be provided, and don’t forget to bring a business card, your “ticket” to door prizes and new business relationships.
As discussed in last month’s newsletter, DDA is patterned after the “Main Street” program of the “National Trust for Historic Preservation.” This pattern has been in place for many years and has proven itself across the country as a successful model for downtown revitalization.

The basic outline of the program is called “The Main Street Four-Point Approach to Commercial District Revitalization.” And the four points are: Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Development.

The Economic Development Committee has begun work with much energy on a major strategic plan that is designed to enhance the downtown business climate. They will be participating in Focus Groups with the City regarding traffic flow patterns and presenting a concept of one-way traffic northbound with diagonal parking on Commercial Ave. from 11th Street north. Also within their concept is the creation of a “magnet” at the north end of Commercial Ave. that would draw both pedestrians and traffic through the “Arch” and Downtown Business Core, creating increased exposure for all Merchants along that section of Commercial.

The Economic Development Committee will be collecting information and data to strengthen this concept and vision and work both with the City and the Port as well as the community to help create a lively and vital Downtown experience.

A brief paragraph outlining the responsibilities of the Economic Development Committee is provided on the Main Street website (www.mainstreet.org), and reads as follows: “Economic Development strengthens a community’s existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today’s consumers’ needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.”

Mike Trafton (Bank of the Pacific) chairs the Economic Development Committee, and is assisted by David Courte-lyou, John Hachey (Port of Anacortes), Curt Oppel (John L Scott Real Estate), and Craig Volkman (Bayshore Office Supplies). Visitors and new potential members are welcome to the committee.

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There’s a new restaurant downtown where local lovers of Italian cuisine will discover familiar tastes.

Bellissima Trattoria, located just two blocks from the historic arch on Commercial Avenue, opened April 25 in a beautifully renovated space with seating for 90 diners.

Restaurant owners are familiar faces in the Anacortes business community: Head Chef Andy Ferguson and his wife, Julianne, Marianne Mach and Tyler Mach.

Bellissima represents a “comeback” for the Fergusons, who owned and operated the Bella Isola Restaurant downtown for almost a decade.

The chef is excited to present a lunch and dinner menu of “old favorites” including fresh and hand-made pastas, steak, chops, local seafood and Skagit Valley produce. Diners will also find a children’s menu, pizza, delicious desserts and bread baked on-site. The restaurant also offers beer, wine and cocktails.

Bellissima, 904 Commercial Avenue, is family-friendly, open from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. Outdoor dining will soon be offered, and Bellissima customers also have the option of heat-at-home dinners. Coming soon is happy hour in the Hot Ember Lounge.

For reservations or information about Bellissima, please call 293-1362.

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Caught in the Act of Doing Business

recently at Frontier Building Supply was Shannon Hartley. Frontier Industries, established in 1975, meets the needs of those looking for lumber, paint, cabinetry and millworks, both homeowners and contractors alike. The business, located on Commercial Ave., recently added a digital clock in front of the store.

Special Thanks to...

The 16th Annual Waterfront Festival is behind us. We enjoyed beautiful weather, happy crowds, festive entertainment, tasty food and busy vendors. This is all put together with the help of many. Waterfront Festival Committee members are dedicated to this community event which is near and dear to their hearts. We extend our heartfelt thanks to these hard-working volunteers. Committee Chairman is Mike Keller from Scott Richards Insurance, who along with his wife, Chamber Office Manager Sue Keller, provided this year’s poster art. Other committee volunteers include: Ken Markel, San Juan Lanes; Robin Pestarino, ALLDATA Shredding; Peter Steffen, ABC Yacht Charters; Vic Childs, Tesoro; Dale Fowler, Port of Anacortes; Betsy Rogers, VIC Volunteer; Ken Clark, City of Anacortes; Barbara Ritts, Anacortes Yacht Club; T.K. Wegg, Anacortes Yacht Club; Meredith Laws, Windermere Realty; Sue Keller, Anacortes Chamber.

Went to a Garden Party...

Thanks to all who worked hard to make the 2006 Garden Fair a success. The event, held at the Majestic Inn & Spa, raised more than $2,700 for downtown planter pots. Christianson’s Nursery of Mount Vernon donated 320 mature rose bushes, which were sold for $5 each. Money was also raised from donated auction items, a raffle and vendor fees. Organizers of the Garden Fair and keepers of the planter pots are a group known as “The Star Bar Breakfast Club.” They are Jo and Wally Vandertoorn, J.B. and Beth Smith, Brent and Colleen Robin, Lin Folsom, Pat De LaChapelle, Joe and Nancy Halton, Ed Bush, Kathy Komonko and Don and Sandy Harper. To find out more about the ongoing flower planter project, or to adopt a planter, contact the Chamber at 293-7911.

AnacortesToday.com

An Internet presence can be an important investment in your company marketing plan, and you won’t find a more colorful Anacortes-based website. Purchase a banner ad on AnacortesToday.com, updated on a daily basis by local writer and photographer Steve Berentson. Call 293-4852 for details.

Hmm. Is it text, or images that catch your eye?
New Members

BananaBelt Boats
Yacht Broker
Sale of pre-owned power boats, 32-60 feet in length
Connie Ripley
2919 “V” Avenue, Anacortes
360-588-9208
www.bananabeltboats.com

Richard Malland
American Dream Real Estate
Specialist Fidalgo Island, Skagit County. Also California connection (Orange & San Diego counties).
1202 Commercial Avenue
293-9500
CA: (949-661-0000)
www.mallandgroup.com

Member Renewals

Airporter Shuttle / Bellair Charters
All Star Excavating
Ana-Cross Stitch
Anacortes Kiwanis Sunrisers
Anacortes Printing
Berentson Public Relations
Catchmore Charters
Chapman University
Creative Cabinets
Curtis Payne Insurance & Financial
EDASC
Fidalgo Pool & Fitness Center
Island Express Charters, Inc.
Island Outfitters
James T. Hunter & Associates
Laws/Craig Real Estate Group, Inc
McGrath, Jr.
Mystic Sea Charters
RE/MAX Realty Associates
San Juan Islands Blinds & Shutters
Soroptimist International
Soroptimist International of Fidalgo
The Troll House
Town Cottages

My Girl
A clothing and accessories store offering the best clothing for today’s trends. We carry brand names such as Billabong, Element & Roxy.
Suenema Johnson
713 Commercial Avenue, Anacortes
293-8172

Salon Bella Bella & Day Spa
Full service salon & day spa – Hair design, turbo tan, nailcare, facial treatments, massage & spa packages.
JC Casad
3218 “R” Avenue, Anacortes
299-2227, toll free (877)Bella-15
www.salonbellabella.com

StillBuilt Motorsports
DBA: Automotive Repair Shop
Chris Longworth and Mike
719 – 28th Street, Anacortes
299-8252
www.stillbuiltmotorsports.com

Bellissima Trattoria
Marianne Mach or Julianne Ferguson
904 Commercial Avenue
293-1362

Sister Cities Association Hosts Doyle Geer Golf Tournament

On Saturday, June 24, golfers from Anacortes and surrounding areas will tee it up for the annual Anacortes Sister Cities Association (ASCA) Doyle Geer Golf Tournament. Enclosed in this newsletter is an ASCA application packet with all of the details regarding sponsoring and/or playing in the tournament.

In the packet, you will also have access to information about Doyle Geer’s contribution over the years to this exciting, well-attended event. Just as important, there is information regarding the uses made of the proceeds from the tournament.

This is ASCA’s major fund-raising event and many of ASCA’s programs are successful in large part because of the funds raised by this tournament. The Anacortes students participating in the Kisakata, Japan student exchange always receive a good financial boost toward the cost of their travel expenses. Programs relating to the other Sister Cities (Lomonosov, Russia, Sidney BC, Canada, and Vela Luka, Croatia) are also beneficiaries from this event.

If you have any questions regarding the ASCA Doyle Geer Golf Tournament or about the Anacortes Sister Cities Association, contact Duane Clark by phone (360 293-8088) or email (dclark@capsantecourt.com).

2005 tournament winners
Faces from the 2006 Waterfront Festival

Photographs by Steve Berentson
Member News Notes

Victoria Express Offers Discount
Victoria Express passenger ferry last month announced a 50 percent military discount. Active military personnel, their spouses and children will receive 50 percent off their ferry ticket price when purchasing tickets between Port Angeles, Victoria and Friday Harbor on San Juan Island. Terri Harmon, co-owner of the Victoria Express said, “Our military personnel serve our country well and faithfully. We’d like them to know the people on the Olympic Peninsula appreciate and recognize their sacrifices.” Victoria Express also announced a switch to biodiesel fuel and upgrade of ferry engines to reduce emissions.

McIntosh Joins Advisory Board
Interior designer, Molly McIntosh, NWSID, Allied Mbr. ASID, principal of Gracious Living Interior Design, has been invited to join the advisory board for Kravet Fabrics, providing feedback to Kravet designers and manufacturers on Northwest tastes and trends.

McIntosh recently returned from the semi-annual International Home Furnishings Market in High Point, NC, where she was among some 60,000 buyers from around the world. There she viewed new product introductions for furniture, upholstery, accessories, rugs, lighting, art, and custom draperies and bedding from the world’s major companies. McIntosh said she was particularly struck by beautiful new inlaid wood designs, now with a casual, approachable finish that’s more appropriate for today’s lifestyles. Prior to going to High Point, McIntosh visited the Boston Design Center. In January, she researched resources at the New York Design Center. Gracious Living is an independent design firm based in Anacortes.

Chamber night at the Speedway
Save this date! Saturday evening, July the 22 is sure to be a blast!
Join Chamber members from all over Skagit County at the Skagit Speedway for a night at the races, including a special charity event. Chamber Directors, or their designated drivers, will race a five-lap event in a ‘Hornet’ class speedster.
Thanks to one of our newest members, Skagit Speedway - ‘Where families Come to Have Fun,’ for providing each chamber member with a free ticket to the event.
Mark this date on your calendar, and RSVP to Sue Keller at 293-7911, by July 14. More details about this event will follow in the July issue of the Communicator newsletter.

Ambassadors Corner

Mary Talosi
Chamber ambassador Mary Talosi’s family has been part of the Anacortes community since the 1940s, and her first visit and fondest memories began when she was only two years old. In the 1970s, her parents moved here, and Mary always knew she’d make it her home, too.
After graduating from Western Washington University with a BA in communications/marketing, she worked in Seattle for a special events company on such projects as the well-known Bumbershoot. She then spent 15 years in the corporate world, selling medical diagnostic equipment.
Her wish to return to Anacortes came true in 1999. Now she, her husband Jess, and their 4-year-old son Tristan enjoy exploring the island as well as cooking, skiing, and traveling together.
Mary also discovered here “the best job I’ve ever had—except for being a mom,” she says. At Viking Moving Services for a year and a half, she’s enjoyed being able to learn a new industry as well as the variety of her work, which ranges from small, internal moves to major cross-country ones, even specialty moves, barging goods to the area’s remote islands.
The job also has meant an opportunity for Mary to be directly involved with people in the community where she lives. Her mantra, she says, has become, “Give to community rather than corporate.”
In fact, however, she gets to do both.
“As part of my job,” she says, “I’ve really enjoyed working with all the wonderful Chamber ambassadors and getting to know the business members in the community.”

Editor’s Note: Ambassadors volunteer their time at Chamber events such as ribbon cuttings, Business After Hours and the President’s Luncheon. They also contact new members and are involved in large projects such as the Waterfront Festival and Jazz Festival. Call the Chamber at 293-7911 to learn more.
VIC Statistics
Thank You, Volunteers!

April 2006

Visitors 1,174 (1,499 - 2005)
Phone Calls 439 (437 - 2005)
Information Request 447 (139 - 2005)
Relocation Request 19 (35 - 2005)
Web Sessions 28,351 (21,382 - 2005)

Chamber Officers

Executive Board
President
Vince Oliver / Island Hospital
President-Elect
Robin Pestarino / AllData Shredding
Treasurer
Nate Scott / Windermere Real Estate
Immediate Past President
Pam Allen / Anaco Inn/Anaco Bay Inn

Board of Directors
Chris Borgen / Anacortes School District
Zee Hogan / Maison et Jardin
Mike King* / City of Anacortes
Pat Pope / Viking Moving Services
John Pope / Tesoro Refining & Marketing Co.
Peter Steffen / ABC Yacht Charters
Bob Elsner* / Port of Anacortes
Dave Storkson / San Juan Lanes & Stork's
Nels Strandberg / Strandberg Construction
Carol Van Iterson / Horizon Bank
Graeme Wilson / Cap Santa Marine
Thomas Wood* / Shell Puget Sound Refinery
Michael Stolmeier / Smugglers Villa Resort

* Ex-officio

Staff
Interim Executive Director
Cory Hunter
Membership Services
Office/Visitor Center Coordinator
Sue Keller
Events Coordinator
Stephanie Hamilton
Licensing
Sub-agents
Kristi Daniels
Crystal Ashford
Sara Jones
Newsletter Editor
Steve Berentson

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Waterfront Festival Kickoff Gala 2006

Port of Anacortes Commissioners Pat Mooney and Bill Short (left) were among a festive crowd at the annual Anacortes Waterfront Kickoff Dinner, co-sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC). The event was held at the Port of Anacortes warehouse on the Guemes Channel. Our thanks to the Port, EDASC and others who helped to make the event a success. See Festival photos, page 6.