Calendar

October 2005

October 6
Chamber Ambassador Lunch 11:45
Captain’s Place Restaurant

October 7
First Friday Art Walk

October 8
Doggone Walkathon
(360) 757-2568

October 6-29
ACT, “Beauty and the Beast”

October 18
Executive Board 2:30 p.m.
Combined Board 3:45 p.m.
Chamber Conference Room

October 19
Waterfront Festival Committee 8 a.m.

October 19
Candidate Forum, City Hall
School, Hospital, Park/Rec, Fire, 6 p.m.
Port Commission, 7:30 p.m.

October 20
Candidate Forum/Debate;
Brodniak Hall, AHS
City Council 6 p.m.; Mayor 8 p.m.

October 22
Mt. Erie Road and Trail Run
City Parks Department, 293-1918

October 25
VIC meeting, 9 a.m.
Chamber Conference Room

October 27
Business After Hours, The Store
5:30 – 7 p.m.

October 29
Trick-or-Treating Downtown
Noon – 6 p.m.

Chamber Mission

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to improving the business and community life of Anacortes.

Lots of scarecrows, mile of food and trick-or-treaters downtown

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce has three special ways for students, families and Chamber member businesses to have fun and win cool prizes this Halloween! The ever-popular Scarecrow Contest is back, along with our Mile of Food drive and Trick-or-Treating Downtown.

Scarecrow Contest: There are three categories in the contest – Community (open to non-business residents of Anacortes), Business (open to all Chamber member businesses) and People’s Choice (open to both Chamber businesses & community members). Scarecrows will be displayed in Chamber member businesses throughout Anacortes.

$100 cash will be awarded for 1st Place and $50 Cash for 2nd Place in each of the Business and Community categories.

Community members who tour the scarecrows on Saturday, October 29 may vote by ballot at participating merchants for this year’s “People’s Choice” award. One prize of $50 cash will be awarded for the People’s Choice category. The contest is free and open to any student, group, family, individual or Chamber member business.

Scarecrows must be freestanding with a height between 4 - 6 feet. Scarecrows will be judged on originality, design, color and creativity. Check the library or internet for practical advice and inspiration. To register your entry, contact the Chamber of Commerce at 293-7911 before October 19. By doing so, you agree to bring your scarecrow to your assigned location on October 21 by 4:00 p.m. and keep it on display through October 31. Have fun creating!

Mile of Food: A cool opportunity to help harvest food for others. Donated food items, including canned, packaged and non-perishable (Continued on page three)

October Business After Hours to be hosted by The Store, home of bakery, deli and more

Political activities will push this month’s Business After Hours event to the fourth Thursday of the month, just a few days closer to Halloween.

The Store, owned by Frank and Priscilla Michaud, will host the October 27 event.

The historic corner store features a variety of “departments” ranging from on-site bakery and delicatessen to wine and coffee (optional custom blends). The business also features a nostalgic “mom and pop grocery” atmosphere, complete with ice cream cooler, penny candy, hardwood floors and collectibles.

As always, this Business After Hours event will feature door prizes and the opportunity for networking with fellow business people, so don’t forget your business cards.

RSVP today for the October 27 Business After Hours at The Store, 37th and Commercial Avenue, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Call the Chamber at 293-7911 to get your name on a list that expedites preparation of hors d’oeuvres and beverages.

(Continued on page three)
A Message from the President

Do you have a question for Anacortes candidates?

Your Anacortes Chamber of Commerce is currently co-sponsoring a series of candidate forums for the upcoming November 8 general election, along with the League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women, Anacortes School District, Anacortes American, Skagit Valley Herald, KLKI Radio and the Soroptimist International.

Candidate forums are a great way for citizens to hear how candidates running for a particular office feel about issues they care about. For the candidate, they present an opportunity to address the concerns of citizens in a fair and open setting, and to foster a dialogue among other candidates regarding issues affecting Anacortes.

These forums are designed to educate and involve citizens in city government and should be viewed as a great opportunity for you to attend. As co-sponsors of the upcoming forum we have the following goals:

• To encourage candidates to commit to an agenda for which they may be held accountable.

• To educate voters on the candidates’ platforms.

• To energize the business community and the citizens of Anacortes who attend the forums and encourage them to become more involved in their community and more informed about their candidate choices.

• To ensure that the forums are done in a way that is as fair and as objective as possible for all candidates, irrespective of their experience or positions on the different community issues.

• To grant equal access, equal time and equal voice to the candidates to discuss their views and answer questions on current issues. Before and during the City Council, Port Commissioner, School District, Hospital, Parks & Recs and Fire District forums we will accept written questions from the audience to direct to all candidates running for the same positions. No individual candidate questions will be allowed.

In addition, the sponsors have designed questions that we think will help the community learn more about candidates’ qualifications. Due to the format of the mayoral debate, we will not be accepting questions from the audience on the evening of the debate. We do however, encourage all chamber members to submit a question by email or mail to the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce office.

Please be sure that your questions are clear and concise, consist of no more than 1-3 sentences, and are directed to all candidates running for a position. The League of Women Voters will read all questions submitted to determine the best possible candidate questions for the forums.

In addition, in order to encourage our young citizens to become more involved in our community and get out and vote, we will be involving the participation of some of our own Anacortes High School debate students and teachers in the mayoral debate. We are excited to be able to work with the Anacortes School District on this opportunity for student leadership participation in a local election event.

Due to the number of candidate positions involved we have scheduled the forum series on two separate nights as follows:

If you have any questions about the upcoming forums or debate, please feel free to call me at 360-293-8529. I look forward to seeing you at the forums.

Two director nominations made, with third pending

The Board of Directors Nominating Committee appointed by Chamber president Pam Allen has nominated Hazel Hogan of Maison et Jardin and Peter Steffan of America’s Best Charters to fill two of the three seats opening on the Chamber board in 2006. A third nomination was being confirmed at the time of this printing and will be announced shortly.

Additional candidates for directors can be nominated by petition bearing the genuine signatures of at least 35 qualified members of the chamber. Such petition shall be filed with the Nominating Committee within ten (10) days after notice has been given of the names of those nominated. The determination of the Nominating Committee as to the legality of the petition(s) shall be final.
Chandler’s Square After Hours

Great food, conversation and networking were the name of the game at the September ‘Business After Hours’ held at Chandler’s Square Retirement Community. Pictured here are (left to right), Jan Hersey of Biz Point Communications, Brian & Kathy Johnson of Anacortes Construction Services, Chandler’s Square Executive Director Peter Kovach and Marketing Director Mary Staley, and Katrine Eagling of Mark Neilson Mortgage Consultants.

Lots of scarecrows...

(Continued from page one)
able groceries will be placed along the Downtown stretch of Commercial Avenue sidewalks during the Trick-or-Treat event, Saturday, October 29. Contribute one can or a sack-full and help create a Mile of Food in support of our local Salvation Army food bank.
Trick-or-Treat: 4th Annual Trick-or-Treat Downtown on Saturday, October 29 from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. This event will bring many young costume-clad kiddies and their parents to the doorsteps of the downtown merchants for a fun and safe Halloween event.

Merchants should have plenty of candy on hand for the kids and a bounce-back coupon with a special offer for the parents (don’t miss this great opportunity to get the parents to return to your store on another occasion!). There will also be a costume contest and free pizza bites for the kids at 4:30 p.m. at Village Pizza.
Sponsors include: Village Pizza, KLKI Radio, Read Me A Story, Radio Shack, Boxes & Bears and Bayside Sweets & Treats.

AnacortesToday.com: a photographic journal

In August alone, AnacortesToday.com drew more than 4,000 “visits” to Steve Berentson’s online, photographic journal of life in Anacortes.

Berentson, a fourth generation Skagit County native who was moved kicking and screaming from this island community in 1960, reclaimed an Anacortes address in 1980 in the midst of a photojournalism career that started on Whidbey Island with Wallie Funk and John Webber.

“I have been in constant celebration of my return since that time,” notes Berentson in the introduction message to his web site. He goes on to say: “Many of us who call Anacortes home love Fidalgo Island for its natural assets: among them are rugged beaches, pristine lakes, thousands of acres of forestland and some awesome views of the Skagit Valley and surrounding islands.”

Many of those scenes are gathered at the AnacortesToday.com address in distinct “Gallery” and “Activities” sections.
AnacortesToday is designed not as a news source, although it might occasionally serve that purpose, but as an image-laden journal that spotlights some of this community’s residents and events. Photographs feature a range of subjects including flowers, birds, animals and attractions such as Mt. Erie, Whistle Lake and Deception Pass.

Banner ads are available, and an increasing number of business people have “shopped” the site to purchase photo reproduction rights for company web sites and printed materials. Visit www.AnacortesToday.com or call 293-4852 for details.
Judy noted, we focus on the first three slices, which are breakfast, lunch and dinner. The next three slices are what we opt to do after breakfast, after lunch and after dinner. The final slice is finding a place to sleep. Judy emphasized the importance of ‘packaging’ these slices. For example, a bed and breakfast offers food as well as a place to sleep. What is critical, she noted, is to take every measure possible to make sure the tourist’s search for the next ‘slice’ doesn’t lead out of town. Local businesses need to work together. The restaurant owner, for example, needs to recommend local activities as his customers pay their tab. The boating or whale watching charter owner might thank his or her customers and suggest several good restaurants. Remember, if the tourist struggles over the next ‘link,’ he is likely to hit the road.”

State ‘watchable wildlife’ session draws audience to Friday Harbor

More than 100 people including state Tourism Director Peter McMillan gathered for two days in Friday Harbor to talk about “making the connection” between scenic byways and watchable wildlife.

The event, held on September 28 and 29, featured out-of-state experts and opportunities for chamber of commerce officials and others to ask questions and compare notes. Representing the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce was Steve Berentson.

A scenic byway is “a special route offering travelers access to the beautiful scenery and the cultural and natural riches of our country.” Discussions are currently under way regarding establishment of a scenic byway in the Islands Region of the state. This region includes Anacortes and the San Juan Islands.

One of the guest speakers at the conference was Judy Walden, president of a Colorado-based firm that specializes in rural tourism development. Walden noted the importance of developing strategies that balance the economic benefits of tourism with protection of natural and cultural resources.

“We may visit a place for the wild-life,” noted Walden, “but it is the human relationships that are really the core of our experience. Humans in the ecosystem are a critical part of the story.”

Factors in success, suggested Walden, include 1) a BIG vision, 2) strong leadership (a person or small group), and 3) financial strategies to keep a vision alive.

“Judy made a number of observations that are worthy of note for any Chamber of Commerce member,” said Berentson. “I particularly enjoyed her ‘Three, three and sleep’ theory, which breaks the tourist’s day into seven slices. Anytime we travel, sleep. Judy emphasized the importance of ‘packaging’ these slices. For example, a bed and breakfast offers food as well as a place to sleep. What is critical, she noted, is to take every measure possible to make sure the tourist’s search for the next ‘slice’ doesn’t lead out of town. Local businesses need to work together. The restaurant owner, for example, needs to recommend local activities as his customers pay their tab. The boating or whale watching charter owner might thank his or her customers and suggest several good restaurants. Remember, if the tourist struggles over the next ‘link,’ he is likely to hit the road.”

Other elements of the conference included a sneak preview of improvements to the state tourism web site, and review of a successful bird watching program established by the state of Texas. A tourism summit will be held in Seattle in November.
Jazz Festival shirts available at Chamber

The music may be a memory, but commemorative shirts from the 2005 Anacortes Jazz Festival are still available at the Chamber of Commerce office. Men’s and ladies’ short-sleeved T’s are $15; long sleeve T’s, $19; polo shirts, $25; sweat-shirts, $25. Also available are beautiful, ready-for-framing posters, $5 each.

Christmas Festival just around corner...

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce is gathering information regarding various holiday events that can be packaged for promotion.

Submit your events now for inclusion in the Anacortes Christmas Festival promotions. Include details such as time, date, location, fees, etc. Mail information to Anacortes Chamber of Commerce, 819 Commercial Ave., Suite F, or email to info@anacortes.org. Call 293-7911 if you have questions.

Dedicated volunteers critical to success of 2005 Jazz Festival

For two beautiful days in September, the Port’s Curtis Wharf was transformed into a Festival venue for a star-studded slate of jazz performers who drew hundreds of out-of-towners to Anacortes.

Chamber President Pam Allen and staff member Sue Keller (center) join volunteers hard at work.

Festival headliner Ernestine Anderson wowed the crowd Friday and Saturday nights.

Robin Pestarino (right) led a large and dedicated group of volunteers including Lynn Berry (left).

Among Jazz Festival Committee members were Chairman Bill Berry (left), Ken Markel (center) and Mike Keller.

Beautification Award

Named most recent recipient of the Chamber of Commerce Beautification Award was Anacortes Window and Door, located at 1020 11th Street. Chamber Executive Director Michael Broome made the award presentation to business owner Paul Arends at the President’s Luncheon.
Jan Hersey is the owner of Biz Point Communications, providing marketing and writing services for clients on the East and West Coasts. She works at warding off the effects of sitting at the computer all day with yoga, hiking, and kayaking. This past summer, she paddled a raft 225 miles down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. As a member of the Skagit Land Trust Advisory Council, she works to preserve the incredible beauty of the Skagit landscape for present and future generations. Jan has two young adult children who live further away than she’d like—a son in Vermont and daughter in San Francisco. Never at a loss for something to do, she also loves gardening, reading, and photography.

Chamber Ambassadors assist Chamber staff with events, planning, and Chamber member relations. As a member of this elite group you gain exposure for yourself and your business and play an essential role in supporting a vibrant local economy. If you’re interested in becoming a Chamber Ambassador, join us for one of our lunch gatherings, held at a Chamber member restaurant, the first Thursday of each month. Contact Chamber Membership Services Director Sue Keller at 293-7911 or email info@anacortes.org.
Library Foundation raises funds for Max Benjamin oil triptych

The Anacortes Public Library Foundation is raising funds to acquire a large (6.5 x 13 foot) Max Benjamin oil triptych for the main library entrance. To that end, we are giving limited edition, signed and numbered archival prints of one of Max’s images with a donation to the foundation of $350 or more. Approximately $300 of this amount will be tax deductible. This is really a rare opportunity because prints of Max’s work have never been available before, and his originals sell for many thousands of dollars. Benjamin is donating much of the value of the library triptych, which will be worth in excess of $20,000 when completed. There is one other bonus in that both Artsmart and Scott Milo have agreed to offer generous discounts in framing the print, (starting at just over $100 at Artsmart). Framed prints are on display in the library, Artsmart, Scott Milo Gallery and Watermark Book Co. The print would be a great addition to any business office, and a great way to show support for public art and the library. An arts event and dedication of both the Max Benjamin and a recently installed Phil McCracken is planned at the library on November 12.

OCTOBER FIRST FRIDAY GALLERY WALK

The Gallery Walk is Friday, October 7 from 6 – 9 pm. Our newest addition to the monthly walks is Johnny Picasso’s ceramic studio and coffee shop.

714 Commercial Ave., Artsmart
The gallery is featuring unique wall hanging photos of Tibet.

711 Commercial Ave., Anne Martin McCool Gallery
The gallery features “Autumn Colors” celebrating Northwest fall colors with new paintings and prints by Anne Martin McCool.

619 Commercial Ave., 2nd Floor, Lorraine Beegle Studio & Sharon Dillon Gallery
Beegle’s studio is featuring “Bones and Sunflowers” by Lorraine Beegle. Dillon’s Gallery is featuring sculptures and small acrylic paintings by Sharon Dillon,

516 Commercial Ave., Insights Gallery
A solo show by Anne Schreivogel continues through the 14th with paintings of whimsical forms of flight. Oct. 16 opens a new show of abstract work by William Slater, landscapes by John Simon and mixed media abstracts by Renate Trapkowski.

512 Commercial Ave., Crossfire Gallery
The gallery features work by its gallery artists.

510 Commercial Ave., Adrift
The café is featuring cartoon style sketches by Steeb Russell of Bellingham.

420 Commercial Ave., Scott Milo Gallery
The gallery is opening a new show of acrylics and watercolors by Jennifer Bowman, watercolors by Sandra Langford, color photographs by Rob Tilley, ceramic wall hangings by Donna Tousley, pastels by Christa Malay and Native American carvings by Kevin Paul.

416 ½ Commercial Ave., Insights Gallery
A solo show by Anne Schreivogel continues through the 14th with paintings of whimsical forms of flight. Oct. 16 opens a new show of abstract work by William Slater, landscapes by John Simon and mixed media abstracts by Renate Trapkowski.

1005 4th Street, Johnny Picasso’s
The café is showing digitally enhanced photographs on canvas by Dennis Caughran and live music by Mia Harrison.

611 R Ave, Gallery at the Depot
The Depot presents “Native American Arts” curated by Lee Brooks of the Arctic Raven Gallery in Friday Harbor. A string quartet from the Fidalgo Youth Symphony will play from 6-7pm.

Caught in the Act of Doing Business

We caught “A Better Night’s Sleep” owner David Toolin working hard at his bed and mattress business in Downtown Anacortes. All kidding aside, David could probably use a good rest after opening his second store in Anacortes, “Futons and Other Stuff,” located at 2012 Commercial Avenue.
Oyster Run brings thousands

Economic boost in ‘shoulder season’

Right on the heels of the 2005 Anacortes Jazz Festival, an estimated 13,000 motorcycles gathered in Anacortes for the annual Oyster Run. Motels filled rapidly, not only in Anacortes but in surrounding communities as well. Restaurants, shops and pubs including P.W. Murphy’s (Phil Griffin, left) recorded a busy weekend of sales, too. Photos by Steve Berentson.