calender

Tuesday, September 3  11:45 am – 1:00 pm
Ambassador Lunch Meeting
Chamber Office

Tuesday, September 8  2:45 pm
Membership Division Meeting
Chamber Office

Thursday, September 10  11:30 am – 1:00 pm
Business Connections Lunch
Anacortes Lutheran Church
2100 “O” Avenue

Thursday, September 10  3:45 pm
Governmental Affairs Division Meeting
Chamber Office

Monday, September 14  2:30 pm
Marketing & Promotions Division Meeting
Chamber Office

Thursday, September 17  5:30 pm – 7:00 pm
Business After Hours
RIS Insurance
901 24th Street

Friday, September 18  10:30 am
Finance/Executive Meeting
Chamber Office

Tuesday, September 22  3:45 pm
Board of Directors Meeting
Chamber Office

Thursday, September 24  4:00 pm
Economic Development Division Meeting
Chamber Office

Tuesday, September 29  9:00 am
VIC Meeting
Chamber Office

cornerstone members

SEPTEMBER 2009

819 Commercial Avenue
Anacortes, WA 98221
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www.anacortes.org

THE ANACORTES COMMUNICATOR

The Newsletter of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce

Volume 19 / Issue 9

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business connections

September means back to business

The Seahawks are back on the field (both in Seattle and here in Anacortes), kids are back in school and now it’s time to refocus your marketing efforts.

Our Business Connections Lunch is designed to directly impact your business through networking. One of the most valuable benefits of your chamber membership is promotion—and who is the best person to promote your business? You are.

Join us on September 10 at 11:30 am at the Anacortes Lutheran Church for a quick bite and some concentrated networking. The networking is $15—lunch is free!

The lunch is sponsored by Bob’s Chowder and BBQ Salmon (located at 3320 Commercial Avenue), and catered by Avenue Catering.

business after hours

New home for RIS

Join us on Thursday, September 17 at 5:30 pm at RIS Insurance for the business after hours. RIS will be showing off their new building at 2801 Commercial Avenue.

RIS Insurance Services started here in Anacortes back in 1980 and today is one of the premier independent insurance brokerage firms in the Northwest, having earned a reputation for unflagging integrity and exemplary service. Besides providing personal and commercial coverage to clients locally, RIS specializes as a transportation insurance agency throughout nine western states and with offices in Washington, Oregon and California. Their truck insurance office is located at 2801 Commercial in the red brick building next to the bowling alley.

marketing update

Our marketing efforts, beginning in early spring, have focused primarily on “Seattle Metro” residents, i.e., those based in Seattle and the East Side areas, for a number of important reasons. These consumers are generally familiar with Anacortes and Fidalgo Island, are conveniently located, and enjoy a high degree of disposable income. Based on economic data, consumers remain uncertain about the current economy. Given our experience over the past twelve months, we sought to craft a marketing approach that stressed the convenience, lifestyle, and affordability of a regional vacation. I think we have been largely successful in this regard.

Our approach this year has largely encompassed print media, specifically Seattle Magazine, Seattle Metropolitan, Seattle Times travel, Sunset, AAA Western Journey, Seattle Homes & Lifestyles, and the Puget Sound

(Marketing Update continued on page 2)
As I write this, summer is in full swing, as evidenced by the Arts Festival and the crowds it brings to Anacortes. I have had the privilege of serving on the Festival board the past year—the evident organization and commitment displayed by festival volunteers and staff is impressive. Thanks to the Arts Festival for another successful weekend and for the crowds the event draws to town—many attendees discover Anacortes for the first time through this event and then set their sights on our town for return visits, which contributes greatly to our tourism efforts.

While I’m on the subject of tourism, I wanted to recognize and thank the volunteers comprising our beautification committee, headed by Jack Darnton (Anacortes American). Members include Marilee Maracich (Arbonne International), Matt McKay (HR Strategies), Carrie Tisinger (Bank of the Pacific), Mary Staley (Chandler’s Square Retirement Community), and Brian Geer (Anacortes/San Juan Islands Red Cross). The flower baskets are stunning this year. The city has done an incredible job maintaining this element and I have heard many compliments. The committee has also gone out to the community via a utility bill insert to raise money for winter decorations on uptown light poles. These lighted elements would replace the five-foot banners that have been in place the past several years. We are meeting with some success in this fund raising effort—I am confident that we will see some elements in place this year, which can then be supplemented over time. If you are interested in participating, donations of any amount are welcome.

We are moving forward with our partnership with the high school’s Career & Technical Education (CTE) department. They are in the process of upgrading their Web site to show the scope and detail of their programming. Once this is released, we will be sending out a survey to member businesses to determine (1) mentorship/internship/job shadowing opportunities; and (2) to get feedback on job skills that should be stressed in high school classes and which may be lacking. We will use this information to place students in the local business community and also to ensure that potential new hires are better prepared for the job market. Please take some time once the Web site content is in place to review the great things happening at our high school and how that programming might integrate into your business. You’ll be helping a young person with career choices and possibly also introducing a future employee.

Enjoy the remainder of your summer! As always, thank you for your continued support of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce. Any questions or comments, please give me a call.

—Mitch Everton
Frank and Priscilla Michaud moved to Anacortes in 1990. In July of 1990 Frank was approached by David Welk inquiring as to any interest in buying The Store. Sizing up the potential was not difficult. The Store (located at 37th & Commercial) had been an operating grocery store since it was built in 1900. The Welks were the third family owners since its opening. The site was an ideal “Community Store” location and Priscilla thought it was “really cute.” Walking through the creaking screen door is like stepping back in time. Inside you’ll find the original wood floors and antiques dating back to its inception.

Frank and Pris had a vision to make The Store so much more, and for 19 years they’ve been doing just that. The Bakery was the first to be launched. It has grown to include fresh baked breads, cookies, pastries, and over 200 varieties of those “World Famous” muffins.

Next came deli lunches, followed by a small breakfast lineup. The dining room, with its fireplace, is warm and friendly, and opens onto a patio and yard.

Shortly thereafter the Espresso Bar was opened. Roasting their own espresso coffee beans, they soon discovered that their customers were interested in fresh, custom roasted coffee beans for home. Frank insists on “Triple Certified” green beans... Organic, Fair Trade, and Bird Habitat Friendly.

Wine has always been one of Frank’s passions and The Wine Shop has an extensive selection of wines that have been chosen for their “great taste” and “great value.” He enjoys sharing his knowledge, helping customers select wines to suit their taste. Wine tasting nights are scheduled throughout the year.

Recent additions include smoothies and new international cheeses, with plans to expand the breakfast and lunch menus.

Drop in to say hello, get a goodie and an espresso, and relax in the dining room. The Store is open 5:30 am to 10:00 pm Monday thru Friday and 6:00 am to 10:00 pm Saturday and Sunday.

Visit the web site... www.thestoreinanacortes.com to preview all that “The Store” has to offer.

The winner of the July AnaCourtesy award is Chas Shetler, owner of SonHouse. He was nominated by VIC Volunteers Jan and Norm Vigre, who said, “We’ve had Chas clean all the windows in our home the past two years. He does a thorough job, and the windows glisten for weeks after he completes the cleaning. He is most reliable and such a pleasant young man. We just enjoy having him in our home and visiting with him as he quietly goes about his work. He is most deserving of this award.”

Congratulations Chas! Thanks for carrying the torch for customer service excellence.
What to Make of Health Care Reform

We are starting to hear a lot about health-care reform at the national level. President Obama and his top advisors have promised major legislation by August, and I take them at their word.

Let’s start with something most of us agree on: there is a health-care crisis. Solutions must move forward; however, we must get them right. Too often we see legislation pass and problems declared solved, only to learn later that these actions actually made problems worse.

Our two biggest challenges are containing health-care costs and addressing our uninsured population. The cost for a family health benefit plan has nearly tripled since 2000, while small business health benefit plan costs have more than doubled in this same time period. Around 11 percent of Washingtonians are without health insurance, with just more than half being between the ages of 19 and 34.

I’m guided by five principles as a member of the House Health Care and Wellness Committee. First, people make better decisions about their health care than politicians and bureaucrats. Second, quality health care means getting the care you need, when you need it. Third, all solutions must take into account costs. Fourth, the private sector must be a part of solutions, which means creating a health insurance market in which competition drives down costs. Finally, an expansion of government-run health care will lead to more costs and fewer choices.

I recently joined my fellow House Republicans in sending a letter to our federal delegation in Congress. We expressed concerns about proposals they were considering, and shared our nine-point plan.

Our balanced legislation is based on increasing access, reducing costs and providing quality health care to all families. These bills involve health insurance approved in other states, health savings accounts, choices for small employers, tax credits on health-care plans, core-benefit plans, young-adult plans, health-care provider innovation, and cost transparency. We also offer solutions for the state’s Basic Health Plan, which recently saw drastic cuts that will impact some of our most vulnerable citizens.

House Bill 1869, which I sponsored, involved health care cost transparency, and was the only measure from our package to pass this year. Much work remains to be done. I know how important health-care issues are for small businesses and families.

Boeing P-8A Poseidon

The next generation aircraft to be housed at NAS Whidbey, the U. S. Navy’s P-8A Poseidon, was unveiled at the end of July in Renton. The service’s newest maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft, created by a Boeing-led industry team, will begin formal flight testing later this year. Poseidon will eventually replace the Navy’s P-3C Orion aircraft, which has been a staple at NAS Whidbey for many years. The Navy plans to purchase 117 P-8As, with initial operational capability planned for 2013.
The 6th annual Jazz and Blues Festival is set for October 16–18 at the Port of Anacortes Warehouse. Tickets are available at the chamber—check out www.anacortes.org for all of the details.

Once again we are bringing national acts to an intimate setting: the Dena DeRose Trio will highlight the gala dinner and concert on Friday night and Mr. Allen Toussaint will headline on Saturday night.

More on these two:

71-year-old composer, producer, pianist and singer Allen Toussaint can, without hesitation, be called a living legend. His work as composer, producer, arranger and performer, especially in the 60s and 70s, helped shape the sound of R&B, soul and funk as we know it today. He brings an easy-going charm and humor to his repertoire, along with seductive, percolating rhythms indigenous to New Orleans, the city he has always called home. He’s collaborated memorably with artists ranging from Lee Dorsey and Ernie K. Doe to the Pointer Sisters and Labelle, from the Meters and Dr. John to the Band and Paul McCartney.

It’s no small accomplishment to be thought of as “The most creative and compelling singer-pianist since Shirley Horn”, but that’s exactly how Joel Siegel of the Washington City Paper described Dena DeRose. If she comes to your city and you want to catch the show, go early, because the room is going to be packed. She not only awes her audiences and music critics with her facility on the piano and her vocal talent, but, as Richard Scheinin of the San Jose Mercury aptly put it, “…..she exudes joy…..what soul!”

2009 Anacortes Jazz & Blues Festival sponsors

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FRIEND OF THE FESTIVAL:
San Juan Airlines
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Steve & Linda Wilhoit

Captain Gerral David and Commander Matt Miller (co-owner Read Me A Story) hosted 40 chamber members for a tour of NAS Whidbey and state-of-the-base address.
Brian Geer

Born in Anacortes, Brian spent his early years as an army brat living in many different states as well as Panama and Germany. Landing back in Anacortes in 1977, Brian went through the Anacortes school system and graduated in 1987, soon after he joined the U.S. Army and was stationed at Fort Ord in Monterey, California. Brian was deployed to combat operations in Operation Just Cause (Panama) and Operation Desert Shield/Storm (Saudi Arabia).

After being honorably discharged, Brian came back home to Anacortes where he started a family and began volunteering in different aspects of the community.

In 2006, Brian ran for and was elected to the Anacortes City Council and is now starting his second term. Soon after his election Brian joined the chamber beautification committee. He became more involved with the chamber, and it wasn’t long after that he became a chamber ambassador. Brian says that the best part about being an ambassador is helping with the proactive growth of the business community.

Brian enjoys fishing with his family at local lakes, golfing and generally being outdoors. One favorite hobby is doing Improv comedy, which he has been doing since 1992. He calls it his “therapy” and loves getting up on stage and making people laugh—most of the time at his own expense. Shows are done every few months with the proceeds going to local charities.

thanks...

Thanks to the following members for donating door prizes for July’s Business After Hours:

- Anacortes Clean!
- Anacortes Community Theatre
- Art Shotwell Web Design
- Cap Sante Inn
- Chandler’s Square: A Retirement Community
- Coldwell Banker Island Living
- Epicure… the Passionate Cook
- Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center
- Opulence Hair Salon
- Read Me A Story

new members

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- American Gold Seafoods
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- Anacortes Telescope & Wild Bird, Inc.
- Anderson’s General Store
- Central Payment Corporation
- Chinook Enterprises
- Days Gone By Antique Mall
- Fidalgo Animal Medical Center
- Fidalgo Bay Coffee, Inc.
- Heron House Guest Suites
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- Opulence Hair Salon
- Raymond James Financial Services, Inc.
- Rockfish Grill/Anacortes Brewery
- Samish Indian Nation
- Ship House Inn
- State Farm Insurance
- Trident Seafoods Corporation
2009 Anacortes Arts Festival Partnership Awards

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce presents a partnership award to an artisan’s from each block in the festival. Pictured here is Mitch Everton and the winners. We appreciate the impact that Arts Festival has on our community and enjoy our partnership with them.

Chamber Cheers is scheduled for Saturday, November 21.

Our Ambassadors are a hardworking group of individuals who really do so much to keep our members connected. In early August, they got together at Barbara and Bob Atterberry’s for a summer potluck and salmon barbeque.
vic statistics

Visitor Information Center

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

chamber officers

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Rick Star Rockfish Grill
Peter Whiting Northwest Trawlers

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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

Photography by Steve Berentson

Mark your calendars for the 6th Annual
Anacortes Jazz & Blues Festival

Friday night dinner and concert with the Dena DeRose Trio ($50)
Saturday evening concert with Kim Field & the Mighty Titans of Tone and the Allen Toussaint Band ($25)
Sunday afternoon concert with Stephanie Porter and the Seattle Repertory Jazz Orchestra. ($20)
Friday and Saturday Jazz Walks will be in seven downtown venues. ($10)

Tickets are available now at the chamber.
More info — www.anacortes.org

ANACORTES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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Thank you, volunteers!
Visit us on the web at www.anacortes.org

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