ALT Insurance and Barrett Financial are excited to host the next Business After Hours on March 17th from 5:30-7pm. Being that the after hours falls on St Patrick's Day this year, ALT Insurance owner Mary LaFleur had this to say about hosting.

“I called up the honorable Patrick Barrett when the list of after hours dates came available. I said, Patrick! ye want to co-sponsor de after hours on St. Paddy's Day? He said, Rubbish! Dat dates not available. I said, it tis! He said, you be acting the maggot. I said, let's get da word out - Come have a swalley and some corned beef! He said, hold yer horses this will be suck ‘n’ diesel! I said, Bang on! Not on yer nelly should you miss this one! Come a quarter til and stay until you hit the four spring night club!”

To translate, please join hosts ALT Insurance and Barrett Financial for drinks, corned beef, and great networking on Thursday, March 17th from 5:30-7pm at 819 Commercial Avenue. (the chamber building) Please RSVP online and bring a gift for the giveaway!
I love how spring pops out shortly after the New Year in the Pacific Northwest! My plum tree is budding out and my crocuses are in full bloom. Pretty soon the daffodils will paint the fields yellow, hotels will start booking up and the guests will be here in full force partaking in our little piece of heaven. There’s the rub living in a postcard destination. Giving up some peace and solitude for the hustle and bustle of good old commerce! But you know what? We have it pretty good here. I’m sure many of you, like me, have visited many seasonal destinations where the shops are literally boarded up in the off season. I don’t think there is another island destination like ours, with the infrastructure and amenities that we have right here, year round!

So as our guests arrive, we’ll be in full swing with our Experience Anacortes Brand Promise Strategy. This isn’t just a chamber endeavor; it’s a full community effort. It’s a way of showcasing what and who we are as a destination unlike any other. And in addition to our natural attractions are the warm and friendly establishments that welcome these people in and make them feel good. They may or may not remember what you said to them, but they will most definitely remember how you made them feel. So when you see someone walking down the street that is obviously a guest, stop them and say hello. Ask them if they are enjoying their stay. Make them feel welcome. Happy guests come back, and they bring their friends!

This time of year is also the start of the boating season. We also live in one of the most beautiful boating destinations in the world and host one of the world’s largest bareboat fleets! If you made it down to the Seattle boat show in January, you would have seen a very large presence from the Anacortes marine trades. And don’t miss out on our very own Anacortes Boat Show this spring from April 8th – 10th. A great opportunity to see some great boats and meet some of our world class marine trades representatives!

—Chris Long
Jolly Mon Charters

marine trades

Anacortes was well-represented this year at the Seattle Boat Show, which ran from January 29 through February 6. Now in its 69th year, there were representatives from the Anacortes Marine Trades group selling boats and services, and hosting seminars at the Boat Show University. There were also free fishing and boating seminars for attendees to enjoy.

The Seattle Boat Show is produced by the Northwest Marine Trade Association (NMTA), which is the nation’s oldest and largest regional marine association, representing more than 700 companies. While the NMTA is best known for the Seattle Boat Show, it is also an indispensable voice for its members in Olympia—advocating on their behalf for boating, recreational fishing, tourism and workforce issues.
Jeff Pleet

For more than six years, Jeff Pleet has been a trusted financial advisor with Edward Jones in Oak Harbor. Prior to that, he lived in Omaha, Nebraska and was a senior vice president for a mutual fund family. While with that firm, Pleet traveled to the Pacific Northwest and knew he couldn’t pass up an opportunity to move here. Pleet is very involved in the community, serving on the boards of several nonprofit organizations in both Oak Harbor and Anacortes. He is the current president of the Skagit Valley College Foundation Board of Governors and serves on the board for the Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce.

Pleet is also active in the Northwest Estate Planning Council and is president-elect for North Whidbey Sunrise Rotary.

Noting the amazing generosity and warmth of the people, Pleet strives to give back to the community and embrace all aspects of Pacific Northwest life, including adopting the Seahawks as his favorite team or reading to kindergartners in Junior Achievement. Pleet and his wife, Cynthia, their children, two boxers, a cat nicknamed Whiddy and a hedgehog named Cinnabun live in Anacortes. Their oldest daughter is a junior at Washington State University and youngest daughter is in middle school.

Pleet’s branch office manager is Abbie Marten, who started working at Edward Jones in September after seven years at the Oak Harbor chamber.

Visit Pleet and Marten at their office, located at 630 S.E. Midway Blvd., Oak Harbor, for a cup of coffee and some chocolates, or call them at 360-679-2558.

Next Steps - Learn about the Promise

The dedicated members of the Brand Promise Team spent hours discussing the words that would craft the Experience Anacortes promise. Learn about the meaning behind the key terms with these descriptors.

**Our Promise**

**DISCOVER** – find, experience, explore, adventure, pleasant surprised, engage

**ISLAND** – seaside, sea life, romantic, relaxed, stands alone, adventures, viewed as a destination

**GETAWAY** – calm, breakout, destination, go!, do something, retreat, escape

**WELCOMED** – inviting, action, accepted, taken in, greeting, setting positive expectations

**GUEST** – invited and prepared for, we want them, friend (not a stranger), exceeding expectations

*Stay tuned to learn more about the second half of the Promise in next month’s newsletter!*

chamber chat

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce is partnering with Google to help put every local business on the map—including yours!

Businesses that have complete business information online are twice as likely to be considered reputable by consumers. When people can find info about local dentists, retail shops, and your business, our community becomes even stronger.

Getting all of your business info online is free and easy. Join us in the Chamber of Commerce Boardroom on Tuesday March 8th at 4pm and learn how! Register online or call us to reserve your spot – attendance is limited to 15 people.
YOUR TIME IS VALUABLE.
We take the burden of business supply management off your shoulders.
With an Ace Commercial Account, we deliver:
- Janitorial and sanitation products
- Property management supplies
- Paper products and more
Contact our B2B specialist Brent at brobi@aceanacortes.com or call 360-402-5589
or apply online today at TheSupplyPlace.com/05588

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce and Unique Romance Travel present...

Sunny Portugal -
Estoril Coast, Alentejo, & Algrave
with an optional Madeira Island post tour extension
November 11-20, 2016

Join us for a special travel presentation on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 6pm at Seafarers Memorial Park (601 Seafarers Way).

For more information, discounts, and to RSVP for the presentation, contact Carla Schipper with Unique Romance Travel (360) 293-4856 carla@uniqueromancetravel.com  www.UniqueRomanceTravel.com

Welcome to Sunny Portugal!
Tucked at the western part of Southern Europe and blessed with about 220 sunny days throughout the year, Portugal is still one of the least explored countries in the old continent. This is a warm, friendly, hospitable country that never disappoints the adventure-seeking traveler, the backpacker, or the luxury tourist.

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce is working in conjunction with Unique Romance Travel and Collette Gateway to plan your trip to Portugal. See the amazing country side, beaches, small towns, and cathedrals as you eat and drink your way through some of the best and hidden treasures in Europe. Join us on Wednesday, March 2nd starting 6:00pm at Seafarers Park, 601 Seafarers Way, Anacortes, Washington, 98221 for an informational session letting you know how you can make this amazing trip a reality, and at a very good price!

Contact Carla Schipper with Unique Romance Travel to RSVP for the presentation, 293-4856. This trip will sell out fast, don’t miss out!

ambassador profile

Bill Robards

Born in Denver, Colorado and raised just north in Thornton, Bill went off to Marine Corps boot camp two weeks after high school. After spending four and a half years in the infantry, Bill switched his career to aviation. Marine/Navy aviation schooling brought him to Whidbey Island where he was stationed for another four and a half years. After his honorable discharge in 1999, he continued working in aviation in Everett.

After four years he changed careers again and became a lead carpenter and eventually got into pest control. He has been servicing Anacortes for the last six years and has recently joined the team at Simply Yards.

Bill’s passions include coaching high school football, baseball, and has coached basketball. He is an active member in the VFW, American Legion and Fleet Reserve.

His claims to fame include playing in several local classic rock bands and is cousin to the late great actor, Jason Robards. Although they had never met, just having the same last name got Bill roles in two independent films.

Bill has a passion for living in the Pacific Northwest and is dedicated to the beautiful town of Anacortes and serving the community. Bill is very proud to serve as an Ambassador for the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce.
The town is going to be abuzz with activity the weekend of April 9th as the Anacortes Spring Wine Festival once again welcomes 30 wineries from across Washington State. The festival will feature an expanded layout, unlimited wine tastes, food bites from Anacortes caterers, and an oyster bar from Taylor Shellfish. Also new this year are VIP tickets with early access to the festival, a VIP swag bag with goodies from Anacortes businesses, and access to the VIP lounge.

All of the wines at the festival will be available for purchase with a 10% discount off the retail price. The festival will also feature local cheese and chocolate makers, sampling and selling their creations. Tickets to the festival are limited, and are selling quickly. Be sure to get your tickets early!

To learn more about the festival, see the full list of participants, and to purchase your tickets, go to www.anacortes.org/spring-wine-festival.

Thanks to all of our wonderful sponsors that make the Anacortes Spring Wine Festival possible!

**Magnum**
Tesoro Refining and Marketing Co.

**Cask**
Academy Mortgage Corporation
Anacortes American
Colleen Craig at Windermere Real Estate
ReMax Gateway
Shell Puget Sound Refinery
Swinomish Casino & Lodge
TCC Verizon, Cellular Connection
Trident Seafoods

**Carafe**
Barrett Financial
Heritage Bank

**Bottle**
Island Rentals
Peoples Bank

**Bota**
Apothecary Spa
Fidalgo Bay RV Resort
Scott Milo at the Framemaker
Steve & Linda Wilhoit

The 2016 Waterfront Festival is just around the corner!

The Anacortes Waterfront Festival is a treasured event, kicking off the summer season here on Fidalgo Island. This community-focused, family event brings thousands of guests to Anacortes the first weekend of June. Planning for the festival has begun and there are many ways that your business can be involved. You can become a sponsor of the festival, join the festival committee, have your business operate a children’s activity booth, volunteer at the info booth, build a milk carton boat with your kids, or put a team together to compete in the Quick and Dirty demo.

Follow the Anacortes Waterfront Festival on Facebook - fb.me/AnacortesWFF

Sponsorship of the Anacortes Waterfront Festival is a great opportunity to highlight your business, show community involvement and be part of a weekend of activities in Anacortes. There are many sponsorship levels available with promotional opportunities for your business. Contact Laura Hartner, lhartner@anacortes.org, to discuss the best way to involve your business in this popular community event.

The Waterfront Festival poster unveiling will take place at Trident Seafoods on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 5:30-7pm.
member renewals

- Ace Hardware
- Adrift
- Anacortes American/Your Fidalgo
- Anacortes Arts Festival
- Anacortes Community Theatre
- Anacortes Econo-Wash
- Anacortes Inn
- Anacortes Senior Activity Center
- Anacortes Ship Harbor Inn
- Anacortes Yacht Charters
- B & B Association of San Juan Island
- Bluewire IT
- Cap Sante Court Retirement Community
- Cascade Loop Scenic Highway
- Charlie & Ute Collins DDS
- Chemtrade Solutions LLC
- Chicago Title Company
- City of Anacortes
- Clark, Duane
- CPI Plumbing & Heating
- Dakota Creek Industries
- Decker, Tom & Wong, Nancy
- Edward Jones - Jeffery Fleet
- Gere-a-Deli
- Intermax Networks
- Island Hospital
- Island Rentals and Supply, LLC
- Island Transport Ferry Service, Inc.
- Judd & Black
- KP Studios
- Les Schwab Tire Center
- Linda Ann Lipke
- Marina Inn Hotel
- Marine Supply & Hardware
- McCary Creative
- Pacific Marine Center
- Petrish, Maria
- Port of Anacortes
- Portalis LLC
- Prosser, John CRB, CRS @ Windermere
- Reisner Distributor Inc
- Richardson, Cynthia
- RIS Insurance
- Salvation Army, The
- Samish Indian Nation
- San Juan Lanes/Bar & Grill
- Scott Richards Insurance, Inc.
- SeaBear
- Secret Harbor

member renewals cont.

- Sheely’s Floral & Gifts
- Skagit Bank
- Smith, Anne
- Smith, Ron
- Tesoro Refining and Marketing Co.
- The Store
- Tracys Furniture
- Unique Romance Travel & Destination Weddings
- Washington Federal
- Williams & Nulle CPA, PLLC
- Windermere Real Estate

Did you know that if you refer a new member and they join the chamber you can receive 10% off your base membership dues for the following year? Spread the word about the benefits of membership!

new members

**COLEMAN OUTDOORS**
316 Fashion Way
Burlington, WA 98233
405-435-3680
www.coleman.com
Jeff Totten
jbt2acr@gmail.com
Supplying the great outdoor gear for the Northwest and beyond.

**MJB PROPERTIES, LLC**
5050 1st Ave South
Seattle, WA 98134
206-762-9125
Jimmy Blais

**PLAYHOUSE DENTAL**
1204 18th Street
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-588-8238
www.playhousedentalkids.com
Michelle Schwabe
michelle@playhousedentalkids.com
At Playhouse Dental, they truly do love children! Their warm and welcoming environment including fun colors and kid-friendly furnishings that allows patients to feel safe and secure in the company of other children and the staff.

2016 Ambassadors

- **Taylor Bannister**—Boys & Girls Club
- **Jessica Cantrell**—RE/MAX Gateway
- **Barry Harter**—Central Payment Corporation
- **Rich Heidecker**—Youth Dynamics
- **Sarah Jurkovich**—Washington Federal
- **Shaunna Marrs**—People’s Bank
- **Dan Maul**—Classic Style & Company
- **Catherine Mers**—Windermere Real Estate
- **Bill Robards**—Simply Yards Landscape & Design
- **Cathy Rockwell**—Cathy’s Accounting and Bookkeeping Service LLC
- **Therese Rudzis**—Individual member
- **Veronica Spencer**—Take Shape For Life
- **Tricia Sharp**—Unique Romance Travel & Destination Weddings
- **Mary Staley**—Marketing WITH Mary

**VAGABOND**
611 R Ave
Anacortes, WA 98221
360-421-4227
www.facebook.com/VagabondAtown
Lori Hayes
Vagabondtrailerfood@gmail.com
Food truck specializing in Southern favorites such as chicken and waffles, fried ribs, trailer made biscuits, and sweet tea.

**WHIDBEY ISLAND VINTNERS & DISTILLERS ASSOCIATION**
5881 Maxwelton Rd
Langley, WA 98260
360-321-6226
www.whidbeyislandvintners.org
Karen Krug
karenkrug@earthlink.net
A collection of small family wineries and a craft distillery set in the spectacular rural countryside of Whidbey Island. Offering critically acclaimed wines, award winning liqueurs and unpretentious hospitality in the state’s third oldest designated grape growing region.
Thank you to SignDog NW for sponsoring our February Luncheon, to the Majestic for preparing such a delicious meal, and to Jensen Lovelett, Philip Prud’homme, and Michelle Stahl for their energizing presentations. Thanks also to the following businesses for bringing a giveaway prize.

- Academy Mortgage Corporation
- Barrett Financial
- Bella Ve Permanent Make Up
- Express Employment Professionals
- Fidalgo Living – Best Version Media
- Jennings Chiropractic
- Jacki Mayo at Coldwell Banker Bain
- Marketing with Mary
- Papa Murphy’s Take ‘n’ Bake Pizza
- Peoples Bank
- SignDog NW
- Trident Seafood Corporation
- Unstopable Personal Training
- Washington Federal
- Whidbey Island Vintners & Distillers

Thank you to the Island Hospital Sleep Wellness Center for hosting our February Business After Hours and to the Island Hospital chefs for presenting us tasty treats to enjoy. Thanks also to the following businesses and individual members for bringing a giveaway prize.

- Anacortes Oil & Vinegar Bar
- Classic Style & Company
- Edward Jones - Jeff Pleet
- Fidalgo Artisan Yarn
- Island Hospital Foundation
- Jennings Chiropractic
- Papa Murphy’s Take ‘n’ Bake Pizza
- Release Your Gorgeous Health with Veronica
- Ron & Anne Smith
- Skagit Eagle Security
- Toy Stories
- Unique Romance Travel & Destination Weddings

Congratulations to Unstoppable Personal Training for celebrating their first year in business with a ribbon cutting!

Christy and Jeff work with clients on nutritional plans and meal prep, plus body building & training programs. They cater to anyone 55 and older looking to get stronger and add years onto their lives. Interested in more serious competitions and need help with posing and presentation? They do that, too!

Visit Unstoppable Personal Training at 1005 Commercial Avenue, Suite 3B or go online at www.teamunstoppable.net
chamber officers

Executive Board

PRESIDENT
Chris Long Jolly Mon Charters

PRESIDENT ELECT
Brian Johnson Jolly Mon Charters

TREASURER
Nancy Dalton Gateway Bed and Breakfast

BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE
Dennis Richards Island Hospital

PAST PRESIDENT
Karin Baldwin Quantum Construction

Board of Directors

Patti Anderson Williams & Nulle
Barbara Atterberry Bob's Chowder Bar & BBQ Salmon
Colleen Craig Windermere Real Estate
Cory Ertel Shell Puget Sound Refinery
Mayor Laurie Gere City of Anacortes
Matt Gill Tesoro Refining & Marketing Company
Duane Knapp Pearl Buttons
Mary LaFleur ALT Insurance
Rob Mellish Heritage Bank
Jeff Pleet Edward Jones
Chris Terrell How It Works
Mark Wenzel Anacortes School District #103
Peter Whiting Northwest Yachts
Allen Workman John L. Scott
Dan Worra Port of Anacortes

Chamber Staff

Stephanie Hamilton Executive Director
Sandy Swartos Visitor Information & Operations Director
Laura Hartner Events & Communications Director
Amanda Hubik Marketing & Promotions Director
Kristi Daniels & Crystal Johnson Licensing Sub-Agents

Thank you, volunteers!

ANACORTES SPRING WINE FESTIVAL
30 Wineries, Gourmet Bites, Cheese and Chocolate
Experience a weekend of wine & food on beautiful Fidalgo Island!
Plan your weekend getaway with Winemaker Dinners, live music and dining downtown, and the Spring Boat Show Friday through Sunday

Saturday, April 9th
VIP Hour noon-1pm
General Admission 1-5pm
anacortes.org/spring

vic (visitor information center) statistics

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Thank you volunteers!

Visit us on the web at www.anacortes.org

Coast in. Hang out.

Photography by Steve Berentson