My Biz Pro

Melody Young is the Owner and Director of My Biz Pro, LLC. Please join us for a celebration of one year in business at the H2O in Anacortes.

My Biz Pro is a digital marketing agency that specializes in mobile friendly responsive websites, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Pay Per Click (PPC) advertising campaigns, website audits, Social Media Optimization (SMO), social media site creation and posting, local search listing services, professional Spanish translation of websites, website writing and business blogging.

My Biz Pro, LLC is backed by a team of highly skilled professionals with years of experience in the digital marketing industry. Their aim is to help entrepreneurs, businesses, and even corporations take their marketing to the next level: the digital landscape.

Please join us Thursday, January 19th from 5:30-7:00pm at H2O, located at 320 Commercial Ave. Please RSVP online. Gifts for the giveaway are welcome!
December’s Holiday Networking Luncheon was so much fun — the room was filled with joy. Our staff had a goal of increasing attendance at chamber events this year by 4% - we did even better. Attendance for lunches and after hours increased by 17%.

We want you to get the most out of your chamber membership — so in 2017 resolve to come and meet fellow chamber members at our events. It’s easy and fun. Hop on line and RSVP (for lunches you save $3 by paying ahead of time). Remember, whether it is for an after hours or a luncheon, we need to give accurate numbers to our caterers.

We look forward to seeing more of you in 2017! - Stephanie Hamilton

chairman's award

It is my privilege to be able to recognize one of this year’s members with the Chairman’s award. This award goes to the member that I feel best exemplifies what it means to selflessly serve in their role as a member of this chamber of commerce. I’m happy to say it was not an easy decision. There have been so many members that have contributed immensely to help with the various tasking’s within the chamber.

One of the lessons that I pulled from our Experience Anacortes training has been, many of you have heard me say this before, is that people may not always remember exactly what you say to them, but they will remember how you made them feel. And when I add this to the equation for this recognition, one person rose to the top.

This person is a hard working selfless volunteer who always gives 100 percent and is rarely not in attendance. He runs his business professionally and leads by example. And this person’s approach and demeanor always make you feel good.

He currently serves on our Board of Directors. He has been the 2015 & 2016 Economic and Community Development Division Chair and was instrumental in keeping the division focused on the 2016 Comp Plan update. He also is on the Board of Directors for the Oak Harbor Chamber of commerce and is President of the North Whidbey Island Sunrise Rotary club and has served as past president of the Skagit Valley College Foundation. I don’t know how he does all that because it seems he is always here volunteering and attending most of our community events!

This year’s Chairman’s Award goes to: Edward Jones financial advisor, Mr. Jeffery Pleet!

-Chris Long, outgoing 2016 Chairman of the Board

community service award

Mary LaFleur

Each year the chamber honors a community member who has demonstrated excellence and outstanding contributions. This year we are honoring Mary LaFleur (ALT Insurance). Mary is an avid boater and very involved in life at Cap Sante Marina. She has been the co-chair of the Anacortes Marine Trades Association and sits on the Port of Anacortes’ Marina Advisory Committee.

One day, Mary saw a spot on Evening Magazine where a group took disabled veterans skiing — and that sparked her imagination. “We could do something like that here in Anacortes,” LaFleur mused.

Thus Operation Orca-Dungie came to being — a weekend for our heroes to come and enjoy our island getaway.

The vets were brought here, taken crabbing one day and whale watching the next. LaFleur raised money from the community and worked with local businesses to host 40 veterans. Mystic Sea Charters and Cap Sante Inn subsidized part of the trip. Nine boat captains gave their time and resources for crabbing. Shell gave each veteran a gas card and the Port of Anacortes lent their party floats.

Next year LaFleur plans to challenge other port cities to do the same! Thank you Mary.

a message from the president

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Home Sweet Home Antiques

Home Sweet Home Antiques “Recycling History” for over 35 years. Bud Lewis started dealing antiques about 1980. All the while he was learning about buying, restoring and selling antique furniture at bargain prices. He sold at many Southern California Antique Fairs, yard sales and old barns.

A little known fact is that his “best buy of a lifetime” walked into his sale one day. That is Karen! They met when she was antique shopping during one of his sales. Eventually they shared a first date at an auction house. Champagne and all. They dated and were married in 1985. That began the partnership that has become Home Sweet Home Antiques. While on their visit to Anacortes they found the beauty and serenity irresistible. They quickly decided to relocate to this little piece of Heaven to raise their family. It took months of work and preparation and transportation to move a large volume of inventory.

Together they opened Home Sweet Home Antiques in 1991 on the 4th of July. Two years later they purchased a darling two-story cottage, The Anderson Home, built in 1927. It has become a landmark for visitors and locals to Anacortes. Welcoming drivers by with a glimpse of the past, and inside with smiles and greetings.

Karen and Bud do daily retail sales and redecorating, on-site appraisals, and purchasing. As a natural decorator Karen is always setting up shop with the ever changing inventory, or staging a house sale for friends and clients. Bud researches, repairs, restores and refinishes on a regular basis. Helping people find, understand, and own a little history. Ever willing to help, they invite all to come visit and awaken a warm place in your hearts. As a family business, the shop has always been blessed by the help of others.

Home Sweet Home Antiques greatly appreciates the Anacortes community and tries to contribute wherever possible. As well, the Anacortes community has always been here to help Home Sweet Home Antiques by pitching in whenever needed. Throughout history Antique dealers have been “green” and saving the natural resources for hundreds of years.

Stop by Home Sweet Home Antiques, enjoy the museum of inventory that is always for sale. You too, can save a piece of the past for future generations.

John Olsen

John Olsen was born in Sedro-Woolley, Washington. In 1957 his family was selected as the first Washington State Dairy Family of the year. John graduated from Sedro-Woolley High School in 1962. He then worked for Skagit State Bank in a bank training program from 1963 to 1965.

In 1965 John joined the Marine Corps. He went to Vietnam in 1966 and served with India Company 3rd Bn 5th Marines. He was wounded three times during his original and extended tours. John’s last year in the Marine Corps was spent in Iceland being in charge of Top Secret documents, which passed through the Marine Barracks in Keflavik Iceland.

Upon discharge from the Marine Corps in August 1969, John attended a small business college in Berkeley California and graduated with a BS in Accounting in 1972. Over the next few years John worked for various CPA firms in the Bay Area. In 1975 he took a job as a Controller for a Research and Development Company that was headquartered in San Diego and had its research facility in Eugene Oregon. In 1979 John started his own company called International Wood Processors, which had a license to sell very large ovens that could dry lumber through the use of radio frequency.

In 1987 John semi-retired, got married and moved to Whidbey Island. John and Dianne had their first child in 1991 and immediately started thinking about which community had the schools and a good place to raise children. Anacortes was the easy choice and they moved to Sea View in 1992.

In 2000 John took a job in Los Angeles as the Chief Financial Officer of a furniture manufacturer. In 2004 John’s company International Wood Processors took over the manufacturing part of the business. In 2010 John’s wife passed away. In 2012 John retired and spent the next two years building a new house and traveling. In 2015 John and Kriena Pelusi came across an Oil and Vinegar shop in Port Townsend. John contacted the main supplier and got permission to open a similar shop in Anacortes. The store opened in August 2015.

John is interested in the Anacortes community and supports several events throughout the year. He has had two houses on the Home and Boat Tour to support Seattle’s Children’s Hospital. He has volunteered to help at the Wine Festival. John is interested in the growth of Anacortes and how to make it easier for small business to be successful.
We hope that you had a chance to join us at the community Christmas tree lighting this year. We want to thank the following groups for making the tree lighting ceremony such a special evening for our community: Mt Erie Mustangs elementary choir, Island View Elementary choir, Anacortes High School choir, the An-O-Chords, Town Crier Rich Riddell, Mayor Laurie Gere, Chamber Chairman Brian Johnson, and of course Santa. Thanks also to the Salvation Army for bringing their brass band and hot cocoa truck for the community to enjoy.

A huge thank you goes out to everyone involved in bringing this year’s community Christmas tree to life. Thanks the Department of Fish and Wildlife for the crab pots, Andy Schwenk with Northwest Rigging for transporting the pots, Jason Dunton of Dunton’s Welding for creating and installing our “trunk,” Costco Wholesale for donating all of the cedar garland for the tree and all the kids who decorated the buoys at the Arts Festival this past summer. Construction of the tree could not have been done without the tremendous efforts of volunteers Mary LaFleur and Jerry Parker with ALT Insurance, Andy Schwenk, Dave Willson, and Dan Maul of Classic Style & Company. Many thanks also to chamber ambassadors for helping construct and decorate the tree and office, Kathleen Johnson of Anacortes Construction Services for decorating the lobby, Birch Equipment for the lift, and SignDog NW for our banner.

We loved how this tree brought so many people in our community together, reflecting the spirit of our town. We hope that everyone enjoyed this year’s unique tree. It truly is meant to be a tribute to the fishing and marine heritage, including those lives lost at sea, and also our town and true community spirit and we hope it can become a new tradition for the community to celebrate!
**Economic Forecast Dinner**

**Thursday, January 26, 2017 5pm - 9pm**

Swinomish Casino & Lodge  
12885 Casino Dr. Anacortes, WA 98221

Join us for a year-in-review and look ahead to the economic trends that shape Skagit County and the world’s economy. This popular event sells out and is attended by nearly 500 business leaders, elected officials, and community representatives.

Register online at www.skagit.org

**Keynote Speaker:**  
Craig Fehr, CFA | Principal Investment Strategist

As an investment strategist, Fehr is responsible for analyzing and interpreting economic trends and market conditions, as well as developing and recommending appropriate investment strategies to help clients build and maintain portfolios designed to help each family meet their long-term financial goals. Fehr, who was named an Edward Jones principal in 2015, is a member of the firm’s Investment Policy Committee. This team of investment professionals is responsible for constructing investment advice and asset allocation guidelines and developing the firm’s expectations for long-term capital market returns. Fehr is also co-chair of the committee responsible for market analysis and the development of investment guidance for Canada.

**Visitor Information Center Holiday Appreciation Party**

The Majestic Inn and Spa graciously hosted the Visitor Information Center Volunteers holiday party again last month in their gorgeous ballroom. Many thanks to the whole Majestic staff for the wonderful decorations, food and drink, and overall generous hospitality.

The Visitor Center is managed by a group of dedicated people who give to their business community each and every day, and once a year they are treated to a special celebration of thanks. Many businesses in town also provided gifts to the volunteers in appreciation. Thanks so much to our generous donors!

- Ace Hardware
- Anacortes Candles
- Anacortes Kayak Tours
- Anthony’s Restaurant
- Bank of the Pacific
- Bob’s BBQ Salmon and Chowder
- Chandler’s Square
- Classic Styles
- Compumatter
- Donatello Gifts
- Epicure
- Fidalgo Bay Resort
- Edward Jones, Gary Thramer
- Island Adventures
- Island Hospital
- John Prosser, Windermere
- Lighthouse Memory Care
- Lil’ Tugs Childrens Boutique
- Mystic Sea Charters
- Pearl Buttons
- Portalis
- Rejuvination Station
- Scot Milo at the Framemaker
- Seattle Yachts
- Sheely’s Floral
- Shell Puget Sound Refinery
- Swinomish Casino & Lodge
- The Store Grocery
- Skagit Valley Tulip Festival

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**EDASC RoadShow not to miss: Developing a Service Culture**

Tony Salas from EDASC brings us this hour and half interactive presentation.

Thursday, January 26th, at 3:30 PM  
Location: Anacortes Chamber of Commerce Board Room  
819 Commercial Ave, Suite F (upstairs)

Please RSVP at www.skagit.org/events
Thanks to Scott Milo at the Framemaker for sponsoring our December Luncheon as well as the Majestic Inn and Spa for hosting us and preparing such a delicious meal. Thanks also to the following businesses for bringing a giveaway prize.

- Anacortes Construction Services, LLC
- Hotel Services Group-Hampton Inn/Candlewood Suites – Burlington
- Interpreting Technology
- Lii’ Tugs Childrens Boutique
- Papa Murphy Pizza
- Majestic Inn and Spa
- Tides of Anacortes
- Washington National Guard
- Welcome Wagon

Thank you to Quantum Construction for hosting our December Business After Hours. Thanks also to the following businesses and individual members for bringing a giveaway prize.

- Allen Workman, John L Scott
- Anacortes Oil and Vinegar
- Anne and Ron Smith
- ACME Creative
- E Fresh Design, LLC
- Interpreting Technologies
- Lighthouse Park R.V. Park & Mini Storage
- Lil’ Tugs Childrens Boutique
- Northwest Rigging
- Quantum Construction
- Skagit River Steel & Recycling
- The Store Grocery
- Unstoppable Personal Training
Relay for Life of Anacortes

SAVE THE DATES!

Reunion Kickoff Meeting
Saturday - January 28, 2017
At the Tesoro Refinery TERA Building
4pm-5pm - Potluck Meal
5pm-6pm - Meeting & Drawings
6pm-7:30pm - Family Movie

The Main Event
Saturday - June 24, 2017
Rice Field, Anacortes High School

Spring Wine Festival Sponsorships Available

The nights may be long right now, but blooming tulips, sunshine and the Spring Wine Festival are just around the corner on April 8th! This annual event brings 1,000 visitors to Anacortes for weekend of wine tasting, winemaker dinners, and local shopping and dining. 2016 was a tremendous success and we look forward to the continued growth of this event since its inception thanks to our community partnerships and volunteers. Sponsorship of the Anacortes Spring Wine Festival is a great way to promote your business to an engaged audience, connect with the community and reach new customers. Opportunities are available with online promotion as well print and event exposure.

Please contact Nancy Rytand at the chamber (360-293-7911) for further information and details.

Scholarships Available

At this time of year, after all of the holiday madness has passed, it’s time for students to really start thinking about heading off to college and with that comes filling out applications for scholarships and financial aid. You hear all the time how there is plenty of available money out there, you just need to know where to look.

Below is a list that the Anacortes High School provided us that includes local organizations that have scholarship available. Most of these groups offer monies for young students, but some also have assistance for “head of household” and adult learning applicants.

- A.C.T.
- Anacortes Youth Sports Coalition
- Anacortes Elks
- Anacortes Para Educators
- Anacortes Educators Association
- Kiwanis Sunrisers
- Kiwanis Noon
- Anacortes Lions Club
- P.E.O groups (there are two/three?)
- Masons Fidalgo Lodge
- USW Local 12-591
- Prowler Roost (Asstn of Old Crows)
- AHS PTSA
- Anacortes Rotary
- Dorothy Etter-Madrona Chapter
- Officers Spouses Club of Whidbey Island
- Chuckanut Valley Veterinary Clinic
- AAUW Anacortes Branch
- Whidbey Island Officers Association
- Beta Sigma Phi
- Guemes Island Environmental Trust
- Matheson Family Trust
- Puget Sound Anglers Fidalgo Chapter
- Samish Indian Nation
- SABA
- Soroptomist
- Ray Wittman Scholarship Fund
- Frank & Joan Todd (Marine Corps)
- Eagles Auxiliary
- Daughter of the American Revolution

The Anacortes Schools Foundation also has a list of available scholarships at: http://www.anacortesschoolsfoundation.org/scholarships/scholarship-applications.html

Many scholarships will become available during the months ahead, February through May. Please be sure to check the counseling website weekly.

Good luck to all the students! We can’t wait to hear of all of your successes and journeys.
Executive Board

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Brian Johnson Anacortes Construction Services

VICE CHAIRMAN
Nancy Dalton Gateway Bed and Breakfast

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Mary LaFleur ALT Insurance

BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE
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PAST CHAIRMAN
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Cory Ertel Shell Puget Sound Refinery
Kristi Gabrielse Windermere
Mayor Laurie Gero City of Anacortes
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Diana Jordan-New Bank of the Pacific
John Olsen Anacortes Oil & Vinegar Bar
Jeff Pleet Edward Jones
Leslie Powell Lighthouse Memory Care
Gina Walsh Peoples Bank
Mark Wenzel Anacortes School District
Peter Whiting Seattle Yachts
Allen Workman John L. Scott
Dan Worra Port of Anacortes

Chamber Staff
Stephanie Hamilton President
Sandy Swartos Visitor Information & Operations Director
Amanda Hubik Marketing & Promotions Director
Nancy Ryland Events & Communications Coordinator
Kristi Daniels & Crystal Johnson Licensing Sub-Agents

Photography by Steve Berentson

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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