Please join us for our State of the District luncheon. Dr. Mark Wenzel, Anacortes School District superintendent, will give a “State of the District.” He will share updates on the district's mission, vision and goals for student success. With the use of videos and student stories, this is always a very informative and popular presentation.

Dr. Wenzel became superintendent in Anacortes in July 2013. He received master’s and doctorate degrees from the London School of Economics and University of Washington, respectively. He lives in Anacortes with his wife, Julie, and children, Ruby, Eli, and Finn.

The luncheon is sponsored by the Anacortes Schools Foundation. Since 1984, the Anacortes Schools Foundation (ASF), has been investing in the dreams of Anacortes students. Originally created from just one family’s donation, ASF now manages more than $2.5 million in endowments, distributes over $160,000 annually in scholarship support and has grown into a non-profit organization that is proud to play a role in helping students succeed in every grade and at every level. We continue to award scholarships — to AHS seniors, current college students, and even preschoolers. They provide funding for STEM enrichment, initiatives like JumpStart and IMPACT, and grade level programs like KidWind and the 4th Grade Salish Sea Science Trip; plus equipment like 3D printers and calculators, after-school arts and social and emotional programs. All of this is made possible through the incredible generosity of our donors, and through events like the “Celebrate the Season” dinner and auction and Shell “Fueling Education 5K and Fun Run.”

The lunch will take place on January 10th at Fidalgo Bay Resort, 4701 Fidalgo Bay Road at 11:30am. Please RSVP and pay online or in the chamber office to receive the $18 luncheon rate. Payment at the door at the time of the luncheon will be $20. Gifts for the giveaway are always welcome!

Join us at Scott Richards’ new location, at 1116 12th Street on Thursday, January 17th, from 5:30-7:00pm for this month’s Business After Hours.

Scott Richards & Anacortes Marine Insurance has been a staple of the Anacortes business community since 1951. Offering a broad choice of carriers to meet the individual Auto, Home, Marine, and Business needs of customers, their markets include CHUBB, Grange, Hartford, MetLife, Pantaenius, Safeco, and Travelers.

More importantly, Owners Scot Buchanan & Shellei Eubanks have a highly capable team of veteran agents including Sherri Bitterman and Nicole Schmidt in Personal Lines and Cletha Sala in Commercial Insurance. Experienced in finding exactly the right coverage for each client, agency staff has more than 70 years combined history in the industry, much of it right here in Anacortes.

Growing into a new location after 65 years, Scott Richards & Anacortes Marine Insurance provides Great Service and Wide Choices of coverage to best meet Your insurance needs. See their new office at 1116 12th street, just west of 7-11.

Find out more by attending our Business After Hours at Scott Richards on Thursday, January 17th from 5:30-7:00pm for food, fun and excellent door prizes! Please RSVP online or by calling 360-293-7911. Gifts for the giveaway are always welcome!
a message from the president

Business Retention and Expansion Survey Media Release

The Anacortes Chamber of Commerce is initiating a Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) survey in January 2019. The focus will be to assess local business strengths and challenges along with perceptions and concerns about doing business in Anacortes.

At the conclusion of the survey, the chamber expects to develop specific programs to enhance local resources for businesses while strengthening the local economy and commercial base to serve residents.

Anacortes BR&E surveys will begin in early January, 2019 with an expectation that the assessments will be complete in February. Follow-up steps will include data review and analysis, leading to a final report and recommendations to the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

“Our goals for the Business Retention and Expansion project are to listen, to identify strengths, issues and challenges local businesses face, and then to develop priority projects aimed at assisting our existing businesses,” said Anacortes Chamber President Stephanie Hamilton.

“The surveys will help us learn more about the views of local companies and the follow-up report will give us better tools to support our existing establishments.”

“The chamber project can help local business owners grow their companies and create meaningful impact here at home,” said Anacortes Mayor Laurie Gere.

“We have a diverse business community and finding new tools to help them across the board will provide Anacortes with added advantages.”

“We know from experience that existing firms are the best sources of growth and vitality in a community,” said Chairman of the Chamber Board of Directors Dennis Richards. “We want to find out how we can help them expand and add jobs in Anacortes. We have an excellent team of volunteers in place to work on our business assessment and expect first rate recommendations once surveys are complete.”

“This is a forward-looking chamber program, designed to stimulate economic development by assisting existing enterprises,” said Hamilton. “When our surveys identify any concerns, problems and opportunities, the chamber can act to improve the local business climate.”

For more information on the Business Retention and Expansion assessment or to participate in the surveys, please contact Anacortes Chamber President Stephanie Hamilton at shamilton@anacortes.org or 360-293-7911.

board profile

Rick Star spent 25 years as a military aerospace engineer before acquiring the assets of the Anacortes Brewery in 2000 and opening the Rockfish Grill with business partners, Allen Rhoades and Paul Wasik. Their business, H2O, was established in 2011. The Anacortes Brewery, originally opened in 1994, celebrates its 25th anniversary next year and is the 10th oldest brewery in the state.

“Originally from Santa Monica CA, Rick began home brewing in 1987 inspired by his brewmaster Uncle in Bavaria. It was around that time that he got the crazy idea that one day he might be able to turn this hobby into a profession. Along the way, he attended Brewing School at UC Davis and the Culinary Arts program at Edmonds College.

Rick has served as the president of the Anacortes Restaurant Trade Association and as Chairman of the Anacortes Jazz and Blues Festival and Bier on the Pier. He was also previously a board member of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce, receiving the President’s Award in 2012, and is a graduate of the Leadership Skagit Program (Class of 2015). He is currently a member of the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival Board of Directors and the Marketing Committees for the Anacortes Chamber and the Washington Beer Commission. He has also recently become a member of the Anacortes Rotary. Maybe you saw him ringing the bell for the Salvation Army in front of the market this month!

Rick lives with his wife, Carole, in Anacortes. Carole is a graduate of WSU’s Master Gardener Program and works at the D Ave Nursery here in town. Together they have 2 boys and 2 girls, one granddaughter and another on the way. In his “spare” time, Rick is a musician in various blues and twang groups in the area and plays in the band at his church, Christ the King.
Caren McKay is our newest member of the Chamber Ambassadors! After growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area, Caren moved to the PNW with her parents in 1993 because of her father’s job transfer. Caren has been living in Skagit County since 1994 and a resident of Anacortes since 2011. Caren has been happily married to her husband Matt since August 2012. Together they have a blended family with Caren’s two sons (Brandon and Kyle) and Matt’s two sons (Collin and Evan). After working in the banking industry for 14 years (and going through too many mergers and acquisitions to count!), she worked for “The web’s most popular swim shop” SwimOutlet.com as a Social Media Moderator and Website QA & Testing Manager. In October 2016 she joined the Anacortes office of John L. Scott Real Estate and is the Director of Broker Services and a licensed Real Estate Broker. Caren and her family enjoy the small town vibe in Anacortes and the walkability of living in Old Town. You can catch Caren and Matt volunteering at Chamber events (Spring Wine Festival, Waterfront Festival, and Bier on the Pier, to name a few), and enjoying the local music scene. A little know fact - Caren’s claim to fame is that she spent her early years Figure Skating with Kristi Yamaguchi and ultimately spent the rest of her athletic career as a competitive swimmer.
Anacortes Coastal Christmas

The horse-drawn trolley has become another high-demand tourism draw for our area on Saturdays in downtown Anacortes! Many thanks to the donors who have helped support the trolley by being location/pick-up sponsors, and logo sponsors, for this holiday season.

We would also like to make a correction from last month’s newsletter - we spelled Reisner Distributing incorrectly, and our Edward Jones sponsor was Gary Thramer AAMS.

Members of the retail trades group worked together in a new beautification project for this holiday season – lighted wreaths along downtown Commercial Avenue. The group solicited donations from downtown businesses and requested funds from the chamber, the city and lodging tax committee. The group purchased and installed 72 wreaths and have another 28 on backorder. Many thanks to SEBOS (wreath purchase and help unpacking/hanging), Ace Hardware (plugs), Bank of the Pacific (off-season storage), the Millers for use of their trailer, and the dozen + volunteers who braved the early morning cold to hang the wreaths.

Each year we like to celebrate the season with our wonderful volunteers from the Anacortes Visitor Information Center and give them a little holiday cheer from our business community. The VIC is run completely by volunteers and they are here just about every day of the year to greet our guests and local residents with information about our amazing island. Some of our chamber members graciously donate gifts for each of our volunteers as a show of appreciation.

A wonderful luncheon was donated by Coconut Kenny’s, Gere a Deli and the 5th Street Bistro at the Majestic Inn. The City of Anacortes donated the use of the Depot. Thank you so much to our generous donors!

Anacortes Kayak Tours  
Anacortes Oil & Vinegar  
Apothecary Spa  
Boeing  
Cap Sante Inn  
Chandlers Square  
City of Anacortes  
Fidalgo Artisian Yarn & Clothing  
Island Adventures  
Island Hospital  
Lil Tugs  
Louis Auto Glass  
Red Door  
SeaBear  
Shell Puget Sound Refinery  
Swinomish Casino

We had a great time at our December luncheon, playing holiday-themed games that pushed some us to be a bit more creative!

For example - have you ever tried to draw a decorated Christmas tree, on the bottom of a paper plate, with the plate on the top of your head?

That’s what our guests are doing here - you should absolutely try it sometime!
2018 ambassadors

**Chair: Mindy Holland** - Interpreting Technology

**Stephanie Bayless** - Sherwin-Williams Paint Store

**Brandon Carter** - Robert W Baird

**Crystal Eddy** - Skagit Bank, a division of Banner Bank

**Barry Harter** - Central Payment Corporation

**Shona Martin** - Fidalgo Financial Planning LLC

**Dan Maul** - Fidalgo Artisan Yarn and Clothing

**Caren McKay** - John L. Scott Real Estate/Anacortes

**Jessica Nguyen** - Peoples Bank

**Meagan Schwab** - Peoples Bank

**Carol Van Iterson** - Bank of the Pacific

new members

**North Cascade Eye Associates**
1112 12th Street - Anacortes, WA 98221
360-424-2020
Brianna Bevis
briannab@ncascade.com
http://www.ncascade.com
Full service eye clinic

**North Sound Chiropractic**
3218 R Ave Ste A - Anacortes, WA 98221
360-299-8999
Peter DeVries
northsoundclinics@gmail.com
We are a new Chiropractic office in Anacortes with a passion for helping our community reach their highest level of health through gentle, specific Chiropractic adjustments and education.

**Gentry House**
1208 7th St - Anacortes, WA 98221
http://www.skagitadultdayprogram.org
360-293-4466
Deanna McDougle
drmcdougle@gmail.com
We provide daytime respite for caregivers caring for loved one with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia. Most Long term Healthcare Insurances are accepted. Personal Care is available. Please call for more information.

member renewals

- Bastion Brewing
- Bunnies By The Bay
- Cap Sante Heated Mini-Storage and U-Haul
- Golden Services, LLC
- How It Works
- Legendary World
- Little Caesars Pizza
- Mert’s Taxi
- Pelican Bay Books
- Pioneer Tree Service & Landscaping, Inc.
- Thrive Community Fitness

thanks...

Thank you to Lynne M. Lang Accounting & Business Services Co. and Dream Catcher R/E Development & Property Management Co. for sponsoring our December Luncheon, to Fidalgo Bay Resort for hosting and to Gere-a-Deli for preparing such a delicious meal. Thanks also to the following businesses for their giveaway prizes.

- Alice Bohnker Insurance Services
- Anacortes Construction Services
- Bank of the Pacific
- Bayside Specialities
- Express Employment Professionals
- Fidalgo Bay Resort
- Lighthouse Memory Care
- Lil’ Tugs Children’s Boutique
- Lincoln Theatre Center Foundation
- OASYS, Inc
- Skagit Valley Tulip Festival
- US Bank

Thank you to Dancing Camel Yoga Studio for sponsoring our December Business After Hours. Thanks also to the following businesses for bringing a giveaway prize.

- Bubba Sudz Car Wash and Detail
- Dancing Camel Yoga Studio
- Fidalgo Artisan Yarn and Clothing
- SeaBear Company
This incredible team of volunteers are working hard to install the sign at the International Ferry Terminal - stayed tuned to learn more about a future Ribbon Cutting!

**Multi-Chamber After Hours**

*Making new connections and building new relationships!*

Join us at the Lincoln Theatre for food, beverages and behind-the-scenes tours of the historic theatre that has been apart of Downtown Mount Vernon since 1926.

**Thursday, January 10**

**4:30pm to 6pm**

**712 S 1st St**

**Mount Vernon**

**Sponsorship opportunities** are available for the Spring Wine Festival, happening on Saturday April 13th 2019.

If you are interested in sponsoring, please call us to learn more about the different levels, and the benefits that come along with each level.

It’s a great opportunity to get your business in front of hundreds of people, both at the event and through sustained digital and print promotion.

**Please Join us for a Ribbon Cutting Celebration**

at Whole Life Wellness

1610 Commercial Ave, Suite B

January 24th at 4:00 PM

wholelifewellness.org

360-269-7011
vic (visitor information center) statistics

November 2017  November 2018  November 2017  November 2018
Visitors 373  431  Relocation Requests 14  5
Phone Calls 35  30  Web Users 11,197  8,612
Information Requests 5  2  Page Views 25,018  41,554

Thank you, volunteers!

ANACORTES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
819 COMMERCIAL AVE STE. E
ANACORTES, WA 98221
(360) 293-5533
HOURS: MON–FRI 930AM–430PM

Coast in. Hangout.