

CHAMBER CHAT

DECEMBER 2020

A Plea to Save Small Businesses

Holmes Jacobs is a friend of mine from my time with the Addison County Chamber in Vermont. When I saw this post on Facebook, I realized that it expressed why we should all shop locally this and every year, far better than I could. So please make a little extra effort this year to support your friends and neighbors. Holmes is right, they are truly depending on it. And if you're ever in Middlebury stop in to see Holmes ... and have a meal.

Andy Mayer, President/CEO

Guest CEO Message

Dear Friends & Neighbors,
This message, this plea, goes out to friends and neighbors across this beautiful nation of ours. Nearly every small business in your community is on the brink of closing its doors. This conversation is not specifically about the plight of the restaurant industry ... it's about your local bookshop, jeweler, hair salon, sports shop, hardware store, movie theater, brewer, clothing retailer and more – your neighbors along Main Street who have invested their livelihoods in keeping your town vibrant, beautiful and meaningful. As a small-town restaurateur, I can tell you that they are struggling like never before. So, my message here is one similar to that which you have heard every Holiday Season. But this year, it is truly more

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Marketing Mastermind: Creating Your 2021 Marketing Plan, Part 2

Thursday, Dec. 3

10-11 a.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Now is the time to review this year's marketing plan and draft a plan for next year. This month, bring your 2021 marketing plan and we'll break out into small groups to share our plans and ask questions.

Boeing in Washington: Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic

Tuesday, Dec. 8

11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Rich White, senior manager in Government Operations at Boeing Commercial Airplanes, will speak with the Skagit County chambers about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the aerospace industry and how Boeing is working to navigate through these unprecedented times.



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Chamber Virtual Luncheon:

Biz Buzz – Holiday Edition

Wednesday, Dec. 9

11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Get your elevator speech – and your finest holiday attire – ready for this month's Biz Buzz. To celebrate the season, come dressed for the holidays, and we'll bring some holiday cheer as well!

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Advanced Business Communications Series

How to Sell Using NLP

Session 3: Thursday, Dec. 17

1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Presented by Master NLP Trainer Paul Webb

via Zoom

\$50 per session

[Register here](#)

NLP – The Sales Masters Course – Greeting Techniques – Questioning Skills – Listening Skills – Reinforcing & Complimenting – Selling Is An Art ... And It Can Be Taught – Learn Techniques That Are Easy To Apply And Get A Huge Return – NLP at Its Best!

Chamber Virtual Luncheon:

2020 Awards Celebration

Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2021

11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

We'll be celebrating the people who have made a difference in the Chamber and our community in 2020. Don't miss this special event.

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A Plea to Shop Locally

...continued from page 1

important than ever. Please consider shopping locally this season – your town depends on it. I think I can safely say that Amazon, Walmart and Pottery Barn are doing all right, but the shop owner on the corner of Main, who knows you by name, is on the brink of losing everything. Yes, the price of shopping local is more and I'll tell you why ... your local business owners are the ones who donate to your child's field trip, sponsor your child's sports team, donate to the local animal shelter and volunteer their time at the local food bank. They give to the Special Olympics, homeless shelters, the American Legion, American Cancer Society and so much more. When was the last time Amazon supported your daughter's Girl Scout troop? Please, support your neighbor down the street. It will pay more dividends than any other purchase you make ... please.

Holmes Jacobs, Owner
Two Brothers Tavern, Middlebury, Vermont



Shop Local Holiday Promotion

The Holiday Shop Local program kicked off with Small Business Saturday on Nov. 28 and will run through Jan. 31. Spend \$5 and you'll get a "punch" on the Shop Local & Win punch card. When you've reached 10 punches, a total of \$50, return the card to Tri-Dee Arts or Skagit Running Company to be entered into a weekly prize drawing as well as the grand prize drawing on Feb. 1, 2021. All the fabulous prizes are provided by the Shop Local participating businesses. For a complete list of participating businesses, visit:

www.mountvernonchamber.com/2020-shop-local-promotion/

Tune In
Chamber Chat
Wednesday Mornings

102.1 KAPS Country
8:05 a.m.

KBRC
Classic Hits 1480 AM
8:20 a.m.

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Get to Know PNW The Clean Team

When Beth Grassi started PNW The Clean Team LLC about a year and a half ago, she set some goals for growing her business. Today, she's outpaced those goals.

"It's turning into something I didn't expect. Where I'm at in my business is where I expected to be at year five or six," Grassi said.

The Clean Team offers house cleaning, both deep cleaning and regular maintenance, janitorial services and window cleaning in Whatcom, Island, Skagit and northern Snohomish counties.

Grassi hails from South Dakota and owned a cleaning business there. When she moved here five years ago, she didn't intend to own another business, in part, she says, because she didn't know the laws here in Washington state.

But in working for others' cleaning businesses, she found herself promoted in short order to a supervisor or manager.

"I always ended up running someone else's business, so I decided I might as well run my own," she said.

Since the pandemic began, the commercial side of the business has grown by leaps and bounds as businesses and government agencies are seeing the value having spaces professionally cleaned.

And her Chamber membership even helped her secure a job with the City of Mount Vernon to clean public restrooms at all city parks. The city was seeking janitorial services and "the Chamber directory was the first place they looked," Grassi said.

Other Chamber members use The Clean Team as well, including Marla Chapa of Keller Williams Western Realty, who uses Beth's services for both her own home as well as move out/move in cleans for her real estate clients.



The Clean Team is licensed, bonded and insured, as well as carrying a general contractor's license, which allows the company to clean for new construction.

Grassi doesn't do all this alone: She recently brought on Bill Grassi as her business partner. She and Bill are divorced but have found a good working relationship in the business. Beth manages the housecleaning division and Bill manages the janitorial and window cleaning. The Clean Team also employs a bookkeeper and full-time cleaning staff.

Beth says she is still catching her breath from the rapid growth of the business. She has more plans she'd like to implement, including investing in a scissor lift for the window service. And she plans to offer a special discount to Chamber members, which will be available soon on the Chamber's website. To learn more about The Clean Team, visit their Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/TheCleanTeamBeth/

Member Reveals Positive Return on Investment

For over 20 years, Cascades Job Corps Center has been a member of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce. As members, Cascades enjoys many benefits that the Chamber provides to the community, though one stands out above the rest: our ongoing partnership that focuses on workforce development and connecting young people with meaningful careers. Cascades has developed a mutually beneficial partnership with the Mount Vernon Chamber Foundation and Career Connect WA that allows our students to connect with job sites and industry professionals that align with their career goals.

In February 2020, Cascades visited United General Hospital with Foundation Director Silvia Reed (pictured). This allowed our students to visit with various departments including the Peace Health Clinic, Registration Office and Rehabilitation Wing. Hospital staff commented that students were engaged and showed interest in all of the topics discussed during the tour. Additionally, students came prepared with lots of questions for the department-head panel at the end of the tour. These types of experiences allow our students to get an inside look at what working in their trade will entail and help motivate them on their path to success. Health-care students will meet with professionals from The Bridge at Mount Vernon and HomePlace Memory Care on Dec. 4 via Zoom for another industry career panel.

While the primary benefit of our relationship is related to workforce development, Cascades also enjoys many of the standard membership



benefits that the Chamber offers. Cascades always attends the monthly luncheons hosted by the Chamber and believes that this is one of the best ways to get your business out in front of potential partners and customers. Additionally, make sure to take advantage of sponsorship and spotlight opportunities when given the chance! Cascades is sponsoring the December membership luncheon and will be able to share information about our Center with over 50 other members.

These are valuable opportunities to let the community know about your business. Andy and Silvia always make their best effort to attend our Center events as well. It is clear that the Chamber takes the time to meaningfully engage with its members and truly cares about the success of your business. We appreciate the Chamber's ongoing support and partnership!

Macklin Hamilton
Business & Community Liaison
Cascades Job Corps



Mount Vernon Chamber Day at COA

Monday, Dec. 7, 3-8 p.m.

Mention the MV Chamber when you order and 20% of your sale will be donated to the Chamber

Ambassadors

Chair - Marla Chapa

Skagit Social

Taylor Bannister

Lincoln Theatre

Susan Cooper

NextHome Preview Properties

Monica Craig

CPI Plumbing & Heating

Ector DeLeon

Tulip Valley Winery

Beth Dewey

Joyous Style

Leslie Exner

hibu

Carol Harris

PrimeLending

Katelyn Huffman

Express Employment

Professionals

Shelby Janklow

Fortiphi LLC

Crystal King

NW Technology

Morgan McCauley

The Bridge at Mount Vernon

Joel Pasek

SERVPRO

Anya Paxson

Aflac

Tammy Reim-Ledbetter

Alaska USA

Sherry Ruderman

Skagit Tradition Realty

Jerry Shackette

Friendship House of Skagit Valley

Lexx Stenson

Chinn GYN, LLC

Liz Theaker

Camp Korey

Lee Thomas-Palmer

Logan Creek Retirement

Community

Katey Von Hagel

Land Title & Escrow Company

Clarissa Wong

Umpqua Bank

Member Announcements

McIntyre Hall Presents a virtual evening with We Banjo 3

A festival holiday LIVESTREAM featuring a special We Banjo 3 (WB3) performance, plus musical sets by Bela Fleck & Abigail Washburn, Skerryvore, The Whileaways, BackWest, and Ajeet. The one-night-only event airs Dec. 18 at 5 p.m. with access to re-watch the livestream through Dec. 26. Tickets are \$20, with limited edition merchandise and ticket bundles also available. Purchase tickets on the McIntyre Hall website. A portion of ticket sales will benefit McIntyre Hall.

Farmstrong Brewing Company Opens Location to Local Artists and Small Businesses

While indoor dining is closed due to Covid restrictions, Farmstrong is opening up its taproom as a retail space for local artists, creative people and small business vendors during the holiday season. "We are now shut down for inside brewery business," said Farmstrong's Todd Owsley. "Instead of crying in my beer, I decided that we can still help out the community." If you're interested in opening a pop-up shop, contact for Todd details. There is no charge to the vendors. todd@farmstrongbrewing.com

Lock In Savings for a Skagit Valley Family YMCA Membership

Join the Skagit Valley Family YMCA by the end of 2020 to receive a discounted joining fee of just \$20 (\$80 discount for most memberships) plus a 30% discount on monthly membership rates. Simply use promo code YGIVETHANKS when you register for your Y membership to lock in these discounted rates through December 2021. Your membership will help sustain the non-profit, allowing it to continue to run its many programs that support the Skagit Valley community.

For complete articles visit
MountVernonChamber.com
Submit articles to
Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com

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The Year in Pictures

2020 will be a year to remember, and while the year wasn't what we expected, we still have had many reasons to be thankful for our Chamber community.



Chamber Ambassador Lunch



VIC volunteer Randy Burr



Chamber Awards Dinner



Multi-Chamber After Hours



Upbeat Award, Chamber luncheon

The Year in Pictures



Welcome New Member Taqueria Mi Conina

Battle of the Bridge Golf Tournament



Battle of the Bridge Golf Tournament



Ribbon cutting at COA



Left: Downtown Festival of Trees

Above: Latino Business Leaders

State Grant Assistance: Act Now

Applications are open this week for a new round of small business grants, part of \$100 million in CARES Act funds being used to support small employers in Washington. A total of \$50 million will be available for grants of up to \$20,000 each, with a focus on businesses

most impacted by the current public health measures or who have experienced significant cumulative impacts. **Priority will be given to applications received by Dec. 10, 2020.** Watch for application information at www.commerce.wa.gov/bizgrants.

Thank You Renewing Members

30+ Years

Chinook Enterprises
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Skagit Publishing

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Skagit Habitat for Humanity
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Weichert Leading Edge Home Sales celebrates ribbon cutting



The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Weichert Realtors Edge Home Sales - Leading Edge Property Management on Thursday, Nov. 19. Mayor Jill Boudreau and Peter Donovan from the City of Mount Venon were on hand to congratulate Stacey Salyer, center, on opening her office, located at 823 N. 4th St., Mount Vernon.

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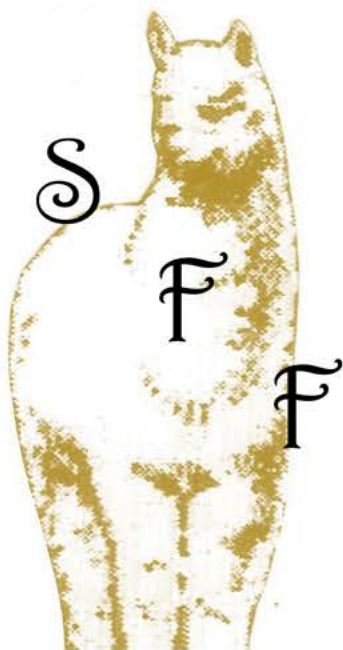
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