

# CHAMBER CHAT

JUNE 2021

## Post-Covid Fever

**By Andy Mayer**

Mark Twain expressed so well what I think most of us are feeling right now: “It's spring fever. That is what the name of it is. And when you've got it, you want – oh, you don't quite know what it is you do want, but it just fairly makes your heart ache, you want it so!”

Of course, he was talking about the excitement that comes with spring, not from the beginning of the end of a pandemic. And we do know what we want. We want to do everything that we haven't been able to do for more than a year, with whomever we want to be with, without any restrictions. But the feeling is the same: a palpable, bubbling up happy feeling that we are emerging from COVID and all its impacts.

We all know we aren't done with Covid. Cases continue across the U.S. – and far more are emerging around the world. We are also keenly aware that so many people have lost their lives or are living with the long-term effects of the disease. And many of you have experienced the economic impact, too. It is in this context that we are moving in fits and starts toward a post-Covid world.

As we do so, let's remember some of things we have learned because they give meaning to this collective experience that otherwise will only be a bad memory. We learned what was important – our health and our relationships with friends, family and people with whom we have had the pleasure of connecting. We learned that our sense of well-being comes from a number of things, many of which we took for granted. We learned that community is far more than a bunch of people in a geographic area. It is a commitment to others and what we can do for them, without regard to furthering our *continued on page 3...*



## LEGACY MEMBERS

### GOLD



### SILVER



Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce  
(360) 428-8547  
[mountvernonchamber.com](http://mountvernonchamber.com)

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **J.E.D.I. Speaker Series:**

### **The ABCs of LGBTQ+**

Tuesday, June 1

1-2 p.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Skagit President Linden G. Jordan is our speaker.

## **Motivation & Marketing Mastermind:**

### **Show & Tell**

Thursday, June 3

10-11 a.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

This month join the mastermind for "Show & Tell" time. Bring a project/campaign/event, etc., and share your successes, challenges and takeaways with the group.

## **Drive-in Movie Night: Jurassic Park**

Friday, June 4

9:35 p.m.

Skagit Valley College

[Tickets](#)

## **Knowledge NOW: Recruiting and Retaining Employees**

Presented by: Express Employment Professionals

Wednesday, June 9

12-1 p.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Join us for a informational meeting with Q&A on the current employment market, recruiting resources, and ways to retain your employees!

## **Latino Business Leaders:**

### **Financial Preparation for Businesses**

Thursday, June 17

6-7:30 p.m.

via Zoom

Presented in Spanish

[Register here](#)

Alan Macias of Wells Fargo, N.A. will share how to establish business credit, apply for business loans and the difference between SBA and conventional loans.

Sponsored by:



## **Chamber Membership Luncheon:**

### **The Changing Economic Landscape**

Wednesday, June 23

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

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

In economics most changes come in slow-moving iterations absent some type of disruptive event. COVID-19 has been a landslide in many respects that has grown many economic divides. Hart Hodges and James McCafferty of Western Washington University's Center for Economic and Business Research will explore what the data has told us about this divide and will employ their crystal ball to see where we might be headed.

Sponsored by:



## Summertime Shop Local promotion is back

The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to supporting local businesses. We are partnering with the Mount Vernon Downtown Association and are proud to announce the 2021 Summer Shop Local Campaign. The campaign will launch July 1 and continue through Aug. 31 with the grand prize drawing on Sept. 1.

We are looking for partners to promote shopping local. Involvement includes fantastic marketing opportunities for your business such as an ad in the Skagit Valley Herald, online and social media promotion, a consumer incentive punch card program and more. Return the flyer at the back of

*Shop local &*  
**WIN!**

this newsletter with your business information, \$25 and a raffle prize valued at \$25 or more to Jeremy Kindlund at the Chamber office by June 15.

## Lessons learned, ready for recovery

*continued from page 1*

personal interests. We learned that we can be content with simple things like gardening, building things and hanging out with pets. We learned that we can find happiness in what we do have rather than being unhappy about the things we do not.

So, let's remember the lessons of Covid as we move on from it. Yes, I would have preferred that we didn't have to learn any lessons, but that option wasn't given to us. And it's okay to feel good about our return to normal. I hope you will be happy in the coming weeks because your business is recovering, you feel a lifting of any fears or sense of dread, and we can gather the way we have enjoyed so much, for business and for genuine fun. I'll see you out there!

## SAVE the DATE



**Battle of the Bridge**  
**2021**  
**Friday, Aug. 6**

## Get to Know CBMM

When Eron Corro was a teenager growing up in Mexico, one of his teachers told him he should consider being an attorney, but Corro didn't want to sit in a courtroom for hours on end – in a suit and tie no less.

“I tried many jobs over the years, and finally found HVAC and knew what I wanted to do,” he says.

He got into the HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) trade about 16 years ago after moving to Washington from California, and he started CBMM, LLC, based in Marysville, two years ago.

Corro said it all clicked when he discovered the trade. He was fascinated learning about custom sheet metal, line sets, AC units and on-demand water heaters.

He and his team keep up with changes in the industry by attending continuing education courses regularly. He values these opportunities to learn more about the industry and to learn the business from his peers, getting ideas he can apply in his own business.

CBMM can install, service and repair HVAC systems, as well as do custom design and installation for duct work. CBMM is a Lennox authorized dealer. The company also installs and repairs water heaters. Their service area includes Skagit and Snohomish counties and the Seattle area.

Corro says his company has three goals: help people, bring options and solutions to each project, and do the job right.



“We like to give customers options and make them feel confident in the project,” Corro says.

He adds that they take pride in ownership of their work just as if they were doing the job for their own home. And extending that line of thinking, they want to treat customers like family.

Family is important to Corro, who brought his brothers on to be partners in the business.

“I like that I can help them, and we can grow together,” he says. “We love our jobs.”

Like contractors of all kinds, right now has been especially busy for CBMM. It is both exhausting and exhilarating for Corro, who is making the most of this busy season. And at the end of the day, he has no regrets.

“I go home happy and satisfied with the job I did.”

To learn more about CBMM's HVAC services, visit [www.cbmmhvac.com](http://www.cbmmhvac.com).

# Member reveals positive return on investment

Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce provides opportunities for many local businesses, by providing both resources and support. During this trying time, they have overcome the restrictions put in place and have developed new resources for businesses to help guide them through the new business landscape that has emerged. I have relied on the Chamber this year to help me find resources to assist our business in helping clients find new grant opportunities.

The Chamber provides many of us with the needed community engagement that has been missing this last year, by developing new and unique ways to engage members and the community. I am very impressed with the ability of the Chamber to adapt to all the changes that this pandemic has thrown our way.

The business community has always leaned on the Chamber to help us obtain economic stability, community unity and networking opportunities. It has been one of my best investments.

**Becki Cox, EA, CFE**  
**BC Accounting**



**Becki Cox**

## MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP

Supply your swag for our New Member Welcome Bags.  
It's great exposure for your business!

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## STAFF

**Andy Mayer** President/CEO

**Silvia Reed** Business Development and Foundation Director

**Jeremy Kindlund** Operations Director

**Hilary Parker** Marketing Specialist

**Marinus Rouw**

Visitor Information Services

## Member Announcements

### HKP Architects Selected to Design New Library Commons

HKP Architects has been chosen to design the Mount Vernon Library Commons, a new public library, community center and parking garage, which will serve as the gateway to the historic downtown commercial district.

“This is a historic day for our city, and for HKP Architects. Almost seventy years after our founder Henry Klein designed the original library, we will be reimagining these critical community facilities to serve for the next 70-100 years. Henry would be smiling,” said HKP Partner Julie Blazek, at the Mount Vernon City Council meeting when the contract was approved.

The project is to include 20,000 square feet of library space and 10,000 square feet of community center space, including a commercial kitchen. It will also provide for three floors of elevated parking to serve the building as well as support nearby mass-transit options.

Anticipated as one of the most sustainable projects in Skagit Valley, the carbon-reduction strategies will include efficient, all-electric fuel sources, Passive House design, low-embodied carbon material use, on-site power generation, and a minimum of 75 electric vehicle charging stations.

### Skagit Transit adds back all services on June 14

On Monday, June 14, Skagit Transit will add back all Fixed-Route bus service that was reduced in response to decreased ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic. Service will be restored to 100% of pre-Covid levels and includes both weekdays and weekends. One exception is Fixed-Route route 750, a pilot route that has been canceled.

Riders can get information about routes and find out when the next bus is coming, by:

- Real-time bus arrival times signs at Skagit Station in Mount Vernon and Chuckanut Park and Ride in Burlington
- Using the UMO app, a Skagit Transit agency app, to locate your bus, plan your trip or to pay your bus fare
- Using the Skagit Transit website info [www.strweb.skagittransit.org](http://www.strweb.skagittransit.org) for real-time bus details and to track your bus on the live map
- Calling Skagit Transit Customer Service at 360-757-4433 for assistance or visiting the Skagit Station Customer Service office.

# Thank You Renewing Members

## 30+ Years

hibu  
J.D.'s Laundry  
Kaptein's Ace Hardware

## 20+ Years

Human Resources of Mount  
Vernon, LLC  
Lincoln Theatre

## 15+ Years

KBRC 1430AM

## 10+ Years

Big Scoop Sundae Palace &  
Restaurant  
Country Meadow Village  
Days Inn  
Goodwinds Composites  
La Conner RV & Thousand  
Trails  
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Skagit Powder Coating  
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Tulip Valley Winery

## 5+ Years

All About Hearing  
Anderson Electric, Inc.  
BrandQuery LLC  
Chad Fisher Construction  
Farmstrong Brewing Company  
Fortune Mandarin Restaurant &  
Lounge  
John Piazza Jr. Construction &  
Remodeling  
Learned Commercial, Inc.  
Shakespeare Northwest  
Association  
Skagit Valley Neighbors In Need  
Food Bank  
Taste of India  
Trina D. Hoekstra, CPA, P.S.  
WAFD Insurance Group Inc.

## Less than 5 Years

Allstate - DeVries & Schlagel  
Insurance  
Aspire Wellness  
Camp Korey  
Eden Home Health  
Semanko Realty Group LLC  
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# Ambassadors

## Chair - Marla Chapa

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NextHome Preview Properties

## Ector DeLeon

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PUGET  
SOUND  
ENERGY

# The month in pictures



<< New Chamber Ambassador Juan Carlos Galban (L) of Skagit Autoworks visits with Armando Fuentes (R) from La Zeta 103.3 FM – Bustos Media.



The Chamber's own Silvia Reed celebrated her birthday on May 28 with cupcakes from Chamber member Indulge Bakery. >>

## Welcome, Gravity Coffee



Gravity Coffee held the grand opening and ribbon cutting for its first Skagit County location on May 28. The drive thru location is at 1701 Continental Place, just off College Way. Gravity Coffee has locations from Vancouver, Wash., north to south King County. New locations will also be opening soon in Oak Harbor and Cle Elum. Mayor Jill Boudreau and Peter Donovan from the City of Mount Vernon were in attendance along with Chamber staff.

## EWP career panel focuses on nursing, allied health and business

In May, the Experience Work Project (EWP) hosted another in a series of virtual career panels, this time hearing from professionals in nursing and business.

Helen Fisher, senior executive director at Ashley Gardens of Mount Vernon, came from the nursing profession, working in both hospital and clinical settings, then moved into management. She has extensive experience in the senior housing operations, marketing and the wellness aspects of the business.

Margarette Bou, community liaison at Eden Home Health, graduated four years ago with a marketing degree from Western Washington University. She has worn many different hats over the past four years – from being an intake coordinator to scheduler to overseeing a telehealth program, teaching her about the industry every step of the way. Her current job as community liaison allows her to use her marketing degree, which was her ultimate goal.

When Fisher came to Cascade Living Group (the parent company of Ashley Gardens) she soon moved from director of nursing to executive director. She appreciates that her supervisors saw her potential to move into management and has passed on that opportunity developing promising employees to move into new, more senior roles in the business.

“You can’t train for passion,” Fisher remarked.

This is similar to the path Bou took, although her starting point was different. She said getting her foot in the door in the industry allowed her to understand the operations and develop relationships that allowed her to grow within the company.

Individuals who attended the panel discussion were varied. While most were nursing or medical assistant students from Skagit Valley College,



**Helen Fisher**



**Margarete Bou**

others came from office business technology and even auto tech. The student from auto tech said she has attended several panels because she appreciates the general advice and resources offered by the employers.

The virtual panel allowed for participants to learn what potential employers are looking for in a job candidate and the opportunities available in today’s market. Panelists also shared how to gain additional experience and how to improve their soft skills when applying for those opportunities.

The Chamber Foundation’s workforce development and Career Connect programs are funded by the Opportunity Grant Program/ Northwest Workforce Council, Skagit Valley College, Shell Puget Sound Refinery and Puget Sound Energy. For more information and partnership opportunities, please contact Business Development and Foundation Director Silvia Reed (360) 395-2944 or [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com).

# Welcome New Members

## Hansen Agency, Colonial Life

Stephanie Hansen  
(360) 483-7441  
601 State Ave.  
Marysville  
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## Archer Halliday, PS

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1621 Cornwell Ave.  
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At Archer Halliday, we put the client first. We are at our best when working as a trusted advisor to our clients, assisting in analysis of the various decisions faced by business owners.

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## Partner Members

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# Upbeat Award Winner: Nichole Long

Nichole Long of Helping Hands Food Bank is the May Upbeat Award recipient, nominated by last month's recipient, Linda Tyler of the Port of Skagit. Nichole is the development and marketing director at Helping Hands Food Bank and is a powerhouse when it comes to her dedication and service to our community. Nichole is involved in several groups that support her professional development and her giving spirit, including Kiwanis, Toastmasters and the Sedro-Woolley Chamber Board of Directors. At home, she pours her heart and soul into her family, including her son's soccer and her daughter's love of dance. Nichole is outgoing, passionate about what she does and busy as heck, but she always has time to greet you with a smile. Nichole's tireless work



**L-R: Linda Tyler, Nichole Long and the Chamber's Andy Mayer.**

for those in need most certainly make Skagit County a better place. Congratulations Nichole on this well-deserved recognition.

## BRONZE LEGACY



### ORTHOPEDICS & SPORTS MEDICINE

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[skagitregionalhealth.org/orthopedics](http://skagitregionalhealth.org/orthopedics)



# MOVE WITHOUT HESITATION

A healthy body is a body in motion.





## Summer Shop Local Campaign

Dear Chamber member,

The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to supporting local businesses. We are partnering with the Mount Vernon Downtown Association and are proud to announce the 2021 Summer Shop Local Campaign. The campaign will launch **July 1 and continue through August 31 with the grand prize drawing on September 1.**

We are looking for partners to promote shopping local. Involvement includes fantastic marketing opportunities for your business such as an ad in the Skagit Valley Herald, online and social media promotion, a consumer incentive punch card program, and more. Please return this flyer with your business information, \$25 and a raffle prize valued at \$25 or more to Jeremy Kindlund at the address listed below.

Not a member of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce? You are still able to participate in this great program and promote your business.

**For more information please contact Jeremy Kindlund, Operations Director**

Via email – [Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com)

Phone: (360) 428-8547

PO Box 1007

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

### Participation requirements -

- \$25 payment
- Raffle Prize (Value of \$25 or more)

### Participation benefits -

- Consumer incentive punch card program: customers receive a punch for every \$5 spent at participating businesses. When the punch card is full (10 Punches at \$5 each, \$50) they can be used as an entry into weekly & grand prize drawings for fantastic raffle prizes. Each partnering business will be listed on back of the punch cards, poster and ads.
- Shop Local Poster
- PDF copy of flier with partnering businesses listed can be distributed to your customers via email or print off to put in bags, etc.

**Please provide the information below and two raffle prizes to Jeremy Kindlund at the Chamber office no later than June 15.**

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Raffle Prize: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Raffle Prize Value: \_\_\_\_\_