

# CHAMBER CHAT

AUGUST 2021

## Summertime and the living is easy!

**By Andy Mayer**

I am very happy that we can do some things in person this month. It has been far too long that we haven't been able to do so. I realize some of you won't be ready for some activities, and that's okay. The events I am highlighting here are all outdoors and celebrate summer in our fabulous community. I am excited that we can do them with and for you.

First of all, our Riverwalk Summer Concert Series is back! If you have attended any of the concerts in previous years, you know what fun they are. If you haven't, please join us. You are in for a treat! It's hard to beat great music in a beautiful setting by the river in downtown Mount Vernon at the Riverwalk Park, and free, by the way. The first one is Thursday, Aug. 5, from 6-8 p.m. featuring Pacific Twang. They will play some great country favorites along with swampy versions of fun classic rock tunes. Next up are Fantasy Band, Janie Cribbs & the T.Rust Band, with the big finish from Chris Eger Band & The Powerhouse Horns!

On Aug. 6 we will be having fun on the links at the Battle of the Bridge Golf Tournament. As you may remember, that's where we play against the Burlington Chamber for bragging rights. We won last year after tying in the inaugural event, so we need you to help claim the title again! The tournament is at Avalon and has a 1 p.m. shotgun start. Let us know right away if you're interested. We might be able to squeeze you in.

Finally, we are holding a Member Appreciation Luncheon on Aug. 25, 11:30 a.m., at Craft Stove. We will get together in the covered outdoor area for a picnic-type lunch, some games and door prizes. We hope to see you at any or all these events. They give us a great opportunity to see each other and, as I keep saying, have some fun!



## LEGACY MEMBERS

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*jpp*  
JULIA PHILLIP

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

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **J.E.D.I. Speaker Series: Leverage J.E.D.I. as your competitive advantage**

Tuesday, Aug. 3

1-2 p.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Kuma Roberts, Senior DEI Consultant for Arrowhead Consulting, will discuss strategies for success in leveraging J.E.D.I. principles as part of your business or organization's competitive advantage.

## **Riverwalk Summer Concert Series**

Thursdays in August

6-8 p.m.

Skagit Riverwalk Plaza

These free summer concerts are a family-friendly, toe-tapping good time!

Concert Lineup:

Aug. 5 – Pacific Twang

Aug. 12 – Fantasy Band

Aug. 19 – Janie Cribbs & The T.Rust Band

Aug. 26 – Chris Eger Band & The Powerhouse  
Horns

## **Battle of the Bridge Golf Tournament**

Friday, Aug. 6

1 p.m. shotgun start

Avalon Golf Links

There's still time to register for our annual tournament. Contact Jeremy Kindlund for details, (360) 428-8547.

## **Drive-in Movie Night: Coco**

Presented in Spanish

Friday, Aug. 6

9 p.m.

Skagit Valley College

[Reserve Tickets](#)

## **Knowledge NOW: Leadership – Are you practicing with Dynamic Behaviors?**

Presented by Bruce Cox, Edyoucorp

Wednesday, Aug. 11

12-1 p.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Do you know how leadership behaviors can impact the culture of an organization? Bruce Cox shares how to practice dynamic leadership behaviors to positively affect your team at this month's Knowledge NOW.

## **Multi-Chamber After Hours**

Thursday, Aug. 12

4:30-6 p.m.

Farmstrong Brewing

Join us as we gather with the other Skagit County chambers for an afternoon of networking. No registration required.

## **Latino Business Leaders Meet & Greet**

Tuesday, Aug. 17

6-7:30 p.m.

Tacos Techalitlan

Free/[Registration required](#)

We invite all Latino entrepreneurs with established businesses or who are planning to start a business to come network with other Latino entrepreneurs and learn about the new Latino Business Leaders training program.

## **Chamber Membership Luncheon:**

### **Member Appreciation**

Wednesday, Aug. 25

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

Craft Stove

We gather at Craft Stove for a social meet up.

We can't wait to see you in person.

Sponsored by:



## Business Sustainer Program comes to successful end

With many of our small businesses struggling to remain active within our economy during the pandemic, the Mount Vernon Chamber launched the Business Sustainer Program in late 2020. This pay-it-forward campaign allowed Chamber members to help fellow members by paying for their one-year membership.

Thanks to the generosity of members including Walmart, Draper Valley Farms, Marla & Company, Joyous Style, Cascade Facial, HKP Architects and Testing and Commissioning Services we were able to raise \$2,815, paying the renewing membership of 10 Chamber members at supporting level. Recipients were selected from some of the industries most affected due to the pandemic including health and wellness, entertainment, restaurants and dining, and the nonprofit sector.

The Business Sustainer Program has been another example of how our business community helps one another despite challenging times. With our businesses returning to normal capacity and operations, we are ending the Business Sustainer Program with a big thank you to all those who helped our small businesses. If your membership fees were waved in 2020 and business is starting to look better, please consider those businesses who provided additional support to our small business community. To all of you, thank you.



## Shop Local & Win

Congratulations Karen! She won a prize from Ristretto Coffee Lounge & Wine Bar by shopping locally. You can too! Check out the participating businesses on the Chamber website and make sure you ask for your punch card when checking out.

## Upcoming Ribbon Cuttings

### Total Employment & Management

1404 E. College Way, Ste. 100  
Friday, Aug. 13, 10 a.m.

### Whistle Stoppe Coffee Shoppe

105 E. Kincaid St.  
Thursday, Aug. 19 at 3 p.m.

### Perla's Insurance Services

2222 Riverside Dr., Ste. 405  
Thursday, Aug. 26 at 3 p.m.

### Sisters Espresso

9029 A Chuckanut Dr.  
Friday, Sept. 3 at 3 p.m.



KELLER WILLIAMS  
WESTERN REALTY

# Get to Know Healing Touch Massage Therapy

Kerri Jesse knew from the age of 4 that she wanted to be a massage therapist.

Her father had been in a serious accident years before and still suffered a great deal of pain from his injuries. It wasn't until a visit to a massage therapist that he began to find relief from his pain. Even as little girl, Jesse could see that the massage had worked like "magic" to make her daddy feel better, and she wanted to do that kind of magic.

"I've always loved making people smile," Jesse says.

Jesse studied at the Cortiva Institute in Seattle, completing an extended 1,000-hour course, and went on to work in an exclusive spa in Seattle that served celebrity clients.

Eventually, she tired of the city life and settled in Mount Vernon.

Today, Jesse is the owner of Balanced Touch Massage Therapy and works out of Spero Salon & Spa in Mount Vernon. She offers gentle-pressure massage, including pregnancy massage, as well as deep-tissue work using Ashiatsu, a technique that uses her feet to perform the massage.

While most people are initially taken aback by the concept, Ashiatsu has been used in other cultures for hundreds of years. The therapist uses bars mounted to the ceiling to steady herself as she works. Gravity, and the foot's shape, allow for a deep massage without the discomfort sometimes associated with deep tissue work. "You don't get the same soreness," she says.



**An up-close look at Ashiatsu massage from Kerri Jesse's point of view.**

Jesse began doing Ashiatsu after experiencing her own injury due to repetitive stress after working too many days without a break.

As she took many months off to heal, she started to worry that she wouldn't be able to go back to the work she so loves. But she couldn't quite get massage out of her system and attended a conference where she was introduced to Ashiatsu. It was the solution she needed to get back to massage, and she hasn't looked back.

For those who prefer a lighter touch, Jesse still offers traditional massage. She says that a lighter touch is often more therapeutic than greater pressure because it allows the body to stop guarding the area that hurts and allow for healing.

Along with providing massage to clients, Jesse also is helping to train new massage therapists at the Arlington School of Massage. She loves sharing her knowledge in the classroom as well as on the table as she works with her clients. To learn more, visit her website at [www.balancedtouchmt.com/](http://www.balancedtouchmt.com/)

# Member reveals positive return on investment

As a locally owned franchise, Express Employment Professionals belongs to many different chambers, but none of them compare to the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce! Andy, Jeremy, Silvia and team do an amazing job recruiting new members of the business and nonprofit community. The Chamber staff and volunteers in general are warm, friendly and willing to help and share resources with everyone. I was especially impressed with how the Chamber handled its membership connections during the pandemic. Virtual meetings were more important than ever – my calendar was full of networking, learning and tons of fun!

Being a member and an ambassador of the Mount Vernon Chamber has been and continues to be a rewarding experience. The business connections I acquire from networking with the Chamber members is immeasurable. I am thrilled to be involved with such a vibrant, connected and quality community organization.

I strongly recommend the Mount Vernon Chamber to anyone who owns a business or wants to grow their business relationships and get involved in the community.



**Katelyn Huffman,**  
**Express Employment**  
**Professionals**

## Partner Members

Barron Smith Daugert, PLLC, Best Western PLUS Skagit Valley Inn, Birch Equipment Co., Budget Towing & Repair, CBMM LLC, Coastal Farm & Ranch, Costco Wholesale, Crawford Garage Doors, D&P Electronic Home Monitoring, Foothills Toyota, Fortiphi, Haggen Food & Pharmacy, Hampton Inn & Suites, Herbal Legends Cannabis, Infinity Painting & Renovations, Kern Funeral Home, Landed Gentry Homes & Communities, Loving Farms, Max Dale's Steak and Chop House, Mount Vernon School District, North Coast Credit Union, Northwest Escrow, LLC, PogoZone, Port of Skagit, Puget Sound Energy, Skagit Public Utility District 1, Skagit Valley Casino Resort, Skagit Valley College, Skagit Regional Health, Tacos Tecalitlan, Testing and Commissioning Services, LLC, The Woods Coffee, Walmart, Williams & Nulle, PLLC, CPAs

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### Tammy Reim-Ledbetter

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### Dr. Amanda Rentschler

Roosevelt Dental Center

### Jon Ronngren

Mount Vernon School District

## 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 welcomes Rochelle Hill as a project manager

Rochelle Hill comes to HKP with over 35 years of design and drafting experience with extensive use CAD/CAM/BIM in design for manufacturing. Her design interest and specialties are off-site construction, modular, pre-fabricated panels, Passive House, and high-performance buildings. Prior to coming to HKP, she was part of the product development team at Kattera and worked as a component designer to help define their products. At HKP Architects, Rochelle is currently working on the new Mount Vernon Library Commons and the Whatcom County Courthouse Envelope Improvements.



### Pinecone, Inc., welcomes Viktoria Hollosi as Showroom Coordinator

Pinecone, Inc., a Mount Vernon-based kitchen and interior finishes firm, announces the arrival of Viktoria Hollosi as its showroom coordinator. Hollosi's primary responsibilities are to set and fulfill appointments, coordinate project schedule for both clients and subcontractors, build and sustain customer relationships, and greet all visitors to the Pinecone showroom. "We are so happy to have Viki on our team," said Rich Callison, co-founder and principal artisan of Pinecone, Inc. "She has already proven to be an incredible asset, elevating what we're able to offer our clients." Hollosi obtained her BSc in Commerce and Marketing from Szechenyi Istvan University in Győr, Hungary.



# Thank You Renewing Members

## 30+ Years

Fix Auto Mount Vernon  
Operated by Dally's Auto  
Body  
Mount Vernon Building  
Center

## 20+ Years

The Skagit Casino Resort

## 15+ Years

Hampton Inn & Suites by  
Hilton  
Sierra Pacific Industries  
Sundance Energy Services,  
Inc.  
The Dey Company

## 10+ Years

Allixo Technologies  
Heritage Financial Group, Inc.  
Shell Puget Sound Refinery  
Smiley Insurance  
United Way of Skagit County

## 5+ Years

Berg Vault Company of  
Washington, Inc.  
Christianson's Nursery  
Cory Kiehn, Realtor Windermere  
RE Skagit Valley  
Modern Cleaners

## Less than 5 Years

Balanced Touch Massage Therapy  
Storied Creative Services  
VibrantUSA

# Ambassadors

## Chair - Marla Chapa

Skagit Social

**Mitch Britt**

Bold Eye Media

**Susan Cooper**

NextHome Preview Properties

**Ector DeLeon**

Tulip Valley Winery

**Sarah Eckenrode**

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## Tune In

Chamber Chat

Wednesday Mornings



8:05 a.m.



8:20 a.m.

# The Chamber Hits the Road



Chamber staff and ambassadors gathered this month to give a big thanks to Jerry Shackette of Skagit Friendship House as he moves on to new adventures in Missouri. Jerry has served as a Chamber Ambassador since 2014, he is our 2015 Making a Difference Award Recipient and Upbeat Award Recipient in October 2017. In the past seven years he has welcomed several new members and continues to make a positive impact. Jerry will still be involved with Friendship House, so we hope to see him on an occasional Zoom meeting.

## Double the ribbon cuttings, double the fun!



The Chamber hosted two ribbon cuttings on Friday, July 23, starting with Primerica at its new Riverside Drive location in the morning and finishing out the day at Revival Lounge in Pine Square.



Thanks to Ector DeLeon at Tulip Valley Winery for hosting our first post-pandemic Multi-Chamber After Hours. August's After Hours will take place at Farmstrong.



Board Member and Ambassador Tammy Reim-Ledbetter (L) visited new member Julia Philip, the new owner of the Whistle Stop Coffee Shoppe at the Skagit Transit station.



# Welcome New Members

## Bauer Home Inspections

Darryl Bauer  
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Protecting your investment with detailed inspections and informative education. Home Inspections Services: Pre-Purchase Inspections, Pre-Listing Inspections.

## Tacos Tecalitlan

Martha DeLeon  
(360) 224-5849  
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Burlington  
[tacostecalitlan.com](http://tacostecalitlan.com)



We are a family-owned restaurant serving authentic Mexican food. Our food is prepared just the way our mother has always cooked it; we find pride in preparing our menu straight from our family recipes. Tacos, tortas, burritos, quesadillas, sopas, gorditas, tostadas are just some of the many delicious dishes you will find at Tacos Tecalitlan.

## Julia Phillip Realty

Julia Phillip  
(262) 960-1998  
2219 Rimland Dr., Ste. 301  
Bellingham  
[www.juliaphilliprealty.com](http://www.juliaphilliprealty.com)



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## PNW Energy Services LLC

Jeremy Smith  
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[PNWEnergyServices.net](http://PNWEnergyServices.net)

We are a weatherization contractor specializing in insulation and electrical, performing all varieties of insulation-related work from residential remodels to commercial new construction.

## Sisters Espresso

Julia Phillip  
(360) 757-0362  
9029 A Chuckanut Dr.  
Bow  
[www.facebook.com/SistersEspressoBow](http://www.facebook.com/SistersEspressoBow)

Woman-owned business helping other women achieve multiple skills to be able to be independent. We are your coffee stand dedicated to bringing you the coffee you've come to know and love.

## Skagit 911 Driving School

Jenny Sanders  
(360) 488-0403  
2025 Riverside Dr., Ste. B  
Mount Vernon  
[911drivingschool.com/washington/skagit-county-911-driving-school/](http://911drivingschool.com/washington/skagit-county-911-driving-school/)



At 911 Driving School, we are offering web-based, instructor-taught classroom sessions for teens who are learning to drive. 911 Driving School courses are taught exclusively by instructors who are police officers and first responders.

## Thryv

Ted Sindell  
(972) 453-7790  
Seattle  
[www.thryv.com](http://www.thryv.com)

Thryv is a full-service digital marketing company that helps small businesses with website creation, automated tools to run their day-to-day operations, and award-winning lead generation.

## Whistle Stoppe Coffee Shoppe

Julia Phillip  
(360) 395-0814  
105 E. Kincaid St.  
Mount Vernon  
[whistlestoppecoffeeshoppe.com](http://whistlestoppecoffeeshoppe.com)

Where wanderlust meets coffee. We have treats, lunch made for the traveller and coffee to keep you going. Enjoy one of our hand-crafted specialty drinks. Come watch the train roll through.

# A year's retrospective of workforce development efforts

Like most organizations during the 2020-2021 academic year, the Mount Vernon Chamber had to make some shifts. Internships and job shadows were transformed into virtual career panels, industry-focus events and similar learning opportunities. Experience Work Project (EWP) was able to continue serving Business Management, Nursing, Human Services, Early Childhood Development, Automotive, Environmental Conservation and other students from related programs from Skagit Valley College and Cascades Job Corps.

Several businesses stepped up and delivered engaging learning opportunities, industry insight, practical advice and plans of action for students preparing to join our workforce. Presentations were possible thanks to the participation and support of HomePlace Memory Care, The Bridge at Mount Vernon, Pioneer Human Services, CPI Plumbing & Heating, Alaska USA, Eden Home Health, Ashley Gardens of Mount Vernon, Puget Sound Energy and Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group.

It is also important to acknowledge the efforts of our EWP participating students who continue

working hard on their education, building a better future for their families and contributing to our local and regional economy. To make this and other workforce development efforts possible, the Mount Vernon Chamber Foundation was able to secure additional funding by community-minded organizations including Shell Puget Sound Refinery. Earlier this year, our Foundation became a Puget Sound Energy Powerful Partner and in March 2021 we received the Community Partner of the Quarter recognition by the National Job Corps Association. We sincerely appreciate the support of our business community that helps us make EWP possible and look forward to continue working with our partners and welcoming new ones.

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)



**Puget Sound Refinery**



# Upbeat Award Winner: Morgan Curry

Morgan Curry of Skagit Gleaners is the July Upbeat Award recipient, nominated by last month's recipient Cheryl Willis of Skagit Transit. Morgan is the Executive Director for Skagit Gleaners and is a community service champion.

Among her community involvement, she is on the Curriculum Development Committee for Leadership Skagit and is a Leadership Skagit graduate. Morgan is the president of the Skagit Women's Alliance and Network (SWAN); she is also on the boards of WE Ignite and United Way. She's involved with the Skagit County Supported Employment Business Committee and formerly ran programs at Washington Vocational Services for the special needs community.

Morgan is currently pursuing a dual Juris Doctor degree and Master's in Public Administration



**Skagit Transit's Cheryl Willis (L) with Upbeat honoree Morgan Curry, Morgan's daughter Nora and Chamber CEO Andy Mayer.**

from Seattle University. Morgan's loves include exploring outdoor activities and her beloved daughter.

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# MOVE WITHOUT HESITATION

A healthy body is a body in motion.



# LATINO BUSINESS MEET & GREET

ORGANIZED BY THE

MOUNT VERNON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



**TACOS TECALITLAN**  
**702 N. Burlington Blvd.**  
**Burlington**  
**Tuesday August 17**  
**6:00 - 7:30 PM**  
**Free Event**



For partnership opportunities contact:  
Silvia Reed (360) 395-2944  
[Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com)



# Partnership Opportunities

Latino Business Leaders (LBL) is a Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce Foundation program designed to facilitate the advancement and participation of Latino businesses through entrepreneurship programs, networking and marketing.

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## **LBL Presenting Partner (10 sessions and 2 events) \$2500.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in all LBL marketing
- ⇒ Company name in all radio announcements
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for participants at 10 sessions
- ⇒ Marketing table at 2 special events

## **LBL Partner (3 sessions) \$500.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in LBL marketing
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for participants at 3 sessions

## **LBL Entrepreneurship Bus Tour Supporter \$250.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in event marketing
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material (including SWAG) available for participants

## **LBL Special Event Supporter \$250.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in event marketing
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Marketing table at event

## **LBL Session Supporter (1 session) \$150.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in LBL marketing
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for session participants

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### **2021-2022 Schedule**

#### **LBL Special Events**

Summer Meet and Greet (August), Entrepreneur Holiday Celebration (December)

#### **LBL Entrepreneurship Bus Tour**

LBL participants ride a Skagit Transit bus and visit Skagit County areas of interest for the Latinx community

#### **Entrepreneurship Program**

10 Monthly sessions (September thru July) include business planning, execution, sales and marketing.

For information contact Silvia Reed | [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com) | (360) 395-2944



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