

CHAMBER CHAT

SEPTEMBER 2021

We plan, God laughs

By Andy Mayer

The expression comes from a Yiddish saying, “Man plans, God laughs.” I am using it with the understanding that I am not qualified to speak on anything Yiddish, how you should go about attaining the future you desire, and most definitely not on how or why the deity should react. But it seems appropriate for the situation we are in. We thought that we would soon be done with Covid. That clearly isn’t the case, for the time being, anyway.

We really enjoyed going back to some in-person Chamber events over the last couple of months. It was very nice to see some of you at After Hours, ribbon cuttings, concerts, the golf tournament, and recently at our member appreciation lunch! We were planning to continue in-person meetings and events, but it is not responsible or practical to do so for now. Coming to that decision is frustrating. The current situation feels like déjà vu with a vengeance, and nobody, at least around here, is laughing.

Whether it feels like it or not, we have made progress. We have learned what we each can do. Most of us have gotten vaccinated and most of us understand that wearing masks when conditions call for it protects each other and our businesses. Let’s continue to do those things and everything that we can so that we are done with Covid, once and for all. That’s a plan on which we can all agree.

Meanwhile, the Chamber will continue to offer a variety of meetings and events to inform you, connect you and maybe even inspire you – on Zoom, of course. We’ll see each other in-person again soon enough. How quickly that happens is up to us ... mostly.



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Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Marketing Mastermind: Video for your business

Thursday, Sept. 2
10 a.m.
via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Josh Burdick, founder and CEO of Veritas Media, discusses how video can help your business solve problems in marketing, recruiting, internal communication, training and more. He will also touch on video marketing strategy, virtual events and what he learned about audience viewership and behavior over the course of the pandemic.

Drive-in Movie Night: The Wizard of Oz

Friday, Sept. 3
8:10 p.m.
Skagit Valley College

[Reserve Tickets](#)

Multi-Chamber After Hours

Thursday, Sept. 9
4:30-6 p.m.
Abbott's Alley, Sedro-Woolley
Join us as we gather with the other Skagit County chambers for an afternoon of networking. No registration required.

Ismaflow Boutique Ribbon Cutting

Friday, Sept. 10
4 p.m.
2112 Riverside Dr., Mount Vernon

J.E.D.I. Speaker Series: Creating a Sense of Belonging through a Culture of Dignity

Tuesday, Sept. 14
1-2 p.m.
via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Presented by Dr. Ismael Vivanco, Ed.D.,
Superintendent for Mount Vernon Schools

Grocery Outlet Ribbon Cutting

Thursday, Sept. 16
10 a.m.
525 E. College Way, Ste. A1
Mount Vernon

Latino Business Leaders

Tuesday, Sept. 21
6-7:30 p.m.
via Zoom

[Register here](#)

Freddy Zavala of Birrieria Tijuana, one of the most popular restaurants in Northwest Washington and featured on KING 5 TV's Evening, will speak to the Latino Business Leaders on how to transform a dream into a successful reality. The interview will be presented in Spanish and broadcasted LIVE on the Latino Business Leaders Facebook page.

Chamber Membership Luncheon: Candidate Forum

Wednesday, Sept. 22
11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.
via Zoom

[Register here](#)

The Candidate Forum will feature the five contested seats for Mount Vernon City Council. Candidates will share their priorities and where they stand on issues important to the business community.

Sponsored by:



Sisters Espresso Ribbon Cutting

Friday, Sept. 24
10 a.m.
9029 A Chuckanut Dr.
Bow

Latino Business Leaders welcomes Birrieria Tijuana's Freddy Zavala

Birrieria Tijuana is considered one of the most popular restaurants in Northwest Washington and its owner, Freddy Zavala, will be sharing his success story with the Chamber's Latino Business Leaders (LBL) on Sept. 21.

Birrieria Tijuana is a dream come true for owner Freddy Zavala who started selling tacos on the streets of Kent. Zavala represents the story of hard work and determination and an inspiration for Latino and non-Latino entrepreneurs.

The Mount Vernon Chamber Foundation is excited to bring Zavala to the Latino Business Leader session on Sept. 21 at 6 p.m. Zavala's success story has been featured on KING 5 TV's Evening, and he will share his story with us on how he transformed a dream into one of the most popular restaurants with locations in Burien, Lakewood and Everett.

The event will be presented in Spanish via Zoom and broadcasted LIVE via the Latino Business Leaders Facebook page. Members and non-members from Skagit and neighboring areas are welcome to attend and are encouraged to actively engage in the interview and Q+A.



Freddy Zavala

We thank Score and La Zeta 103.3 FM for sponsoring this event.

[Facebook LIVE](#)

[Zoom event registration](#)



Hiring?

Post your job openings at
MountVernonChamber.com. This
service is FREE with your membership!
Contact Jeremy Kindlund, 360-428-
8547, for instructions.

Get to Know Absolute Plumbing

Absolute Plumbing began as a family business in 2007 and has grown in its 14 years from three employees to 27. All totaled, those employees have more than 160 years of plumbing experience, says owner Jeremy Oliver.

Absolute Plumbing covers Skagit, Whatcom and Island counties, and works with residential and commercial properties as well as new construction.

About 75% of their work is in residential plumbing, a need that was especially apparent in the last year and a half. While many families have worked and gone to school remotely, it's put more stress on the plumbing systems in homes. This means everything from broken garbage disposals to broken sewer lines.

Another trend Oliver says he's seen in the last year is the addition of a sewer inspection prior to the sale of a home. For \$375, Absolute Plumbing can run a camera into the sewer line between the home and the main line to see if there are any breaks or even potential failure, which could easily result in a \$20,000 repair bill. If Oliver's team catches trouble during the inspection, it can give home buyers leverage when negotiating with the sellers.

"We think it's a valuable add-on to a home inspection," he said.

And, if a sewer line or other underground pipe does need repair, there is new technology that allows for trenchless pipe repair and replacement, Oliver said. That means no digging up an entire parking lot or front yard to repair a break.



Trenchless repair is among the advancements in the trade that Oliver and his team take the time to learn so they can offer the best possible service and solutions.

Oliver said they also make sure to use only top-quality materials, "so we get a better-quality result."

If you have recently required the services of a plumber, you probably noticed a higher price tag for the job. Like many other industries, finding employees has been a challenge in the last several months.

"Tradespeople are in high demand, and it is hard for us to obtain good employees at this point," Oliver said.

You'll also find Absolute Plumbing out in the community, sponsoring kids' sports teams, a sprint car team, an adult softball team and decorating a Christmas tree for the hospital foundation's Festival of Trees

"We try to stay involved in the community and donate to local charities," Oliver said.

To learn more about Absolute Plumbing, visit their website at www.absoluteplumbingwa.com.

Member reveals positive return on investment

It's like a bank account.

Often when depositing time into something there is a goal in mind at the end. Whether it's getting fit, saving money, or acquiring additional skills and education. In essence it's like a bank account: the more you put in the more you get out, and we all love that. Being a member of the Mount Vernon Chamber is a great opportunity. Families and businesses need to know about our businesses, and networking is an important part of that. The Chamber affords us this opportunity by organizing events to meet new business owners and employees. First and foremost, we get to share with each other our businesses and what we do respectively – at the minimum. At the maximum there is an opportunity to generate income for each other. The Mount Vernon Chamber's commitment, not only to the community but equally to the support of member businesses, is a direct reflection of the leadership as well as their collaboration with fellow local chambers. It's a privilege to be part of the Chamber, as the result has far exceeded expectations.



Phil Thornley
Primerica

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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Member Announcements

Camp Korey Named an Official Charity Partner of the 2021 TCS New York City Marathon

Camp Korey was named an Official Charity Partner for the 2021 TCS New York City Marathon, taking place on Nov. 7. This year serves as the 50th celebratory running of the marathon. Camp Korey will be among the more than 400 official charity partners providing thousands of runners the opportunity to run in the world's most popular marathon.

Camp Korey's 22 "Team Korey" runners will travel from Washington state and across the U.S. to raise funds that support Camp Korey's year-round programs. These include two women from Skagit County: Katie Roden of Mount Vernon and Shayla Driskell of Sedro-Woolley.

SWAN Presents 2021 Women of the Year Banquet

Skagit Women's Alliance and Networking (SWAN) will present in person the 2021 Women of the Year Banquet, taking place at the Swinomish Casino & Lodge on Oct. 21. SWAN has been celebrating and honoring Skagit County women for the last 37 years for their successes and contributions to the community as business leaders, innovators and visionaries.

Sponsorship and volunteer opportunities are available. Please email swanskagit@gmail.com to inquire.

Port of Skagit and Ziplly™ Fiber Partner to Bring Fiber Optic Infrastructure to Eastern Skagit County

The Port of Skagit and Ziplly Fiber entered into an agreement last week to connect homes and businesses in eastern Skagit County to fiber optic infrastructure, putting the speed, capacity and reliability of Internet service for Skagit communities on par with larger cities around the country. This agreement will provide fiber-to-the-premise construction to more than 1,200 homes and businesses in Lyman, Hamilton, Concrete and Marblemount by the end of 2022.

For the Port, this agreement presents the opportunity to accelerate deployment of high-speed Internet in these communities at levels of affordability typically only seen in urban markets.

Thank You Renewing Members

30+ Years

Foothills Toyota
Mount Vernon Carpet One
Floor & Home
Port of Skagit
Riverside Health Club

25+ Years

Windermere Real Estate/
Skagit Valley

20+ Years

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Price
Skagit Wild Bird Supply
Tulip Town - Skagit Valley
Bulb Farm

15+ Years

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Williams & Nulle, PLLC, CPAs
Wycoff Insurance

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A-1 Mobile Lock & Key
Baker Septic Tank Pumping,
Inc.
Salem Village
Skagit Habitat for Humanity

5+ Years

Blue Lake Property
Management
Humane Society of Skagit
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Legg & Watne, CPAs
Loving Farms
Northwest Propane, LLC
Papa Willie's Catering
Stress Free Tax Season, LLC

Less than 5 Years

Allstate - DeVries & Schlagel
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Kelly Schols Inc.
PeaceHealth United General
Medical Center
Sound to Summit Physical
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NextHome Preview Properties

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Tulip Valley Winery

Sarah Eckenrode

CPI Plumbing & Heating

Leslie Exner

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Juan Carlos Galban

Skagit Autoworks

Carol Harris

PrimeLending

Katelyn Huffman

Express Employment

Professionals

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Joel Pasek

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The Chamber Hits the Road



August's Multi-Chamber After Hours took place at Farmstrong Brewing.



Whistle Stoppe Coffee Shoppe at the Skagit Station celebrated its grand re-opening with a ribbon cutting.



Latino Business Leaders Meet & Greet at Tacos Tecalitlan. We're excited to have Tacos Tecalitlan as a new member.



We stopped by Txley to present co-owners Nupur and Jay Chakravarty with a framed copy of their Get To Know feature.



Total Employment and Management celebrated its new location with a ribbon cutting. TEAM provides staffing for agriculture, manufacturing, offices and more.



Coherence Wellness Center in Mount Vernon celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting. The center offers accupuncture, health coaches, counseling and more.

Member Appreciation Lunch

Thank you to everyone who attended the member appreciation luncheon, and thank you to Craft Stove for playing host and providing the delicious grilled burgers!



Join us online for September's meeting when we host the candidate forum.

Welcome New Members

District Brewing

Mel Perez
(360) 873-6714
520 Main St.
Mount Vernon
districtbrewco.com

We commit to have the best selection of craft beers on tap in the area. Our signature pizza choices are named after movies to keep with the theme of our renovated historic building –The Lyric Theatre.

Creations by Carri

Carri Gollen
(360) 436-6199
109 S. 29th Place
Mount Vernon
www.creationsbycarri.com

Skagit County photographer specializing in portraits, headshots and boudoir photography.

Dapper Dogs & Aristocats

Sue Parker
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Northwest Natural Care

Mathew Friedlander
(253) 457-1700
16915 Highway 20, Unit C
Mount Vernon
www.NWNaturalCare.com

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Coherence Wellness Center

Elsa Del Toro
(360) 399-7467
1311 E. Division St.
Mount Vernon
www.coherencewellnesscenter.com

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Ismaflow Boutique LLC

Flor Villanueva
(360) 503-4837
2112 Riverside Dr.
Mount Vernon
ismaflowboutique.com

Our selection of women's clothing features business casual, fitness and outdoors, and evening attire, including special occasions like quinceañera and sweet 16. Se habla español.

Whidbey Tech Solutions

Joshua Blackmer
(360) 639-8715
840 SE 8th Ave., Ste. 201
Oak Harbor
www.whidbeytechsolutions.com

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Urban Hot Yoga LLC

Susan Rennert
(206) 718-1986
525 E College Way. Ste. F
Mount Vernon
urbanfitnesshotyoga.com

We are a hot yoga studio offering classes in a warm room available to the seasoned yogi and beginners.

Legacy membership worth its weight in gold, silver or bronze

We would like to extend our appreciation to those businesses that have increased their investment in their membership. Thanks to their support, the Mount Vernon Chamber is able to continue and expand its efforts for the betterment of our community.

- Sound Beverage Distributors, Inc.
- Northwest Natural Care
- Julia Phillip Realty

Additional benefits are delivered to those members who upgrade to Legacy level. For more information please contact Silvia Reed, Business Development and Foundation Director, (360) 395-2944, Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com.



JULIA PHILLIP

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