

CHAMBER CHAT

JUNE 2022

Last Chances

By Andy Mayer/President & CEO

I hope the headline got your attention. But here's the thing – last chances are rare. Oh, I know you're thinking about some things you missed out on over the years. Sure, I get it. I missed a few myself. Really, though, it's about decisions. We make the best choices with the information we have at the time. And if the information changes, we can reassess our decision. I guess that would be a second chance.

Following is an important opportunity for some of you. I'm referring to The Employee Retention Credit (ERC). It is a tax credit against an employer's share of certain payroll taxes. It was intended to help employers keep employees on the payroll during the pandemic. It can be a significant amount of money. Maybe you looked into it but weren't eligible. But here's the current information – the deadlines and the qualifications to receive an ERC have changed. You may be eligible even though you weren't previously.

One local CPA told me there are definitely a number of companies that have "left this on the table." He's had some larger clients push back that they weren't eligible only to discover that they, in fact, were. One of them received a particularly meaningful amount of money. I will tell you that the Chamber received an ERC. It, too, was meaningful and helped us through turbulent times. Talk to your accountant. It could be a second chance, or at least quite the opportunity.

Speaking of last chances, there is room for just a few more teams in the Battle of the Bridge golf tournament. See page 2 for the registration link, and see you on the links!



GOLD



SILVER



Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce
(360) 428-8547
mountvernonchamber.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Motivation & Marketing Mastermind: Graphic Design for Busy Marketers

Thursday, June 2

10 a.m.

via Zoom

[Register here](#)

It's easier than ever to create graphics and publications using online tools, and with just a few tips you can power up your designs to look more professional. Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce's Marketing Specialist Hilary Parker shares some easy rules to take your designs from meh to marvelous. Bring your own design projects to workshop with the group.

Knowledge NOW: Playing Nice Together – Your Computer and MS Office

Wednesday, June 8

Noon

Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce

\$10 members; \$15 non-members

[Register here](#)

Sure! Your computer is one of the most powerful tools known to man but getting the most out of your PC and the MS Office software installed on it can be a challenge. In this month's Knowledge NOW, Brian Williams from Let Us Show You Learning will discuss:

- Making sure your software is up to date
- Taking a look at what Office 365 is
- Sharing information between applications
- Importing information from the World Wide Web

Multi-Chamber After Hours

Thursday, June 9

4:30-6 p.m.

Skagit Valley Neighbors in Need Food Bank
Mount Vernon

Join all six of the Skagit County chambers of commerce for an in-person networking event at Skagit Valley Neighbors in Need Food Bank. Have fun and expand your network!

Battle of the Bridge Golf Tournament

Friday, June 10

1 p.m. shotgun start

Avalon Golf Links

\$600 team/\$150 individual

[Register here](#)

Help us bring the trophy back to Mount Vernon!



Mount Vernon Drive-In Movie Nights featuring Spider-Man: No Way Home

Friday, June 10

9:45 p.m.; parking opens at 8:15 p.m.

Skagit Valley College

[Reserve your spot starting June 3](#)

We've partnered with Mount Vernon Parks & Recreation again this year to bring FREE drive-in movies to the community. Upcoming movies include *Encanto*, presented in Spanish, on July 15 and *Back to the Future* on Aug. 5.

Don't forget the movie popcorn! Pre-order your concessions at www.lincolnthetre.org.



July 7 - Stacy Jones Band

July 14 - Hot Damn Scandal

July 21 - Chris Eger Band with Powerhouse Horns

July 28 - Mama Dirty Skirt

August 4 - The Naughty Blokes

August 11 - Cascadia Groove

August 18 - Janie Cribbs and the T Rust Band

August 25 - The Atlantics

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Latino Business Leaders: Como Alcanzar su mercado objetivo / Reaching your target market

Presentado en español

IN-PERSON Event: Martes 21 de Junio a las 6 p.m./Tuesday, June 21, 6 p.m.

Members/Miembros \$10.00

Non-Members/No-Socios: \$15.00

[Register here for June 21](#)

VIRTUAL Event: Miércoles 22 de Junio a las 6 p.m./Wednesday, June 22, 6 p.m.

Evento Gratuito/Free event

[Register here for June 22](#)

With more than two decades of experience in marketing, publicity and event management, Jose Armando Fuentes knows the importance of reaching your target market. During this session, Fuentes will share the different strategies and methods to place your product or service in your target market.

Sponsored by:



Chamber Membership Luncheon

Wednesday, June 22

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

Skagit Acres

\$23 with RSVP; \$25 day-of

[Register here](#)

We take the membership luncheon on the road to Skagit Acres this month, with lunch provided by Skagit Acres' sister business, Skagit Landing.

Sponsored by:



Ribbon Cutting at White Branches

Friday, June 24

Noon

100 E. Montgomery St., Suite 210

Grainery building

Mount Vernon

Join us as we help new Chamber member White Branches celebrate its grand opening.

Thank you, Drive-In sponsors



Opportunities to strengthen ties with Latino business community

Many employers are looking for bilingual staff. However, their recruitment efforts have been challenged by lack of participation or engagement from the Latino community. To assist in this challenge, the Mount Vernon Chamber Foundation and Community Action of Skagit County are combining efforts this July by co-hosting a cultural competency event to help employers in their equity-based recruitment and retention efforts. It will be held on Thursday, July 2, at noon. Those interested in joining the July presentation are also invited to attend the June 9 Community Action Latinx Advisory Committee listening session.

Additionally, the Chamber Foundation is getting the 2022-2023 Latino Business Leaders program ready with monthly business training on how to start and market your business. Individual consultations in partnership with SCORE will continue throughout the program.

New this year, Latino Business Leaders will also offer mentorship opportunities where experienced Latino business owners will offer guidance to startups within their industry sector. All presentations, consultation and mentorship will be held in Spanish. Sponsorship opportunities are listed on page 14. Contact Silvia Reed for details: silvia@mountvernonchamber.com.

EWP continues career panels

In May, the Experience Work Project (EWP) hosted another of its career panels for Skagit Valley College students to learn about job opportunities within their chosen fields.

Students from human services, allied health, nursing and medical assistants heard from Rosalee Ronquillo of Silverado Bellingham Memory Care, Julia Rowland of Skagit DVSAS and Kristie Minkoff of Where the Heart Is.

The professionals shared recommendations to enter the industry and offered tips for what students can do today to become a better candidate for the company, and students asked questions regarding typical employment opportunities within the organizations.

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.



Get to Know Woodcraft Wood Floors



Woodcraft Wood Floors, Inc. has been serving Skagit and the surrounding counties since the 1980s, but the business initially got its start in 1978 as Woodcraft Construction, says company founder John Freto.

He started the business as a design/build general contractor for new homes, but after a few years decided to specialize in wood floors, for which the company was already making a name for itself.

“We decided it was more profitable to focus on wood floors,” John says.

Woodcraft just celebrated its 32nd anniversary with the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce, having joined in May of 1990.

John says he sees chamber membership, as well as the company’s membership in the National Wood Flooring Association, as a sign to customers of Woodcraft’s level of professionalism.

Furthermore, chamber membership is way to stay connected. “I think being a member of the Chamber is a good way to stay tuned-in to the community,” he said.

Wood flooring takes a lot of skill and experience to do right, John says, which is why he is honored to have many top-notch, long-time employees who specialize in installation, sanding and finishing.

“We’re not just a company that supplies

prefinished floors and installs them,” he says. “We do everything from basic refinishing to amazingly intricate, fancy work.”

Woodcraft has worked on many of the large waterfront homes on Orcas and San Juan islands as the company has grown its reputation for quality work over the years.

Eight years ago, as John eyed stepping back from day-to-day operations in the business, he decided to bring on some of his long-term employees to become part owners in the business. Angelo Kelsoe, Joe Starkovich, Rod Berg and Jennifer Hodgins all came on as partners. Sadly, they lost Jennifer to cancer just a few months ago.

John says he couldn’t be more pleased with how the partnership has worked out. “It’s almost become an employee-run business,” he says with pride.

Come visit Woodcraft Wood Floors’ showroom at 1515-D Freeway Drive in Mount Vernon or visit online at www.woodcraftwoodfloors.com.



Member reveals return on investment



Flor Villanueva, Ismaflow Boutique

“Being part of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce has been truly beneficial for me and for my business, Ismaflow Boutique. The Chamber support and participation at my ribbon cutting event meant a lot; having chamber members present in a moment when my business reached a milestone was very important for me. The Mount Vernon Chamber has provided guidance for my business, thanks to the orientations and individual consultations with businesses that I highly appreciate.

“I have had the opportunity to connect with Latino businesses, learn their stories and learn from them. With Latino Business Leaders I have had the opportunity to support Latino entrepreneurs and it has been an honor to help when I could.

"Se Habla Español."

“Ser parte de la Cámara de Comercio me ha traído muchos beneficios para mi y para mi negocio Ismaflow Boutique. Desde el apoyo y compañía durante la inauguración de mi nuevo local, para mi significa mucho contar con la presencia de los miembros que asistieron en uno de los momentos mas importantes de mi vida. La Cámara de Comercio también me ha guiado en varios momentos cruciales para mi negocio con orientaciones y sesiones privadas con empresarios a los cuales admiro mucho.

“He tenido la oportunidad de conectarme con mas empresarios Latinos, de conocer sus historias y de aprender mucho de ellos. A través de Latino Business Leaders también he tenido la oportunidad de apoyar a empresarios Latinos y ha sido un honor y orgullo poder ayudar cuando he podido.

"Se Habla Español."

Partner Members

Allstate - Mayra Nava Agency, Barron Smith Daugert, PLLC, Best Western PLUS, Skagit Valley Inn, Birch Equipment Co., Budget Towing & Repair, Coastal Farm & Ranch, Costco Wholesale, D&P Electronic Home Monitoring, Foothills Toyota, Fortiphi, Haggen Food & Pharmacy, Hampton Inn & Suites, 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, Pacific Premier Bank, PogoZone, Port of Skagit, Puget Sound Energy, SERVPRO, Skagit Public Utility District 1, Skagit Valley Casino Resort, Skagit Valley College, Skagit Regional Health, Tacos Tecalitlan, Testing and Commissioning Services, LLC, Walmart, Williams & Nulle, PLLC, CPAs

Welcome New Members

Adobe

Alexandria Haslam
(502) 530-0418
San Jose, CA
www.adobe.com/acrobat/online/pdf-to-word
Creativity is in our DNA. Our game-changing innovations are redefining the possibilities of digital experiences. We connect content and data and introduce new technologies that democratize creativity.

Gonzalez Gigi's Lawncare

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NFTs Live LLC

Brecky Bihary
217 S. 1st St.
Mount Vernon
www.nftslive.io
NFTS Live LLC has screens for viewing NFTs, one VR station, and offers online NFT launches and meetups.

Vets Junk Removal LLC

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Arlington
vets-junkremoval.com
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White Branches

Matthew White
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Mount Vernon
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Help welcome new members

Be one of the first to introduce your business to new chamber members by providing your company swag or special offer, to be included in every welcome basket.



Board of Directors

Chair - Bill Henkel

Community Action of Skagit County

Vice Chair - Brian Ivie

Skagit Regional Health

Past Chair - David Lukov

Kern Funeral Home

Treasurer - Rhonda Tingley

SaviBank

Member at Large - DUBY PETIT

Skagit Publishing

VIRY DELGADO

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City of Mount Vernon

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All About Hearing

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Infinity Painting & Renovations

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Children of the Valley

Andrew Miller

Tulip Town

Todd Owsley

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Tammy Reim-Ledbetter

Alaska USA

Dr. Amanda Rentschler

Roosevelt Dental Center

Jon Ronngren

Mount Vernon School District

Tony White

Skagit Valley Food Co-op

STAFF

Andy Mayer President/CEO

Silvia Reed Business Development and
Foundation Director

Jeremy Kindlund Operations Director

Hilary Parker Marketing Specialist

Marinus Rouw & Emeleah Magaña

Visitor Information Services

Member Announcements

Leadership Whidbey hires Mary Anderson as new program manager

Leadership Whidbey recently hired Mary Anderson as its new program manager. Leadership Whidbey provides accessible, high quality development opportunities to connect, inspire and advance transformational leadership across Whidbey Island.

Anderson brings more than 15 years of experience in program and project management to her new position. During her career, she's worked as a strategist, senior services administrator for the City of Oak Harbor, local business owner, and employee of Island County Public Health. She holds a bachelor of science degree in organizational behavior and a master's degree in public health – health services.

Applications for Leadership Whidbey will be accepted beginning in July with an application deadline of Aug. 31.

Mountain Film Festival in Concrete

The Concrete Chamber hosts the first Mountain Film Festival in Concrete after two years of cancellations due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The event is June 2-5, at the Concrete Theatre. It's a celebration of mountains – near and far – through movies, multimedia presentations, photography, guest speakers and live music.

Feature-length documentaries include This Mountain Life; The Alpinist; Dirtbag: The Legend of Fred Beckey; and The Mountain Runners. Shorter films will highlight local mountain-biking and hiking trails, mountain safety, and the area's history.

The complete schedule of films and presentations can be found at www.mountainsonfilm.com. Tickets will be available for purchase online.

Free Shred Event Hosted by Mountain Pacific Bank

Bring up to 50 pounds of documents to shred securely by Shred-it. The event takes place June 25, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., at the Burlington branch of Mountain Pacific Bank, 110 Cascade Mall Drive.

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Skagit Valley Neighbors In Need
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empowering the community

The month in pictures



The Multi-Chamber After Hours in May was hosted by the Lincoln Theatre.



The Chamber Connections noon referral group ate lunch at Il Granaio and then toured White Branches, located upstairs from Il Granaio.



Chamber Ambassadors got festive at their May 5 meeting at La Catrina.



Chamber members Kristie Minkoff and Kimberly Schlimmer reconnect at the May Membership Luncheon.



Chamber Ambassador Tammy Reim-Ledbetter with new Chamber member Tina Mitchel of DSHS - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



Latino Business Leaders talked marketing last month with Chamber member Glenda Herrera of Custom Cleaning and Double R Photos.

NFTs Live celebrates ribbon cutting

We had a great turnout for the ribbon cutting at NFTs Live. Curious to learn more about NFTs? Stop by the studio in downtown Mount Vernon across the street from the Co-op.



BRONZE LEGACY



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skagitregionalhealth.org/orthopedics



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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, marketing and mentorship.

LBL Presenting Partner (09 sessions and 3 socials) \$2500.00

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in all LBL marketing including website, social media and newsletter
- ⇒ Company name in all radio announcements
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for participants at all sessions
- ⇒ Marketing table (or similar depending on space) at 3 socials

LBL Partner (3 sessions) \$500.00

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

Latino Initiative Supporter \$250.00

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

LBL Social Supporter \$250.00

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in event marketing including website, social media and newsletter
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Marketing table at event (or similar depending on space)

LBL Session Supporter (1 session) \$150.00

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in LBL marketing
- ⇒ Company logo on the event page and displayed during the sponsored session
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for session participants

2022-2023 Schedule

LBL Social Events

Held in August, December and April

Latino Initiatives

Special sessions designed to support the Latino community and based on specific community needs.

Entrepreneurship Program

09 business training sessions held in Spanish. designed for start ups and established Latino businesses.

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



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