

CHAMBER CHAT

JULY 2022

Rockin' and rollin' on the river

By Andy Mayer/President & CEO

Are you ready to for a wonderful time at our Riverwalk Summer Concert Series? The concerts are back, every Thursday in July and August from 6-8 p.m. The concerts have great music in a beautiful setting. Dancing is optional, but many people join in as the evening progresses. And thanks to our sponsors, including our presenter Dwayne Lane's Skagit Subaru, concerts are free to the public! Please see page 3 for the full list of sponsors and groups performing. The Stacy Jones Band kicks off the series on July 7. Stacy has been nominated, multiple times, for "Best of the Blues" awards in songwriting, performance, harmonica and guitar. She and the band will really get the series started right!

I do suspect you could use the relaxation. We all had various ideas of what life and business were going to be like coming out of the pandemic. But few of us guessed we would have the current mix of inflation, ongoing supply chain disruption, and very tight labor market. It has made for a challenging business environment. I would like to know how your business is doing, including challenges and opportunities. I am particularly interested in fundamental changes you are seeing post (mostly) Covid. Please take a minute to email me your thoughts: andy@mountvernonchamber.com. They will be helpful to me and the Chamber Board of Directors. I'll also share them with you in a future newsletter.

I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at a Chamber program or event soon. And I'll expect you at the concerts for summertime fun!



LEGACY MEMBERS

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Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce

(360) 428-8547

mountvernonchamber.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Ribbon Cutting at Law Office of Hector Leal

Friday, July 8

3 p.m.

415 Pine St.

Mount Vernon

Join us as we welcome the Law Office of Hector Leal.

Multi-Chamber After Hours

Thursday, June 14

4:30-6 p.m.

Peoples Bank

Burlington

Join all six of the Skagit County chambers of commerce for an in-person networking event at the Peoples Bank Burlington branch. Have fun and expand your network!

Mount Vernon Drive-in Movie Nights featuring Encanto

Presented in Spanish

Friday, July 15

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

Skagit Valley College

[Reserve your spot starting July 8](#)

We've partnered with Mount Vernon Parks & Recreation again this year to bring FREE drive-in movies to the community. This month, come see the enchanting family musical Encanto, followed by Back to the Future on Aug. 5.

Don't forget the movie popcorn! Lincoln Theatre will be there selling concessions.

Bilingual Staff: How to recruit and retain them

Thursday, July 21

12-1 p.m.

via Zoom, [Register here](#)

Presented in English/Spanish

The Community Action Latinx Advisory Committee and the Mount Vernon Chamber Latino Business Leaders are hosting a cultural



Law Office of Hector Leal

competency event building the bridge between the employer seeking bilingual employees and the Latino community. The event will allow employers to better connect with the Latino population, identify the right communication channels and create/improve a company culture that welcomes a diverse team and embraces collaboration. Recruitment starts with retention. Sponsored by the Law Office of Hector Leal

Membership Orientation

Tuesday, July 26

10 a.m.

Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce

[Register here](#)

Come learn about how your Chamber membership benefits your business. Our membership orientations are not limited to new members, any active member can attend as well as those businesses that may want to know more about the Mount Vernon Chamber and how we can support their business.

Chamber Membership Luncheon: Biz Buzz

Wednesday, July 27

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

Hillcrest Park

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

[Register here](#)

Join us for our summer Biz Buzz. It's like speed dating for business! Il Granaio provides lunch. Sponsored by SWAN



Ribbon Cutting at Anderson Podiatry

Friday, July 29

3 p.m.

1311 E. Division St.

Mount Vernon

Join us as we help Anderson Podiatry celebrate its new location with a ribbon cutting.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Riverwalk Summer Concert Series

Join us at 6 p.m. each Thursday in July and August at Riverwalk Park for our summer concert series. These free concerts are great for the whole family.

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

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Workforce development efforts: A year in review

Thanks to the financial support of the Northwest Workforce Council, Skagit Valley College, HF Sinclair Corporation and Puget Sound Refinery, the Mount Vernon Chamber Foundation's Experience Work Project (EWP) has provided robust learning opportunities to qualifying Skagit Valley College students.

The focus of the 2021-2022 academic year was human services, business management and nursing students, who were able to participate in diverse learning opportunities hosted by Sherwood Community Services, Friendship House, Pioneer Human Services, Silverado Bellingham Memory Care, Skagit DVSAS, Where the Heart Is and Perla's Insurance.

The participation of our business community

is instrumental in hosting career panels, job shadows and internship opportunities. The program helps students prepare for the changing demands of a global and technology-driven economy while delivering highly skilled students to local companies. Employers are able to evaluate the students' skills and the potential to hire them before or after completing their college education.

If you would like to learn more about the Mount Vernon Chamber Foundation/EWP and how you can host a learning opportunity for students, please contact Business Development and Foundation Director Silvia Reed. Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com, 360-395-2944

Member reveals return on investment



"The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce is a great resource for businesses and area visitors. It provides excellent educational opportunities that serve businesses and nonprofits. They offer a climate that develops strong community and elected official relationships, and exposure to services, businesses and fresh ideas."

Cheryl Willis, Skagit Transit

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

Get to Know Total Employment and Management

Total Employment and Management (TEAM) is a staffing agency in Mount Vernon that serves Skagit and the surrounding counties.

TEAM serves the agriculture industry in Skagit, Island, Whatcom and Snohomish counties, and serves the construction, industrial and hospitality industries in Skagit, Island and Snohomish.

TEAM is based in Moses Lake and has been working with farmers in the Skagit Valley for seven years but opened its first office here three years ago.

“When we got more and more growers here working with us, we decided to open an office here,” said TEAM’s Zayleen Kunkel.

The friendly office staff is always ready to answer questions from staffing clients or workers looking for employment. TEAM even has an after-hour phone line (and they do answer it) for questions that come in outside of regular working hours.

One special niche TEAM fills for agricultural workers is extending their working season. For instance, many workers have contracts with Sakuma Brothers Farms during berry season but won’t have work in the shoulder seasons. TEAM can place many of these employees from March through November with agriculture jobs. Zayleen says TEAM also recognizes that these workers may want to broaden their experience and can place them in the off season in jobs such as seafood processing, housekeeping and more.

The caring and helpful staff at TEAM have developed a rapport with the workers they place, which leads to longevity.

“More than 80% are repeat employees that have worked with us for years now,” Zayleen



said. “We have developed a relationship with them, and they keep coming back.”

For businesses interested in using TEAM’s services to hire workers, Zayleen encourages them to give her a call or even drop by the office at 1401 E. College Way in Mount Vernon. She can provide an estimate for their services or simply get started matching your business with qualified employees. In some cases, TEAM can even provide their clients with transportation to get employees to the job site.

Since many of the agricultural workers speak Spanish, Zayleen and her co-worker in the office are bilingual. They are looking for one more employee to join the office, and while being bilingual is a plus, it’s not a requirement, she said.

TEAM has six offices in Washington and one in Astoria, Ore. Check them out online at www.teamshome.com or call 360-404-5530.

Board of Directors

Chair - Bill Henkel

Community Action of Skagit County

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STAFF

Andy Mayer President/CEO

Silvia Reed Business Development and Foundation Director

Jeremy Kindlund Operations Director

Marinus Rouw & Emeleah Magaña

Visitor Information Services

Member Announcements

20th Annual Scholarship – Three Winners for Cascadia Eye

Cascadia Eye is pleased to announce the winners of our 20th annual \$1,000 “Excellence in Education” scholarships, which are awarded to high school senior students in 1) Skagit/North Snohomish County, 2) Whatcom County, and 3) Coupeville/Oak Harbor/Island County. Over 60 students applied. Winners are: Nicole Hulst, Sedro-Woolley High School; Thomas Buy, Home Connection; and Hilary Greenwood, Bellingham High School.

Community supports student-athletes at SVC Athletic Auction

Skagit Valley College (SVC) hosted its 19th annual Athletic Auction on May 14 and raised more than \$104,000 in support of student-athletes and the athletics program at SVC.

More than 150 people attended the auction which was held in the Dave Duvall Pavilion. The SVC Culinary program created the menu, which was prepared by students. Students and instructors from the SVC Cardinal Craft Brew Academy served craft brew made by students.

Many local businesses supported the auction including the Event Underwriter: Baird Private Wealth Management. Gold sponsors included: SaviBank and Dimensional Communications, Inc. Silver sponsors included: Banner Bank, Dwayne Lane’s Auto Family, Halgren Orthodontics, Northwest Physical Therapy, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, Tepic Mexican Restaurant, TRICO, WaFd Insurance Group, and the 1991 SVC Men’s Soccer Team. Bronze sponsors included: Piazza, Andrew and Michele Fitzgerald, Bob’s Burgers and Brew, Burgermaster, Coconut Kenny’s, Hampton Inn and Suites, Hawthorne Funeral Home and Memorial Park, Baird and Russell Team of John L. Scott, Nelson Automotive Group, and Spane Buildings.



Tune In
Chamber Chat
Wednesday Mornings

102.1 KAPS Country
8:05 a.m.

KBRC CLASSIC ROCK
8:20 a.m.

For more member announcements, visit
mountvernonchamber.com/member-announcements

Send your announcements to
Jeremy@mountvernonchamber.com

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Josh Mayer

(425) 357-1790

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alphahomehealthhospice.com

Alpha Home Health is the only 5-star rated agency in Skagit County. We offer RN, PT, OT, SLP, MSW and Bath Aid services which are covered by Medicare at 100% with a referral from a doctor.

Consejo Counseling and Referral Service

Mario Paredes

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consejocounseling.org

Consejo is an outpatient behavioral health bilingual organization founded in 1978. We provide mental health, substance use disorder, domestic violence and sexual assault services to individuals, families and communities in Western Washington utilizing an interdependent treatment model that enables clients to learn new skills to better their lives at their highest level of functioning.



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(425) 449-2405

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Law Office of Hector Leal provides legal services to the public with emphasis on criminal trial work. I am fully bilingual in the Spanish language and will be a legal resource for our Latino community.



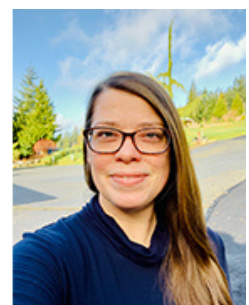
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May Upbeat Award Winner is Liz Theaker

Liz Theaker, director of development for Camp Korey, was named May's Upbeat Award winner. She was nominated by April's Upbeat Award winner, David Lukov of Kern Funeral Home. Here is what he had to say about Liz:

"When we think of an Upbeat Award winner, we usually think of someone who is outgoing and boisterous. But this month's award winner is someone happy to work and live behind the scenes. Liz has a knack of providing a nurturing spirit to so many people within our community.

"Liz has a military background, having retired from the U.S. Navy nearly 20 years ago. Since an honorable discharge, she has focused her work in the non-profit world, most recently devoting her time to Camp Korey. Liz also currently serves as the chairperson for the Chamber's Ambassador program."



The month in pictures

Mount Vernon brings home the trophy!



Mount Vernon brought home the trophy at the fourth annual Battle of the Bridge golf tournament.



The Noon Connections group toured member business Clutter Cops.



The Morning Connections group's first in-person meeting took place at member business Tucker Realty - ERA Powered.



June's Membership Luncheon took place at Skagit Gardens, with lunch catered by Skagit Landing.



LBL wraps up the 2021-2022 season.

White Branches celebrates ribbon cutting

White Branches, a unique tearoom, retail shop and cabaret, celebrated its opening with a ribbon cutting last month. You can find White Branches upstairs from Il Ganaio in the Grainery building.



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