

CHAMBER CHAT

March 2024

What I'm Thinking About

By Andy Mayer President/CEO

1. The flowers are coming! But we don't know when. Sun, snow, hot, cold, all factor in the schedule that only Mother Nature controls. We do know that to celebrate the season, the Skagit Chili & Chowder Cook-Off will be on Saturday, April 6, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., at Farmstrong Brewing. There will be a tremendous variety of chili and chowder from amateurs and professionals for you to taste. That makes for a fun event by itself, but the vibe will really be enhanced by the return of Savanna Woods on the stage! Tickets are [available here](#), and at the door. By the way, it's not too late to enter as a contestant with your chili, chowder, or both.

2. The 2024 Legislative Session ends on March 7. As expected, it was whirlwind of activity. Thousands of bills were introduced, with some generating a lot of attention, but eventually falling by the wayside. To hear a full report, you are invited to AWB's Legislative Session Review webinar. [Click here](#) to register. The Skagit Chamber Alliance will also host our 10th, 39th, and 40th District legislators in April, for a session wrap-up.

3. I'm going to Denver soon to help a friend celebrate his company being in business for 40 years. He and his co-founder are throwing a big party for all the people that were part of the journey through the years. It's a fun idea and I'm looking forward to it! It got me wondering how many businesses in Mount Vernon have been around 40 years or longer. Our database says that we have only one member that joined before 1984, the Skagit Public Utility District, in November of 1969. Are they the member that's been with us the longest? Let us know if you have any information to the contrary. Either way, we appreciate them and you!

4. Speaking of appreciating you, instead of a Luncheon in March, we are holding a Member Appreciation event, on the 27th, at 11:30 a.m. at Craft Stove. Join us for hamburgers, fun, and door prizes. There is no charge to attend. After all, you've been with us for up to 55 years...or more! [RSVP here](#)



GOLD



SILVER



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

MEMBERSHIP TESTIMONIAL

Tina L. Kies, Owner & CEO Chikara PR, LLC

I have been a member of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce for just over a year and the benefits of this membership have far surpassed my expectations. As a marketing and public relations professional, I have been most grateful for the incredible networking opportunities with fellow business leaders and champions of our great community. The “Speaking of Women” events have been the highlight of my membership involvement. These events are more than just a “think tank,” they are platforms for professional inspiration and personal motivation.

The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce has provided me with so much more than professional resources and knowledge, networking opportunities, and higher-level Statewide and governmental insights – it has also provided meaningful friendships and genuine support from a dedicated group of individuals that truly want to see me succeed. This support and sounding board with trusted peers and brilliant business minds have been invaluable and my most treasured benefit of membership.



Tina Kies
Chikara PR, LLC
(360) 630-9300
www.chikarapr.com

Thank You Renewing Members

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Baird Private Wealth Management
Community Action of Skagit County

25+ Years

Haggen Food & Pharmacy
Mount Vernon Christian School
Association
Swinomish Casino & Lodge
The Bridge at Mount Vernon

20+ Years

Cascade Facial Surgery and
Aesthetics

15+ Years

Mount Vernon Senior &
Community Center
Skagit Transit

10+ Years

Grandy Creek KOA
McDonald's- College Way
Puget Sound Veterinary Group PC
Skagit Symphony
State Farm Insurance - Brad Methner
Waste Management

5+ Years

Bargains Galore Thrift Store
Cascade Prosthetics & Orthotics
Frontline Cleaning Services & Supplies
La Conner Seafood & Prime Rib House

Less than 5 Years

Avenue Catering Enterprises
Chikara PR, LLC
Consejo Counseling and Referral
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Cook CPAs and Consultants, PLLC
DSHS- Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation
Ecological Land Services, Inc.
Mount Vernon Neighbors/Skagit
Valley Living
Skagit Thermography
Tulip Valley Farms
Vets Junk Removal LLC
WECU

Breaking the Glass Ceiling, a Speaking of Women event

After two very well-attended coffee chats earlier this year and a successful first year, Speaking of Women is ready to present its first 2024 series panel, "Breaking the Glass Ceiling" featuring Julie Blazek of HKP Architects and Leslie Smith of EDCO Inc. They will speak about the invisible barriers that prevent women from rising to leadership positions.

The 2024 Speaking of Women Program includes quarterly presentations and monthly coffee chats at various locations in Skagit County.

March 13 at 4:30 PM Breaking the Glass Ceiling
June 12 at 4:30 PM The "Why" Behind the "What"
Sept. 11 at 4:30 PM Climbing the Success Ladder

Program Fee \$180.00

The topics have been selected to address the needs of women and deepen those relationships that sometimes start with a card exchange at a business event and are ready to evolve into a business partnership, mentorship, or friendship.

Those interested in participating or supporting Speaking of Women can contact Business Development and Foundation Director, Silvia Reed – (360) 395-2944 – Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com.

Welcome New Member

Master Warehouse LLC

Junior Galeas
(360) 224-7543

www.masterwarehousellc.com

1385 Admiral Pl
Ferndale

We sell floors, cabinets, countertops, supplies, etc.

We work with sub-contractors, property management companies and residential customers.



Partner Members

Anderson Podiatry, Bank of the Pacific, Best Western PLUS, Skagit Valley Inn, Birch Equipment Co., Budget Towing & Repair, Coastal Farm & Ranch, Chikara PR, LLC, Farmers Insurance Tory Charette Agency, Foothills Toyota, 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, PogoZone, Port of Skagit, Puget Sound Energy, SERVPRO, Skagit Public Utility District 1, Skagit Valley Casino Resort, Skagit Valley College, Skagit Regional Health, Skagit Valley Food Co-op, Testing and Commissioning Services, LLC, Walmart, WECU, White Branches, Williams & Nulle, PLLC, CPAs

Calendar of Events

Breaking the Glass Ceiling – A “Speaking of Women” event Part 1/3

Wednesday March 13

4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Grand Willow Inn Event Venue and B & B

17926 Dunbar Rd

Mount Vernon

[Register here](#)



Multi-Chamber After Hours at Panera Bread

Thursday, March 14

4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Panera Bread

1749 S Burlington Blvd

Burlington

LBL: Recursos para Negocios de Comida y Empresas Contratistas / Resources for Food Businesses and Contractors

Presented in Spanish

Wednesday March 20

6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Skagit Valley College

Multi-purpose room

[Register Here](#)

thrivent

Shawn Steffens, ChFC, RICP
(360) 707-7677



Member Appreciation Event

Wednesday, March 27

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

Craft Stove

900 West Division

Mount Vernon

Free - lunch provided

[Register here](#)



Skagit Chili & Chowder Cook-Off



Amateurs and professionals will gather on Saturday, April 6, at Farmstrong Brewing Company for the title of Skagit’s favorite chili and chowder. Cook-off attendees pick the winners by voting with their bowls. Want to come and enjoy some great chili and chowder? Tickets are available [here](#), but come hungry! Want to compete? The rules and application are at the back of this newsletter. Contact Jeremy Kindlund, Operations Director at (360) 428-8547 or Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com. with any questions.

Board of Directors

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STAFF

Andy Mayer President/CEO

Silvia Reed Business Development and
Foundation Director

Jeremy Kindlund Operations Director

Bob Johnson & Julie Newkirk

Visitor Information Services

Member Announcements



DIAPER DRIVE CHALLENGE

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BY
DROPPING OFF ITEMS UNTIL MARCH 29, 2024!



HELP US REACH OUR GOAL!

ITEMS NEEDED

- New and opened packages of Diapers (Newborn to Size 6)
- Wipes (Unopened)
- Formula (Unopened)
- Diaper Cream (Unopened)
- Adult Incontinence products

ALL DONATIONS WILL BE COLLECTED
FOR THE DIAPER BANK OF SKAGIT
COUNTY



Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County's Annual Breakfast presented by TRICO Is Back Once Again!

This March, The Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County is hosting their Annual Breakfast once again. They have hosted their Annual Breakfast for over 20 years, with a few years hosted virtually and this event has become a staple within the community.

What: Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County, 2024 Annual Breakfast

When: Tuesday, March 19th, 2024 | Doors open at 7 am |
Breakfast Begins at 7:30 am

Where: McIntyre Hall Performing Arts & Conference Center

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

Send your announcements to
Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com

Tune In
Chamber Chat
Wednesday Mornings

8:05 a.m. 8:20 a.m.

February in Pictures



**Ambassador Orientation at
Global Credit Union**



**Skagit Wedding Films
Ribbon Cutting**



**Multi-Chamber After Hours at
White Branches**



**Latino Business Leaders Program
at Skagit Valley College**



**Speaking of Women Coffee Chat at
Pegasus Pie Co.**

Ambassadors

Chair - Betsy Anorbe

Betsy Anorbe Real Estate

Silvia Alvarez

Triumph Teen Life Center

Emmy Bateman

Lincoln Theatre

Marla Chapa

Skagit Social

Clarissa De Vries

CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC

Morgan Elton

Country Financial - The Elton
Group

Joley Garner

WAFD Insurance Group, Inc.

Devin González

Center for Inclusive
Entrepreneurship

Jaime Huss

Washington Federal

Susana Ipanaque

La Peruanita LLC – Peruvian
Street Food

Crystal King

NW Technology

Blake Rawlins

Guardian Northwest Title &
Escrow

Tammy Reim-Ledbetter

Global Credit Union

Chris Van De Grift

ReLuTy Real Estate

BRONZE LEGACY





Presented by:



Saturday, April 6, from 1pm to 4pm at Farmstrong Brewing Company

1st Place Professional Division - \$250 and an award plaque

2nd Place Professional Division - Entry Fee Refunded

1st Place Amateur Division - \$250 and an award plaque

2nd Place Amateur Division - Entry Fee Refunded

Craft Stove Best of Show Award - Award plaque

Team Name: _____

Team Captain: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Yes, I will need electricity to prepare my chili/chowder

No, I have a camp stove or propane to prepare and keep my product warm

I am entering Chili and/or Chowder to the competition

I will be competing as a Professional or Amateur

Space is limited! Please fill out and return by Friday, March 15

Please send your completed form and \$25 entry fee to:

Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce

301 W Kincaid St.

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

For more information please contact Jeremy Kindlund at
(360) 428-8547 or Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com



The event is Saturday, April 6, from 1pm to 4pm.

Teams must submit an entry Form with a \$25 check to the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce by March 17 to reserve a spot.

Farmstrong Brewing Company will open at 10am on April 6 for set up and cooking.

Teams will be assigned a 10' x 10' preparation area. Bring your canopy, table, and everything you will need to prepare your chili/chowder and keep it warm.

Each team is responsible for all cooking utensils, tables, chairs, cooking ingredients, set up and clean up. Each team must supply all cooking equipment: propane camp stove, grills, etc. power will be available through generators.

Each competitor will be given spoons, napkins, 2-ounce taster cups and bowls to give attendees.

Teams are encouraged to decorate their area and themselves. The best decorated and costumed team will win \$100.

No chili can be pre-cooked or prepared prior to competition unless done at a commercial kitchen and transported according to Health Department guidelines.

Please keep chili and chowder tightly covered when not serving.

All ingredients must come from approved food sources, so it's safe for public consumption (No roadkill). For questions, contact the Skagit County Health Department (360) 416-1500.

Each participant will also need to bring a handwashing station with a continuous flow spout, soap, and paper towels.

Chili powder and other spices are fine and dandy, but complete commercial chili mixes are not permitted. Thickeners such as corn meal, masa or flour are allowed – so are canned tomatoes, chipotles and beans. NO prepackaged chili/chowder is allowed.

Attendees will be given six taster tickets and a vote ticket. The vote ticket will be for their favorite chili/chowder and they will receive a bowl in exchange for their vote.

Craft Stove will choose the Craft Stove Best of Show Award.

You can submit both a chili and a chowder for the one application.

The more chili you have, the more votes you can get – a minimum of 4 gallons is required.

Craft Stove Best of Show Award winner will also receive a plaque.

1st Place Professional Chowder – award plaque and \$250

2nd Place Professional Chowder - receive your entry fee back

1st Place Professional Chili - award plaque and \$250

2nd Place Professional Chili - receive your entry fee back

1st Place Amateur Chowder – award plaque and \$250

2nd Place Amateur Chowder - receive your entry fee back

1st Place Amateur Chili - award plaque and \$250

2nd Place Amateur Chili - receive your entry fee back



JULIE BLAZEK
HKP ARCHITECTS



LESLIE SMITH
EDCO Inc.

BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

A "SPEAKING OF WOMEN" EVENT

March 13th, 2024 – 4:30 PM

The Grand Willow Inn

2024 SERIES \$180.00

Includes monthly coffee chats and panels:

- *Breaking the Glass Ceiling (March)*
- *The "Why" behind the "What" (June)*
- *Climbing the Success Ladder (Sept.)*





SPEAKING OF WOMEN

Partnership Opportunities

“Speaking of Women” is a Mount Vernon Chamber program designed as an outlet for business women to connect with one another, empower each other and mentor upcoming business leaders.

Series Sponsor (Up to 2 sponsors)

\$2,000.00

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo prominently displayed in series marketing (panels and coffee chats)
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak to the group at each Speaking of Women event
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for participants
- ⇒ 01 complimentary admission to 3 panels

Coffee Chat Sponsor

\$ 200.00

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo prominently displayed in coffee chat marketing
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak to the group at the coffee chat of your choice

2024 Schedule

Panels

March 13	4:30—6:00 PM	Breaking the Glass Ceiling
June 12	4:30—6:00 PM	The “Why” Behind the “What”
September 11	4:30—6:00 PM	Climbing the Success Ladder

Coffee Chats at 9:00 AM

Jan. 10	Feb. 14	April 10	May 8
July 10	Aug. 14	Oct. 19	Nov. 13

Panels and Coffee Chats are held at various locations

UNMASK AFFORDABLE HOUSING WITH SKAGIT HABITAT!

Raise the Roof Gala & Benefit Auction

presented by



March 9, 2024 · 5pm
Swinomish Casino & Lodge

Join our annual fundraiser for dinner, drinks, live entertainment, a silent & live auction, raffle prizes and more!

Purchase your tickets today!

Visit www.skagithabitat.com, call 360-428,9402, or scan the QR Code.

Thank you to our sponsors!



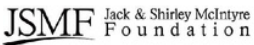


CHILDREN OF THE VALLEY
ANNUAL ART
AUCTION



FRIDAY, APRIL 26
DOORS OPEN AT 5 PM
ST. JOSEPH CENTER

215 N 15TH ST, MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273



THANK YOU TO OUR LEADERSHIP CIRCLE!

CELEBRATE CINCO DE MAYO WITH US!

Experience a fun-filled night featuring a live mariachi student performance and Mexican street-style dinner by COA Mexican Eatery, all while supporting COV!

SINGLE TICKET \$100 | TABLE (SEATS 8) - \$750

Visit covmv.org/annual-art-auction for details.



TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE!





CHILDREN OF THE VALLEY ANNUAL ART AUCTION



VIERNES 26 DE ABRIL

PUERTAS ABREN A LAS 5 PM

CENTRO DE SAN JOSE

215 N 15TH ST, MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273



JSMF Jack & Shirley McIntyre Foundation



SaviBank



PeaceHealth
The spirit of healing

¡GRACIAS A NUESTRO CÍRCULO DE LIDERAZGO!

¡CELEBRA EL CINCO DE MAYO CON NOSOTROS!

Ven y experimenta una noche de diversión con el mariachi en vivo y una cena estilo callejera que estará a cargo de COA Mexican Eatery, ¡Todo mientras contribuyes y apoyas a COV!

UN BOLETO - \$100

MESA (PARA 8 PERSONAS) - \$750

Visita covmv.org/annual-art-auction
para obtener más detalles.



¡BOLETOS DISPONIBLES EN LINEA!



@covskagit



childrenofthevalleymv.org



@covskagit



FOUNDATION FOR ACADEMIC ENDEAVORS

HELP US BREAK BARRIERS | AYÚDENOS A ROMPER BARRERAS

Collectively breaking down barriers to educational achievement for diverse students, educators and families. We serve students from **Pre K-High School** and their families through the following:

- ★ 5 Week Summer Program For Ages 3-14 of STEM and Bilingual Literacy
- ★ Paid High School and College Internships
- ★ Virtual Parent Workshops

Juntos, venciendo las barreras para el desarrollo educativo a la diversidad de educadores, alumnos y familias. Servimos a estudiantes de **Pre K-Preparatoria** y sus familias a través de lo siguiente:

- ★ Programa de Verano de 5 Semanas para Edades de 3-14 Años de STEM y Literatura Bilingüe
- ★ Pasantías Pagadas para Estudiantes de Preparatoria y Universidad
- ★ Talleres Virtuales para Padres

How you can contribute: Cómo puede contribuir:

- ✓ Monthly Donor / Donador Mensual
- ✓ Sponsor / Patrocinador
- ✓ Follow Us on Social Media / Síguenos en las Redes Sociales



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ESCANEE EL CODIGO PARA VER
NUESTRO VIDEO

CONTACT US / CONTACTANOS

- www.skagitfae.org
- [@skagitfae](https://www.facebook.com/skagitfae)
- 360-226-2228
- [@skagit_fae](https://www.instagram.com/skagit_fae)
- 2727 E College Way
- [@foundation-for-academic-endeavors](https://www.linkedin.com/company/foundation-for-academic-endeavors)

Since 2016 FAE Has... Desde El 2016 FAE Ha...



+ 1,724

Served + 1,724 PK-High School students
Participaron + 1,724 estudiantes de PK-Preparatoria



+ 280

United + 280 family members and community presenters
Unimos a + 280 familiares y presentadores comunitarios



+ 90%


Over 90% of our K-8 students maintain literacy skills and over 60% make improvements
Más del 90% de nuestros estudiantes K-8 mantienen sus habilidades de literatura y más del 60% logran mejoras




Fiber Internet for Condos & Apartments

City of **MOUNT VERNON** Washington


- Lower pricing and quality service means Higher Occupancy Rates!
- Elevator phones, Kiosk parcel storage, HVAC are available!
- Common area WiFi
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High-speed Internet



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1. Get the services you want: Pick your Internet speed, add Phone, Fax, and TV if you like. Our process is seamless for making changes... **That's PogoZone!**
2. If you have older infrastructure and don't know how the owner will consider spending thousands of dollars on new wiring? **Think PogoZone!**
3. Saving time and money while upgrading services for your tenants? **PogoZone!**

AND...

We can make your infrastructure run circles around our competition and usually on your existing wiring! **We are PogoZone!**



Internet speed 100/100
Starting at
\$49.95/month

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Starting at
\$34.95/month

Phones & Fax Solutions
Starting at
\$24.95/month



Contact us for more information
 (360) 676-8772 - Option 3 (sales)
 Sales@Pogozone.com

Visit PogoZone.com or scan QR code

