Mission:
As a regional Chamber we serve and promote our members and proactively encourage economic growth. We support members by providing information, training, networking opportunities and advocacy.

Social Networking for the Rest of Us

We have been looking at LinkedIn, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and blogs to determine the importance of social networking to economic development organizations and businesses. Some people embrace social networking and find it fun. Then there is everyone else - wondering whether it really will help grow their organization or business.

There are three reasons why all organizations and businesses should participate:
- Social networking can be used to gather and share customer feedback. Links to social networking sites will become as standard as phone and fax numbers for ways to communicate with a company. In addition to gathering customer feedback, social networking sites can be used to share this information because customers can quickly find recommendations from their peers.
- Social networking sites can be used to increase search engine optimization (SEO) ranking of an organization’s website. Every link that points back to an organization’s website improves the website’s ranking. Organizations should take advantage by including links to their website on their posts and their social networking pages.
- Social networking sites are the easiest way people can share information about your organization. You can easily upload presentations,

“Caught in the Act”
Each month the chamber will feature a photo of a member “Caught in the Act” of promoting a fellow chamber member. Send your photo to chamber@mountvernonchamber.com and you could be featured too! Go get “Caught in the Act”!

The August Membership Luncheon was about the Health Care Reform bill and featured speakers Renee Sinclair, U.S. Chamber and Dana Rindal, Northwest Chiropractic Clinic. In this picture they are talking to members after the luncheon.

“Excellent program today! Way to go! It was worth my annual dues to hear this great program. Thanks for putting it on.”
– Rob Martin, Chinook Enterprises

Max Dale’s Steak & Chop House owner Paul Pickering is promoted by Kim Bockenkamp, Best Western CottonTree Inn, to their hotel guests as one of the great restaurants in Mount Vernon where they can enjoy lunch, Happy Hour, dinner and sample one of their many Martinis.

Platinum Members:
Silver Members:
Bronze Members:
Pre-Paid Legal Services is to the legal industry what health insurance is to the medical industry. Jeanette Coffey is the VP of Group Marketing in the Northwest. She has been in the area since 1999 and loves the friendly and kind people, fresh air and views of the water and mountains.

With Pre-Paid Legal Services you pay a monthly fee, which can be as low as $0.87 per day. With this fee you gain access to attorneys and receive services such as preparation of wills and living wills, traffic ticket defense, and identity theft protection and restoration. Pre-Paid Legal Services offers small business policies for companies with less than 100 employees, and they also offer their service as a group employee benefit similar to the way health care is offered.

What makes Pre-Paid Legal Services unique is the fact that you can’t get this service anywhere else. They are the leaders of both the legal and identity theft industries. Pre-Paid Legal Services has access to over 100,000 lawyers nationwide and work with AV rated lawyers in every state.

When working with Jeanette you are working with a person who has been in the industry for some time and understands the industry. She was recently promoted to VP of Group Marketing, a high position held by very few in the industry.

When asked what business she admires most in the area Jeanette answered Valley Cabinets, Kitchens & More, because of the way they do business, promote other businesses and have a dedication to being community oriented.

Jeanette enjoys being part of the chamber because the people who lead and work at the chamber have been very supportive, caring and show a genuine desire to help promote her business. She also enjoys the many opportunities to meet and network with business owners.

The Illusions of Entrepreneurship, Professor Scott Shane

After you have read this book, you are rewarded with the answers to 67 myths about entrepreneurship. Be sure to take the entrepreneurship quiz. Be prepared to score low, at least until you read the book.

The book is divided in 10 chapters. The author starts off with debunking the myth that today’s America is the land of opportunity when it comes to entrepreneurship. According to research, he says, the self-employment rate was much higher in the beginning of 20th century compared with today’s situation. The United States of America is bottom on the list of self-employment rate compared with the other OECD countries. Turkey is number one with 30 percent of new established businesses per capita. America has a rate of about 7. The number one start-up place is not New York, LA, Texas or any likely thought place; it is Vermont. In the next chapter, you get a wake-up call if you already have decided your industry to work in. Your chances for success are much higher if you choose the right industry. Some industries have dismal success ratios and you may want to avoid them. In chapter three, you get a not-so-rosey picture on who becomes an entrepreneur.

“Therefore, if you want to become an entrepreneur, go to school — just don’t go on to get a PhD. With that much education, you are likely to become a needy professor like me, who studies entrepreneurship instead of doing it.” [Chapter 3, Who Becomes an Entrepreneur, page 47.]

With that statement I want to conclude that this book is inspirational reading material. You get mental exercise by reading the book and you start to think in new directions. Plenty of the old myths are taken care of in an elegant way.

Excerpt from review by Martin Lindeskog
social networking add at least 10 comments per day.

Because all businesses will benefit from some level of participation, we added a social networking section to the Tools for Business. To see it go to www.mountvernonchamber.com, scroll over Business Resources, and click on Tools for Business Success. Once you are routed to the Tools for Business Success page click on the Networking button.

Back to Business

By Rieva Lesonsky
GrowBiz Media
SCORE Association © 1997-2009

September still feels like the start of a new year for many of us, a result of years of looking forward to (or dreading) going back to school. But it’s a great time to get back to business—to ensure you finish 2009 on a positive note.

Take a look at your business plan, which you should consult and update at least quarterly. Assess whether you’ve gone off track. If you have, figure out what you can do now to get back on course. If you need help doing this, talk to SCORE, and get advice online or make an appointment to meet an advisor in person.

Many believe The Great Recession is ending. So channel your high-school self and start prepping now for the upcoming big tests—in this case, the coming recovery. Here are four things you can do:

1. Manage your inventory. A lot of entrepreneurs have (smarly) trimmed inventories. But make sure you’re not caught with out-dated products or empty shelves when consumer spending picks up. Find the happy medium between spending smart and offering current stock.

2. Focus on customer care. Customer loyalty may end up being a casualty of the recession. Value-conscious customers have left their brand and business loyalties behind in search of a better deal. Are you offering your loyal customers what they’re looking for, at a price they’re currently willing to pay?

3. Staff up. I’m not saying hire now, but think about the staffing levels you’ll need when business starts to rebound. Can you bring on interns you can train now and possibly hire later? Did you lay anyone off in the past few months? Check in with those you’d consider rehiring, just to get a status update. Or tap into the millions of unemployed Americans, many of whom are looking to be retrained in new industries or willing to work for far less than their usual salaries.

4. Renegotiate. If you haven’t done so already, this is a great time to talk to your landlord, your banker, your suppliers and your vendors. So much is negotiable these days. The better the terms you get now, the better poised you’ll be for recovery.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these New Members!

Postal & More, Inc.
Gretchen Thomas
1500 E. College Way, Suite A
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
(360) 428-5848
Mail Services/Shipping

Smiley Insurance
Sheilie Eubanks
1616 N. 18th, Ste 160
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
(360) 424-1772
www.smiley-ins.com
Insurance

The Shop
Mel & Betty Ulborn
18055 Cedar Dale Rd.
Mount Vernon, WA 98274
(360) 428-5948
www.theshopmountvernon.com
Lawn & Garden Equipment

RENEWING MEMBERS

Thank you to these Members who have continued their Membership Investment.

Alf Christianson Seed Company
Allstate - Dailey Insurance Agency
Arbor Pacific Forestry Service
BECU
Barnett Implement Co., Inc.
Best Western College Way Inn
Best Western CottonTree Inn
Blade Chevrolet, Inc.
Cascade Natural Gas
Chinook Enterprises
City of Mount Vernon
Concrete Nor’West
Consumer Rental Center
Debt Recovery Specialists
Deer Meadows Apartments
Double Barrel BBQ
Esary Roofing & Siding Co., Inc.
Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott
Fiducial Business Centers, Inc.
Five-B Investment Park Village Mobile Homes
grafixCORP
Hansen’s Furniture
Holland Health Services Inc.
Horizon Bank
J.D.’s Laundry
KAPS Radio 660
Kapteins Ace Hardware
KBRC Radio 1430
Land Title Company
Leonard, Boudinot, & Skodje
Logan Creek Retirement Community
Max Dale’s Steak and Chop House
Mclntyre Hall Performing Arts
Mobile Music Unlimited
Mount Vernon Building Center
Mount Vernon Carpet Center/Cartoon One
Mount Vernon Grocery Outlet
Mount Vernon Towing & Auto Repair
PUD 1 Skagit County
Pat Rimmer Tire Center / Les Schwab
Per Dona Salonspa
Port of Skagit County
PWG Design LLC
Ray’s and Beyond
Ray’s Auto Parts
Rhema Electric LLC
Skagit County Community Action Agency
Skagit County Fairgrounds
Skagit Farmers Supply
Skagit Gardens
Skagit Habitat for Humanity
Skagit Valley Casino Resort
Skagit Valley Medical Center
Skagit Whatcom Electronics
Sound Publishing
Straus Jewelers
The Bony Pony
The Dey Company
United Way of Skagit County
Vintage at Mount Vernon
Vital Chiropractic
Washington Federal Savings
Washington Vocational Services
Wells & Wells
Williams & Nulle, PLLC, CPAs
Windermere Real Estate/Skagit Valley
Woodcraft Wood Floors
Western Washington University announces a Weekend MBA program at Everett

Western Washington University’s College of Business and Economics will begin a Weekend Master of Business Administration (MBA) program at University Center of North Puget Sound in Everett. The WWU program is designed for active managers and professionals who are seeking career advancement, upward mobility and job security.

The Weekend MBA program at Everett will begin January 8, 2010 and meets Friday and Saturday of every other weekend. The program features a quality Graduate Business education with high student-faculty interaction and small class sizes. The priority application deadline is October 16 and the final deadline is November 16. Potential applicants to the program are encouraged to begin the testing and application process now.

For more information on the Weekend MBA Program, you are invited to attend an informational meeting at 6 p.m. on Sept. 10 at Everett University Center of North Puget Sound, 2000 Tower Street, Gray Wolf Hall, Room 160. If you have questions, please contact weekendmba@wwu.edu or (360) 650-7780.

Haggen Stores Partnering with Customers to Help Children Needing School Supplies

Haggen Food & Pharmacy stores are partnering with their customers to provide at-risk children in Skagit County with supplies for the start of school.

When customers buy and donate a backpack at a Haggen store for $9.99 through Sept. 13, Haggen will fill the backpack with $21 worth of school supplies, including paper, pencils, crayons, a binder and a ruler. Haggen stores are located at 757 Haggen Drive, Burlington, and 2301 E. Division, Mount Vernon.

The backpacks filled with supplies will be distributed to at-risk children by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County (www.bgaskagit.org), which has clubs in Mount Vernon, Anacortes, La Conner and Sedro-Woolley.

“As more families face economic tough times, more children need our help to get a good start at school,” said Becky Skaggs, spokesperson for Haggen Food & Pharmacy stores. “We’re hopeful that the public will join us in supporting Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County, which eliminates some of the barriers these children face.”

Haggen, Inc. operates 33 supermarkets in Washington and Oregon under the Haggen Food & Pharmacy and TOP Food & Drug names. Headquartered in Bellingham, it is the largest independent grocer and eighth-largest private company based in the State of Washington. For more information, visit www.Haggen.com.

Skagit Valley College Earns National Recognition as a Military Friendly School

Skagit Valley College has recently earned national recognition for being in the top 15% of military friendly schools. G.I. Jobs magazine recently surveyed more than 7,000 schools across the country to establish their military friendliness. Admissions staff completed the survey and the results were assessed by the magazine’s academic advisory board to determine the ranking.

At SVC, the Veterans’ Education offices at the Mount Vernon and Whidbey Island campuses welcome military service people, veterans, and their dependents each quarter during the academic year. “With our close ties with the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in Oak Harbor, SVC is the perfect choice for many military students and their dependents who wish to begin or continue their college education,” said Mike Abbott, Veterans’ Education Specialist. “Whether students are in active duty or post-military status, we are ready to provide them with the advising, course planning, and success skills they need to meet their educational goals.” SVC course options include a comprehensive eLearning program, more than 20 professional/technical career training programs, as well as academic transfer degrees.

Fall Quarter begins Monday, September 21 and registration is going on now. For Veterans’ Education information, contact the Mount Vernon office at (360) 416-7610, or the Whidbey Island office at (360) 679-5389, or online at www.skagit.edu.

Chinook Enterprises recently awarded a Certificate of Appreciation to Bryan Lee, manager of Red Robin in Burlington, Washington. Mr. Lee’s Certificate of Appreciation was in recognition of his total support of hiring and encouraging the growth of people with disabilities in the workplace. Mr. Lee sees the clients’ abilities rather than disabilities. He makes everyone feel appreciated, valued and special. It has been a pleasure working with Mr. Lee; he will be missed as he moves onto another opportunity with Red Robin in Northgate.

Chinook Enterprises is a non-profit organization that helps persons with disabilities and other barriers find employment and inclusion in the community.

www.mountvernonchamber.com
Candidate’s Forum with City Council Candidate’s

Wed., September 23
11:30am-1:00pm
Hillcrest Lodge
1717 S. 13th Street

The September luncheon is the can-
didates forum where we will get a chance to hear from the candidates running for Mount Vernon City Council. Everybody attending will have a chance to submit their questions on a note card for the can-
didates before the meeting.

$15 Lunch and Meeting, $5 Beverage and Meeting. RSVP today to 360-428-8547 or office@mountvernonchamber.com.

Sponsored by:

- Skagit Habitat for Humanity Store Grand Opening celebration with Mount Vernon Mayor Bud Norris and Skagit Habitat for Humanity Director Wayne Wegner.

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EVENTS CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 11-13</td>
<td>5th Annual SICRA Home Tour</td>
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<td>Sep 14</td>
<td>WWU Writing the Modern Memoir- Information Meeting</td>
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<td>Sep 16</td>
<td>Mount Vernon Farmers’ Market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 17</td>
<td>WWU 101 at Logan Creek Retirement</td>
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<td>Sep 17</td>
<td>WWU Professional Editing for Print &amp; Online</td>
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<td>Sep 17</td>
<td>WWU Prepare for Professional in Human Resources Certification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 17</td>
<td>WWU Project Management Professional Course Information Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 19 &amp; 20</td>
<td>Soap Box Derby Rally Race</td>
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<td>Sep 19</td>
<td>Mount Vernon Farmers’ Market</td>
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<td>Sep 21</td>
<td>Ambassador Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>Sep 23</td>
<td>Membership Luncheon- Candidates Forum</td>
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<td>Sep 23</td>
<td>Mount Vernon Farmers’ Market</td>
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<td>Sep 23</td>
<td>WWU Web Design &amp; Development</td>
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<td>Sep 24</td>
<td>Governmental Affairs Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>Sep 24</td>
<td>Shop Local Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>Sep 26</td>
<td>Downtown Mount Vernon’s Annual Fall Fest</td>
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<td>Sep 26</td>
<td>Mount Vernon Farmers’ Market</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 26 &amp; 27</td>
<td>Antique, Craft &amp; Flea Market at Skagit County Fairgrounds</td>
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<td>Sep 26 &amp; 27</td>
<td>Friends of the Mount Vernon Library Book Sale</td>
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<td>Sep 27</td>
<td>Oyster Run</td>
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<td>Sep 28</td>
<td>WWU Video Production Info. Session</td>
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<td>Oct 3</td>
<td>Mount Vernon Farmers’ Market</td>
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<td>Oct 3</td>
<td>14th Annual ASES National Solar tour</td>
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<td>Oct 6</td>
<td>SYP Networking Event</td>
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<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Less Than Six Degrees After Hours @ Youthnet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 10</td>
<td>Harvest &amp; Crush Party at Challenger Ridge</td>
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**Williams & Nolle**

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**Salon Rouge Grand Opening celebration with owners Stan and Christine Spencer, La Conner Mayor Ramon Hayes, staff and friends**
At the August Membership Luncheon the Upbeat Award was passed onto Billie Stormont of Express Employment Professionals. “From the first time I met Billie Stormont I was impressed by her positive outlook and great energy. Billie is a chamber member who is always on site, always smiling behind the scenes and always ready to lend a hand. In business, Billie goes the extra mile to insure that every detail is correct. Her efforts make her stand out from the crowd as one who gives exceptional customer service. Chris Gregoire stated that although the drop in the jobless rate was “reassuring and indicates that the economy may be stabilizing, this does not mean the national recession is over.”

Welcome CPI Plumbing & Heating
Newest Bronze Legacy Member

Kelly Schols, owner of CPI Plumbing, holds his new Bronze Legacy Member plaque.

Billie Stormont – Express Employment Professionals

At the August Membership Luncheon the Upbeat Award was passed onto Billie Stormont of Express Employment Professionals. “From the first time I met Billie Stormont I was impressed by her positive outlook and great energy. Billie is a chamber member who is always on site, always smiling behind the scenes and always ready to lend a hand. In business, Billie goes the extra mile to insure that every detail is correct. Her efforts make her stand out from the crowd as one who gives exceptional customer service. Billie carries that shining customer service standard into her involvement with the chamber. She definitely makes my day brighter each time I see her and with that

Washington’s Jobless Rate Drops to 9.1 Percent in July

Washington’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 9.1 percent in July, down from June’s revised rate of 9.2 percent, according to the state Employment Security Department. The state gained an estimated 4,000 non-agricultural jobs over the month, seasonally adjusted. Gov.

UPBEAT AWARD WINNER

Billie Stormont – Express Employment Professionals

Barbara Atterbury of Avenue Catering hands off the Upbeat award to Billie Stormont of Express Employment Professionals.

I am thrilled to nominate her for the Upbeat Award.

Congratulations Billie.

Chris Gregoire stated that although the drop in the jobless rate was “reassuring and indicates that the economy may be stabilizing, this does not mean the national recession is over.”

Article from Association of Washington Businesses (AWB)
We build <b>great</b> web sites that work.
e-Commerce Shopping Carts • Animation • Database Integration

grafixCORP
Guy D. Corp, CCO | Chief Creative Officer
360.424.5268 | www.grafixCORP.com

FUN FACT of THE MONTH
Mosquito repellents don’t repel. They hide you. The spray blocks the mosquito’s sensors so they don’t know you’re there.