

**MOUNT VERNON
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

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**Chamber NEWS
CHAT**

IN THIS ISSUE

- Who's that Member2
- Book of the Month2
- New & Renewing Members...4
- Announcements5
- Events Calendar6
- Fun Fact8

**THE MOUNT VERNON
CHAMBER
of COMMERCE**

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Chamber Chat News is designed by
Guy D. Corp of grafixCORP • grafixCORP.com

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.

**Your Membership Matters! Membership
Appreciation Month – January 2011**

**Now is the time to join! Let's work together to strengthen
the economy and business community.**

"Being a member of the Mount Vernon Chamber is like having an instant team of salespeople promoting your business. It's a place to find mentors and good friends; networking and camaraderie with other entrepreneurs."



-Kimberly Self
Therapeutic Massage
2010 Ambassador of the
Year - Member Since 2006

New Member Rewards

- Chamber Chat Insert (\$75 Value)
- Administration Fee Waived (\$25 Value)

Existing Member Rewards

- Bronze Legacy Membership to member who refers the most new members
- \$25 off your membership renewal (up to \$250 off)

To join the chamber and start receiving the benefits of New Business Contacts, Referrals, Community Promotion, Advocacy and more go to mountvernonchamber.com, call (360) 428-8547 or email karenm@mountvernonchamber.com today!

**Washington State Department of Commerce
launches small business help website**

Starting and keeping a small business open often is challenging and lonely if the operator is unaware that help is available, often for free.

In addition to the Chambers Tools for Business Success website The Department of Commerce has recently launched a new website that lists small business support services available across the state. It allows the visitor to search by county or to review nearby services that may not be available in a partic-

ular county. Categories to search include loans, business planning, training, licensing and networking opportunities.

The site also includes instructions on how to navigate through the available information. Visit commerce.wa.gov/smallbizhelp to learn more or go to mountvernonchamber.com, scroll over Business Resources and click on Tools for Business Success.

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Gold Members:



Silver Members:



Bronze Members:





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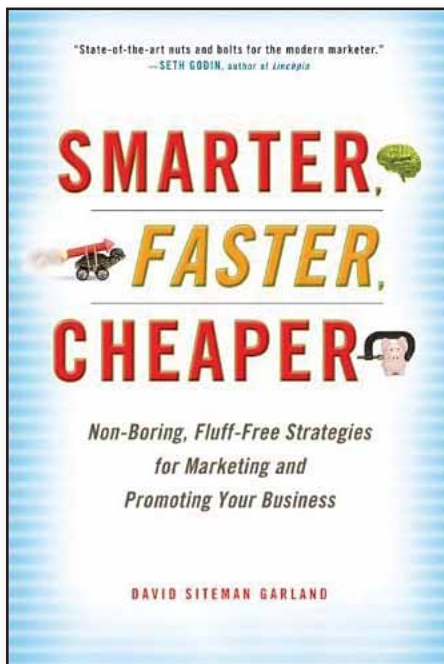
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BOOK OF THE MONTH

Each Month the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce calls on *The Tattered Page* to scout a book to help you improve your business and work life. This month's book is available at the *Tattered Page* at 514 S. 1st St. in Downtown Mount Vernon.



Who's that Member?

MEMBER PROFILE

Each month, the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce will randomly select a member to feature. This is a great way to get to know some of the diverse and interesting businesses in our community.

Bayside Specialties

In 2003 Darrell and Stephanie Hooper of Bayside Specialties brought their business from Camano Island to Skagit County and Stephanie says it was the best thing they ever did. Well, that and hiring Stephanie full time in 2004. The business actually started in 1983 after Darrell left the insurance industry in Bellevue. Bayside Specialties is a promotional advertising company that provides logo imprinted products and embroidery. They sell primarily business-to-business, however they do make personalized items for weddings and family reunions.

One thing that makes Bayside Specialties unique is the fact that they offer a 100% guarantee to their customers. They also offer access to 800,000 products from 4,500 different suppliers which gives their customers a wide range of products to choose from when looking for a promotional advertising solu-



tion. When asked what business they really admire Stephanie responded by saying Business Bank, because they are working so hard right now to raise capital while still retaining the integrity of a community bank.

Darrell and Stephanie are very well known through the community as they are involved in 4 local chambers, Mount Vernon since 1994, and several other organizations as well. Stephanie says it's very important to them to be involved in the community, especially for business, because your reputation within that community builds over time, you get to know more people, and after all, people do business with people not businesses.

Next time you're in need of any promotional advertising be sure to give Bayside Specialties a call at (360) 707-5422, or check them out online at www.baysidespecialties.com.

Smarter, Faster, Cheaper: Non-Boring, Fluff-Free Strategies for Marketing and Promoting Your Business.
by David Siteman Garland

Save time and money in building, marketing and promoting your business.

With huge recent shifts in the way enterprises are built, marketed, and monetized, these are "wild west" times for business. In this new landscape, entrepreneurs and small business owners actually have an edge in marketing without spinning their wheels or going broke.

Smarter, Faster, Cheaper gives you an innovative, approachable new guide on how to market, promote and improve your business drawing on real world examples and offering practical advice as opposed to fluffy theory. It presents a complete roadmap for marketing and promoting your business with the latest techniques.

- Draws from author David Siteman Garland's extensive experiences as a successful entrepreneur.
- Based on countless interviews with

successful leaders, including conversations with entrepreneurs and owners of businesses large and small.

- Strategies and ideas are easy to understand, digest, and immediately put to use.

From learning when to skimp and when to splurge to mastering the art of online schmoozing, Smarter, Faster, Cheaper will save you time, money, and aggravation whether you're building your tenth business or your first.

"State of the art nuts and bolts for the modern marketer."

—Seth Godin, author, *Linchpin*

"A great read for passionate entrepreneurs looking to market their businesses by inspiring, educating, and entertaining."

—Tony Hsieh, #1 NY Times bestselling author of "Delivering Happiness" and CEO of Zappos.com, Inc.

The Tattered Page
used bookstore, movie & book repair
Book of the Month Sponsor

Chamber divides areas of work into divisions to better serve you

The Chamber is proud that to say that it has its hand in many arenas, from tourism to retail to government affairs and more. This allows us to serve the diverse needs of our membership. To better serve you however, we have recently been working on dividing all of the areas into 11 divisions. Each division has either a member of the board of directors or a staff member as the Chair person. This move was made so that each division could have a clearer focus and more defined responsibilities. The divisions are split up as follows:

Division	Chair
Operations Division	Kristen Whitener Paul Pickering, Max Dale's Steak & Chop House
Membership Division	Dr. John Jarolimek, Town & Country Chiropractic
Tourism Division	Laura McDaniels, Best Western Cottontree Inn
Economic Development Division	April Axthelm, Axthelm Construction ACI
Workforce Development Division	Kristen Whitener
Skagit Young Professionals	Kristen Whitener & Ryan Schols
Board of Directors	Paul Pickering, Max Dale's Steak & Chop House
Communication Division	Ryan Schols
Events Division	Mark Hulst, Dally's Auto Body
Retail Division	Patt Woods, Sound Cedar
Governmental Affairs Division	Kelly Schols, CPI Plumbing & Heating

If you have an interest in helping in any of the committees, please call the Chamber office at (360) 428-8547 or feel free to contact any of the division chairs at their business.

The Front Gallery/Trumpeter Public House to host the February SYP After Hours

The Front Gallery in Downtown Mount Vernon will be the place to be on Tuesday, February 1st at 5:30pm. The Skagit Young Professionals will be having their After Hours in this fresh new gallery opened by Paul & Karin Springer who also own Trumpeter Public House next door. The young professionals will have an opportunity to network and sample appetizers from the



Trumpeter while perusing the display of the featured artist. Drinks will be available from the Trumpeter as well. The cost is \$5 for local chamber members and \$10 for non-local chamber members. The Front Gallery is located at 420 Myrtle St. in Downtown Mount Vernon.

KAPS/KBRC Announces 2nd Annual Stronger Business Initiative

KAPS/KBRC Radio recently announced an encore series of workshops to be held in Mount Vernon on February 7, 8, & 9, 2011. Sponsored and underwritten by Chambers of Commerce in Mount Vernon, Sedro Woolley, La Conner and Burlington, the 2nd Annual Skagit Valley Stronger Business Initiative aims to dispense professional guidance to local business owners/managers who want to make sense in today's turbulent economy and perplexing advertising environment. These free workshops will offer many key fundamentals of advertising for those who didn't attend last years workshops. For more information on the workshops, or to reserve a seat at this event please contact Jerry Keane of KAPS/KBRC at rsvp@strongerbusiness.org or call 360-424-0660.

Future Leaders of Skagit County!

Join Today!
Ryan Schols
360.428.8547



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Become a Member, Reap the Benefits

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Sponsorship Opportunities

- Newsletter Inserts - \$75 - 550 businesses per month.
- Newsletter Sponsorship - \$500 - \$1,500 - 6,600 copy annual distribution.
- E-Chat Sponsorship - \$75 - Over 800 weekly e-mail distribution
- Website Sponsorship - \$50-\$100 monthly- Over 300 website pageviews daily.
- Membership Luncheon Sponsor - \$250 - Logo visibility, 5-min. presentation, banner, distribute flyers.
- Breakfast Biz-Buzz Sponsor - \$150 - Logo visibility, 5-min presentation, banner
- Skagit Young Professionals Event Sponsor - \$150 - Logo visibility, 5-10 min presentation, distribute flyers.
- Million Dollar Putts & Pints Tournament - \$50 - \$2,500 annually - Summertime networking with over 150 golfers and attendees.

Call (360) 428-8547 or e-mail Karenm@mountvernonchamber.com for more info



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RENEWING MEMBERS

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

A big thank you goes out to these members who know the true value of chamber membership and renew each year. We value your support and acknowledge that we wouldn't be able to provide all of the services we do without you.

Gold Legacy Membership Renewal



15+ Years
Presidio Construction

Therapeutic Massage
Valley Cabinets Kitchens
& More Inc

Foss Heating & Cooling
Garden Cafe
Hartford Photography
Home Instead Senior Care
Lasting Impressions

10+ Years
Costco Wholesale
Burlington #662
Volunteers of America

Under 5 Years
Accounting & Business
Solutions

Landscape Design
Marinus and Jill Rouw
Pizza Factory - Burlington
Sahara Pizza

5+ Years
Cascade Cosmetic Surgery
& Skin Care
Chicago Title
View Properties Skagit-
Susan Cooper
Sound Publishing

Boys & Girls Clubs of
Skagit County
Country Meadow Village
Creekside Retirement
Community
Edward Jones- James
Dvorak
Fire Mountain Solar LLC

Servpro of Skagit County
Sprouts Clothing and
More
Tulip Valley Vineyard and
Orchard

DID YOU KNOW?

Respondents were more likely to want to purchase goods or services from a small business that is a chamber member.

63%

44% were more likely to rate it favorably than study respondents who were not told of the chamber affiliation.

Credit: The Schapiro Group

TUNE IN

Chamber President/CEO Kristen Whitener addresses the Skagit Valley every Wednesday morning with Chamber activity updates.



8:20 AM



8:40 AM

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Riverwalk and Flood Wall Phase 1 Now Complete!

Phase 1 of the Downtown Riverfront Revitalization and Skagit Riverwalk is officially complete after Friday, December 10th's ribbon cutting ceremony. The wall, which stretches from Lions park to the Division St. Bridge, serves as a flood wall, provides beautification to the area and a place for recreation.

Kicking Off the Spirit of the Spud

Mount Vernon Downtown Association celebrates our local farming community showcasing the beautiful and bountiful harvest of Skagit Valley potatoes. Throughout the year we have many potato related family fun events planned. In September we will conclude our year of celebration by attempting to break the Guinness World Book of Records for Potato AuGratin. In a custom crafted pan, heated by propane we will cook: 15,000 lbs. sliced red potatoes, 400 lbs. cheese, 200 gallons cream, 100 lbs. onion, 50 lbs. garlic.

Champions of Diversity Program at SVC Honors 102 Local High School Students

Five hundred community members attended the 11th Anniversary of the Champions of Diversity Awards Ceremony, which honored 102 area high school students for their contributions to

diversity in their schools and communities. On December 1, 2010, educational institutions, local businesses, and community organizations awarded \$167,000 in scholarships to 52 seniors who have shown exemplary service in leadership, community service, as well as academic and educational activities. Go to mountvernonchamber.com for a full list of the award recipients and donors.

Recession drives higher unemployment taxes

During these extraordinarily challenging times, it's not welcome news to hear that unemployment-insurance taxes will increase again for most employers in 2011. Unfortunately, this recession has gone longer and deeper than any recession in decades, so tax rates are rising before the recovery has gained momentum. In 2011, the average tax rate will be an estimated 3.26 percent, up from 2.39 percent in 2010. The average tax rate in 2011 will be the highest since 1988 -- a far cry from just two years ago, when unemployment tax rates were the lowest in 40 years. For the full article go to mountvernonchamber.com

WWU Youth Programs Announces Odyssey of Science & Arts

Western Washington University's Odyssey of Science & Arts youth program is an evening event for Grades 3-5. The

academic enrichment program takes place on the WWU Campus from 6:30-10:30 p.m. on Friday, February 25. Students will choose one of two special topics, Science "Earthquakes" or Arts "Bungee Cord Art". The cost of the program is \$45. Details are on the Web www.wwu.edu/youth or contact youth@wwu.edu or call (360) 650-3308.

Mount Vernon Downtown Association-Winners of the 2010 Christmas Parade

The Mount Vernon Downtown Association's 2010 Christmas Parade sponsored by Whidbey Island Bank, was a huge success. Attendance was estimated at over 2,000 people, as Mount Vernonites lined up on First Street to cheer on the parade before heading to, Pine Square for the Christmas tree lighting and a chat with Santa.

This year's winners of parade entries were:

Grand Prize Winner: Girls Scouts of America

2nd Place: Tails Up Dog Club

3rd Place: Shell Oil Company

Honorable Mention: Skagit Rein Riders.

Our judges this year were:

Leileah Petty from Farmers Insurance

Julie Fleury from Per Dona Salonspa

Dianna Cornelius from Easton's Books.

CHAMBER EVENTS CALENDAR

January 12 – Skagit Business Alliance Day in Olympia

January 13 – Business Happy Hour & Open House at Valley Cadillac

January 14 – SYP's FRIDAYS @ 4 with the Latino Advisory Council

January 17 – Skagit Business Alliance Weekly Conference Call

January 21 – SYP's FRIDAYS @ 4 with Gregg Davidson of Skagit Valley Hospital

January 24 – Skagit Business Alliance Weekly Conference Call

January 26 – Chamber Member Orientation before Biz Buzz

January 26 – Bizz Buzz Networking Luncheon

January 28 - SYP's FRIDAYS @ 4

January 31 - Skagit Business Alliance Weekly Conference Call

February 1 – SYP After Hours at The Front Gallery/Trumpeter Public House

February 2 – SYP Leadership Committee Meeting

February 3 – Legislative Day in Olympia

February 4 – Lobby Day in Olympia

February 4 – SYP's FRIDAYS @ 4

February 7 – Skagit Business Alliance Weekly Conference Call

February 8 – Chamber Board of Directors Meeting

February 10 – Business Happy Hour & Open House

FUN FACT of THE MONTH

A hummingbird weighs less than a penny.



Year End Award Winners

Five Awards were handed out at the December 9th Holiday Mixer & Awards at Skagit Valley Gardens. Pictures of the award winners are below.



Kimberly Self of Therapeutic Massage happily accepts the Ambassador of the Year award from the Chamber's Karen Mills.



Mike Yeoman of KAPS Radio 660 accepts the Making a Difference Award from Board Chair Mark Hulst of Dally's Auto Body.



Paul Genest of American Family Insurance-Paul Genest Agency proudly displays his Rising Star Award.



Tammi Wells (center) accepts the Bernie Award from previous year's winner Dr. John Jarolimek of Town & Country Chiropractic and Barb Lowery of People's Bank.



Rob Martin of Chinook Enterprises displays his Legacy Award.

Chamber welcomes new board members

The Chamber would like to welcome our new board members for the 2011 year:

- Laura McDaniel of Best Western Cottontree Inn
- Kelly Schols of CPI Plumbing & Heating
- Bob Lama of PROForma Creative Printing Solutions
- Pamela McNaughton of The Tattered Page Bookstore
- Dr. John Jarolimek D.C. of Town & Country Chiropractic
- David Cope of Union Bank and

Ambassador Chair

Also, a big thank you to the outgoing board members finishing their 3 year term:

- Past Board Chair Didi Hagman of Valley Cabinets Kitchens & More
- Beau McCallum of Action Pages
- Matthew Youngsman of Human Resources of Mount Vernon
- Deb Bundy of Skagit Publishing
- Gary Lorenz of Skagit Valley Gardens

Thank you all Board Members for your contributions to the Chamber and the local business community.

2nd Tuesday of the Month: 5:30 PM
FRIDAYS @ 4 - Every Friday at Max Dale's

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It's like speed dating business style

Don't forget to RSVP for the January 26th Biz Buzz Luncheon. The event is sponsored by Axthelm Construction ACI. Prepare your 1 minute speech, bring lots of business cards and flyers to pass out, and get ready to develop new business relationships at this highly attended event. This is one of the best ways within the chamber to meet new people, get the word out about your business, and develop leads. Give your business extra exposure by bringing a door prize. Please consider bringing non-perishable food or toi-

letry donations to help support local food banks. The event starts at 11:30am, lasts until 1:00pm, and is located at the Best Western CottonTree Inn Convention Center at 2300 Market St. in Mount Vernon. To RSVP go to www.MountVernonChamber.com or call (360) 428-8547.



Event Sponsor

Business Happy Hour & Open House kicks off in true style at Valley Cadillac

Join the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce for the 1st Business Happy Hour & Open House of 2011 on Thursday, January 13th at Valley Cadillac-Buick-GMC Truck from 5:00-7:00pm. Valley Cadillac will be showing off their new 2011 line of vehicles, have a sampling of appetizers from Avenue Catering & Bistro and beverages from Skagit River Brewery. Don't miss the

Scavenger Hunt with the "Staycation" grand prize of an overnight getaway for two at the LaConner Country Inn & Channel Lodge, including dinner at Nell Thorn and a massage at Delamae Spa.



Business
HAPPY HOUR
Open House
← SECOND THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH →

UPBEAT AWARD WINNER

Cheryl Kaufman Reverie BBQ

I decided to give the Upbeat Award to Cheryl Kaufman of Reverie BBQ because of all the work that they do to feed the poor during the last week of the month. Cheryl and her husband Matt provide a great deal of assistance to those who are struggling to find a way to put food on the table. They always do it with a smile on their face too. What's more upbeat than that? Not to mention that they have awesome BBQ food too.

- Doug Eldridge
Budget Towing & Repair



Doug Eldridge of Budget Towing & Repair hands off the Upbeat Award to Cheryl Kaufman of Reverie BBQ at the Holiday Mixer & Awards in December.

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We Appreciate You!

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Dawn Latimer *Mister T's Awards & Embroidery*

Barb Lowery *Peoples Bank*

Scott Sutton *PrintStreams*

Paul Tinnon *Skagit Publishing*

Tammi Wells *Skagit Valley Gardens*

Catlyn Preston *Superior Graphic Design*

Kimberly Self *Therapeutic Massage*

John Jarolimek, D.C. *Town & Country Chiropractic*

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