

**MOUNT VERNON
CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE**

Vol. No. 9 • Issue No. 6 • December 2010

**Chamber
CHAT
news**

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.

10 tips to make it through tough times

If your company is heading towards financial trouble or could just use a shot in the arm, consider some or all of the tips listed below from the Tools for Business Success website, sponsored by the Mount Vernon Chamber and Skagit Valley College.

1. Trim the fat
2. Do a new business plan and share it to get input.
3. Identify what people you need to keep in your organization
4. Open the books and share your financial information
5. Reduce your clients' fears
6. Be honest with your vendors

7. Embrace alternative financing
8. Get rid of your least profitable clients
9. Never take your eye off the cash
10. Encourage risk

Find out more about Marc Kramer's 30 Day Business Turnaround program at the Tools for Business Success website under the Tools for Tough Economic Times tab. You can get to the site by going to www.mountvernonchamber.com and clicking on Business Resources and then on Tools for Business Success. While you're there be sure to check out everything else offered on the site such as marketing and selling advice, government requirements, and employer assistance.

Mount Vernon Chamber and Skagit Young Professionals gather for Annual Holiday Mixer

Join Mount Vernon Chamber members along with Skagit Young Professionals on Thursday, December 9th, 2010 from 5:00pm-7:00pm for the Annual Holiday Mixer & Awards at the Winter Wonderland inside Skagit Valley Gardens. We'll be giving away the Legacy, Rising Star, Making a Difference, Ambassador of the Year, and Bernie Awards as well as thanking the outgoing board members and welcoming the new board members.

This year we'll also be featuring delicious food and drink from 8 member restaurants and caterers. The \$15 admission fee gets you 3 tickets to try the fares at the participating member booths. Beverages will be available from Skagit River Brewery. To make your mouth water a little more the participating members signed up so far are:

- Avenue Catering & Bistro
- Cynergy Celebrations
- Deception Cafe & Catering
- Emerald City Grill
- Garden Cafe
- Max Dale's Steak & Chop House
- Reverie BBQ
- Sahara Pizza
- Skagit River Brewing Company

Skagit Valley Gardens is located at 18923 Peter Johnson Rd. in Mount Vernon.



RSVP today to (360)428-8547 or chamber@mountvernonchamber.com

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**THE MOUNT VERNON
CHAMBER
of COMMERCE**

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LEGACY MEMBERS

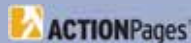
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Bronze Members:





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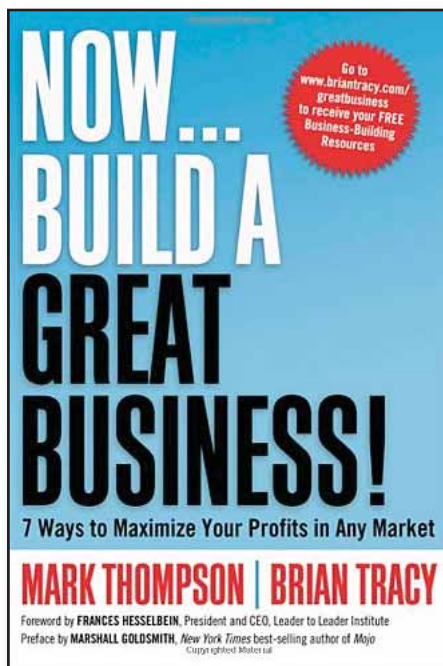
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BOOK OF THE MONTH

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.

Mount Vernon Grocery Outlet

Shopping at Mount Vernon Grocery Outlet is best described as a treasure hunt. You never know what you're going to find from bulk and generic foods to the occasional dirt bike or pool table. Grocery Outlet opened in Mount Vernon March 31, 1979 in the same location it remains today at 1333 Riverside Drive. It has grown over the years to include a frozen section, deli section, fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats. Customers love the great deals they can find at Grocery Outlet, as was proven after the store closed and re-opened 4 months later after a fire about 15 years ago. Customers thanked owners, Leonard and Polly Ballif, for re-opening the store and told them how much they appreciated the



access to the great bargains.

Over the years Leonard has become very involved with local food banks and is very proud of how Grocery Outlet is able to help. Leonard takes regular deliveries in his truck to the Sedro Woolley Helping Hands Food Bank which distributes out to the other local food banks. When asked what business he most admires, Leonard said he really appreciates Pregnancy Choices in Westside Mount Vernon for the service their volunteer staff provides to young expectant mothers. Thanks for the great interview Leonard and thanks for keeping the great bargains rolling out year after year.

Now Build a Great Business: 7 Ways to Maximize Your Profits in Any Market, Mark Thompson, and Brian Tracy

Don't be daunted by a challenging economy and fierce competition. Even in the toughest environment, innovative, highly profitable businesses abound. And yours can be one of them with *Now, Build a Great Business!* This essential success kit from business heavyweights and acclaimed authors Mark Thompson and Brian Tracy is filled with straightforward, powerful strategies to ignite growth in your business.

Packed with insights from face-to-face interviews with world-class business leaders (Tony Hsieh of Zappos, Virgin Brands' Richard Branson, Ingvar Kamprad of IKEA, Charles Schwab, and many others), this book distills a wealth of ideas and practices to uncover the core ingredients of successful organizations. Step-by-step instructions and a compelling big-picture overview show you exactly how to:

- Become a great leader -- and get extraordinary results from everyone around you
- Develop a great business plan -- and structure your company to maxi-

mize every resource

- Surround yourself with great people who are motivated to give their best
- Offer a great product or service -- identifying exactly what your market needs
- Design a great marketing plan -- and position your business as the preeminent provider
- And much more!

You'll find no theory here -- just practical steps you can take immediately, with simple explanations of exactly how to measure how well you're doing at each step along the way. So while your competitors duck and cover -- cutting costs and slashing personnel -- it's wise to remember that some of the savviest leaders and most successful companies operated in economic downturns and all-out busts.

"Thompson and Tracy offer easy, tried-and-true ways to think about and plan organizational growth, especially in tough economic times...valuable advice..." — Publishers Weekly

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



Tulees owners, Nathan Ward and Katie Senff, gather for their ribbon cutting and grand opening along with family, friends, Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce members, and Mayor Bud Norris. The flagship store of their women's eco fashion brand is now open at 614 1st St. in Downtown Mount Vernon.

Mark your 2011 Calendars

Business HAPPY HOUR Open House

← SECOND THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH →

Go to mountvernonchamber.com/events
for more information

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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
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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.

Silver Legacy Membership Renewals



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Bronze Legacy Membership Renewals



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Racks & Beyond
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FedEx Office Print & Ship Center
Lefebur Turf Farm
Lithtex Northwest Manpower
Precision Collision Inc.
Salon Rouge
Steam Interactive, LLC
The Encore Shoppe

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

The Outlet Shoppes at Burlington Announces Nike Opening

The Outlet Shoppes at Burlington announced the Ribbon Cutting and opening of a new Nike store. The new 10,000 sq. ft. store will continue to celebrate their opening with a weekend Grand Opening. The Outlet Shoppes at Burlington draws more than one million visitors annually and features over 35 stores. "The opening of the new store has been generated by the growth of the market area and Horizon Group Properties re-development efforts of the shopping center," according to James Harris, Director of Business Development and Asset Management for Horizon Group Properties.

WWU Writing Course, The Novel - Enroll now for Winter Quarter

Join Western Washington University's course, The Novel: Experience and Write Fiction, taught by award winning author, Laura Kalpakian. Winter Quarter, evening classes begin Jan. 11. Limited space is available in the course. Details are on the Web at www.ExtendedEd.wvu.edu or contact eesp@wwu.edu or (360) 650-3308.

tulees announces flagship location in Mount Vernon, WA

Women's eco fashion brand will be opening its flagship store before Thanksgiving 2010 on 614 1st Street in historic downtown Mount Vernon, WA. The brand tulees (tulips + tees) chose to locate in the Skagit Valley over other large metropolitan areas to further strengthen its brand identity nationally. The company creates eco-fashion in women's clothing and focuses on fabric-forward, vertical production and delivery to you, their customer. A Pacific Northwest based company; tulees is fanatic about environmental sustainability and ecology.

Complete take-home meals offer alternative to cooking and restaurants during holidays

Complete turkey, ham and prime-rib dinners are available through December from Market Street Catering, a division of Haggen Food & Pharmacy stores in Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish counties. The meals are chilled in deluxe containers and need up to three hours to

reheat while greatly reducing clean-up time afterward. Customers are asked to place orders at least 72 hours in advance of pick-up. Delivery is available in many areas for an additional fee.

Skagit Valley College hires Director of Skagit/Islands Head Start

Skagit Valley College (SVC) is pleased to announce that Mary Ellen Lykins has accepted the position of Director of Skagit/Islands Head Start. As Director of Skagit/Islands Head Start, Mary Ellen Lykins will oversee SVC's Head Start and Early Head Start programs, which serve over 450 young children and their families in Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties and provide field experiences for college students in Early Childhood Education, Human Services, and Nursing.

SERVPRO of Skagit County Warns Families about Dangers of Cooking Fires

Local restoration service offers tips to help prevent kitchen accidents this Thanksgiving Day. As the Thanksgiving holiday approaches and home cooks begin preparations for this annual family feast, David Morgan, owner of SERVPRO of Skagit County, wants to remind community residents that cooking fires are the leading cause of home fires and home fire injuries. Watch What You Heat and Keep Flammable Things and Heat Sources Apart

Singers will brighten holidays while helping local food banks

Everyone from choirs to a pair of friends willing to share their musical talents can brighten the holiday season of others while helping local food banks. Haggen stores will donate a \$50 gift card to a local food bank for each hour a group presents holiday music. Participants may include organizations, quartets, choirs, families or friends. Sing from the Heart will be presented at each Haggen store from 2-7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10, noon-7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 11 and noon-5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 12.

Mount Vernon Express Employment Professionals Launch Medical Division

The Mount Vernon Express Employment Professionals office recently launched a medical division. Express is

now providing licensed health care professionals to local medical facilities. Among the health care professionals Express now provides are nurses, occupational and respiratory therapists, and various medical technicians and assistants. The Mount Vernon Express franchise office, located at 525 E. College Way, Suite F, is currently taking applications. For more information call 360-336-1980, or visit the Express Web site at www.expresspros.com.

FUN FACT *of* THE MONTH

Human jaw muscles can generate a force of 200 pounds on the molars.



Looking back

Thank you to all of our members for another great year. We couldn't have done it without all of our members,



Skagit Young Professionals

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



A laugh is shared at the April 2010 Biz Buzz by Paul Tinnon of Skagit Publishing, Bill Forney of Visible Reality, Susan Trenary of Valpak, and Patt Woods of Sound Cedar.



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Tammy Custer of Liberty Tax and Deb Bundy of Skagit Publishing both try to get the winning bid on a silent auction item at the 1st Annual Jump Into Summer Garden Party.

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The sun sets on Eagle Haven Winery at the joint September Business Happy Hour & Open House with Sedro Woolley Chamber of Commerce.

on 2010

sponsors, board, ambassadors, and volunteers. We're looking forward to what's in store for 2011.



A crowd of new members waits to give their "1 Minute Infomercial" at the January Luncheon.



Tracy Willis & staff from Country Meadow Village show off their booth at the Million Dollar Golf & Trade Show and Putts & Pints Brewfest.

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