

CHAMBER CHAT

June 2020

Message from the CEO: ARE YOU READY?

Andy Mayer, President & CEO

Skagit County has applied to move into Phase 2 of the Governor's Reopening Plan and every indication suggests that we will qualify. That means many of us will be able to go back to work, or back to work outside our homes, shortly. Are you ready? There is obviously a lot to think about and to do. First, you must have a plan in writing that outlines how you will meet the requirements for your type of business to reopen. Those requirements organized by business activity can be found here: [Reopening Guidelines](#).

Your plan will necessitate a good number of changes to your workplace and how you interact with customers. For example, the use of masks and other personal protective equipment protective is required, according to the risk of virus transmission inherent in your business activity. The only exception is for people working alone or if a job has no "in-person" interaction. "Coronavirus Facial Covering and Mask Requirements" are [here](#).

Our friends at the Association of Washington Business have put together a [tool kit](#) to help communicate reopening plans and changes in the workplace for employees and customers. It is vital that we reopen safely, and it's also important that our businesses start to recover financially. It isn't a simple task, but we will do it together. Please reach out to the Chamber with any question or need you might have. We're ready, and I hope you are too.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Motivation & Marketing Mastermind: Using Social Media Schedulers

Thursday, June 4
10 a.m.
via Zoom
[Register here](#)

Skagit Regional Health – Pandemic Response & Priorities

Presented by CEO Brian Ivie
Co-hosted by the Burlington Chamber of Commerce
Thursday, June 4
11 a.m.
via Zoom
[Register here](#)

NEW!

Facebook Live Friday: Valley Shine Distillery

Friday, June 5
4:30 p.m.
Featuring Ben Lazowski of Valley Shine Distillery demonstrating how to make one of Valley Shine's signature drinks.
www.facebook.com/mountvernonchamber/

Latino Business Leaders: Essential Marketing Elements

Tuesday, June 9
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Presented by Dr. Ed Jaramillo in Spanish
via Zoom
[Register here](#)
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Knowledge NOW: 21st Century Selling vs 20th Century Selling

Wednesday, June 10
Noon
Presented by Max Collette
via Zoom
[Register here](#)

Chamber Virtual Luncheon: How to Mentor Your Successor

With Kelly Schols
Wednesday, June 24
11:30 a.m.
via Zoom
[Register here](#)
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2020 Riverwalk Concerts Canceled

The Riverwalk Summer Concert Series has been canceled because of concerns about public health due to the coronavirus and in keeping with the health department's guidance regarding large gatherings, said Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce CEO Andy Mayer.

The popular concert series typically takes place mid-July through August at Skagit Riverwalk Park in downtown Mount Vernon and

features a variety of well-known local bands.

"We decided hosting the Riverwalk Summer Concert Series wouldn't be prudent under the county health department's recent directive that recommended canceling or postponing large scale events through the summer," Mayer said. "We look forward to bring the concert series back in 2021."

Get to Know

The Humane Society of Skagit Valley

The Humane Society of Skagit Valley (HSSV) has been a fixture in the county since 1974, and the organization sees approximately 2,500 animals each year. Along with providing an animal shelter and adoption service, HSSV helps provide spay/neuter services to low income households, emergency animal rescue and community outreach.

Janine Ceja, HSSV's executive director, saw early on as the coronavirus made its way into our community that they would need to close their doors, doing so even before the governor's Stay Home order. She hopes the shelter can begin limited operations in early June.

"In order to serve the community and staff in the safest way, we had to close the shelter to the public," she said.

Fortunately, they were able to rally and get all pets in the shelter adopted before the closure. A few have come in since, but Ceja says they are asking people not to surrender pets unless absolutely necessary.

Ceja wants to make sure the shelter has ample room if owners need to surrender a pet due to illness.

Limited adoptions are still taking place, but adoptive pet parents won't get to meet their new pet in person until it's time for pick up. As with all adoptions, Humane Society staff will work to get the right match between pet and people.

HSSV is asking everyone to wear a mask when visiting the shelter.

As with most businesses during this time, HSSV's operations budget has been stretched thin, Ceja said. Their main fundraiser has been cancelled, and they are looking at ways to retool their September fun run.

HSSV is currently seeking donations to help build a racoon- and coyote-proof feeding station and shelter for their Barn Buddies program, which provides food and shelter on site at the Humane



Humane Society of Skagit Valley staff: Tiffany L.R., Nathan H., Cynthia G., Janine C., Veronica C., Annie C., Jane M., Cassandra W., Erika H.

Society for feral cats. HSSV spays or neuters the animals so they don't continue to contribute to the already booming cat population, then gives them a home.

If you're interested in helping with this program or adopting a pet, visit skagithumane.org.

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Member Announcements

Port of Skagit Adopts New Safety Protocols for Public and Staff

As business operations throughout the state begin to phase back in, Port of Skagit leadership has developed and adopted new Disease Prevention Safety Protocols to further protect Port staff, visitors, tenants and the general public. Social distancing, protective equipment and safety protections for high-risk employees and guest access are just a few of the topics covered in the policies.

With a wide spectrum of staff job duties and roles, including maintenance, airport and marina operations, business development, and direct customer service to the public, the new safety policies had to address an equally diverse and broad range of risks, accommodations and protocols. Visitors to the Port administrative and marina offices can expect to see more physical barriers, signage to provide guidance, and protective supplies like masks, gloves and hand sanitizer for guests and staff to use. La Conner Marina staff are on-site getting geared up for the spring boating and RV season. Port staff at the administrative office will return to on-site work beginning June 1 once all the new safety measures are installed and prepared.

Skagit Gleaners will be accepting donations including house wear products and clothing starting June 1

Cleaning out your closets? Skagit Gleaners is now accepting all Gratitude Galleria donations, including house wear products and clothing. Instead of tossing these items, donate them, and you are able to receive a tax write off. Appliances, large furniture items and car seats are not accepted. Please donate Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun: 9:00am-12:30pm and Tue, Thur: 3:00pm-6:30pm, at 1021 Riverside Dr., Mount Vernon.

Peoples Bank Makes \$25,000 Grant to Local

United Ways to Support COVID-19 Relief Efforts
Peoples Bank has awarded a \$25,000 grant to local United Ways to support communities across the state impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. In Skagit County, the donation will be used to support the Skagit Valley Disaster Relief Fund, which helps sustain nonprofit organizations and agencies as they work to address the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on the Skagit Valley. The Peoples Bank grant will also be used to support United Way coronavirus relief efforts in Whatcom, Snohomish and King counties.

United Way of Skagit County is partnering with the Skagit Community Foundation and the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County (EDASC) to manage distribution of the Skagit Valley Disaster Relief Fund, which is distributing grants to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that directly support vulnerable populations and critical human needs impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in Skagit County.

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EWP Coordinator **Jessica LaSota**

Visitor Information Services

Marinus Rouw

Stephanie Fernandez

EWP hosts Virtual Career Panel for SVC students

After Skagit Valley College (SVC) switched all classes to online learning in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Experience Work Project (EWP) needed to retool its offerings to students as well. On May 20 EWP hosted the Industry Focus Virtual Event, featuring Rachel Handy, director of Skagit programs at Northwest Youth Services, and Rowell Dela Cruz, director of residential programs at Pioneer Human Services. The event was prepared with Human Services and Allied Health students in mind.

The event received great feedback from the students as well as college administration. "The career panel allowed our students to not only learn and gain insight directly from our local employers, but also gave them the ability to interact with real professionals in the specific industry they are preparing to enter," said Maria Galindo, Skagit Valley College Workforce Grants Manager. "Our students take away the knowledge, tips and skills to be successful in reaching their employment goals. Students were engaged and asked very thoughtful questions."

EWP will continue this virtual format facilitating new connections between students and industry leaders. In-person job shadows and internships will be available following health guidelines to ensure the safety of employers and students.

Experience Work Project (EWP) is a program of the Mount Vernon Chamber Foundation that creates robust learning opportunities to help prepare our youth and adult students for future employment while supporting our business community workforce needs. For more information please contact Silvia Reed | Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com | (360) 395-2944.





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Chair - Marla Chapa

Skagit Social

Taylor Bannister

Lincoln Theatre

Susan Cooper

NextHome Preview Properties

Monica Craig

CPI Plumbing & Heating

Ector DeLeon

Tulip Valley Winery

Beth Dewey

Joyous Style

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Friendship House of Skagit Valley

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Liz Theaker

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Katey Von Hagel

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Clarissa Wong

Umpqua Bank

Member Reveals Positive Return on Investment

I have been a member of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce for two years, and the value of the investment has been astronomical. Skagit Social has made some very valuable connections through the Chamber that otherwise we would have never made. The value it brings to small businesses is unbelievable. Silvia Reed, and the whole Chamber, has welcomed us with open arms, shown support at our events, and has helped us grow. It brings a huge sense of community as there are businesses of all sizes, experience and industries helping one another. The representation and professionalism we have received, and witnessed, has been tremendous. We are beyond proud to be a part of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce.

Marla Renee Chapa
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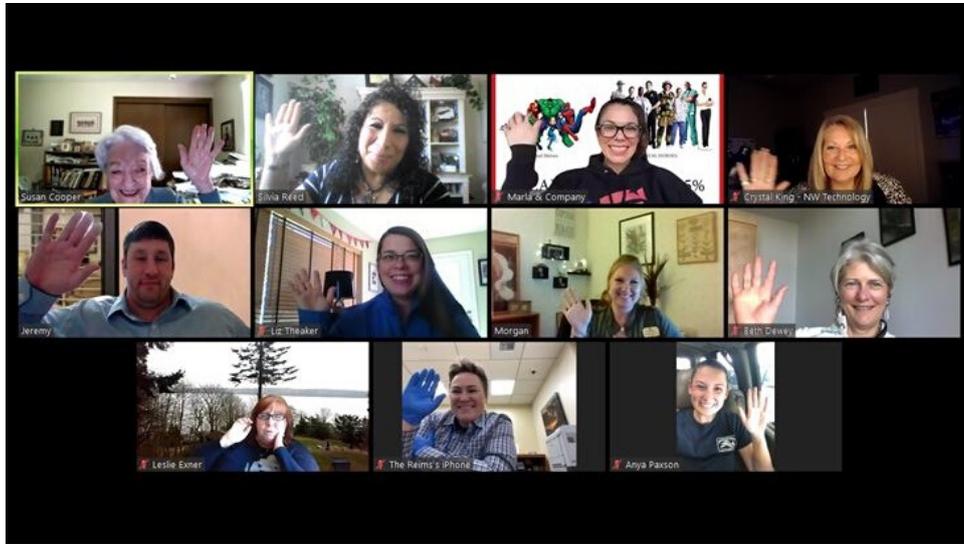
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Chamber Ambassadors say 'Hello'



Our Chamber Ambassadors are continuing to make their enthusiastic presence known at all our virtual events. They hope to see you at the June 5 Facebook Live featuring Valley Shine Distillery. Get the Live details on page 2.

Thank you, Ambassadors!

BRONZE LEGACY

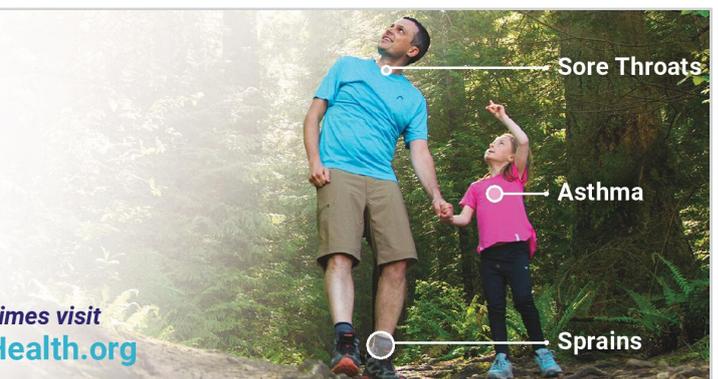


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Sign at a hole of your choice (based on availability)

Hole Sponsors - Set up at a Hole: \$300

Set up a tent at the hole of your choice (based on availability)
Sign at hole (provided by the chamber)
Company name on printed and digital marketing materials
Logo with a link to your website on Burlington-Chamber.com and MountVernonChamber.com

Tee Sponsors: \$200

Sign (provided by the chamber) at a tee of your choice (based on availability)
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Logo with a link to your website on Burlington-Chamber.com and MountVernonChamber.com

For more information contact Peter Browning at BurlingtonCEO@Burlington-Chamber.com
or Jeremy Kindlund at Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com



May 24th, 2020

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