

# CHAMBER CHAT

February 2025

## Chamber Celebrates a Successful Year and Recognizes Exceptional Achievement!

Chamber members gathered on January 22, to celebrate an outstanding 2024 for the Chamber, which positively impacted businesses and the community. Highlights included the growth of Chamber Connections Referral Groups and the Speaking of Women program, both of which support and connect participants. Workforce development and entrepreneurial training expanded to help students learn about career options, for Latino youth to start their own businesses, and to bridge the gap between Latino businesses and the entire business community. The Chamber also had a strong year advocating for businesses and our community. Special events such as the Riverwalk Concert Series and the new Brewfest on the Skagit, thanks to the Lincoln Theater's hand-off, boosted community spirit significantly.

The following awards were presented for extraordinary achievement in business and community support in 2024:

- **Ambassador of the Year: Tammy Reim-Ledbetter, Global Credit Union**

Tammy has been instrumental in fostering a sense of belonging in the chamber, the business she represents and the community at large. She has been an incredible chamber ambassador since 2015, Ambassador Committee Chair in 2018-2019, Board member since 2022, Treasurer, and now Board Chair-elect.

- **Rising Star: Courtney Bourasaw, The Skagit Table**

As a Skagit Valley College student, Courtney learned to work with the freshest ingredients and embraced farm-to-table cooking. She is passionate about educating others about the relationship between quality ingredients and good health. Courtney is a chef, a survivor, a wife, a mother, and a role model to many.

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### GOLD



### SILVER



Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce  
(360) 428-8547  
[mountvernonchamber.com](http://mountvernonchamber.com)

# Chamber Celebrates a Successful Year and Recognizes Exceptional Achievement!



**Business of the Year**  
**Dwayne Lane's Auto Family**



**Business Person of the Year**  
**Amelia Cook, Goodwinds Composites**  
**Tony Cook, Cook CPAs and Consultants, PLLC**



**Making a Difference Award**  
**Robert Martin, SCORE**



**Rising Star**  
**The Skagit Table**



**Ambassador of the Year**  
**Tammy Reim-Ledbetter,**  
**Global Credit Union**



**Resilience Award**  
**Ernesto Mendoza,**  
**Garden Rosalyn**

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- **Making a Difference: Rob Martin, SCORE**

Rob has always treated everyone equally, with kindness and a keen sense of humor. His knowledge and service to our community has helped create a more equitable community for those experiencing barriers including disabilities. Currently, Rob spends countless hours providing consultations to our Latino entrepreneurs and training our Latino youth.

- **Business of the Year: Dwayne Lane Auto Family**

Dwayne Lane's motto, "We'll Take Care of You" applies to their customers and to the communities they serve. They regularly do service projects and help families in need, because they believe it's the right thing to do. They have been tremendous supporters of the Chamber, including sponsoring the Riverwalk Concert Series since its inception, and are now the presenting sponsors.

- **Business Person of the Year: Amelia Cook, Goodwinds Composites and Tony Cook, Cook CPAs and Consultants**

Amelia and Tony each run successful and growing businesses and still find time for extensive service to the community, through separate Rotary Clubs, the Chamber, and other business associations. They speak frequently based on their experience and expertise, including literacy, STEM education, women in business, accounting, and manufacturing.

- **Chamber Foundation Resilience Award: Ernesto Mendoza, Garden Rosalyn**

Ernesto came to the U.S. from Oaxaca, Mexico, in 2013. While working for one of our well-established tulip farms, he dreamed of starting his own. In 2021 he opened Garden Rosalyn, which has succeeded despite Ernesto not speaking English or much Spanish, opening during the pandemic, and limited resources. This year, Garden Rosalyn will have a separate location with their own product line.

## Calendar of Events

### Speaking of Women Coffee Chat

Wednesday, February 12

9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Union Block Bistro

614 S 1st St. Mount Vernon

[Register here](#)

[Series registration](#)



### Latino Business Leaders

#### Applying for Business Loans – In Spanish

Wednesday February 19

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Skagit Valley College, multi-purpose room

2405 East College Way

Mount Vernon

Also available via zoom

[Register here](#)



### Multi-Chamber After Hours at Barley & Brew

#### Taproom

Thursday, February 13

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

102 Woodworth St

Sedro-Woolley

### Ribbon Cutting at Totally Elegant Beauty

Sunday, February 16

12 p.m.

2222 Riverside Dr Ste 402

Mount Vernon

### Latino Business Leaders – In Spanish

#### Getting your Taxes Ready

Thursday February 20

6:00 to 8:00 PM

Via zoom

[Register here](#)



### Membership Luncheon Mount Vernon

#### Comprehensive Plan

Wednesday, February 26

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Mount Vernon Library Commons

208 W Kincaid St

Mount Vernon

[Register here](#)



## Thank You Renewing Members

### 35+ Years

Puget Sound Energy

### 25+ Years

Heritage Bank

Human Resources of Mount Vernon, LLC

Mount Vernon Christian School Association

Peoples Bank

### 20+ Years

Skagit Transit

### 10+ Years

Baker Septic Tank Pumping, Inc.

Global Credit Union

Primerica

Sakura Japanese Steakhouse & Sushi Bar

Skagit Tradition Realty

### Less than 5 Years

Brand Market Media

Kiwanis Club of Mount Vernon

Mutual of Omaha Reverse Mortgage

The Washington Shakespearean Festival

Total Employment And Management

## Announcing the Mount Vernon Chamber BASH

Last September we hosted our first “Building the Bridge” event. Garry Priam of Diventa Solutions facilitated a great conversation between our legacy members who shared their experience in multi-cultural settings and how they could build opportunities for successful collaboration between the Latino and non-Latino business communities.

This March we are launching a brand-new initiative to continue Building the Bridge. The Chamber BASH is the Business and Social Hour, “Latino” style where you will

- Enjoy a festive evening with your fellow business owners and entrepreneurs
- Get to truly know each other and build authentic connections
- Embrace the diversity of our business community
- Learn about different cultures and expand your market reach
- Of course, have fun (it’s the Latino way)

Save The Date - Tepic Mexican Restaurant - Thursday, March 27 at 5:30 p.m.

For the Chamber Bash Event flier and sponsorship information see the end of this newsletter. For more information contact Business Development and Foundation Director, Silvia Reed | (360) 395-2944 | [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com).

## Skagit Chili & Chowder Cook-Off April 5

**Sponsorship Deadline February 14**



**Craft Stove**



Amateurs and professionals are invited to compete on Saturday, April 5, at Farmstrong Brewing Company for the title of Skagit’s favorite chili and chowder. Cook-off attendees pick the winners!

Are you looking for visibility in a fun and exciting environment? The Skagit Chili & Chowder Cook-Off provides that and so much more! There are several options available for you to choose from. Find the complete list at the end of this newsletter. We have sponsorship levels available for every budget, which include opportunities through print and digital advertising as well as day-of-event visibility.

For questions regarding the cook-off or sponsorships, contact Jeremy Kindlund, Operations Director at (360) 428-8547 or [Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com). Find application and rules at the end of this newsletter. Good luck!

### Partner Members

Anderson Podiatry, Aquarius Collective, Bank of the Pacific, Birch Equipment Co., Chikara PR, LLC, Coastal Farm & Ranch, CPI Plumbing & Heating, Foothills Toyota, Global Credit Union, Haggen Food & Pharmacy, Hampton Inn & Suites, Kern Funeral Home, Landed Gentry Homes & Communities, Loving Farms, Mount Vernon School District, North Coast Credit Union, Northwest Escrow, LLC, PogoZone, Port of Skagit, Puget Sound Energy, Quality Gutters, Skagit Public Utility District 1, Skagit Valley Casino Resort, Skagit Regional Health, Skagit Speedway, Skagit Valley Food Co-op, Testing and Commissioning Services, LLC, WECU, White Branches, Williams & Nulle, PLLC, CPAs, Wingate by Wyndham

## Welcome New Members

### Northwest Organization for Animal Help (The NOAH Center)

Tasia Bogle

(360) 629-7055

[www.thenoahcenter.org](http://www.thenoahcenter.org)

31300 Brandstrom Rd

Stanwood

Dedicated to stopping the euthanasia of healthy, adoptable, treatable homeless dogs and cats. Family friendly adoptions and high quality spay and neuter services for low income residents.

### Quality Inn Mount Vernon

Marlyn Kirkpatrick

(360) 428-7020

[www.choicehotels.com](http://www.choicehotels.com)

1910 Freeway Dr

Mount Vernon

Free hot breakfast, indoor pool, pet friendly, free premium WiFi, laundry rooms. Rooms feature a TV, hair dryer, coffee maker, iron and ironing board. Friendly service at an affordable price.

### Search Hound LLC

Ted Sindell

(206) 954-8015

[www.searchhoundllc.com](http://www.searchhoundllc.com)

Your marketing companion. With over 30 years of marketing experience, we have extensive knowledge in how to get our clients found online. Contact us for a free assessment today.

### The Fixer Upper Co. LLC

Angelica Guerrero

(360) 550-8294

[www.fixer-upperco.com](http://www.fixer-upperco.com)

1310 E. College Way #201 A

Mount Vernon

Your go-to general contractor in Skagit County. We deliver high-quality craftsmanship and personalized service. We are committed to enhancing the beauty and functionality of your home.

### Totally Elegant Beauty

Lawanda Hampton

(512) 814-5797

[www.totallyelegantbeauty.mysalononline.com](http://www.totallyelegantbeauty.mysalononline.com)

2222 Riverside Dr Ste 402

Mount Vernon

Totally Elegant Beauty is a hair salon that helps customers who've lost their hair to various types of alopecia, aging or medical related reasons. We specialize in hair care and scalp care.

### Union Block Bistro

Heidi Herr

(360) 389-1664

[www.unionblockbistro.com](http://www.unionblockbistro.com)

614 S 1st St

Mount Vernon

An American bistro located in the historic Downtown Business district of Mount Vernon. Our menu is sourced locally and features dining options for everyone.



## Let's Meet for Coffee and a Conversation

As busy as you are, it's easy to lose track of why you joined the Chamber. We invite you to meet with us to review your current business goals, and how the Chamber can help you attain them. There are many ways we can assist you directly and work on your behalf, even if you don't have time to attend programs and events.

Let the Chamber take you for coffee or visit you, at your convenience. Contact Silvia Reed | (360) 395-2944 | [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com) to schedule time for the chamber to visit you.

## Board of Directors

### Chair - Tony White

Skagit Valley Food Co-op

### Vice Chair - Tammy Reim-Ledbetter

Global Credit Union

### Past Chair - Flora Lucatero

Children of the Valley

### Treasurer - Tony Cook

Cook CPAs and Consultants, PLLC

### Member at Large - Dr. Chris Villa

Skagit Valley College

### Lance Calloway

Association of General Contractors

### Matt Gill

Marathon Petroleum Corporation

### Katie Hayton

La Conner Inn

### Elizabeth Jennings

Community Action of Skagit County

### Robert Knoll

Puget Sound Energy

### Andrew Miller

Tulip Valley Farms

### Julia Phillip

Julia Phillip Realty

### Jon Ronngren

Mount Vernon School District

### Steve Sexton

City of Mount Vernon

### Danny Vera

Skagit Regional Health

## 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

### Barron KARES donates \$100,320 in 2024 to 12 nonprofits

Committed to sharing kindness and appreciation throughout Northwest Washington, Barron KARES donated a total of \$100,320 to 12 nonprofit organizations in 2024, the first year of the program.

Barron Heating AC Electrical & Plumbing is highlighting a different charity or non-profit organization each month that holds high esteem among Team Barron and within the communities it serves. Barron KARES (Kindness, Appreciation, Response, Empathy, and Service) provides a charitable donation of \$110 on select purchases, such as tankless water heaters, heat pumps, solar installations, generators, and more.

### Let's Dance!

### Live Big Band Music at the Mount Vernon Senior Center

# Let's Dance!

Experience the magic of

## Live Big Band Music!

With Skagit Swings Big Band

## Fridays 7-9 PM

 March 7 St. Patrick's Day Dance

 April 4 Spring Dance

 Sept 7 Fall Dance

 October 17 Halloween Dance

 December 19 Christmas Dance

 **Mt. Vernon Senior Center**  
1401 Cleveland Ave,  
Mount Vernon, WA  
98273

**Admission  
\$15 at the door**

Sponsored By

  
**THE BRIDGE**  
AT MOUNT VERNON  
A CENTURY PARK COMMUNITY





## Tune In

Chamber Chat  
Wednesday Mornings



8:05 a.m.



8:20 a.m.

For more member announcements, visit  
[mountvernonchamber.com/member-announcements](http://mountvernonchamber.com/member-announcements)

Send your announcements to  
[Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com)

# January in Pictures



**Ribbon Cutting at  
Tepic Mexican Restaurant**



**Latino Business Leaders**



**Skagit Chamber Alliance  
Legislative Send-Off**



**Multi-Chamber After Hours at  
Windermere Real Estate/Skagit Valley**



**Jaime Huss 2024 Ambassador  
Bowling Champion**



**Speaking of Women 2025 Kickoff  
Breakfast at COA**

## Ambassadors

- Chair - Betsy Anorbe**  
Betsy Anorbe Real Estate
- Silvia Alvarez**  
Triumph Teen Life Center
- Tim Alvord**  
Pape Machinery AG and Turf
- Clarissa De Vries**  
CrossCountry Mortgage, LLC
- Dan Dewispelaere-Rusch**  
Global Credit Union
- Morgan Elton**  
Country Financial - The Elton Group
- Jaime Huss**  
Washington Federal
- Karla Nelson**  
U.S. Bank - Riverside Dr
- Blake Rawlins**  
Guardian Northwest Title & Escrow
- Jessica Rodriguez**  
Children of the Valley After School Program
- Natalie Zavala**  
WAFD Insurance Group Inc.

## BRONZE LEGACY





# BECOME A SPONSOR OF AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP IN SKAGIT COUNTY!

Join Skagit Habitat for Humanity in unmasking the path to affordable housing at our Raise the Roof Gala & Benefit Auction!

Raise the Roof Gala & Benefit Auction  
April 12, 2025 | 5pm  
Swinomish Casino & Lodge



## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

This is the perfect opportunity to advertise your business, while helping us build 11 more permanently affordable homes in 2025!



\$5,000

### Roof Raiser Sponsor

- 10 VIP Tickets
- Half-page print ad in program
- Medium logo featured on event advertising materials
- Recognition on our website, newsletter, and social media



\$1,000

### Window Opener Sponsor

- 2 VIP Tickets
- Small logo in program
- Recognition on our website, newsletter, and social media



\$2,500

### Wall Builder Sponsor

- 6 VIP Tickets
- 1/4 page print ad in program
- Small logo featured on event advertising materials
- Recognition on our website, newsletter, and social media

For more information and opportunities, contact Ian Houben, Development Director  
(360) 428-9402 ex. 116  
[i.houben@skagithabitat.com](mailto:i.houben@skagithabitat.com)





# THE CHAMBER BASH

Tepic Mexican Restaurant  
Thursday March 27  
5:30 - 7:00 PM



## YOU ARE INVITED

embracing the diversity of our community  
brought to you by Latino Business Leaders

**No RSVP required**



Silvia Reed | (360) 395-2944 | [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com)  
[www.MountVernonChamber.com](http://www.MountVernonChamber.com)

A Mount Vernon Chamber program designed for business women to connect with one another, empower each other and mentor upcoming business leaders



# SPEAKING OF WOMEN

## 2025 SERIES

### EMPOWERMENT PANELS

THE NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN LEADERS

MARCH 12 | 4:30 - 6:00 PM

WOMEN SHAPING THE FUTURE

JUNE 11 | 4:30 - 6:00 PM

WOMEN IN POWER

SEPT. 10 | 4:30 - 6:00 PM

### COFFEE CHATS (Jan - Nov.)

Second Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM

(No coffee chat in months when panels are held)

## WHY JOIN?

- Feel inspired and empowered
- Experience a sense of belonging
- Expand your professional network with like-minded women



## JOINING FEE

**Members: \$180.00**

**Non-members: \$250.00**

**Students: \$100.00**

Includes admission to panels and hors d'oeuvres.

Coffee Chats food items paid separately.

Held at various locations

Student Fees available for non-members only

For information

Silvia Reed | [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com) | (360) 395-2944

[www.MountVernonChamber.com](http://www.MountVernonChamber.com)



## **SPEAKING OF WOMEN**

### **2025 Partnership Opportunities**

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

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#### **Series Sponsor**

**\$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 all 2025 empowerment 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

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### **2025 Schedule**

#### **Panels**

March 12 4:30—6:00 PM	The Next Generation of Women Leaders
June 11 4:30—6:00 PM	Women Shaping the Future
September 10 4:30—6:00 PM	Women in Power

#### **Coffee Chats at 9:00 AM**

Jan. 8	Feb. 12	April 9	May 14
July 9	Aug. 13	Oct. 8	Nov. 12

Panels and Coffee Chats are held at various locations



**Sponsorship Opportunities**  
**Saturday, April 5, 2025**  
**at Farmstrong Brewing Company**

**Royal Sponsor: \$1,250**  
Company logo prominently displayed on promotional poster  
Company name on printed and digital marketing materials  
    Logo with a link to your website on MountVernonChamber.com  
    Social media promotion on Chamber channels  
    Mentions in both the weekly and monthly Chamber newsletters  
Display table at the event  
Special recognition during the event  
Special recognition at Membership Luncheon

**Major Sponsor: \$550**  
Company logo on poster  
Company name on printed and digital marketing materials  
    Logo with a link to your website on MountVernonChamber.com  
    Social media promotion on Chamber channels  
    Mentions in both the weekly and monthly Chamber newsletters  
Recognition during the event  
Recognition at Membership Luncheon

**Supporting Sponsor: \$325**  
Company logo displayed on promotional poster  
Company name on printed and digital marketing materials  
    Logo with a link to your website on MountVernonChamber.com  
    Mentions in both the weekly and monthly Chamber newsletters  
Recognition during the event

Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce  
PO Box 1007  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
(360) 428-8547  
Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com





The event is on Saturday, April 5, from 1pm to 4pm.

Teams must submit an entry Form with a \$35 check to the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce by March 17 to reserve a spot.

Farmstrong Brewing Company will open at 10am on April 5 for setting 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



# Partnership Opportunities

Latino Business Leaders (LBL) is a Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce Foundation program designed to facilitate the advancement and participation of Latino businesses in our region through business training programs, networking, marketing and mentorship. LBL runs between August 2024 and May 2025.

## LBL Presenting Partner

**\$2500.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in all LBL marketing including website, social media and newsletter
- ⇒ Company name in all radio announcements
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for participants at all business training sessions
- ⇒ Marketing table (or similar depending on space) at 3 LBL Social-Networking events

## LBL Partner (3 business training sessions)

**\$500.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in LBL marketing including website, social media and newsletter
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for participants at 3 business training sessions

## Latino Initiative Supporter

**\$250.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in event marketing
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for LBL participants

## LBL Social-Networking Event Supporter

**\$250.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in event marketing including website, social media and newsletter
- ⇒ Opportunity to speak in front of the group
- ⇒ Marketing table at event (or similar depending on space)

## LBL Business Training Supporter (1 session)

**\$200.00**

- ⇒ Company name and/or logo in LBL marketing
- ⇒ Company logo on the event page and displayed during the sponsored session
- ⇒ Your marketing material available for session participants

### **2024-2025 Schedule**

#### **LBL Social-Networking Events**

Held on in August—December and April

#### **Latino Initiatives**

Special sessions designed to support the Latino community and based on specific community needs.

#### **Business Training Program**

Free monthly training sessions in Spanish. Held the second Wednesday of the month unless otherwise noted in event page.



**MOUNTVERNONCHAMBER.COM**

Silvia Reed | [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com) | Direct: (360) 395-2944 - Cell (360) 305-0895