

# CHAMBER CHAT

January 2025

## Happy New Year!

I truly hope that you are excited about the possibilities for your work and personal lives in '25. Last month I wrote about how long-term strategic planning and committing to achieving goals can lead to significant accomplishments. The beginning of each year is a natural time to look ahead and make plans for our businesses, and to celebrate accomplishments.

### Things to think about for a successful year for your business or organization:

**Artificial intelligence:** AI can help you with routine tasks and complex operations. You already are using AI, when your computer fixes your spelling and grammar in a Word document. That's a simple example of how it saves time and limits human error. There are many other uses. Consider creative projects, marketing, customer service, analytics, to name a few. As you fully integrate AI, your organization will be more competitive.

**Transform your office and culture:** Our experience with work during the pandemic dramatically changed expectations of what we all expect from our work environment. Have you thought about what's important to employees and the work/life balance they've come to expect? Are you insisting on all work being done in the office? Is your office or business a place where employees and customers enjoy being? Are you investing in your employees by investing in their skills and leadership potential? Some changes in these areas can make a big difference.

Taking time to look back instead of forward, the **Chamber's Awards Luncheon** on the 22nd, will honor some outstanding individuals and businesses, who contributed greatly to our community and to the success of the Chamber in 2024. We will also highlight the achievements of the Chamber, which were made possible because of, and with you, our valued members!

Andy Mayer, President & CEO



### GOLD



### SILVER



Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce

(360) 428-8547

[mountvernonchamber.com](http://mountvernonchamber.com)

# Calendar of Events

## Speaking of Women 2025 Kickoff Breakfast

Wednesday, January 8  
9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.  
COA Mexican Eatery  
1810 Riverside Dr  
Mount Vernon  
[Register here](#)



## Latino Business Leaders Preparando sus Impuestos Getting your Taxes Ready

Wednesday, January 15  
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Skagit Valley College Multi-Purpose Room  
[Register here](#)



## Skagit Chamber Alliance 2025 Legislative Send-Off

Thursday, January 9  
9 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.  
Burlington City Council Chambers  
833 S. Spruce St. Burlington  
or via Zoom  
[Register here for Zoom](#)

## Ribbon Cutting at Tepic Mexican Restaurant

Thursday, January 16  
5 p.m.  
150 Cascade Mall Dr  
Burlington

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

Thursday, January 9  
4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.  
1030 E College Way  
Mount Vernon

## Annual Awards Luncheon

Wednesday, January 22  
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
208 W Kincaid St  
Mount Vernon  
[Register here](#)



# Thank You Renewing Members

### 35+ Years

Community Action of Skagit County  
Skagit Public Utility District  
Skagit Publishing

### 10+ Years

Allixo Technologies  
Chicago Title Company  
Skagit Valley Food Co-op

### 5+ Years

Dwayne Lane's Auto Family  
Farmstrong Brewing Company  
Fernandez Dental  
La Conner Channel Lodge  
La Zeta 103.3 FM - Bustos Media LLC  
Minuteman Press  
Mount Vernon Grocery Outlet  
PFLAG Skagit  
Thrivent Financial - Shawn Steffens

### 25+ Years

The Learning Ladder Child  
Development Center

### 15+ Years

Boys & Girls Clubs of Skagit County  
Country Meadow Village  
Fire Mountain Solar LLC  
Foss Heating & Cooling  
Lefeber Turf Farm  
Lithtex Northwest  
Lyon's Furniture  
Tulip Valley Winery  
United Way of Skagit County

### 20+ Years

Copy & Print Store

### Less than 5 Years

Center for Inclusive Entrepreneurship  
Chad Fisher Construction  
Country Financial - The Elton Group  
Diventa Solutions LLC  
Farmers Equipment Co.  
Les Schwab Tire Centers  
Parker, Smith & Feek  
Temperate Habits Brewing Company  
WECU

## Speaking of Women is Back

Speaking of Women returns this January, bigger and better. The program has been designed for businesswomen to connect with one another, empower each other and mentor upcoming business leaders. Starting this year, the series will also welcome non-members and students who may not have a business or are not yet part of our local workforce.

The 2025 Speaking of Women Kickoff Breakfast will be held on Wednesday January 8 at COA Mexican Eatery, Mount Vernon. The series includes 03 panels:

- March 12th at 4:30 PM The Next Generation of Women Leaders
- June 11th at 4:30 PM Women Shaping the Future
- Sept. 10th at 4:30 PM Women in Power

There will also be 8 morning coffee chats held throughout the year.

While the panels include a social time and presentations that inspire and empower participants, the coffee chats are designed to provide a more intimate setting where participants can deepen their business relationships and share their experience in a welcoming environment.

For sponsorship information, please contact Silvia Reed | (360) 395-2944 | [Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Silvia@MountVernonChamber.com)

## Skagit Chili & Chowder Cook-Off



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 by voting with their bowls. Interested in sponsoring the event? 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 the sponsorship flyer, application to compete and the 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

### CPI Plumbing & Heating

Steve Murray  
(360) 822-9306

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

1900 Railroad Avenue

Mount Vernon

Plumbing, heating or air conditioning needs? Don't Cry, Call CPI! Offering a complete range of plumbing, heating and air conditioning repairs, replacement, installation and maintenance, no job is too complex for our experts.



### Halvor Homes, LLC

David Halvorsen  
(360) 410-5323

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

Mount Vernon

Halvor Homes Real Estate: Exceptional real estate services. We are a team of experienced and knowledgeable agents who are committed to helping you sell, buy, or rent a property.



### Enterprise Truck Rental of Mount Vernon

Alex McKinlay  
(360) 610-4299

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

111 Stewart Rd

Mount Vernon

We offer a selection of cargo vans, refrigerated trucks, box trucks, dump trucks, tow capable pick-up trucks and flatbed trucks at daily, weekly, monthly and yearly rates.

### Merry Maids

Varum Gill

(360) 707-2595

[www.merrymaids.com/burlington](http://www.merrymaids.com/burlington)

145 Cascade Pl 108

Burlington

We are dedicated to giving our customers back the time they deserve to enjoy the things they love. Our house cleaning services cover every inch of your space.

### Skagit Hometown Values Magazine

Sarah Herlickson

(360) 399-2199

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

320 E Fairhaven Ave

Burlington

Saving people money and growing sales for local merchants through a coupon magazine.

## Secure Marketing Opportunities for 2025

Do you have plans to increase your marketing presence or support the Chamber? Now is the time to act on marketing and sponsorship opportunities.

The Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce has the following opportunities available: Monthly Luncheons, Skagit Chili & Chowder Cook-Off, Riverwalk Summer Concert Series, BrewFest on the Skagit, Your Chamber This Week, Chamber Chat Newsletter Inserts, and banner ads on [www.mountvernonchamber.com](http://www.mountvernonchamber.com).

These events and publications are a great way to increase exposure to fellow Chamber members and the community at large, and the Chamber makes it easy to participate. See the marketing opportunities in this newsletter for details on each sponsorship, as well as other opportunities available with the Chamber.

Contact Jeremy Kindlund, Operations Director to reserve your chance to gain exposure at (360) 428-8547 or [Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com).



## 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

### Dr. Amanda Rentschler

Roosevelt Dental Center

### 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

### 2025 Skagit Valley Tulip Festival Poster is Here



The beautiful artwork shown above in our 2025 poster was painted by Mary Warden from Leavenworth, WA. To read more about her and her artistic journey, head over to our blog page on our website (link below). Her original tulip festival poster artwork will be on display at our office in downtown Mount Vernon. Feel free to come by anytime between 10AM-4PM Monday through Friday to view it.

### [READ MORE ABOUT THE ARTIST & HER WORK](#)

If you're interested in preordering a 2025 SVTF poster of your own, you can shop it online on our website. All 2025 SVTF poster preorders will ship out on January 24, 2025.

### [PREORDER HERE](#)



## 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)

# December in Pictures



**Latino Business Youth Graduation**



**Multi-Chamber After Hours  
at Avenue Catering**



**Ambassador Bowling Party**



**Chamber Connections Brunch**



**Biz Buzz Networking Luncheon**



**Latino Business Leaders  
Holiday Social**

## 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)



# 2025 MARKETING & SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

<p><b>Membership Meeting Sponsor</b></p> <p>Includes your logo in the monthly Chamber Chat, weekly email, website event calendar, newsletter email to over 900 businesses, 5 minute presentation at the meeting, display table and exclusive right to distribute flyers on the tables.</p>	<p>\$300 (Act quickly because these go fast!)</p>	<p><b>Exclusive Sponsor of "Your Chamber This Week" Email</b></p> <p>Your display ad or logo sent to over 900 email addresses each week with an active link to your website. We have a special rate for yearly sponsors.</p>	<p>\$100/week or 12 for \$1,000</p>
<p><b>Skagit Chili &amp; Chowder Cook-Off</b></p> <p>A fantastic way to get exposure as Skagit County's best battle it out. This competition features both amateurs and professionals and is a sure fire hit with the crowd!</p>	<p>\$325-\$1,250  Sponsorships Available</p>	<p><b>Chamber Chat Newsletter Inserts</b></p> <p>You provide the PDF, we do the rest! Perfect for events, sales and announcements; sent to over 900 business professionals in the monthly Chamber Chat Newsletter.</p>	<p>\$100/week or 12 for \$1,000</p>
<p><b>Riverwalk Summer Concert Series</b></p> <p>A family-friendly event on the Riverwalk in downtown Mount Vernon Concert Series featuring an eclectic mix of genres from talented local musicians. Sponsorships include radio promotion, social media, display table and option to announce your business during the concert.</p>	<p>\$350-\$5,000  Sponsorships Available</p>	<p><b>Chamber Chat Newsletter Ad</b></p> <p>Place your ad in the award-winning Chamber Chat newsletter and be seen every month. Reach out to fellow business leaders and potential customers with over 10,000 copies distributed annually.</p>	<p>\$700-\$1,500  Varies by Size</p>
<p><b>BrewFest on the Skagit</b></p> <p>Cold beer, cider, wine, delicious food, fantastic music, leisure games and a view of the Skagit River. BrewFest on the Skagit has it all! A portion of tickets sales is donated to the Lincoln Theatre Foundation.</p>	<p>\$550-\$5,000  Sponsorships Available</p>	<p><b>MountVernonChamber.com Display Ads</b></p> <p>Extend your marketing reach to over 136,000 annual visitors on our website with your display ad linked directly to your website. Three sizes/ styles of display ads available.</p>	<p>Cost varies by size and length of ad run.</p>
<p><b>New Member Welcome Basket</b></p> <p>Be one of the first to introduce your business to new chamber members by providing your company swag or special offer, to be included in every welcome basket.</p>	<p><b>FREE</b>  Just supply us with your promotional items.</p>	<p><b>Door Prizes</b></p> <p>Keep your business name and brand in front of potential customers by donating a door prize during any one of our events.</p>	<p><b>FREE</b>  Provide us your door prize prior to start of event.</p>

**Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

For more information contact Jeremy Kindlund - (360) 428-8547, or [Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com](mailto:Jeremy@MountVernonChamber.com).  
Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce - PO BOX 1007 Mount Vernon, WA 98273, [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