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March Calendar*

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March 2010

The Chamber is Also a Visitor Information Center

*By Geri Pilcher, Tourist
Information Specialist*

Most of you know the Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce as an organization that supports Freeland's business owners. But did you know that the Chamber is also a Visitor Information Center?

In 2009, we greeted over 4,000 visitors to our visitor information center, answered their questions, distributed brochures and maps, and directed them to local businesses, recreation activities and events. While a number of our visitors are from Washington, they also hail from the other 49 states, such as California, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Texas and Hawaii. We've also had visitors from other countries, some as close as Canada, and others as far away as England, Brazil and Nepal.

We answer a lot of interesting questions here at the Visitor Center. Many times

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Munch a Bunch of Lunch!

By Leanne Finlay

The Greater Freeland Members and Guests Boxed Lunch meeting will be Tuesday, March 23.

This is the first 2010 lunchtime networking/educational meeting, and we hope you will join us! Our guest speaker will be Matt Kukuk, the Resource Enhancement Manager for Island County Public Health.

Matt is not a boring bureaucrat! We have asked Matt to speak a bit about a variety of topics, and encourage any/all of your questions at this informal Q & A session. Your Chamber Board members heard Matt speak at the Board retreat in January, and wanted all of you to have a chance to meet him.

Matt's topics will include the South Holmes Harbor Shellfish Protection District and the Island County Salmon Recovery Program. He will also provide information regarding the new septic inspection and maintenance requirements.

Matt's experience includes critical areas (wetlands, streams, bald eagle

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Marian Myszkowski photo

Matt Kukuk, Island County Resource Enhancement Manager, shared his expertise in shoreline issues, water quality and county government policies at the Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce Board retreat in January. He will be the featured speaker at the Chamber's lunchtime networking meeting.

WHEN: Tuesday, March 23. 11:45 – 1:00

WHERE: Windermere Real Estate Conference Room, 5531 Freeland Avenue, Freeland - 360-331-6006

LUNCH MENU: \$10 Box Lunch (\$15 non-members - feel free to bring a guest!) RSVP needed by Friday 3/19.

Our boxed lunch menu features a delicious choice of Tuna, Grilled Chicken or Corned Beef sandwiches on whole grain bread - coleslaw or potato salad and a cookie for dessert. Boxed lunches prepared by Gerry's Kitchen of Freeland! RSVP directly to the Chamber, 360-331-1980 or freeland@whidbey.com.

Boxed Lunch

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habitat, etc), shoreline management and code enforcement.

This will be a great setting to ask any questions you may have regarding topics such as Island County's zoning, clearing and grading and stormwater ordinances, as well as the building code.

Chamber President Chet Ross will give an update on the Freeland sewer project status, as well as an update on other Chamber events for 2010.

Our boxed lunch menu features a delicious choice of Tuna, Grilled Chicken or Corned Beef sandwiches on whole grain bread - coleslaw or potato salad and a cookie for dessert at a cost of \$10. Boxed lunches prepared by Gerry's Kitchen of Freeland! (RSVP directly to the Chamber, not to Gerry's.)

Chet will open the lunch meeting at noon. If you cannot be there right on time, please come anyway! For reservations or questions, contact the Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce at 360-331-1980 or freeland@whidbey.com.

In recognition and support of our business members, we are planning a variety of events in 2010 at as many of our member business locations as possible.

If you have a space good for a meeting (lunch or evening), or would like your business to host a business "After Hours" social event, please contact the Chamber at freeland@whidbey.com.

Business "After Hours" events are also a great way to show off your "Behind the Scenes" work areas, too - everyone loves these tours and information!

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"Behind the Scenes" Business After Hours

Thursday, March 11, 5:30 - 8:30 PM

O'Brien Bookkeeping & Raco Construction

1804 Scott Road, Suite 103, Freeland

Chamber members and their guests are invited to the Business After Hours for O'Brien Bookkeeping & Raco Construction.

Welcome Amber O'Brien and Michael O'Brien to their new offices and meet your fellow chamber colleagues in a happy-hour atmosphere. Parking is available in the China City parking lot.

Chiropractic Zone Moves to Bayview

Dr. Craig Weiner, D.C. and his staff have relocated to their new offices in the Sears House at Bayview Corner.

Joining Dr. Craig will be massage therapist Gina Ames, LMT and yoga teacher Annapoorne Colangelo.

Dr. Craig's Transformational Dialogues will continue in April, and an opening celebration will take place on April 7. Watch for details.

Small Business Tax Workshop Offered

The Everett office of the Washington State Department of Revenue is hosting a free workshop for new and small business owners from 1 to 4 p.m. Thursday, March 11, at the Everett Public Library, 2702 Hoyt Ave.

Participants will learn about Washington excise taxes, reporting classifications, deductions, tax incentives, sales tax collection, and record-keeping requirements. All receive a workbook and helpful reference guide to Department of Revenue rules and regulations.

To register, visit www.dor.wa.gov or call 425-356-4800. A complete schedule of workshops and a streaming video version of the workshop are also available on the website.

NEW AROUND HERE

**John L. Scott Whidbey
Island South**
Michele Rozinek, Owner
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John L. Scott Whidbey Island South has the expertise, knowledge and desire to represent your residential or commercial properties or your land acquisition for new construction. We also offer a full-service property management division for residential, commercial and vacation rentals.

'Behind the Scenes' at All Coastal Properties

Members of the Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce gathered at the first Business After Hours of 2010 on Wednesday, Feb. 10, held at the new office of All Coastal Properties. Clockwise from top, owners Lynn Bangston and Carol Ann Mitchell welcome guests; Robin Corum of the Whidbey Examiner and Julie Joslyn of Building Source sample the refreshments; Bangston and Joselyn share a laugh at the networking event; Ryan Porter of Porter Whidbey Insurance, Inc., the Chamber's newest director, chats with Louis Muniz of Wells Fargo Home Mortgage.



Chamber Also Serves as a Visitor Information Center

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we know the answer, but if not, we usually can find it by searching the Internet, by checking the Freeland or Whidbey/Camano Islands websites, or by asking a co-worker. Some of the more frequently asked questions we routinely answer include the following:

1. Where can we – hook up our RV, go fishing and do we need a license, get free WiFi, go wine tasting, go camping, walk our dogs on the beach, get our cars licensed, see the whales?

2. How do we – make reservations for the Port Townsend ferry, get a haircut right now, get married on the beach, get a fire permit, book the Freeland Hall?

3. Where's the – monastery, store, restaurant, post

office, sheriff's office?

While our office is well stocked with Chamber members' brochures and business cards, we also have an abundance of information on recreational activities and events.

One of our most popular handouts is our green, tri-fold Whidbey/Camano Islands map with travel notes on 26 destinations, such as Greenbank Farm, Ebey's Landing and Freeland, as well as a list of major events and activities throughout the year throughout the two islands. It's a hit with locals and tourists alike.

Another very popular map visitors consistently want is the Whidbey Island Map, which includes a street index of all the cities (plus

Deception Pass and Naval Air Station Whidbey), places of interest, government buildings and area recreation parks.

This map also has lots of advertising space available for your business too. Other favorites of locals and tourists are the sailing schedule for the ferries and the Island Transit bus schedule.

The Visitor Information Center is stocked with several guides, which are great for newcomers who have moved to the island.

The Whidbey Island Newcomers' and Visitors' Guide contains information on everything, including reference guides, things to do, community profiles of our towns and a newcomers' section.

The Whidbey Island Almanac is the complete guide to living on Whidbey. The Whidbey/Camano Islander is the official Island County visitor guide and contains information about each town, wineries and coffee houses, gardens and farms, art galleries, antique and thrift shops, the performing arts, the great outdoors, and island events.

We hand out a lot of these, and each has advertising space for your business.

There's never a dull moment here at the Visitor Information Center. But the thing I enjoy most about working as a Tourist Information Specialist is interacting with the most interesting characters--whether citizens of the Island or those from faraway lands – and helping them “discover a place called Freeland.”

Calendar

March 4, Thursday, 5:30 PM - Chamber Board meeting, China City, Freeland. All members welcome.

March 11, Thursday, 5:30 - 8:30 PM - Behind the Scenes / Business After Hours. Hosted by Raco Construction & O'Brien Bookkeeping, 1804 Scott Road, Suite 103, Freeland. Parking at China City lot.

March 23, Tuesday, 11 AM - Freeland Chamber Luncheon, Windermere Real Estate Conference Room, 5531 Freeland Ave., Freeland. Guest speaker from Island County. Boxed lunch from Gerry's, \$10; RSVP to the Chamber, 360-331-1980 or freeland@whidbey.com.

April 1, Thursday, 5:30 PM - Chamber Board meeting, China City, Freeland. All members welcome.

April 7, Wednesday, 5 - 8 PM - Joint Behind the Scenes / Business After Hours. Hosted by The Chiropractic Zone and Bayview Corner.

**Be a Part of Freeland's Future
Join the Greater Freeland
Chamber of Commerce**

Advertise with the Chamber

If you want an inexpensive way to promote your business, consider advertising in the Chamber newsletter or place your brochures at the Visitors Center Kiosk at Ken's Korner.

Newsletter Ad Rates

- Business card (2" x 3") = \$25**
- 1/4 page inside = \$35**
- 1/2 page inside = \$50**
- Full page insert = \$75**

Kiosk Advertising Space

- Small = \$250**
- Large = \$650**

Contact the Greater Freeland Chamber of Commerce at 360-331-1980 or visit www.freeland-wa.org.

Greater Freeland Chamber Board of Directors

Chet Ross: President, 360-331-1980

Richard Davis: Vice-President, Edward Jones, 360-331-4450

Lyn Gaustad: Secretary, Whidbey Vision Care, 360-331-8424

Anne Bobinac: Treasurer, Whidbey Island Bank, Retail Branch Manager, 360-331-5868

Virginia Bloom: Director and Vice Secretary, Greenbank Farm, 360-678-7171

Louis Muniz: Director and Vice Treasurer, Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, 360-331-5952

Leanne Finlay: Director, Windermere Real Estate/East, Inc., 206-310-1477

Marian Myszkowski: Director, Goosefoot, 360-321-4232

Ryan Porter: Director, Porter Whidbey Insurance, Inc., 360-331-1508.

Angela Vosburg Ng: Director, China City, 360-346-0061

Susie Yeilding: Director, Allstate Insurance, 360-331-6424

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