Hello everyone, this is Scott Filkins here at the Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce! I’m here to announce the date for the Business Expo, it will be Thursday March 1, 2012 from 1pm – 7pm at the convention center! We are taking reservations for this event and we’re also proud to announce new lower Member pricing for this premiere business event!

One of the most cost effective exposure strategies that you may employ is to participate in your communities Business EXPO!

Now more than ever you need to showcase your people, information, products, and/or services to as wide an audience as possible in order to help grow your business!

For more information or booth prices, please contact myself at 248-2021 x-110 scott@yakima.org or Carolyn Gray at 248-2021x-114 Carolyn@yakima.org

Thanks to the host of November’s “Business After Hours”, Rexford Manor at 1010 N. 34th in Yakima. Don’t miss your chance to join us monthly, it’s a member benefit that you should not pass up. Business After Hours is back with great presentations, food and opportunities to meet your fellow Chamber businesses!
Welcome New Businesses!

**AT & T - Yakima**
Kristal George – Central WA Area Manager
t Kristal.george@att.com or www.att.com/wireless – 509-248-7194
901 W. Yakima Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902

**AT&T – Union Gap**
Kristal George – Central WA Area Manager
t kristal.george@att.com or www.att.com/wireless – 509-453-3445
2401 S. 1st Street Suite 120, Yakima, WA 98903

**Big Lots!**
Forest Newcomb – Store Manager
www.biglots.com – 509-452-2958
120 N. Fair Avenue, Yakima, WA 98901

**Jim & Denise Nelson – ACN Independent Business Owner**
Lia Jennings – Qualified Team Trainer
t eartpower@msn.com or www.acnicom – 509-654-9086

**Inland Pipe and Supply presents the Kitchen & Bath Showplace**
Kristie Cannon – Showroom Manager
k kristicannon@hajoca.com or www.inlandpipeyakima.com
509-248-2561
102 S. Front Street, Yakima, WA 98901

**Yakima Youth Soccer Association**
Bo Gottfried – Board President
yysaoffice@ymc.org or www.yysa.org
509-452-1392
313 S. 11th Avenue Suite B, Yakima, WA 98902

We are pleased to announce the following new businesses have joined your Chamber in the month of October 2011! Please support these businesses & associations who support your Chamber!

**Kimmel Athletic Supply Co., Inc**
Steve Tri – Team Salesman
str@kimmelathletic.com or www.kimmelathletic.com - 509-573-9001
2105 W. Lincoln Avenue, Yakima, WA 98902

**Legal Shield – Francis Coillot, Independent Associate**
Francis Coillot – Small Business Manager & Group Specialist
franciscoillot@prepaidlegal.com or www.prepaidlegal.com/hub/franciscoillot
509-594-7257

**The Home Depot #4727**
Salvador Cobar – General Manager
salvador_f_cobarjr@home depot.com or www.homedepot.com – 509-452-3016
2115 S. 1st Street, Yakima, WA 98903

**Yakima Valley Credit Union**
Christine Cote, Cisco Tech
Jon DeVayne, Yakima Valley Growers and Shippers
Ryan Smith, Peterson CPA's and Advisors
Adam Olsen, The Olsen Companies
Julie Grieb, Treveri Cellars

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I just wanted to repeat what I said last year as your Chairman and point out the underlined items that have been achieved. And I just heard last week that J.C. Penny’s is on their way back with a couple of other new additions. Please join me in Dreaming Bigger for the Yakima Valley from Selah to Prosser. Let’s work together and define what community means to us as citizens and remember to look at the big picture. Yakima is truly “Acres of Diamonds”!

Dear Santa,
I want it all… more Yakima business development, prospering businesses, and businesses that create living wage jobs. I want family friendly entertainment, a water park, a ball park, and fun things to do with riverside development venues… like a kayaking station, a place to rent bikes on the Greenway, and a place to get hot cocoa or espresso as I’m strolling along!

I want the Greenway to receive all the funding possible to complete the trail. I want the Capitol Theater funded so they can have more plays like Cats or Phantom of the Opera. I want the Fairgrounds to have what they need to grow, rebuild and maintain historical value in our community. I want the Visitors & Convention Bureau to continue to make improvements like the new plaza… a Valley wow! I want more shopping choices…like Trader Joes, Chico’s, and I want Nordstrom’s back. I want us to spend our money where we live.

My list does not end there, I want a community that is strong, that respects diversity, and supports every opportunity for commerce. I want people to do the job they are elected to do. I want to see the next generation of the Yakima Valley running for positions in the City Council and County Commissioner offices. I do not want the past replayed…. I want a future made up of dreamers, believers, and risk takers!

I want Yakima to be a tourist hot spot…better yet I want it to be the top destination in Washington State. I want more wine… to taste, more microbrews bottled, and restaurants that compliment every flavor. I want to go to a place where I can dance the night away. I want to sit in the park and watch families play, couples hold hands, and see children shine.

I want a dozen roses…yellow… my favorite, given to me by the love of my life, my husband. I want every man and woman to experience the love I have. I want my family to prosper here in the Valley. I want to live my faith not by words but actions. I want a cure for cancer. I want the freedom to speak life into the place I live. I want political correctness to be corrected, and last but not least I want to know my children's future is protected by the actions and decisions made by Yakima’s leadership.

I want every citizen to prosper, have hope, and to walk in faith. I will not listen to the voice of doubt, destruction, and dismay. I want you all to believe that Yakima’s best is yet to come and you will be a part of it, maybe the start of it.

Dear Santa,
I want it all for Yakima… I want Yakima to believe… I want you all to want it all!

Merry Christmas and May God Bless you!

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Free Microsoft courses extended through October 2012

By Sheryl Hutchison, Communications Director—Employment Security Department

If you own or work for a business that uses Microsoft software, here’s a deal that you can’t beat. The Washington State Employment Security Department has extended its contract with Microsoft to make the company’s entire suite of online courses available for free to Washington residents through October 2012.

The offer is open to anyone of working age – both the employed and unemployed. Employment Security Commissioner Paul Trause said the free e-learning is part of the department’s efforts to help improve the computers skills of Washington’s work force.

‘Many people are familiar with Microsoft products, but few are truly expert on even one of the software programs – let alone three or four of them,’ said Paul Trause. The free courses are a great way to improve the computer skills of one employee – or even hundreds of employees.

The Microsoft e-learning library includes hundreds of courses covering every software program produced by the company since 2002. Registration is handled through local WorkSource centers. You can learn more about Microsoft e-learning and submit a registration request online at www.wa.gov/esd/e-learning. Or you can contact your WorkSource business services representative for personalized service; office listings are posted on Go2WorkSource.com – click on the “WorkSource Offices” tab near the top-right.
The holidays are upon us. My first piece of advice is a carry-over from last month...shop locally!
Secondly, give meaningful gifts. Can you remember the gifts you received or even gave last year? You may remember one or two but probably not most of them. When my grandson was born, I had no idea what to get a toddler for Christmas. I racked my brain and came up with monogrammed beer steins. His initials are MVP, so the steins were a hit; my daughter put them away for when he turns 21. But you know...she never forgot that gift. I can't remember what I gave my other grandkids on their first Christmas.
Holidays can be costly...The cost of travel, food, entertaining others, gifts, beverages all add up to a healthy sum. Spend responsibly and again please make it local.
This time of year can also be dangerous, the roads will be icy, people driving with too much to drink...be careful, it’s a jungle out there...with ice. Bah...hum bug.
But you know, though you may never guess, the holidays are my favorite time of year. Reading by the fireplace with a hot toddy is nice. Having family and friends over is good. A break from work is welcomed. And the music! It is just a nice time of year.
It is a time to reflect on our triumphs, learn from our mistakes, and anticipate a new year that will hopefully be better.
The Chamber in 2012 will be stronger. We are setting a focused direction. Our new leadership and staff face challenges head on and are making progress.
On a final note, I would like to remind everyone that these economic times are harder on some than on others. Do you remember how exciting a simple wrapped gift and a family holiday dinner was as a child? Let's help make sure every family in our community has the opportunity to make those memories this year. Please give what you can to any of the many local charities and help spread the holiday spirit to those less fortunate.
I am hopeful that the economy will pick up this year, It has been down too long. So to all of you, I wish you a Happy Holiday and a prosperous New Year.
I n a world loaded with marketing options and information overload I'm often asked by new and existing business owners for a simple, inexpensive way to increase their local visibility and marketing efforts to produce more opportunities and sales. Without a doubt, I always ask a stunningly simple question, Are you a member of your local chamber of commerce? I get one of three answers:

1. Yes
2. No, but tell me more
3. We used to be a member

Now I know every person has opinions but I'd like you to take a moment to read this brief article to discover seven reasons why I strongly feel that every business and non-profit organization should be a member of their local chamber regardless of the size of their organization, marketing budget, years in business, or even if they've heard or possibly had a negative chamber experience in the past. In light of the current challenges in the economy, this article is even more relevant than when I first wrote it two-years ago.

1. Visibility. Yes, you've heard it said time and time again, that out of sight means out of mind. This is not a smart strategy for any business, especially when times are good. A market can change quickly. As Jim Collins says, good is the enemy of great. This is a great statement, but I'd like to add to it as it relates to marketing. While good is the enemy of great, complacency and short term thinking is the enemy of sustained marketing breakthroughs. Let's look at a real world example of chamber complacency in action. Having worked with hundreds of chambers throughout North America, I'm simply baffled that within many communities how few real estate agents and automotive sales reps are either non-existent or barely active within their local chamber. In these two highly competitive and crowded markets you'd think these folks would do anything to stand out from the competition and fully leverage the chamber to get an edge. Nope. It's as if they have no idea the local chamber exists and how it can benefit their business.

2. Access. Unless you're crazy or like consistent rejection, no one enjoys making cold calls all day long. It's a painful, tedious process that often wastes far too much time and mentally drains even the most upbeat and friendly person after a while. When you join a chamber and actively get involved you'll discover that meeting prospects who may have an interest or who can refer you to key contacts you're trying to reach, is a huge benefit of membership. From being on committees, serving as an ambassador, or attending specific events where prospects are likely to be, you'll find yourself in situations where you can identify and meet decision makers face-to-face versus making cold calls.

3. Ongoing training and education. Unless you have the luxury of a training budget or can afford to bring in local, regional or nationally known experts on different topics, I firmly believe that there's no other organization in America that delivers timely programs at such an affordable price as the local or regional chamber of commerce. By spreading costs among fellow members through registration fees and sponsorships, members can stay updated, informed and educated at a bargain price.

4. Networking. From seminars, leads groups, luncheons to business expos and various business and community committees, there's absolutely no excuse for not being able to meet new contacts, referrals and people who can help you with ideas and additional ways to grow your business. The old adage, out of sight, out of mind, is so true when it relates to networking. The chamber gives you several different venues to meet new people. My entire career I've utilized the power of networking in my home chamber's ranging from serving as co-chair of the ambassador league to sponsoring and speaking at different events. The positive outcomes on the bottom line and great people I've met have been great. In addition, doing business with fellow member who offer wonderful products, services, and ideas has also been a big plus.

5. Low cost advertising opportunities. As far as visibility at the local level, a chamber offers a wide range of affordable advertising options and sponsorship packages for just about every business or non-profit, regardless of how big or small their budget may be. I've bought and sold traditional media and I can tell you it's not cheap. For the price of a few ads within a major media outlet, you can often sponsor an entire program with the chamber, give a short commercial about your company, meet new prospects and follow up with the list of attendees who may have a need for your offering. This is a wonderful way to hold your marketing dollars accountable and see them working hard right before your eyes.

A common area to get low cost or free advertising is submitting updates or news briefs for possible inclusion within the chamber 'Member News' section of the newsletter or eletter. Amazingly, a lot of members do not take advantage of this wonderful free marketing opportunity provided with their membership. The chamber is always on the lookout for member related news. I make it a goal to get over a small news update or announcement at least every two to three months to my local chambers because I know many times it will get printed and read by key people in the business community.
Yakima Theatres announces plans for former Uptown Plaza site

Yakima Theatres announced that a 21-and-over entertainment and dining venue will be built on the former site of the Uptown Plaza Theater in downtown Yakima at 202 E. Chestnut Ave. Yakima Theatres President Kathi Mercy made the announcement at the site on November 29th. The New Galaxy Theatre and Mickey’s Pub will be part of Yakima Theatres 100th anniversary year and should be completed by August 2012.

The New venue will have 3 movie screens and will also feature alternative entertainment options including; professional and college sports, art house films, and cultural events. Movie and entertainment goers will be able to order food and drinks from the pub and full bar right from their seats.

View press conference at www.yakima.org

And on www.youtube.com/greateryakimachamber

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Thanks for Supporting our Veterans and Active Duty Guard and Reserve

Chamber CEO Verlynn Best and Yakima Training Center Post Commander LTC Mike Daniels sign letters of support for ESGR

November General Membership Luncheon
Importance of Employer Support for Guard and Reserve

Jeff Newgard of Yakima National Bank receives award for support of Guard and Reserve

Yakima’s Downtown Veterans Day Parade

See the complete parade gallery at www.yakima.org
The Yakima Valley recently hosted a number of events on and around Veteran’s Day weekend, the most visible of which was another successful parade down Yakima Avenue. These events highlight an ongoing wellspring of support in our community for veterans, service members and families. We also greatly appreciate and applaud those local citizens and businesses who are currently providing support to our local military units this holiday season at a number of venues, as well as those who have sent, and continue to send, care (goody) packages to our deployed forces. If there are any individuals or groups that would like to mail a letter or box to a unit overseas, and you don’t have a unit or person in mind, feel free to call the YTC headquarter (577-3205) and we can provide you an address.

One other initiative currently underway is the Veterans History project, a Library of Congress program being spearheaded locally through the Yakima Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross. This program trains volunteers to help capture the story of our Valley’s veterans, especially those from the WWII and Korean War era, who are leaving us each day. For more information go to www.loc.gov/vets or contact Amanda Appel at the ARC Chapter office (834-2654).

LTC Michael Daniels Post Commander – Yakima Training Center

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Plan to save energy at your business.

A comprehensive energy management plan can help your business significantly reduce energy costs. Here are a few guidelines to follow when creating a plan for 2012 and beyond:

• Take inventory. Identify the systems at your facility that impact energy costs. Include all mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, as well as the building envelope and other infrastructure.
• Review your last three years of energy bills. Identify areas of highest energy use and trends that show increasing energy costs. Three years of bills will help minimize the effects of an excessively hot summer or cold winter.
• Account for recent changes. These changes might include building additions, insulation upgrades, lighting upgrades, the addition of new load (such as increased use of computers), employee hires or reductions, etc. Determine if these changes can explain variations in energy bills.
• Consider future expansions. If your business has an energy management system (EMS), can it grow with these changes? If you’re considering a new EMS, will it meet future business requirements?
• Develop a maintenance plan. An EMS can quickly become ineffective if control valves, dampers and sensors fail.

Pacific Power’s free online Business Solutions Toolkit has sample energy management plans you can tailor for your business. Visit pacificpoweronline.com/toolkit.

Source: Pacific Power and Tech Resources Inc.

Dr. Vicki Black honored as Family Physician of the Year

The Washington Academy of Family Physicians has honored Dr. Vicki Black as Family Physician of the Year for 2011. Dr. Black is currently the medical director for Community Health of Central Washington and on the faculty of Central Washington Family Medicine Residency in Yakima, Washington. Prior to joining CHCW, she practiced rural medicine in Grand Coulee, Washington. She is also the Program Director for the Central Washington Family Medicine Residency Program. She has been with the residency program since 1993, previously serving in the roles of Associate Program Director, faculty, and coordinator for medical student rotations.

Dr. Black is a skilled educator whose work, leadership, and advocacy have significantly impacted both the regional and national medical education landscapes. His enthusiasm for learning and teaching is contagious. He models the highest standards of medical care, training, collaborative leadership and professionalism in his dealings with residents, students, colleagues, friends and patients.

New Associate at Velikanje Halverson P.C.

Arthur A. Simpson has joined the firm of Velikanje Halverson P.C. as an associate attorney. Arthur graduated from the Seattle University School of Law, summa cum laude. While at Seattle University, Arthur was a Research and Technical Editor and the recipient of six “CALI Awards” for the highest marks in his class. During law school, Arthur was a summer associate at Velikanje Halverson as well as an extern with SCRAP, a Seattle-based public defenders’ office. At SCRAP, Arthur successfully represented clients in motions practice and upon appeal. Arthur is from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and graduated from Temple University with a bachelor’s degree in English, magna cum laude. In his free time, Arthur enjoys reading, writing, and running.

Grant Money is Now Available for Wood Stove Change-Outs. Does Your Stove Qualify?

Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency is proud to announce that we have received two grants totaling $500,000 for the Wood Stove Change-Out (WSCO) Program. The purpose of the program is to remove uncertified wood stoves (pre-1994) from service and replace them with a cleaner-burning, healthier heating unit—wood, pellet, propane, natural gas or electric. The program will also cover a coal-burning furnace, or in some cases help with replacing wood burning stove with a furnace.

Who Qualifies?

This program is open to income-qualifying households with uncertified wood stoves or inserts. For example, a family of four who made less than $45,300 in total household income last year would qualify.

What about Landlords?

Landlords who have uncertified wood-stoves in their rental units, and have tenants who are income-qualifying are encouraged to apply. The WSCO program will pay half of the change-out cost for a rental unit. The benefit to the landlord is replacing an old, uncertified heating appliance for only half the cost. The new device is the property of the landlord.

What is Included?

All the necessary hardware to bring the install to code is included, at no cost to the home-owner. The old stove is removed for recycling and taken away by a professional installer.

What are the Benefits?

The home and surrounding neighborhood will benefit from healthier air quality. Often, the new, efficient device will use only half of the wood, but provide the same or more heat. A Wood Stove Change-Out raises the property value, and new equipment lowers the chance of loss due to a house fire.

To Find Out More Call:

Michelle Blanchard at Yakima Regional Clean Air Agency
(509) 834-2050 ext. 100
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- 50% of all tape backups fail to restore. (Gartner Group)
- 30% of all businesses that have a major fire go out of business within a year and 70% fail within five years. (Home Office Computing Magazine)

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