



IN THIS ISSUE

Chamber Board Retreat	pg. 1	Partner Focus	pg. 3
Upcoming Events	pg. 2	The Inner Circle (Membership)	pg. 3
Director's Cut (Exec. Director)	pg. 2	The Turn of Events (Events)	pg. 3
Adopt A Child/Apple Hill Farm Invitation	pg. 2	Customer Service Star Award	pg. 4
Give A Chamber Membership	pg. 2	Freeze Frame* (Photo Spot)	pg. 4

THE VILLAGE Current

AN E-PUBLICATION FROM THE BLOWING ROCK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The mission of the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce, through the efforts of our membership, shall be to contribute to the cultural, social and economic development, growth and sustainability of Blowing Rock while preserving the charm and character of the village.

Chamber Soars to New Heights

Once a year, the Chamber of Commerce and its Board of Directors 'retreat' to a special location to spend the day addressing some of the more challenging issues facing the board and the Chamber of Commerce. Perhaps a better term than 'retreat' for this kind of focused meeting would be a strategic meeting. Time spent away from the pressures of daily responsibilities allows the board to challenge preconceived ideas and rethink structures, begin a strategic planning process, confront difficult issues, forge camaraderie, and improve productivity.

This year's board retreat (strategic meeting) was held in the High Mountain Club House at Sunalei Preserve. The actual club house is situated within the development at an elevation of more than 5500 feet. So, it was only fitting that the retreat was dubbed "Soaring to New Heights". Once a short board meeting was held to review old business and any new

business, the attendees gathered in the living room of the club house to begin the retreat.

The motivational speaker for the event was Denise Ryan from FireStar Consulting located in Raleigh. Every eye was riveted on her as she began her speech, questioning the Chamber's purpose and mission. Her thought was that our mission statement was too all-encompassing. After all, wasn't the Chamber's main mission is to promote, protect and improve business in Blowing Rock and the area? So, the new mission statement is now: *To promote, protect and improve business through the cultural, social and economic development, growth and sustainability of Blowing Rock while preserving the charm and character of the village.*

Ms. Ryan analyzed the individual committees and their purposes and goals. Were the committee goals being met and did each committee have the proper leadership in place? She spoke about member recruitment, retention and involvement and offered some great ideas for improving each of them. The group is now focused on a bigger push for membership and even formed a new committee for marketing.

Many interesting points were addressed. Each person at the retreat walked away energized with a refreshed understanding of the current and future challenges facing the Chamber. Since realistically a retreat is a tool for identifying issues rather than finding solutions (which could take days), each person left with a list of things on which to keep working.



Gold Partners

Silver Partners



What's Going On? Area Events

December 3-4

50th Anniversary Weekend Celebration
Appalachian Ski Mountain, 295-7828

December 3

Mountain Home Music
Grace Lutheran Church, 8:00pm, 964-3392

December 10-24

Santa at Sugar
Sugar Mountain Ski Resort

December 10

Red Bull ThingamajIB
Appalachian Ski Mountain, 295-7828

December 13

Holiday Party
Green Park Inn, 7:00-9:00pm
By Reservation Only: 295-7851
Order your tickets now! \$20 per person

December 16-18

Christmas in Blowing Rock Variety Show
Blowing Rock School, 414-1844

Business Meetings

December 5

Events Committee Meeting
Chamber of Commerce, 9:00am

December 14

Finance Committee Meeting
Chetola, 8:00am

December 21

Membership Meeting
Chamber of Commerce, 4:00pm

December 22

Business Support Meeting (Breakfast)
Gideon Ridge, 9:00am

December 28

Economic Development Committee
Chamber of Commerce, 4:00pm

December 29

Executive Board Meeting
Chamber of Commerce, 3:00pm

For more information
and calendar:

www.blowingrock.com
www.blowingrockncchamber.com



Find us on
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THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

Charles Hardin, Executive Director



Event Marketing 101 The Thanksgiving crowds were the best we have seen in recent history. The parade attendance was on par with the Fourth of July parade attendance. Much of this was due to the weather, but most economic indicators are pointing to a loosening of the wallet for the first time since 2008. I realize sales are not back to those historic levels, but hopefully there is a silver lining in the cloud that this recession may be waning. Many business owners have told me that they have had a very good year. For this, I am truly thankful.

In walking around town, I have noticed very few businesses displaying their beautiful posters or rack cards promoting upcoming 2012 events. Inquiring about this I am told that the conventional wisdom is to only display events that are close in. REALLY??? I wish to challenge this thinking. The whole reason these events are marketed so early through these posters is to present current visitors a reason to return to our village. Yes, off-the-mountain advertising is placed closer to the events, but giving our existing visitors a reason to return is priceless. Even if they don't return, they may pick up a rack card for next season's Art in the Park or Blue Ridge Wine Festival and put it on their fridge or give it to someone who might come. The very best time to market WinterFest is actually in late summer for instance. Visitors in Blowing Rock over Christmas or early January who see a WinterFest poster are certainly not going to come back

in 3-4 weeks to WinterFest. They may just be annoyed that we are having a really great winter event that they could have come to if they had known about it. Many of these events are designed to address shoulder seasons when things are slower. If we capitalize on the times when we are very busy such as summer, the month of October, Thanksgiving weekend and the week after Christmas, we will hopefully get them back at times when we really need the business. You know when that is.

One more angle on this is the creation of a vibrant active community that is attractive to second home and seasonal residential home buyers. Realtors will tell you that community lifestyle is one of the most significant selling points for these buyers. These folks are looking for things to do in their active retirement years. Seeing the many cultural amenities including these quality Chamber events throughout the year, cultural offerings such as BRAHM, productions at the Hayes Center, community theater at Ensemble Stage, offerings at ASU such as the Performing Arts Series, the Turchin Center, and Appalachian Summer are all part of the economic equation that helps all of our members succeed year round!

If you would like some of our beautiful works-of-art posters to display in your business or if you only have a small space and would like to use our beautiful rack cards as mini posters, please call us. We will deliver (no charge).

**Give
A CHAMBER
MEMBERSHIP
FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

- 1. Discount Card** to 75+ participating member businesses
- 2. Stay In The Know**—receive newsletters, e-blasts and updates from the Chamber
- 3. Volunteer** for multiple Chamber events or serve on a committee
- 4. Get To Know Business Leaders** Attend Business After Hours, ribbon cuttings/grand openings, events and educational possibilities that allow you to know business leaders & owners in our community
- 5. Get To Know Our Community**
Participate in programs like Concierge 101 & 102 and Leadership Challenge

Call the Chamber for details: 295-7851

Invitation from Apple Hill Farm

Apple Hill Farm invites you to join them during their Open House on December 1, 2011 from 10am to 5pm to thank you for all your support through the year and show their appreciation. Currently they are having their Christmas Celebration which includes a farm tour visiting with the animals, homemade hot chocolate and apple cider, snacks, cookies and their Christmas store which includes Fresh Cut Fraser Fir Tabletop trees with stand, hand tied wreaths, handmade ornaments and items, the largest selection of alpaca products in the High Country.

For those who are unable to make it on December 1st, they would like to extend December 4, 2011 as another option from 10am to 5pm which will allow most to bring their families. RSVP either at 828-963-1662 or applehillalpaca@aol.com

Adopt A Child

For several years, community members have "adopted" children from Blowing Rock School for Christmas—providing everything from clothing, coats, boots, and shoes to toys on a child's wish list. There's no better way to get in the holiday spirit than shopping for a needy child.

Would you be interested in helping out this year by either adopting a child or two or making a monetary donation so that we may shop for you? All information is confidential. Please call Trish Kohlasch at Blowing Rock School 828-295-3204 to participate or to get further information by December 01.

PARTNER FOCUS



CHETOLA RESORT AT BLOWING ROCK has been part of the town's landscape for more than 170 years. In 1846, Lot Estes, Chetola's first recorded owner, purchased 100 acres for a mere five cents per acre. Since then the resort has had several owners – including J. Luther Snyder (the future “Coca-Cola King of the Carolinas”), who bought the property in 1926, and the resort's current owner, Kent Tarbutton, who purchased Chetola in early 1997.

The 87-acre resort plays host year-round to vacationers, corporate meetings, weddings, special events, and restaurant and spa visitors. In 2004, Chetola opened the Bob Timberlake Inn, a luxurious eight-room bed and breakfast that is decorated with the North Carolina artist's artwork, furnishings and accessories. We are very proud to be only one of two Orvis Endorsed Fly Fishing Lodges in North Carolina.

In late 2009, the Spa at Chetola was opened,

featuring a wide variety of massages and facials. It also offers makeup applications and nail treatments.

In early August 2011, the Manor House Restaurant suffered a small kitchen fire. The restaurant is currently under renovation, with a redesign that offers additional lakefront dining in the Timbers Room. In 2012, Chetola will open Timberlake's Restaurant, featuring a menu inspired by Bob Timberlake's culinary favorites.

Chetola currently holds four memberships in the Blowing Rock Chamber – one for the Bob Timberlake Inn, the Spa, the restaurant and the resort. Each entity is extremely well represented across several business categories. The Chamber is the number one referral of business to the Chetola website. The resort loves participating in Chamber-sponsored events, particularly Blowing Rock Winterfest, the Blue Ridge Wine and Food Festival and Symphony by Chetola Lake. The Chamber has more than proven that it can create business in months when there was previously little business, as evidenced by more than 13 years of Winterfest and 7 years of the Blue Ridge Wine & Food Festival.

Marketing director Marcia Greene commented, “We are grateful for the opportunity to co-promote and partner with the Blowing Rock Chamber.

Thanks for all you do for us and the Town of Blowing Rock.”

The Inner Circle

Terri Bailey
Membership Services Director



Business After Hours at Canyons Restaurant

A huge crowd of more than seventy Chamber members showed up at Canyons on November 15 to attend the last Business After Hours of 2011. I (Terri) welcomed everyone to the event and thanked Bart Conway, the owner of Canyons, for hosting the event. Vinny Smith, a representative of Servpro and one of our newest Chamber members, spoke about his company to the crowd, as did Jim Cottrell of French Swiss Ski College. Chicken, beef and vegetarian quesadillas, wine and beer were served and one lucky member, Susan Freshcorn (Blowing Rock Investment Properties), received the door prize of a gift card to come back to Canyons for dinner.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS:

Kay Jackson (Individual Member) Resident of Gastonia, NC
Jamie Collins (Individual Member) Resident of High Point, NC
Sabrina Austin (Individual Member) Resident of Charlotte, NC

Apple Hill Farm (Lee Rankin) is an Alpaca Farm that sits atop Valle Mountain on the site of a 45-year-old apple orchard. The remaining apple trees serve as the focal point for the property which is now home to alpacas, cats, chickens, dogs, donkeys, goats, horses, llamas and miniature donkeys. Telephone: (828) 963-1662

Blue Ridge Vacations Travel Guide (Scott Richardson) This popular area website features Blue Ridge Parkway and Blue Ridge Mountains lodging and accommodations, local attractions, events, shopping, restaurants, services and area photos. The guide focuses on Blowing Rock, Banner Elk and Boone NC. Telephone: (828) 394-4850

Brower Architectural Associates (Ken Brower) has been practicing quality architecture in FL, NC and MA for over seven years. Our work focuses on historic renovation and restoration, as well as new high-end residential and commercial architecture. Telephone: (561) 659-1948

Kojay's Cafe (Mike Bozeman) Specializing in fresh and creative choices for breakfast and lunch, featuring a full line of specialty coffees and signature sandwiches plus homemade pastries and desserts. Telephone: (828) 295-0015

The Sanctuary A Day Spa (Randy Schindler) is a quiet haven for rejuvenation of your mind, body and spirit. We have highly trained personnel who offer massages, waxing, facials and sunless airbrush tanning.

Telephone: (828) 268-0003



Billie Rogers
Events Director



THE TURN OF EVENTS

As the Events Director, it is my job to plan and promote the events of Blowing Rock in order to ultimately bring more folks to town and more folks into the businesses. I wish to ask you to help me in doing this over the next couple months.

I look at our winter season as a beautiful event! Unique to the High Country, our winter months are a welcome change from those of our neighbors off the mountain. Yes,

I know that we all get sick of the snow and ice and cold. The ice scraper in our car, the Yak-Trax in our glove compartments, and a stash of non-perishable food and water, just in case. But for the tourist, they see the fields of white snow, the ski slopes glowing at night heavy with skiers and the unlimited opportunities to build snowmen. And what an assortment of winter gear we can offer – virtually everywhere but in short supply off the mountain.

My point is ... the next time you are speaking with a visitor to our beautiful area, try to curb the complaints of what a pain the snow is and look at it from their viewpoint. They came up to enjoy the “winter event” not available to them at home. Perhaps by encouraging them to enjoy some of our winter activities - snow skiing, cross country skiing, snowman building and, of course, shopping and dining afterwards, it will make us see and appreciate the things that are right in front of us – and hopefully ignore the problems the weather can create. Stay warm and safe!

A Reminder from 'Green Bean' Christmas party at Green Park Inn



December 13

7pm 'til 9pm

Reserve tickets by calling
295-7851 by December 9th
\$20 per person, buffet dinner

*Bring a gift for Adopt A Child.
Call the Chamber for details.*

FREEZE FRAME!



CUSTOMER SERVICE STAR

Hallie Harding
Village Hardware

Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce and Blue Ridge Electric's November Customer Service Star

Hallie receives the Customer Service Star for, well, doing absolutely everything she can to help customers. No job is too big or too small. She has even helped a man with Alzheimers find his house. Now, that is awesome customer service! Congratulations, Hallie!!

Do you know someone who deserves recognition for outstanding customer service? Go to our website to nominate them at www.blowingrockchamber.com.



Denise Ryan of FireStar Consulting in Raleigh speaks to Chamber Board members for the Chamber Board Retreat at Sunalei Preserve on November 16th.



Snow people Crystal and Chilly participated in the Blowing Rock Christmas parade on Saturday, November 26. They were, of course, promoting Winterfest, their favorite event of the year.

Sunalei Preserve's High Mountain Club House was the location for the Chamber's Board Retreat this past month. At an elevation of more than 5500 feet, is there a more fitting location for a meeting entitled "Soaring to New Heights"?



Bart Conway, owner of Canyon's Restaurant, awards Susan Freshcorn will the door prize of a free dinner at Business After Hours on November 15.

Quick Business Tip of the Month

Tip 10: To Improve Your Small Business (find next tip in next month's newsletter)

Know Your Limits: Every successful business owner, even Bill Gates, has a clear idea of their limitations. By knowing your entrepreneurial personality type, you can manage your resources and find help in areas of weakness.

-Darrell Zahorsky

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Chetola Resort

JOHN ALDRIDGE

Vice President

Individual Representative

LINDA GILLELAND

Secretary

Greystone Insurance

DEBORAH MCDOWELL

Treasurer

Mountaineer Inn & Log Cabins

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

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DON HUBBLE

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Tweetsie Railroad

DOUG PEGRAM

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CINDY MILNER

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Westglow

MELISSA PICKETT

Blowing Rock Inn

CHELSEA GARRETT

diSanti, Watson,

Capua & Wilson

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