

VALLEY BUSINESS NEWS



Chamber news and member happenings!



NEWCOMERS MEETUP

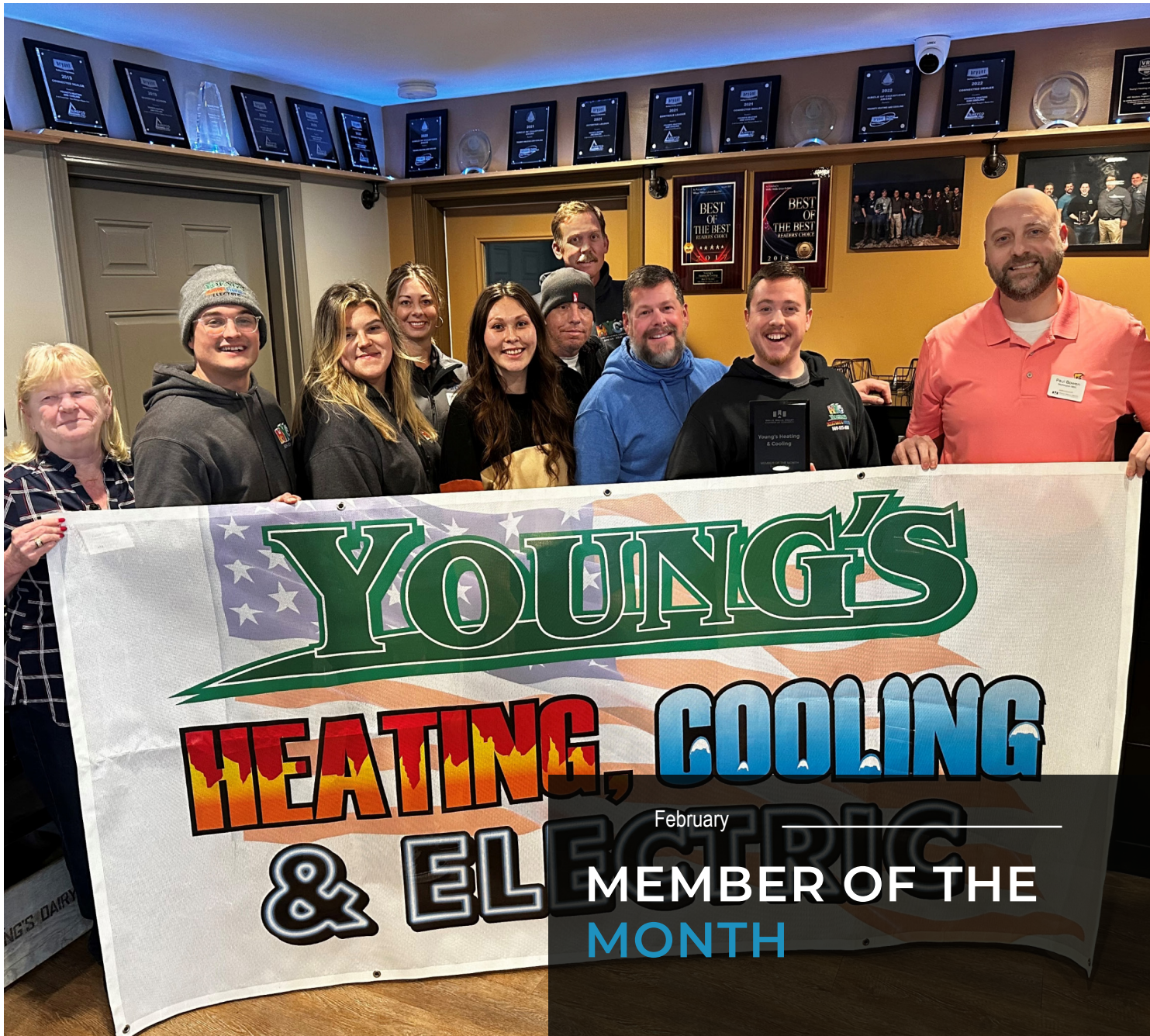
Introducing businesses and volunteer opportunities to new locals



SCORE COMES TO WW VALLEY

Free mentorship for entrepreneurs in the Walla Walla Valley.





YOUNG'S HEATING, COOLING & ELECTRIC

At Young's Heating and Cooling, LLC, they know a thing or two about keeping you comfortable. Since 2004, they've been the number one heating and cooling company in Walla Walla and surrounding areas — and customer satisfaction is their specialty! When you're looking for reliable, trustworthy, and effective service, look no further than Young's. From speedy fast air conditioning repair to comprehensive furnace replacement services, they can keep you comfortable season after season.

“

We make quality affordable”

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Dossier Wine Collective

Tuesday, February 20
5:30 pm- 7:00 pm

8 W Main St
Walla Walla

Dossier offers a modern approach to luxury wine inspired by the region's great potential, incredible local talent, and distinctive terroir. Join us to connect with other business professionals and experience what Dossier Wine Collective brings to the Walla Walla Valley.

Join us for an evening of connections with other valley professionals while experiencing food, beverage and maybe a little bull riding from Walla Walla's newest country bar. You do not need to be a Chamber member and it is free to attend this open-house style event.

To assist our host with a headcount for food and beverage, please RSVP: [BAH RSVP](#)



RIBBON CUTTINGS

There's nothing quite like getting to celebrate a grand opening, a milestone anniversary, expansion, rebranding or other exciting changes to your business than with a giant pair of scissors. But how do you plan a ribbon cutting?

The first step is to reach out to the Chamber to make sure your date and time are available. The Chamber is available for ribbon cuttings Monday-Friday during business hours.

Once you have your date and time confirmed start planning! Remember this is a great way to showcase your products or services so think about how you are going to demonstrate them or provide the information to attendees.

Compile a list of people and/or businesses you would like to invite. Personally extending an invite can go a long way. Family, friends, customers, supporters and vendors are all great people to start with. Also, think about the people and businesses that could be potential customers or a source of referrals.

Providing food, activities, tours, door prizes or other ways to interact with guests will also help draw attendance. Once you have all your details figured out, start inviting the community!

For more information on hosting or scheduling a ribbon cutting reach out to Tawni Gama, tgama@wvchamber.com or call 509.525.0850.



VIRTUAL CHAMBER 2024

Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, February 14
11:45 am-1 pm

This will be a virtual event for anyone that is interested in learning all the exciting updates about Chamber 2024! Celebrating 125 years, the Chamber will be rolling into the new year with updated events, initiatives and programs!



Whether you are a current member or curious about the Chamber this is the perfect event to attend. Register to learn about the strategic priorities for the upcoming year and how they can benefit you and your business. We also recommend registering if you attended our Annual Meeting on 1/30 and wanted to hear more details or have an opportunity to ask questions.

There will also be plenty of time to answer attendee's questions.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The Empowerment Project | What would you do if you knew failure was not an option?

Wednesday, March 20
11:30 am- 1:00 pm
Doors open at 11 am

Courtyard by Marriott
550 W Rose St.
Walla Walla

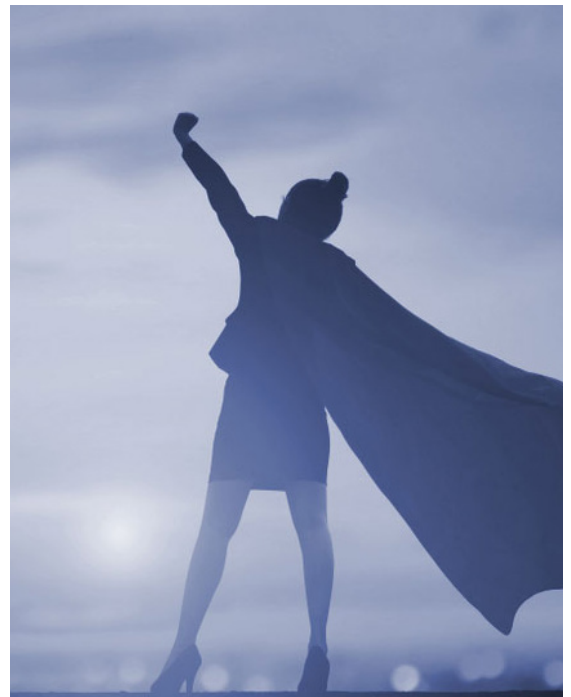
The Empowerment Project is the incredible journey of a crew of female filmmakers driving across America to encourage, empower, and inspire the next generation of strong women to go after their career ambitions.

Driving over 7,000 miles from Los Angeles to New York over the course of 30 days, the documentary spotlights 8 positive and powerful women leaders across a variety of lifestyles and industries.

In celebration of the all-female focus in front of and behind the camera, the filmmakers turned the cameras on themselves, capturing their transformational journey.

The film challenges the audience to ask themselves, "What would you do if you knew you would succeed?"

[REGISTER HERE](#)





Wild Willow

Jamie Graham
120 E. Alder Street
Walla Walla, WA
wallawallaflowers.com

For Jamie Graham, owner of Wild Willow Flower House since 2018, a Walla Walla florist and retail shop, the answer is: “I’ve always wanted to find a way to bring beauty and joy to people. When I started working for my Aunt Kathi at Holly’s Flowers (now named Wild Willow Flower House) twelve years ago, I found a way to do that. Flowers are not just a gift but a way for our customers to express an emotion to their loved ones during important moments in their lives. I am so grateful to be able to do this work in a community that I love.”

When Jamie’s aunt was nearing retirement, she asked her niece to come work for her. At the time, Jamie lived in Spokane and worked at a restaurant. She had started as a busser and finished as the manager. Jamie sees parallels between the two businesses: both rely on customer service in a fast-paced environment.

“We deal with the highs and lows in people’s lives,” Jamie said. “Flowers always bring a smile to a person’s face.”

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Every month, we pose a new question to several local businesses, and this month we asked:

What inspired or guided your career path?



Walla Walla Public Schools

Dr. Wade Smith
364 South Park St.
Walla Walla, WA
wwps.org



Dr. Wade Smith, Superintendent of Walla Walla Public Schools since 2016, could have remained a science teacher his whole career if he hadn’t received some important words of encouragement.

“Role models and mentors have been instrumental in positively influencing my career,” notes Superintendent Smith. “It was my first superintendent whose confidence in me provided the courage to step out of teaching to lead a high school at the ripe age of 26. Later, it was a close mentor who convinced me that I was ready to serve as the HR Director for a large district despite my reservations. And most recently, it was trusted advisor George Murdock who encouraged me to step across state lines and serve as just the 16th superintendent in Walla Walla’s 165-year legacy.”

Walla Walla Public Schools now has a 93% graduation rate, the highest ever, 10% above the state. Superintendent Smith added, “Our assessment scores continue to rise.” He sees his role to pay it forward and be a “moment maker” for someone else.

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

With Throwback Photos

If you have any photos you would like to share with the chamber or have information about any of the photos we share, email Tawni Gama, tgama@wwwchamber.com.



CHAMBER UPDATES & NEWS

Civics Bee: Submission Deadline Extended to February 19

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation has extended the essay submission deadline to February 19!

Washington Middle Schoolers still have two weeks to submit their 500 word essays on the topic "Identify a problem facing your community. How might a citizen solve the problem?"

SCORE  TM
FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR BUSINESS

**BECOME A
MENTOR**



[email ceo@wwwchamber.com](mailto:ceo@wwwchamber.com) for more details



Wednesday, February 21
 9:00 am- 10:00 am
 Doors open at 8:30 am

Courtyard by Marriott
 550 W Rose St.
 Walla Walla

Join us as we recognize our Hometown Heroes and each of the Valley's higher education institutions for their Higher Education Community Service Awards.

Law Enforcement Officer of the Year | Firefighter of the Year | Educator of the Year

Walla Walla Community College | Walla Walla University | Whitman College

[REGISTER HERE](#)

OFFICE SPACE

Think about a rare upcoming opening for a private lockable office space for 1-2 in the Chamber of Commerce. You will enjoy uninterrupted Wi-Fi connectivity, off-street shaded parking, 24/7 access with facility security, copier usage, kitchen & Keurig, board room with AV available for meetings. Walk to your favorite shops and restaurants. Asking \$850 a month/annual lease.

Call the Chamber Office for additional details
 509.525.0850.





MARCUS WHITMAN HOTEL

A Romantic Valentine's Day Escape

Embark on a captivating escape with our Romance Package at The Marcus Whitman. Discover the allure of an enchanting overnight stay, enveloped in the timeless charm of Walla Walla. Savor the sweetness of love with hand-crafted truffles from Bright's Candies, perfectly paired with the effervescence of a bottle of sparkling wine. Let the ambiance of our luxury accommodations, blended with rich history, set the stage for a memorable retreat.



AMERICAN 35

Singles Mixer Pizza Making Class

February 14
7:30 pm-9 pm

Slice into love this Valentine's Day! Join Pizzaiolo Tom Bennett for a Singles Mixer Pizza Class at American 35. Master the art of pizza making while mingling with fellow singles. From dough to delightful toppings, create connections and culinary masterpieces. \$45 covers instruction and materials. Who knows, you might find the perfect topping for your heart!



ENABLE ART

Check Out All of the Class Offerings

Enable Art is located in the Walla Walla Valley in Washington State and offers a wide range of art programs for kids and adults.

Evening Art Classes
Adult Art Classes
After School Art Classes
Home School Student Art Classes



Walla Walla Symphony

Leah Wilson
13 1/2 E Main St #201
Walla Walla, WA
wwsymphony.org



Leah Wilson-Velasco, CEO of Walla Walla Symphony since 2011, enjoys music, especially the logistical and operational pieces of performances. She grew up around music with a mother who was and still is a professional orchestra violinist.

“I started playing violin as a kid and quickly experienced the thrill and intensity of orchestral music,” Leah explained. “As I grew and developed as a musician, I realized that I liked working behind the scenes to bring music to other people. I find inspiration in creating a shared experience that provides opportunity to connect in and through music.”

Leah first came to Walla Walla to study Music Performance at Whitman College. She was attracted to the liberal arts setting and managed and performed in the Fridays at Four Concert Series on campus. She earned a BA in Music Performance then moved to Boston to work professionally and also obtained a Master’s in Music Education from Boston Conservatory.

Leah added: “Music education is so important! Music can teach perseverance, problem solving skills, and cooperation (and more!), and these skills can enhance other areas of academics and life. And this is why we have many music education programs at the Symphony that are available to students across our valley completely free of charge!”



Community Bank

Tom Moran
1288 SE Commercial Drive
College Place, WA
communitybanknet.com



“First, banking is a family business, and I am a third-generation banker,” said Tom Moran, President and CEO of Community Bank in College Place. “My father took over for my paternal grandfather at First Bank in Ketchikan, Alaska, where I was raised. I never thought of being anything other than a banker. As I was growing up, that’s what I thought I wanted to be and needed to be. As a banker, I’m involved in so many aspects of people’s lives and circumstances – no one is exactly alike. We help people succeed in life whether it’s their business or personal needs. We’re there to help them plan and succeed.”

Community Bank’s board members chose Tom to lead the bank in 2006, right before the recession, when he was 27. He had earned an undergraduate degree in finance and a Master of Business Administration degree at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. Tom admits he was surprised to be named president at such a young age but added, “I’m glad it happened. Banking is not all about numbers and regulations and boring banking stuff. It’s really a great career for those who want to be part of the community you live in.”

Tom added, “If you’re around long enough, you see someone start a small business and see it grow. It’s neat to help and it’s fun to watch.”



Calhoon's Fitness

Ryan Calhoon
1711 E. Isaacs Ave.
Walla Walla, WA
calhoonsfitness.com



"I just hate the idea of being unfit, overweight or unhealthy even more than I might hate the workout," noted Ryan Calhoon, owner of Calhoon's Fitness, a "boutique athletic performance training center" in Walla Walla. "It's not the workout itself that I necessarily enjoy. It's the results. I have the same daily struggles getting motivated to work out just like everybody else. Being fit is not easy, but I really, really don't want to be overweight and unhealthy. That is what inspires me to make decisions that lead me to being fit."

Ryan began working out with weights in junior high school. He was an entrepreneur at 22 with an international network marketing business in nutritional supplements. Now he's a business owner in a building he designed, a personal trainer, a certified massage therapist and sports massage therapist, who also studied Naturopathic and Holistic Health Sciences and holds a 2nd degree black belt in Yueng Chuan, a brown belt in Kempo/JKD, a purple belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and spent years training in mixed martial arts (MMA) which has no belt system.

"I've always been interested in health, wellness and fitness – that's the common thread," Ryan said.



Tumble Bugs Walla Walla Gymnastics & Movement

Annamarie Gordon
489 N. Wilbur Ave
Walla Walla, WA
tumblebugsw.com



Annamarie Gordon, owner of Tumble Bugs Walla Walla Gymnastics & Movement, grew up in Napa, California, and took gymnastics classes from the ages of 9 to 18. "My love of gymnastics started when I was little – it helped me stay fit while having fun. My goal is to build a lifelong love of physical fitness."

When Annmarie moved to Walla Walla 20 years ago, there was no program like the one she had experienced in California so she started one here. After five years, she took a break from being an entrepreneur and worked as a retail manager and went back to school at Walla Walla Community College for business and medical administration degrees.

Annamarie missed the energy and fun of young people learning gymnastics and started up Tumble Bugs at 489 N. Wilbur Ave. in June 2021. Children from 10 months to 12 years old are welcome to learn floor tumbling, uneven bars, vault and beam. Annmarie prepares those who are interested for regional competitions and already has three youngsters who qualified for the state competition this year. "I love watching the kids improve each week and seeing their self-esteem and confidence blossom," Annmarie said.



Graphic Apparel

Lynette Gordon
860 NE Rose Street
College Place, WA

Dave and Lynette Gordon had friends who got them interested in the business of custom imprinting and Lynette found the work to be “right down my alley” - even as the design work transitioned from plotting Y and Z coordinate points to being completed digitally. Display boards covered with embroidered patches made over the decades are like lessons in Walla Walla Valley’s business history.

“I used to sew everything until my husband and I started this business in 1986,” explained Lynette Gordon, owner of Graphic Apparel in College Place. “I’ve always been more of a creative type and can envision things in my head and then do it.”

Graphic Apparel first began in the couple’s garage then expanded into their home. As business continued to grow, the need for more space did too. After a couple of different locations, they eventually bought land and built the building on Rose Street.

Twelve Tajima embroidery machines can each produce 500 to 600 stitches a minute on hats, caps, shirts, vests and more. Graphic Apparel also provides screen printing, Direct to Film transfers, imprinted mugs, cups, pens and calendars with customized graphics. “I haven’t liked the hours but it has been fun,” Lynette said. Graphic Apparel has been a Chamber member since 1996.



Walla Walla Transmission Specialists

Zach Doty
204 Bennett Street
Walla Walla, WA
wallawallatransmission.com



Zach Doty, owner of Walla Walla Transmission Specialists, grew up in Colfax, Washington, around people who worked with their hands. “The inspiration for my career path started early with my grandparents, who owned a farm where equipment was always being worked on in the shop. I liked taking things apart and seeing how they worked. My neighbor across the street also had a shop. I spent a lot of time there helping clean parts and working on small jobs. In high school, my uncle, who was a mechanic at a Case tractor dealership, helped me fix up an old Willy’s Jeep,” Zach explained.

After high school Zach completed the two-year automotive program at Walla Walla Community College, then worked full-time at the local Nissan dealership for 13 years.

“Richard Hellie, my previous auto instructor and then owner of WWTS, asked if I was interested in purchasing the business,” Zach said. “He wanted to go back to teaching so in December 2008, my wife, Julie, and I became the proud owners of Walla Walla Transmission and have never looked back.”

WWTS opened in 1968. Zach and Julie, the third owners, have been Chamber members since 2013. Maggie, a Wire-haired Pointing Griffon, pictured above, helps Zach with customer service.

MEMBER NEWS

Gesa

Scholarship Applications Open

We are accepting applications for the 2024-2025 scholarships. Applicants must be Gesa members. Additional eligibility details can be found on our official Scholarship Guide at gesa.com/category/scholarships/.



Goodwill

Basic Computer Skills in Spanish

Learn computer skills at the College Place Goodwill Employment Connection Center.

Each Friday from 9am-11am
Starting February 9th

Contact us to register:
509.525.5999
1017 NE C St
College Place

GOODWILL

Having computer problems?

Learn computer skills at the College Place Goodwill Employment Connection Center!

✓ **Basic Computer Skills in Spanish**
Each Friday from 9-11
Starting February 9th!

Contact us to register!

509.525.5999
1017 NE C Street
College Place
ecc@goodwillotc.org

All classes are at no cost!

Whitman College

Summer Internship & Job Fair

Wednesday, March 6
4 pm

This event will allow you to have meaningful interactions with our students! This is an opportunity for you to meet our students, and for our students to learn about a variety of companies and industries.

The deadline to register is Feb. 28, 2024 5:00pm PST.



CHAMBER ROUNDTABLES

Professional Services

Wednesday, March 6
8:30 am-9:30 am

WWV Chamber Board Room
29 E Sumach St
Walla Walla

The Professional Services Roundtable is open to anyone in financial, real estate, law, insurance or similar industries. Membership is NOT required.

Roundtables are small group discussions where all attendees are encouraged to participate. Roundtables are typically for a specific sector or industry to pose questions, discuss current challenges and exchange ideas.

RSVP is required as space is limited. If capacity has been reached, please add your name to the wait list.

[RSVP HERE](#)



ADVERTISE HERE!

Contact the Chamber for more details
509.525.0850 or tgama@wwvchamber.com



January Anniversaries

Thank you for your continued support of the Chamber!

Krivoshein/McDaniels Financial PLLC /
 Raymond James Financial Services
 Sandy's U-Rent
 Vivio Technologies
 D.A. Davidson & Co
 Cougar Crest Estate Winery
 Les Schwab Tire Centers- College Place
 Columbia Basin Hearing Center
 Walla Walla Valley Association of REALTORS®
 Willis & Toews PLLC
 Boyer House
 La Quinta Inn & Suites Walla Walla
 Gard Vintners
 Eritage Hospitality
 Bobbie Jo Haggard, NMLS# 92472-
 Heartland Mortgage Inc., NMLS# 3205
 Dayton Historical Depot Society
 Tom's Yard Care
 Premera Blue Cross
 Seattle Ballooning
 Eck Agency LLC (Allstate Insurance)
 Churchill Mortgage- NMLS #1591
 Mero

2nd Street Distilling Company
 S & K Mountain Construction Inc
 Walla Walla Beer Parlor
 FRHC
 Kelley Connect
 Vineyard Farm Labor
 Isenhower Cellars, LLC
 Green Valley Gardens
 SHIFT boutique

Look Who's Celebrating 25 Years or More!

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| Herring Funeral Home | 98 |
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| Grapeland Supply | 73 |
| Tallmans Pharmacy | 72 |
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marketing@wwwchamber.com



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



VISIONARIES

