

FIRST FRIDAY MARCH 2024

VALLEY BUSINESS NEWS

Chamber news and member happenings!



WALLA WALLA VALLEY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



06

COMMUNITY CONCIERGE

Do you love where you live?



04

WOME IN IN BUSINESS

It's hard to reach the top alone.



March

MEMBER OF THE MONTH

VW QUALITY ROOFING

This may be a newer business to Walla Walla but, Jesus, Owner of VW Quality Roofing has been a roofer for over 25 years. They are a local and family owned business.

They love what they do and take pride in their work. They make sure ALL of their customers are well cared for and happy with the end result, treating their roof as their my own.

VW Quality Roofing specializes in roofing and gutters but as a general contractor, they are able to do other projects for you. If you have a job out of their scope, they will help you find someone who can.

“

They respond quickly, work with honesty and integrity and go above and beyond”

COMMUNITY CONNECTION/ BAH

Marcus Whitman Hotel

Tuesday, March 12
5:30 pm- 7:00 pm

6 W Rose St
Walla Walla

The Marcus Whitman leadership team will escort small groups to view the exciting hotel remodels. Door prizes will include gift certificates for stays at the hotel and dining in the newly renovated restaurant and lounge.

This is a Community Connection event, an enhanced version of Business After Hours.

Join us for an evening of connections with other valley professionals while experiencing food, beverage. You do not need to be a Chamber member to attend this free open-house style event.

To assist our host with a headcount for food and beverage, please RSVP.

[RSVP HERE](#)



CHAMBER ROUNDTABLE

Professional Services

Wednesday, March 6
8:30 am- 9:45 am

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](#)





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 failure was not an option?”

[REGISTER HERE](#)

WOMENS PITCH CONTEST

Brought to you by SCORE Washington District

This Pitch Contest is open to women entrepreneurs and women small business owners in the Washington, Alaska and Northern Idaho region. Our aim is to help prepare women entrepreneurs and business owners to successfully seek financing, whether it’s from an investor or a bank.

The winners of the Pitch Contest will receive cash prizes

Timeline:

- Registration for the contest is now open.
- Attend the online Pitch Tips & Tricks Seminar Tuesday, March 12th at 5 pm
- Your presentation must be submitted by Friday, March 29th at 9 pm
- The Pitch Presentation will be reviewed and finalists announced Thursday, April 4th
- Finalist Pitches will be presented to judges in person Thursday afternoon, April 25th

Let the Chamber know if you enter!

[MORE INFO & REGISTRATION](#)





QUESTION OF THE MONTH

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

Can you share some incredibly funny occurrence in your business/organization?

PocketiNet Communications Inc.

Nate Ewer
2919 Isaacs Ave
Walla Walla, WA
btwallawalla.com

The installation of Fiber-Optic cables for Internet access is hard work but at PocketiNet Communications Inc. in Walla Walla, that doesn't mean the crew can't have some fun.

Nate Ewer, an area operations supervisor and employee of PocketiNet for 10 years, recalled this story: "The guys I work with often buy snacks to munch on between jobs. When everyone goes home at the end of the day, I typically grab the near empty bags of chips and finish them on the way home. The guys started complaining about it -- not real serious -- just giving me a friendly, hard time about it.

"One day I pulled up to an alley that they were working about 100 feet from the truck. I looked in and saw a bag of nachos sitting on the seat. I thought I would mess with them so I picked up the bag and started eating the chips. I knew they were watching but that they were too busy to do anything about it. I thought it was strange that they just watched and didn't start giving me a hard time -- until the bomb went off in my mouth.

"One of them had bought a container of Carolina Reaper powder [a cross-bred red habanero pepper with a red Ghost Pepper, i.e. extremely hot] and poured it into the nacho bag. I fell for it. Almost instantly I felt like I had swallowed a blow torch. I started peeling off clothes as my whole body felt as if I were on fire.

"The guys down the alley were practically rolling, laughing at me. I don't think any of us could breathe -- them from laughing and me from the incredible pain I was experiencing. I was sweating from every pore in my body, and I'm pretty sure I even had snot coming out of my ears. Needless to say, I learned my lesson. I haven't touched anyone's snacks ever since."

PocketiNet has been a Chamber member since 2000 when the company was established. Work continues throughout the areas of Walla Walla, Yakima and Kennewick.



COMMUNITY CONCIERGE

A celebration of community spirit and collective empowerment

Do you enjoy connecting with people and sharing your love for the Walla Walla Valley?

The Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce is seeking enthusiastic individuals to join our Community Concierge program!

As a Community Concierge, you can:

- Welcome visitors and residents to the Chamber office, providing information about local businesses, events, and attractions.
- Answer questions about the Walla Walla Valley, from restaurant recommendations to dog-friendly places.
- Assist with community events and educational initiatives, such as Exec-2-Education.
- Contribute to a positive and welcoming atmosphere at the Chamber.

This volunteer opportunity is perfect for individuals who:

- Are passionate about the Walla Walla Valley and enjoy sharing their knowledge with others.
- Possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills or want to improve them.
- Have a positive and enthusiastic attitude.
- Are available to volunteer a few hours per week or at special events.

Benefits:

- Gain valuable experience in the field of hospitality and customer service.
- Build meaningful connections with other community members.
- Make a difference in the lives of visitors and residents.
- Participate in professional development opportunities, such as Exec-2-Education.
- Be part of a team dedicated to building a brighter future for the Walla Walla Valley.

If you are ready to embrace the spirit of community and share your love for the Walla Walla Valley, we encourage you to apply!

Please contact Teresa at the Chamber at 509-525-0850 or email info@wwvchamber.com to learn more and start your application process today!



COMMUNITY AWARDS

125th Anniversary



WALLA WALLA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENTS

HOMETOWN HEROES



EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR
Eric Matson (center)



FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR
Lieutenant Jim Nagle (right)



LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR
Officer Brandon Rhodes (center)

HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS



WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Nicole McCauley (right)



WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY
Dorita Tessier (left)



WHITMAN COLLEGE
Sarah Hulburt (eft)
This award was presented in Memory of Bryan Lubbers

Thank you to our Sponsors





GESA POWERHOUSE THEATRE

“One Noble Journey”

March 1
7 pm

Gesa Power House Theatre proudly presents Mike Wiley’s historical play One Noble Journey highlighting Henry ‘Box’ Brown, a man born into slavery in 1816 and escaped by sealing himself in a box and shipping himself to freedom.

Tickets can be purchased at phtww.org or by calling 509.529.6500



WALLA WALLA CIVILITY PROJECT

Intro & Overview

One of the most important ways to create safe and respectful places is to learn to discuss and deal with differences in a civil and constructive way. Civility does not mean giving up your beliefs, being passive, staying silent, backing down, agreeing, or avoiding conflict. But it does require speaking respectfully, kindly, courteously, and without judgment, and listening with the goal of understanding, not of persuading each other.

To facilitate and promote this behavior, we practice civility ourselves and offer materials and workshops to increase these skills in our community, workplaces, places of worship, and other organizations.

For more info go to: www.wwcivilityproject.blogspot.com, write to civilityww@gmail.com, or call 509-593-0470.



EARLY LEARNING COALITION

Identifying Properties and Spaces for Early Care and Education Programs

The Early Learning Coalition continues focus on the accessibility and availability of child care and we are working with United Way of the Blue Mountains and the Arrowleaf Group on increasing the available early learning and child care facilities.

We need your help finding spaces and properties in Walla Walla County and Columbia County that could potentially be used by early learning and care programs.

If your organization has a space or property that could potentially be leased by or sold to a child care program, please take a [5 minutes survey](#) or email eiledonm@bmacww.org for additional information.



Bella Terra Real Estate

Roger Esparza
517 W Main St
Walla Walla, WA
btwallawalla.com



Roger Esparza, managing broker and owner of Bella Terra Real Estate, and realtor for 14 years, had this story to share: “I worked with a client who was influential in the community. We literally looked at more than 30 homes. One day he called me to look at a house. I arrived and a couple was already there waiting. I thought they were friends of my client. I spent 20 minutes giving them a tour when my phone rang. My client wondered where I was. I was at the wrong house. The couple was early for the showing and it was the first house they looked at – they had not met their realtor in person yet. I rushed over to the other house, and we went through it together. It was not the house my client ended up buying – he picked the 32nd house.”

Roger is a Walla Walla native. He worked his way up at Sprint. Realtors encouraged him to change his profession. “Once I made up my mind that’s what I wanted to do, I am thankful I did it.”

He is a past President of the WWV Chamber of Commerce and a current member.



Allegro Cyclery

Michael and Kathryn Austin
200 E Main Street
Walla Walla, WA
allegrocyclery.com



You never know what might improve a long-distance relationship.

Kathryn Austin, co-owner of Allegro Cyclery with her husband, Michael, have this solution:

“A dad who lives far away from his son decided to share his love for cycling and sent his son a “smart” bike trainer as a way for them to stay connected and “train” together through the winter months.

“These smart trainers provide an interactive “avatar” experience – similar to a treadmill and a video game. You hop on your bike, strap in, and suddenly you’re pedaling through the streets of Paris or dodging kangaroos in the Australian Outback—all from the comfort of your own living room.

“Through weekly interactive bike training sessions on their trainers, dad and son developed a new closeness and a renewed mutual interest in cycling – all while literally, going nowhere. They are now “training” together for a bike event this spring to do together “in-person!”

Dad is very thankful for the unexpected result these bike trainers have provided for him and his son. Now dad’s brother is going to do the same with his daughter who lives far away to spread the love and “the ride!”

Ride on. Allegro Cyclery has been a Chamber member since 2019.



PostalAnnex+

Sheila Proefrock
1644 Plaza Way
Walla Walla, WA
postalannex.com

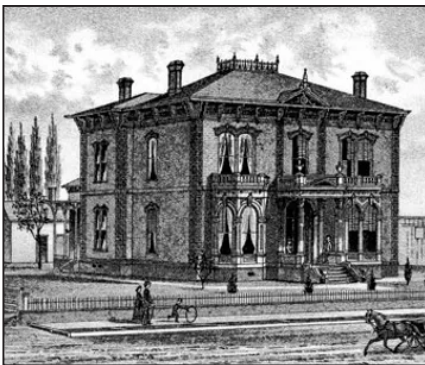


Sheila Proefrock and her husband, Dean, opened PostalAnnex+ in November 2000 and became Chamber members the next month – more than 24 years ago.

A number of customers have come through the door to ship wine or other items, notarize documents, pick up mail, copy or laminate paperwork, buy greeting cards or Melissa & Doug toys, or shred old documents but, this story stood out for Sheila: “Years ago, a customer came into the store and said, ‘I’d like to get some postage stamps... Can I please get the rubber ones.’” Our response was ‘Huh?’

“It took a bit of conversing to realize that the customer was referring to the sign in the window that said: ‘We sell rubber stamps!’”

Sheila and Dean were both born in Walla Walla. Dean wanted to be his own boss when the opportunity to open the franchise was advertised in the newspaper. Sheila said, “It feels like we’re a close-knit store and community with our customers. They’re happy to see us and we’re happy to see them.”



Kirkman House Museum

214 N. Colville St.
Walla Walla, WA
kirkmanhousemuseum.org



The “dream home” of William and Isabelle Kirkman, completed in 1880, is now known as the Kirkman House Museum. Over the decades, this stately house has served several purposes: private residence, boys’ dormitory, apartment building and now, museum.

Staff at the Kirkman House Museum recalled a time in the 1900s when the Kirkman family had a domestic helper. Records of the 1910 Census show his name as ‘Kirkman Sing’ but no photographs remain of him.

The helper’s role was to cook, do laundry and clean the house. According to the story, this helper loved to play practical jokes and his favorite time of year was April 1. It is said that one April Fool’s Day, the helper baked beautiful biscuits and served them to the family. When they began eating the biscuits, it was discovered that the biscuits had been stuffed with cotton balls and served to them as a joke.

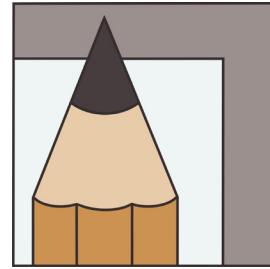
We don’t know how his joke was received but the helper left the country to visit family and never returned.

The museum reopens on March 16.



Enable Art

Chloe Congleton
508 S. College Avenue
College Place, WA
enable-art.com



Enable Art, a Chamber member since 2017, provides opportunities for people ages 5 and older to express themselves by “creating community through creativity.”, explained, Chloe Congleton, owner and creator of the business. Chloe experienced this funny story:

“I was teaching my kids art class [ages 5-12 years old] and we were creating cartoons. One student and I created a little story around this character that we were drawing. She told me that since I have written and illustrated a book before that I should make our cartoon from class a story book.

“I responded and told her, ‘Well, illustrating, writing and publishing a book is hard work! It takes a long time to get it done.’

“The next week she walked in and put some folded up papers on my desk. I asked her, ‘What is this?’

“She responded, ‘I don’t know why you thought writing and illustrating a book is so hard. I did it all after class and it’s done. You are allowed to publish it now but, I want 80% of the profit since I did most the work.’

“I have never been so proud,” Chloe added.

ADVERTISE HERE!

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



March Anniversaries

Thank you for your continued support of the Chamber!

Amavi Cellars, LLC
 Wagner Landscaping, Inc
 Hayden Homes
 Dutch Bros Coffee
 Windermere Property Management
 Buckley Investment Group
 Inland Family Dentistry
 Walla Walla Sheriffs Foundation
 Public House 124
 Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram of Walla Walla
 Welcome Home Properties
 Tate Transportation, Inc.
 Winery Fulfillment Services
 Walla Walla Steak Co./Crossbuck Brewing
 The Leadership Difference, Inc.
 Price Computers
 The Human Bean
 Lodmell Cellars
 Clarette's Restaurant
 Outwest Printing
 Comfort Inn & Suites Walla Walla
 TETO Eco Wash llc
 Wild Willow Flower House
 Walla Walla Periodontics & Implants
 Blue Mountain Action Council

Look Who's Celebrating 25 Years or More!

Whitman College	87
Wylie Monument Inc	84
CliftonLarsonAllen LLP	81
AgWest Farm Credit	80
Gary's Paint & Decorating Inc	41
John D. Logan, Inc	40
City of College Place	40
Mountain View-Colonial DeWitt Cremations & Funeral Services	36
Blue Mountain Humane Society	33
Bicycle Barn / Knowles Sports, Inc	31
Fort Walla Walla Museum	29
Best Western Plus Walla Walla Suites Inn	29



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COMMUNITY PARTNERS



VISIONARIES

