

Recreate. Relax. Repeat.

Burke Vermont



BURKE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2018 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

December 2017 – **Updated Bylaws and 2018 Board of Directors** voted in and approved at the Annual Meeting.
2018 Current Board of Directors: Chris Andrews (2 year term), Michelle Cleveland (replaced Linda Corey, 1 yr), John Kascenska (3 yrs), Linda Lotti (3 yrs), Jim O'Reilly (1 yr), Tammy Wagner (1 yr), Gail Weed (2 yrs)
2018 Current Officers: Jim O'Reilly, President; Chris Andrews, Vice President; Linda Lotti, Treasurer; Michelle Cleveland, Secretary.

February– All members were invited to an idea gathering session to help the new BOD decide on initiatives to focus on for the year. A survey was also emailed to all members for feedback. As a result of the meeting/survey, the following committees were formed and are headed by BOD members shown in parentheses:

- Lodging (Jim)
- Business to Business Opportunities (Jim & Linda)
- Business to Consumer Opportunities (Chris & John)
- Marketing (Jim, John & Chris)
- Education (Linda & John)
- Event (Tammy & Gail)
- Beautification (Tammy & Gail)

Any members interested in being involved, can contact the BOD member heading that committee.

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES INTRODUCED IN 2018

- **Business After Hours** was created as a networking opportunity for members and a way to showcase local businesses. In August, the first BAH was held at Sanderson's Wooden Bowls with food/drink provided by Café Lotti and Juniper's. All members were invited. Sam & Weeza were wonderful hosts and happy to show off their studio and farm critters! The other BAH was on December 11th at Burke Mountain. This was an info session to inform the public about winter operations at Burke Mtn and Kingdom Trails.
- The Chamber also worked with **Main Street Alliance** and invited all members to a roundtable event in October. About 40 people attended to share their thoughts and challenges as business owners. MSA will use the information gathered to determine their legislative agenda on behalf of small businesses.

MARKETING INITIATIVES COMPLETED AND IN PROGRESS

- **E-newsletters** are sent on the first of each month and include info for residents and visitors including monthly events, lodging, local deals and other area news.
- The chamber website, **BurkeVermont.com** is regularly updated with events, listings, area news and more. The site receives an average of 5,000 hits per month.
- Regular posts are made to **facebook** and we have over **4,000 followers/likes**.
- **Print advertisements** placed in: 2017/2018 VT Winter Vacation Guide (coop ad), VT Ski & Ride Winter Adventures (Jan/Feb 2018 issue), Snowmobile VT (Coop ad, Dec 2018 issue)
- **Online ad campaigns:** Vermont.com (annual campaign), Boston.com (winter 2017/2018), Facebook ads (Fall 2018) VisitNewEngland.com (winter 2017/2018 and winter 2018/2019)
- **Television ads:** The Chamber ran a 30 second commercial on NBC Sports Boston and The Mountain Report to promote Winter 2017/2018 in Burke.

(All print and online ads direct readers/viewers to the Chamber website, BurkeVermont.com, where they can learn about all area offerings and member businesses. Coop ads consist of a general chamber ad for the area as well as individual ads from participating businesses with their own website and contact info.)

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EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

May – Café Lotti hosted a **Social Media Workshop** – all members were invited to attend and learn about tagging on facebook.

EVENTS

- March – **Annual Community Dinner** to benefit the Burke Senior Meal Site. Many local restaurants and chefs donated delicious entrees and \$600 was raised for the Burke Senior Meal Site.
- June – The Chamber participated in **NEMBAfest** at Kingdom Trails and had vendor space to represent the area offerings and local businesses. Many area businesses sponsored the event through the Chamber and were promoted alongside the 3 day mountain biking event which saw thousands of visitors per day!
- September – **The 31st Annual Burke Fall Festival** was a great success with beautiful weather and an estimated attendance of about 1,500 people. This year had over 80 vendors and a new raffle of vendor items was featured at the Chamber Info Booth. 50 local businesses sponsored and donated to the event.
- October – **The Gloaming** featured Halloween activities throughout East Burke Village including trick or treating at businesses, haunted storytelling, a costume contest, and a jack-o-lantern contest. Lots of families came out to enjoy the festivities.
- December – The **Annual Christmas Tree Lighting & Holiday Party** was held on December 9th at the Burke Mtn Club/Library. The winners of the tree contest each received \$100 to a charity of their choice. Earlier in the day, **Santa made his annual visit to West Burke**. At least 100 families came to enjoy cookies, wagon rides and more. Both events were free and attendees brought generous donations for the local food shelf.

In addition to these events, the Chamber began creating a **printed list of weekly events**. The list is emailed to all chamber members on Wednesday or Thursday of each week and also posted at select locations in Burke/Lyndonville. All members are welcome to share information about their events with the Chamber so that we can share them via this list, the online events calendar, e-newsletters, and facebook.

BEAUTIFICATION

- The Chamber is working with the Burke Mountain Club to repair the **kiosk on the green** and update the information on display. One side will feature photos of the area and highlight annual events. The other side will include a general map of Burke as well as library events and other information about the area.
- **THE CHRISTMAS TREES!!!!!!** Of Course!!! These will be lighting up the green until mid-January.

OTHER ITEMS

- The Chamber is responsible for the **free WiFi** available in the village (The Burke Connection). The service and routers were updated this year for better connectivity.
- The Chamber partnered with Kingdom Trails and Burke Mountain to offer the free **Burke Mountain Shuttle** service on summer weekends. The shuttle has proved popular and will continue next summer. It is offered as a convenience for visitors and residents as well as to help ease traffic concerns in the village. We are also working with Kingdom Trails to alleviate other parking and traffic issues in the village.
- Chamber Financials – We are on track with our budget projections for the year and are financially stable.
- IRS non-profit status – The Chamber has been working with an experienced CPA to resolve this complicated issue. We have requested the IRS reinstate our non-profit 501c6 status and do so retroactively to the date of revocation.

All members are invited and encouraged to contact the Chamber or any Board Member with ideas, questions, concerns, or to keep us informed about your business so that we can promote your news and the area.

Thank You for your continued membership and support!