



Lyndon Area Chamber of Commerce



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“You’re on your own”

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It’s not just a quote from Mel Brooks’ *“Blazing Saddles,”* it’s also the message we’re hearing from Montpelier these days.

I am just back from a VACCE meeting—six times a year, chamber people from all around the state gather to discuss issues, share information, etc. This month, we met at the Three Stallion Inn in Randolph. The word from Bruce Hyde, Commissioner of Tourism & Marketing is that we need to do lots more with lots less money. Tell us something we don’t know!

There was brighter news from Secretary of State Deb Markowitz, who took time out of her very hectic schedule to stop in and explain **“Community Business Connections”** a *BRAND NEW* program designed to help Vermonters start and expand businesses. Along with representatives from the SBA and the Vermont Small Business Development Center, we got an overview of what the state, with limited funding, can do to help those brave souls who have an entrepreneurial streak. Deb was right: If you can find the funding, NOW is a great time to start a business.

There’s the catch. ***IF*** you can find the funding. The biggest issue confronting every businessperson seeking to open, expand, renegotiate debt, whatever, is that the credit markets remain locked, or at best, very reluctant. If you know otherwise, PLEASE... share some good news with us.

Planning for Stars & Stripes is well underway, as is planning for Vermont-Fourth, an ambitious festival July 4th weekend in Lyndonville and Burke. It will be HUGE!

We’ll talk about all of these things and lots more when we gather at the Stepping Stone Spa in Lyndonville this Tuesday . Chef Casey is preparing a bunch of tempting treats for lunch and if you haven’t been to the Spa yet, well are you in for a treat! This is a very special spot.

YOU make a difference. Please come to the meeting.

All best,
Steve Nichols
steve@nicholscommunications.com

MAY MEETING

Tuesday, May 19 1:00

Stepping Stone Spa
Darling Hill

AGENDA

- Lunch!!
- Minutes
- Treasurer’s Report and Budget
- Stars and Stripes Update
- New Business
- Adjourn

What Business Owners Should Know About Catamount Health

Catamount Health is Vermont's health care program for uninsured Vermonters with premiums based on the ability to pay. Most uninsured Vermonters are eligible, even those that are already employed. If an employee chooses to enroll in Catamount Health, there is no cost to the employer. Employers can choose to reimburse employees for both premium and out of pocket costs incurred by employees on Catamount Health. Employers can also make employees aware of the benefits of Catamount Health:

- During the hiring process
- Through employee newsletters and the employee handbook
- By having enrollment forms and information for employees
- When employment is terminated

For business owners, employees and family members, Catamount Health may be the best option for health insurance if they:

- Are ineligible to join the company plan (for example, temp employees or part-timers, or if there is a waiting period for eligibility)
- Lose coverage through a spouse due to death, divorce, loss of employment or any other reason.
- Are children or employees who lose access to the company plan upon leaving college.
- Are employees who are terminating employment and don't have immediate access to another plan.
- Are former employees who are paying COBRA costs.
- Are employees, their spouses and their children who are uninsured or enrolled in a plan with a deductible of \$10,000 or higher.

There is much more detailed information about the Catamount Health program on their website at www.catamounthealth.org. Health care costs are a huge expense for employers *and* employees. See if Catamount Health might provide an option for your business or employees. If you would like more information about Catamount Health and your business, please contact Jennifer Ruddy at m2tr@aol.com or phone her at 802-922-3358. Ms. Ruddy works with the Vermont Campaign for Health Care Security Education Fund, a non profit organization working to educate Vermonters about, and help them enroll in, Vermont's public health care programs so that all Vermonters have access to affordable, comprehensive health care.

Workshop on Available \$\$\$ from SBA

Incubator Without Walls (iWOW) is offering a 1 and 1/2 hour workshop entitled "SBA RESOURCES TO HELP YOUR BUSINESS." The course will be offered on Wednesday, May 20th from 8 to 9:30 am at the CCV facilities in the Hebard Building in Newport. It will be presented by Bernard Villemaire from the Vermont office of the SBA, Ross Hart, Area Business Advisor for the Vermont Small Business Development Center, and John Mandeville, Director of the iWOW program at LSC.

If your business is looking for financing resources in these challenging times, then this workshop is a "must attend." Come find out the facts about what sorts of existing and new financing opportunities may be available to you through the SBA and its resource partners in Vermont.

Registration is necessary as space is limited, but there is no fee to attend. Register for the workshop online at www.vtsbds.org or e-mail Heather Gonyaw at hgonyaw@vtsbdc.org. For more information, contact IWOW Director John Mandeville at 802-626-4867 or john.mandeville@lyndonstate.edu.

IWOW is a project funded by USDA Rural Business enterprise Grant (RBEG) awarded to LSC that will help the Newport-Derby area grow new businesses and respond to the changing economic climate. The RBEG project helps businesses identify the most effective ways to respond to the addition of big box stores in the area and other challenges. The total cost of the project is \$322,059. LSC, the Vermont Small Business Dev. Ctr. And collaborative partners will contribute a total of \$59,695 towards the project, in addition to the grant. Everyone is welcome to attend the workshops.

**CHECK
THIS
OUT...**



Community Business Connections
Helping Vermonters start and expand businesses

Visit our one-stop shop to learn how to:

- Write a business plan
- Build management skills
- Finance a business
- Find new customers
- Increase sales

For more information visit
www.StartABusinessInVermont.net,
or call the SBA at 802-828-4422, or the VtSBDC at 800-464-7232.

Community Business Connections is a joint project of the Vermont Secretary of State, the SBA, and VtSBDC

  

Cooperation Authorization # 09-0150-05. SBA's participation in this co-sponsored activity is not an endorsement of the views, opinions, products or services of any co-sponsor or other person or entity. All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Chamber Calendar and Newsletter Deadlines

May Chamber Meeting: Tuesday, May 19th at the Stepping Stone Spa on Darling Hill. 1 PM. Lunch will be provided.

Deadline for submissions for the June Newsletter: Friday, June 5th
The June chamber meeting will be on Tuesday, June 16th at 1 pm. Place to be announced.

Stars and Stripes Celebrates the Northeast Kingdom

It's official, the theme for this year's Stars and Stripes celebration is "**Moments in American History**". The date for the Festival is Saturday, July 18th. The theme was developed with help from Rick Paul's Business class at LSC and we thank them for their input. Local student Amanda Gilman came up with the winning theme, which should make for some great floats and a spectacular parade. There will be a road race in the morning, and the parade begins at 10 am. Vendor forms and Float registration forms are posted on the web at www.lyndonvermont.com, or you can call 626-9696 to have them sent to you.

When you receive a fundraising letter from the Stars and Stripes committee, please support this great community event. We are looking to "grow" the seed money from last October's coin drop in order to put on the best event possible. The next meeting of the Stars and Stripes Festival Committee will be on Wednesday, May 20th at 10 am at the Cobleigh Public Library. Everyone is welcome.

Lyndon



Area

CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE

PO Box 886
Lyndonville, VT 05851
802-626-9696
www.lyndonvermont.com



Place Your **FREE** Ad Here!

The Northeast Kingdom Travel and Tourism Association is trying out some social networking tools to showcase the Northeast Kingdom. They have a YouTube channel and also a Facebook Page to reach out and share videos, photos and more.

Check them out and pass the information along!

Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Vermonts-Northeast-Kingdom/64812082554>

YouTube

<http://www.youtube.com/user/NekttaNEK>

NUTRILITE® the world's leading brand of vitamin, mineral, and dietary supplements based on 2006 sales, specially formulated to deliver the unique benefits of plant concentrates.

Contact Donna Stark at 802-625-8945
Amway Global™ Independent Business
Owner, to learn more.

Contact us with your ad requests by calling
626-9696 or emailing: info@lyndonvermont.com

The Lyndon Area Chamber is investigating a **reduced rate for bulk purchase** on heating oil and propane. In order to determine rates, we need some idea of what participation might be if we can offer this program and how much oil or propane your business would use annually.

You can email info@lyndonvermont.com to express interest in this program, or call 626-9696.

1. Would you be interested in participating in a reduced rate fuel program if offered by the Chamber?

2. What is your annual fuel usage in gallons?

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING!

Vermont Woman Annual Lecture Series presents

An evening with Gloria Steinem

June 11, 2009

Burlington Hilton

6 pm

Limited Seating. Reserved tickets only. \$30/ticket

Order online at www.vermontwoman.com/speakers.shtml

or call Vermont Woman Newspaper at 802-372-3201