



IN THIS ISSUE

Adopt-A-Child.....	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
Chamber Christmas Party	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.

Adopt-A-Child Was A Success



The Chamber decided to give back to the community a little differently this year. Instead of collecting cans of food for charity at the Annual Christmas Party, it was decided the Chamber would help with Adopt-a-Child.

The Blowing Rock School's Adopt-a-Child for Christmas program provides gifts for the neediest children in Watauga County with only volunteer efforts and contributions. Without Adopt-a-Child, some children in our area wouldn't have a Christmas. So, Trish Kolasch from Blowing Rock C.A.R.E.S. collected the names of 34 children who needed help in having a Merry Christmas this year and the Chamber adopted 10 of those children.

Chamber members were asked to purchase an item on a child's wish list and bring the gift to the Chamber Christmas Party. Amazingly, a few members bought absolutely everything on one or two of the lists. Gifts and monetary donations started pouring in the weeks before the Christmas Party.

The Chamber received enough clothing, candy, games and toys to completely

adopt five of those children and a total of \$575 to purchase items for the other five children. So thank to the very generous members of The Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce, all ten children will have presents under their trees this year! There was even a gift for one of the parents to open.

So, the staff at the Chamber wishes to extend a heartfelt "Thank You!" to the members who donated to this worthwhile cause. Word from the North Pole is that Santa has moved you to the top of his "good" list!



Above right: Charles Hardin, Executive Director of the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce, and Melissa Pickett, owner of Blowing Rock Inn, pose in front the Chamber's Christmas tree and all of the Adopt-A-Child gifts collected.



Gold Partners



Silver Partners



What's Going On? Area Events

Ongoing thru March

"What Draws You Here?"

BRAHM, 295-9099

December 29th

Holiday Open House

Carlton Gallery, 10am-5:00pm

December 31

Appalachian Ski Mountain

New Year's Eve Extravaganza

Fireworks, torchlight skiing,

moonlight skating 10-11:45pm

Breakfast 9:00pm-midnight

December 31

New Year's Celebration

Table at Crestwood, 6:00pm-1:00am

877-836-5046 ext.117

January 26-29

Winterfest

Downtown Blowing Rock

Business Meetings

January 3

Winterfest Meeting

Chamber of Commerce, 9:30am

January 3

Executive Board

Chamber of Commerce, 3:30pm

January 9

Events Committee

Chamber of Commerce, 9:00am

January 10

Winterfest Meeting

Chamber of Commerce, 9:30am

January 10

Wine Festival Meeting

Chamber of Commerce, 9:30am

January 11

Board of Directors Meeting

BRAHM Board Room, 8:00am

January 17

Winterfest Meeting

Chamber of Commerce, 9:30am

For more information
and calendar:

www.blowingrock.com

www.blowingrocknccchamber.com



Find us on
Facebook

THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

Charles Hardin, Executive Director



Business New Year's Resolutions

As the Christmas tree comes down and the Santas, tinsel, and ornaments are packed away for the year ahead, it's time to toss out the remaining cakes and cookies and look at your business with a critical eye. Yes, I mean New Year's resolutions for your business, better known as goal setting. During the slow cold weeks of early January, it is time to re-evaluate the status quo of the new economy we face in 2012. Use this slow time wisely to determine what is working and what isn't. It is often tempting to slump into a depression about how slow it is and before we know it, we are busy again and nothing has changed. But this time spent critically analyzing your business can pay big dividends when the season does start. Here are a few thoughts to consider for setting goals:

Customer Service

This is one area that few small businesses really understand. Many small business owners bemoan the successes of their big corporate competitors. While it may be tough to admit, these corporates generally have consistent, standard driven customer service that is pounded into their new hire employees from day one during their training and orientation. Furthermore, they have written service standards that are reviewed with the potential employee while they are still a candidate, not after they have been on the clock for six months. This brings up several areas for possible goals:

1. Develop written customer service standards
2. Review customer service standards with potential employees during their interview
3. Conduct employee orientation and follow-up with thorough training
4. Ensure service consistency daily
5. Perform regular employee performance reviews

Customer service actually begins with you, the owner. Ask yourself these questions: Is customer service

really important to you? Are you doing all the business you want to do? Sure you probably know how to treat customers, but what is going on when you aren't there? Do you set the example when you are there? Are smiles a required part of the dress code? Do you allow your employees to chat on the phone with their friends during business hours? Do you allow employees to text, or surf the Internet? What do employees do when there are no customers in the store? (I seem to remember cleaning and re-stocking.) When a customer comes in your store is there a required greeting standard or do you or your employees just silently remain seated behind the counter reading a book or talking on the phone? Are employees taught how to offer assistance to customers? How to pull back when the customer wants to be left alone, but to still remain available? Are all customers sincerely thanked when they make a purchase? Are they thanked for visiting Blowing Rock and your store when they don't make a purchase or are they just ignored when they leave without a purchase? Do you let your customers know about your sale items or suggest other items to compliment their purchase? (This may require hiring intuitive employees.) Do your employees know where the major attractions and event venues are located? Do they know where the post office, grocery store, visitor center, and Chamber of Commerce are located? Do they know basic directions? Do they know what is going on in town?

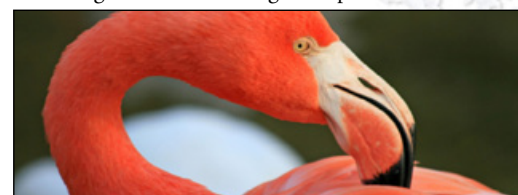
I believe customer service is one of the only industries we have left in this country. We have off-shored many of our manufacturing jobs and designed products to be discarded rather than repaired when we are done with them. Customer service is about all we have left and for the most part, we aren't very good at it. Could it be that Blowing Rock can be known for its impeccable Customer Service? With your help, I think it can!

A Partridge in A Pear Tree (or not?)

The Chamber Christmas Party was held Tuesday night on December 13th at the Green Park Inn. Party-goers started gathering and mingling in the Divide Tavern at the Green Park Inn around 6pm where hors d'oeuvres were served. Guests then moved to the Laurel Room to enjoy a festive buffet prepared by Chef James Welch that included oyster stew or chicken tortilla soup and mixed green salad. Entrees consisted of rigatoni with chicken in pesto cream sauce and meat lasagna plus a side of green beans almondine. Homemade chocolate chip cookies were offered for dessert.

After dinner, Charles Hardin thanked all the members present for coming to the party and for their support of the Chamber. As an end to the festivities, Lynn Lawrence, wife of Mayor J.B. Lawrence, led the group in a spirited

rendition of "The Twelve Days of Christmas". Each table was assigned a "day" out of the twelve days and stood to sing when it was their turn. Arms flapped when "3 french hens" was chanted and "8 maids-a-milking" had people pretending to milk a cow. The table whose singing role capped off the song with "...and a partridge in a pear tree!" carolled the words loudly each time it was their turn. Mischievously though, they decided to get creative on the last line of the song. After every table had sung each of the eleven days, the night ended with the "partridge" table belting out at the top of their lungs, "...and a flamingo in a palm tree!"



PARTNER FOCUS



A destination-residential community tucked between the charming village of Blowing Rock and the bustling university town of Boone, North Carolina, **Blue Ridge Mountain Club** offers the best of both communities without being "in" either. Located just 1.5 miles from the legendary Blue Ridge Parkway in historic Dugger Valley, it is a hidden gem in hills.

The moment you enter the property, its larger-than-life nature triggers a grab-your-bike-or-hiking-shoes impulse difficult to resist. Suddenly, you can't wait to be a part of the "unbelievably great outdoors," whether it be fishing, camping, hunting, or hiking, you are

sure to find a mountain peak or creek bottom all your own among its 6,000 acres.

Blue Ridge Mountain Club's incredible nature may already be well-known, but new discoveries are made every day by our owners. Just recently, a four-tier waterfall was found in Dugger Valley! It starts out like a traditional waterfall, then courses behind a cliff, turning into a sluice fall, before forming a pool in a tight gorge with vertical side walls. "Dugger Cascade" is a true sight to behold with a vertical drop of over 120 feet. In order to truly appreciate the beauty of this waterfall, a five-mile hiking trail was created along Dugger Creek starting at Watson Gap Pavilion and ending at the cascade. The first three miles are a moderate hike, then the trail becomes slightly more technical, with the last two miles featuring ladders and stairs. Coming upon the magnificent view of this cascading waterfall makes all five miles well worth the excursion.

Blue Ridge Mountain Club's "unbelievably great outdoors" are open to the general public to experience from sunup to sunset. Just drop by the gatehouse for directions, or call Outbound Coordinator Harrison Herbst at (828) 295-8667 ext. 5916.

The Inner Circle

Terri Bailey
Membership Services Director



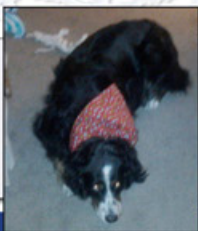
Don't Forget To Renew Your Membership!

It is almost a new year - 2012, and that means it is time to renew those memberships! Why, you ask? Every member is granted a 4"x9" rack card space or business card space in the Visitor's Center, a listing in our Visitor Information Guide and Membership Directory, a listing on the web site and access to the Member to Member Discount Program in addition to all of these other benefits:

- Networking
- Advertising Opportunities
- Education
- Community Forums
- Ribbon Cuttings and Grand Openings
- Newsletters and e-blasts
- Combined Voice for Betterment of the Community
- The opportunity to sponsor and/or volunteer at Chamber events

Individuals and organizations join a Chamber because the Chamber of Commerce carries the reputation of being a leader of business integrity in the community and affiliation adds to your credibility as a business PLUS members of the Chamber work to support each other's businesses. The Chamber of Commerce also focuses on community issues that affect the quality of life, unifies the public spirit of the community and works to make positive changes that upgrade the region.

So, don't you want to continue to be a part of an organization that works so hard for you and your business? Call Terri at the Chamber at 295-7851 to renew.



Lost Australian Shepherd Dog

"Pup" ran away from the Homestead Inn, Blowing Rock 12/27

He is black with cream and brown, 80 lbs, no tail. He had a collar on with Christmas scarf attached and dragging a green leash. He may not have any of this on now. Possible sightings in Chetola neighborhood. We are from Florida and can't go home without him.

Please call Lee Ann at 863-214-8166 or Homestead Inn.

Billie Rogers
Events Director



THE TURN OF EVENTS

Father Christmas has come, Father Time is dropping off Baby New Year and Chilly and Crystal are waiting just around the corner. You know Chilly and Crystal—the snow folks of Blowing Rock WinterFest! WinterFest begins Thursday, January 26th and runs through Sunday, January 29th. Several new and interesting things are occurring at this year's event. Details for everything can be found on www.blowingrockwinterfest.com.

Saturday, January 21st

- Little Miss/Master WinterFest Pageant. The first time for this new event, children of all ages are encouraged to compete for the title of Miss or Master Winterfest. Located at the Blowing Rock School Auditorium, registration begins at 10:00am; competition begins at 11:30am. Winners will attend the WinterFest events the following week.

Thursday

- WinterFest at Chetola Resort. The new restaurant of Chetola, Timberlake's will open temporarily to host this event.
- WinterAles Craft Beer Tastings at Foggy Rock Restaurant following WinterFest.

Friday

- Downtown activities (bonfire, hot chocolate) begin.
- Blowing Rock School's Spaghetti Dinner and Bingo at the school cafeteria and gymnasium.
- App Ski's special pricing for skiing and snowboarding with lessons included.
- Beverly "Guitar" Watkins and the King Bees at the Hayes Center.

Saturday

- Polar Plunge to benefit Wine to Water – Chetola Resort
- WinterFest Silent Auction and Raffle to benefit Mountain Alliance – Blowing Rock School Cafeteria
- Chilly Chili Challenge – Blowing Rock School Gym
- Ice Carving Demonstrations in the park featuring the US Army Special Forces Ice Carving Team!! Go USA!
- WinterFest Wine Tasting and Auction – Green Park Inn
- Interactive Game Shows with Ensemble Stage – Blowing Rock School Auditorium.
- John Cowan Trio at the Hayes Center.

Sunday

- WinterFest Pancake Breakfast – Blowing Rock Cafeteria; to benefit the Blowing Rock Fire Department.
 - WinterPaws Dog Show – Blowing Rock School Gym; to benefit the Watauga Humane Society.
 - Snowman Building contest at App Ski Mountain.
- And of course, Shop 'til you Drop every day!!!

Don't Hibernate... Celebrate!

FREEZE FRAME!




Charles Hardin, Executive Director of the Chamber, and his wife Margaret stop to pose for a quick picture before heading for all the delicious food on the buffet.



Mandy Poplin of Doncaster Outlet spends time chatting with an associate in the Divide Tavern.



Steve Irace, owner of Green Park Inn, looks festive all decked out in his Santa hat while speaking with Tom McAuliffe of Sugar Mountain Golf Club.



The festivities began with a few drinks in the Divide Tavern. Pictured here are Pamela and Alex Isaenko of Calloway Chiropractic Clinic and Bill Razner of Identities Advertising, Inc.



Charles Hardin starts the holiday season off right by decorating the welcome signs to Blowing Rock with gorgeous wreaths.



Party-goers enjoy a delicious buffet including mixed green salad with homemade dressing, oyster stew and meat lasagna. Yum!

Quick Business Tip of the Month

Tip 8: To Improve Your Small Business (*find next tip in next month's newsletter*)

Monitor Trends: No business operates in a vacuum. The events and changes in the global landscape have an effect on your business. Stay current on trends and issues.

-Darrell Zaborsky

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2011 OFFICERS

MARGARET HOLDER

President

Chetola Resort

JOHN ALDRIDGE

Vice President

Individual Representative

LINDA GILLELAND

Secretary

Greystone Insurance

DEBORAH MCDOWELL

Treasurer

Mountaineer Inn & Log Cabins

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

TIM MILLER

Blowing Rock Frameworks & Gallery

BETSY COLLINS

Individual Representative

DON HUBBLE

Individual Representative

J. B. LAWRENCE

United Community Bank

CATHY ROBBINS

Tweetsie Railroad

DOUG PEGRAM

Village Real Estate

CINDY MILNER

Bistro Roca

DICK GOOSMAN

Meadowbrook Inn

CHRISTOPHER BRANTLEY

Christopher's Wine & Cheese

JULIE ROBERTSON

The Last Straw

GENIE STARNES

Individual Representative

CATHY WILLIAMSON

Kilwin's Chocolates & Ice Cream

STEVEN PRICE

Westglow

MELISSA PICKETT

Blowing Rock Inn

CHELSEA GARRETT

diSanti, Watson,

Capua & Wilson



CHAMBER STAFF

CHARLES HARDIN

Executive Director

hardince@blowingrock.com

TERRI BAILEY

Membership Services Director

Art in the Park Coordinator

terri@blowingrock.com

BILLIE ROGERS

Events Director

billie@blowingrock.com

MARCIA VAUGHAN

Travel Counselor

marcia@blowingrock.com