



The Village Current

An e-Newsletter of 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.

The Grand Tasting in Downtown!

In the most significant change since the Blue Ridge Wine and Food Festival's first year, the Grand Tasting, the Festival's center piece event will, now take place in Downtown Blowing Rock. The Grand Tasting will take place at the Maple Street Parking area, just off of Main Street, on Saturday April 18th, Noon-4pm. The Festival, produced by the Blowing Rock Chamber and organized by a committee, has worked closely with the town in order to make the move happen. "This will result in more visitors to the Wine Festival spending more time in our shops and restaurants in the central business district," Rita Davis, Chair of the Wine Festival Committee, said on Friday. "That is really the most important thing, the support of our local merchants." When the Blue Ridge Wine and Food Festival was first conceived over five years ago, it sought to create



The Blue Ridge Wine & Food Festival is making some exciting changes for 2009!

business during what is traditionally a slow time of the year for Blowing Rock's tourism based economy. "This move fulfills the goal of that purpose," said Charles Hardin, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce. "Visitors to the Festival will be exposed to our downtown in a way that they haven't been in previous years." The Blue Ridge Wine & Food Festival prominently features North Carolina wines. Many North Carolina Wineries will be on hand to pour their wines for Festival Attendees. Additionally, wines from North Carolina can be purchased in the Grand Tasting Tent.

"Supporting our North Carolina Wine Industry is just another level of the event," Hardin continued. "We want to feature the fine products we have right here in North Carolina, and introduce them to the visitors in Blowing Rock." The theme of local support runs throughout the Festival. Shops and galleries get involved through a Gallery Stroll and Scavenger Hunt, area restaurants participate in Wine Maker's Dinners and The Fire on the Rock Chef Challenge features ingredients grown or raised in North Carolina. For more information about the Blue Ridge Wine & Food Festival, please contact the Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce at 828-295-7851 or see the festival's web-site:

www.blueridgewinefestival.com

For printable calendar of events, [click here](#).

New Members Join the Chamber!

Welcome to the four New Members who have recently joined the Blowing Rock Chamber. First we have [Poppy's of Blowing Rock](#), located at 1128 Main Street and featuring unique gifts. Charter Business has also joined

our Chamber. [Charter Business](#) is the Business services section of the Charter Corporation. A new catering company, Createring, owned by Marietta DeBriere — a Fire on the Rock Competitor — is a new catering company

serving the High Country. We're also welcoming Franks-N-More, the great hot dog stand located in the SouthMarke shopping center.

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Friday,
March 27, 2009

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Calendar of Events.

- NC Chamber Annual Meeting, Sheraton, Durham 11:00 am
- Wednesday, April 1, Board of Directors Meeting, 8 a.m., Community Club
- Wednesday, April 1, Leadership Challenge Alumni
- Wednesday, April 1 Leadership Challenge, Social Infrastructure, Blowing Rock Hospital 1:00 pm
- Thursday, April 2, Wine Festival Committee, Hayes Center, 10:30
- Thursday, April 2, Community & Government Committee, 4:00 pm, Wachovia
- Thursday, April 16, thru Sunday, April 19, The Blue Ridge Wine and Food Festival

Meet Your Board of Directors Margaret Holder, Treasurer 2009



Margaret Holder is the Treasurer for the Board of Directors for 2009.

Margaret Holder is the Blowing Rock Chamber's Board of Director's Treasurer for 2009, a position she has held since this January. Margaret is the General Manager at Chetola Resort, located off Main Street in Blowing Rock. A North Carolina State University graduate, she has worked at Chetola since 1990. After moving here from Raleigh, Margaret first took a job at the front desk. Later, she moved to Chetola's marketing department. Margaret is a familiar face around Blowing Rock, and prior to joining the Chamber Board of Directors, she was involved with the Blowing Rock Merchants Associa-

tion. She also has three children, one girl, 11, and 7 year old twins, a boy and a girl, all of which are at Blowing Rock School. Margaret is a graduate of the charter class of the Blowing Rock Leadership Challenge, a program which she feels is a fabulous opportunity to learn how to be a more responsible person in the community. "The program gives you the tools to be able to help shape the community the way you want it," she says, voicing the pro-active goals of that program. In addition to her role as Treasurer, Margaret serves as the leader of the Chamber's Finance commit-

tee. In this capacity she is, "Very excited about Developing the Total Resource Campaign for the Blowing Rock Chamber. It will present some exciting opportunities it will present for our membership." A program which develops and executes a sponsorship and marketing program at chamber events for our members, that program will be planned and in place by the end of the year. The Total Resource Campaign will be looking for many volunteers to help recruit for sponsorships. "This will be a way that businesses can work together to support the Chamber and themselves."

Fire on the Rock

Fun at the Hayes Center During the Wine Festival

BLOWING ROCK N.C.

(February 2009) – Heating up year by year, the "Fire on the Rock" Chef's Challenge has become the culinary confrontational centerpiece of the Blue Ridge Wine & Food Festival. Showcased in an "Iron Chef" format at the Hayes Performing Arts Center, Fire on the Rock draws the area's best chefs, who duke it out on stage while cheering spectators "egg" them on. This year's Fire on the Rock competition will take place on Saturday, April 18 and Sunday, April 19. On Saturday, eight chefs will pair off in four preliminary head-to-head "heats" featuring a secret, must-include ingredient. The two chefs with the highest overall scores will compete in the Sun-

day afternoon finals. Tickets to Saturday's heats are \$5 each or \$10 for all four; heats are at 11 a.m. and 2:00, 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. The Fire on the Rock final showdown is at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday; tickets are \$7. **What's new in 2009:** A constantly evolving and improving event, this year's Fire on the Rock adds four front-row "Chef's Table" seats at each of the five competitions. Chef's Table guests will sample each dish prepared by the competitors; cost is \$50 per seat. Also new this year will be preliminary competitions held in March where hopefuls vie for one of the eight Fire on the Rock spots available during the Wine & Food Festival. Held at Crippen's Restaurant in

Blowing Rock, residents and visitors will sample and score three dishes from each chef; cost of the six-course culinary delight is \$39 per person. For reservations call Crippen's at (828) 295-3487. The Blowing Rock Fire & Rescue Departments, which manage Fire on the Rock, will be on hand at each competition during the Wine & Food Festival in case of spontaneous combustion... and to sell T-shirts that benefit local fire and rescue services. For more information on the Fire on the Rock Chef's Challenge, visit blueridgewinefestival.com/fireontherock.html. For information on the Wine & Food Festival, visit blueridgewinefestival.com

**FIRE
ROCK**



Get Ready for the 2009 Fire on the Rock Chef Challenge.

Flat Stanley Visits Blowing Rock

We get some pretty unique visitors in Blowing Rock. Usually, they stop by the Visitor Center on Valley Blvd, to get some ideas about places to visit and things to do in Blowing Rock. This week, we had a very unusual visitor — he wasn't even three dimensional! Arriving via manila envelope Monday morning, Flat

Stanley came for a visit to our town. A character based on a children's book and part of an international geography project, Flat Stanley helps students explore the world. ([Find out more here.](#)) Our Stanley is the creation of a Fourth Grader from Swannanoa, NC, and he had lots of questions about Blowing Rock. Marcia Vaughan, our

Travel Counselor, not only answered all of Stanley's questions, but took him on a tour of the Village. Stanley hung out on Main Street and visited town hall. Then he took a trip to the famous rock itself. When Stanley gets back to Swannanoa, he should have some pretty nice things to say about Blowing Rock.



Marcia Vaughan and Stanley enjoy the view from The Blowing Rock

Get Your Customer's Attention! (Did That Work?)

Greetings Chamber Members, The Business Support Committee will be bringing you hints, tips, and articles of interest that pertain to increasing business during this challenging economic time. Our newsletter column is called "Minding The Store". When you receive your Chamber newsletter, we encourage you to take a moment to read the articles, you may discover something within that can apply to **your** business. We are searching the internet and other sources to find timely advice and tips that just might help to make a difference. So, unless you have a line of customers forming outside your door, just dying to get inside and spend their money, you should definitely consider sharing the articles with your sales staff and all front line people in your store, restaurant, or other place of business! If you should run across something that you think would be of interest to other merchants, please let us know...we'll be happy to share it with our members!

Here's a great example of an article we found:

You can read the entire article at:

http://www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/6371/Merchandising.pdf

MERCHANSIDING!

Grab your Customers Attention

About the only thing that everyone will agree on with retail is that today's retail environment is fiercely competitive. There is a limited amount of disposable income but endless choices for the consumer. **Studies suggest that a retail store has 3 seconds in which to grab the attention of the customer walking by— just to get them in the store!** HOW ARE YOU GRABBING YOUR CUSTOMERS ATTENTION? Hand written signs, poor lighting, untidy displays, and posters covering doors and windows send the message that your business isn't serious and makes it difficult for the customer to determine what it is you have on offer. If it is too difficult to tell from the window, today's time poor customers will not make the effort to try and work it out inside. **That customer is gone!** Merchandising and display are an important part of the marketing plan, and should have a reasonable budget allocated—even for the small business. It is more than stock in the window; the way your business looks is directly linked to its image and your customer's experience. Merchandising is about understanding the way your customers shop and positioning your goods to increase sales. At the end of the day taking the time to plan and consider your store's merchandising could be the difference between selling a product and having it sit in your store. (Continued at the above link.)

**Minding
The
Store**



*Hints & Tips
from the*

BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE

The Business Support Committee is committed to helping you with issues related to your business.



**The Blowing Rock
Chamber of Commerce**

*The Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce
2009 Board of Directors*

Blowing Rock Chamber of Commerce

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Fax: 828-295-4643
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**Keep Up with Latest on Issues that
Effect Your Business.**

Links to help you Stay in The Know

[US Chamber of Commerce](#)

[NC Chamber of Commerce](#)

[United States Senate](#)

[United States House of Representatives](#)

North Carolina General Assembly :

[Senate](#)

[House of Representatives](#)

Officers

- Rita Davis, President**
Wachovia Bank
- Nancy Santay, Vice President**
Cabin Fever
- Bill Hall, Past President**
Blowing Rock Realty
- Linda Gilleland, Secretary**
Greystone Insurance
- Margaret Holder, Treasurer**
Chetola Resort

Members of the Board

- Babette McAuliffe**
Carolina Mountain Life Magazine
- John Aldridge**
Individual Representative
- Greg Clark**
Gregory Alan's
- Dan Phillips**
Individual Representative

Tim Miller

Blowing Rock Frameworks & Gallery

Betsy Collins

Individual Representative

Joellyn Gibbons

Individual Representative

J. B. Lawrence

United Community Bank

Heidi Ellis

Tanger Shoppes on the Parkway

Cathy Robbins

Tweetsie Railroad

Doug Pegram

Village Real Estate

Cindy Milner

Bistro Roca

Dick Goosman

Meadowbrook Inn

Deborah McDowell

Mountianaire Inn

Jim Steele

Individual Representative



*Say Cheese. If you have photos
you'd like to share, please send
them to
Stephanie@blowingrock.com.
We're especially looking for
photos from our Business Mem-
bers in their Businesses!*

This Week in Photos

Stanley gets his start at the Visi-
tor's Center.



Roger and Julie Robertson of The Last
Straw enjoy Business After Hours March
17 at the Meadowbrook Inn.