



Lake Champlain Regional
Chamber of Commerce

60 MAIN STREET NEWS

The Newsletter of the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce & GBIC
Editor Genevieve Burnell • gen@vermont.org

Over \$6 Million Dollars to Vermont's Economy Contributed by VCB

Vermont Convention Bureau a Strong Driver in Our Economy

The Vermont Convention Bureau had an excellent year of business in 2010, booking well over 21,000 guest rooms for the many conferences and events held in Vermont. The VCB's member properties throughout the state hosted these travelers, producing over \$6 million dollars in economic impact for Vermont.

"Vermont's brand is a major selling point in our marketing and we see a lot of repeat business in organizations hosting meetings and conventions here," explains Ronda Berns, Director of the VCB. "Meetings are high-value and low-impact on the Vermont. They produce significant revenue streams for Vermont's economy while leaving our natural resources untouched and enjoyed."

According to expert impact studies, each of these 21,000 rooms added a significant economic impact to the state revenues in the form of room revenue, food and beverage, retail sales, transportation, recreation and jobs. These guest rooms also come from out-of-state visitors who contribute valuable dollars to our economy. Spending per visitor is approximately \$292 per day within the state.

In terms of attracting meetings and conventions, "Trade shows are a key piece of our efforts in building awareness of what we have to offer," Ronda said. The Vermont Convention Bureau joins with its members to

exhibit at a number of carefully selected national and regional trade shows as well as sales missions around the country. These shows are attended by all our New England competitors and convention and visitor bureaus from across the nation. The target areas of primary interest to the VCB in the past year have been Boston, Washington D.C., and Chicago. Attendees at these shows represent everything from large and small corporate meetings, national and regional association groups, government contractors, social events, and sports programs. These events offer us the perfect opportunity to showcase Vermont and our ideal combination of urban amenities and rural landscape; often, meeting-goers will extend their business stay into a small personal vacation and spend time on the mountains and lake.

Best of all, the VCB offers their professional services at no charge! Their goal is to help meeting and event planners locate the ideal location for any size meeting - groups small and large are welcome to take advantage of these services. The VCB staff handles wedding inquiries, family reunions, board retreats, dinner cruises, sales meeting, as well as national associations to world class sporting events.



From left: Sheril Dolphin, Killington Grand Resort; Gigi Valley, Vermont Convention Bureau; and Bernadette Whitcomb, Sheraton Hotel & Conference Center, attended a trade show this year.

Among the many reasons to use the VCB:

- You'll receive meeting assistance from a three-time Pinnacle Award winner for outstanding destination services
 - Local expertise throughout Vermont to meet your individual meeting needs
 - Save valuable time with one source for RFP distribution and bid collection
 - Collection and organization of hotel availability for events and tournaments
 - Connection to transportation services both inbound and outbound
 - Referrals for leisure activities and attractions throughout the state
- For more information on membership in the VCB, contact Ronda Berns at (802) 860-0606 ext 230 or ronda@vermont.org.

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Vermont Brand Essential to Our Economy

Vermont holds an allure like no other place for groups to hold their meetings and conventions. It is an area where our size and rural nature are competitive assets to be trumpeted rather than to be worked around. The Chamber, through its subsidiary the Vermont Convention Bureau (VCB), markets the entire state as the best place for a group to hold their events. The VCB represents 101 members in the convention and meeting field. This is done through our staff at 60 Main Street and through our staff person based in the Boston area. Staff is very strategic when working with meeting, event planners, and guides those looking to place an event to the types of properties that work best for the group. For instance, it makes no sense to push Burlington for a group looking for a rural retreat or to suggest an inn when the group is looking to blend nightlife during their strategic planning retreat.

Staff at the Convention Bureau work closely with their Board and Executive Committee to define target markets and groups to pursue them. This relationship with the actual providers of meeting services, from rooms to food and beverage, is one element that makes the Bureau a real success. Staff takes direction from the folks on the ground. Consequently, the Bureau has demonstrated a significant return on investment over the past few years. In 2008-2009, not the best years from a regional or national economic perspective, your Convention Bureau brought over thirty-nine thousand room night bookings to Vermont properties. Conservatively, this



Tom Torti, President,
Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of
Commerce

translated into almost \$6 million in lodging revenues and over \$11 million in economic impact.

Tourism has been the underpinning of Vermont's economy since the early days of the ski industry and the construction of the interstate highway system. Attracting conventions and meetings to Vermont is a low impact way to supplement Vermont's tourism industry. With over sixty million people living within driving distance of Vermont, we must redouble our efforts to promote Vermont. How many times have we heard from people coming to Vermont to start a business that their first experience in the state was as a visitor?

We cannot miss opportunities to put the best face on our state and for many thousands of folks, this first visit is through the work of the Vermont Convention Bureau.

GBIC

New Year's Resolution: Let's Work Together to Solve Challenges

Seth Bowden, Director of Business Development

It's the start of the New Year, and for most people struggling to wake up from their food induced holiday coma that means one thing: New Year's Resolutions (NYRs). NYRs can be rather tricky; emboldened by everyone else jumping into the same boat we often tend to set the bar a little high for ourselves; am I really going to go to the gym every morning before work and cut out carbs after eight? An insatiable love of pasta and a number of late-starting football games have pretty much ruined those already, but there's one resolution we truly hope for: that the new Administration and Legislature will work to solve our state's challenges with focused and meaningful governance from the State House.

You might say that it's an odd resolution given that, as outsiders, we have limited control over what is and is not discussed in the chambers and on the floor under the dome. And yet, it means far more to me than cardio at 6 a.m. The reason is this: the solutions required to cut my own bloat are multitudinous and of my own design, while those required to handle what has swelled to a \$150 million shortfall are complicated by history, connections, interests, economic and social wellbeing, and (of course) cost.

Therein lies the problem: without a strong plan and steadfast leadership,

cont'd on page 4

Private Sector in Vermont Should be Held as National Model

By Jeff Beer, Chair of the Board of Directors

It's an honor to serve as Chair of the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce as it celebrates its centennial year. Through my association with the Chamber, I have had the opportunity to meet dynamic leaders, insightful business owners and dedicated Vermonters. They devote their time and energy, engaging in the debates over issues affecting our region and the state with tremendous passion.

The private sector in Vermont should be a national model of what a business community can and should be about. Our business leaders are committed to creating meaningful jobs, supporting a vibrant non-profit sector, and building a sustainable Vermont that will create the opportunity for the next generation of Vermonters to thrive professionally. It is our responsibility to build on the great work done before us to ensure that there is a thriving private sector during the next 100 years that creates the same type of opportunities for those generations to come.

My first experience with the Chamber came in May of 1987, at the tail end of senior year at UVM. My roommate, and current business partner, and I decided that we wanted to try and stay in Burlington and start a business. A visit to The Chamber of Commerce, which was on Battery Street at the time, which to us represented the pulse of commerce in the area, was our first official act as 'business people'. 20 plus years later, the Chamber, still the center of commerce in the region, is more relevant and its mission more critical than ever.

When I joined the board a couple years ago I thought I had a good idea of the role the Chamber played for businesses in Vermont. I learned quickly that had I significantly underestimated the depth of the programs, the talent of the staff, and the commitment to representing businesses in the region.

It is an organization that is completely focused on providing the tools, the training, and the advocacy its members need in order to thrive. The Workforce Investment Board, Tech Jam 3.0, Leadership Champlain, the PILOT High School Leadership Program, The Vermont Convention Bureau, which helped generate over \$11 million in revenue for the state, The Council on World Affairs, networking events, the BTV Young Professionals Group – the list goes on and on.

Your Chamber is an efficient, well-managed organization that provides tangible returns on your investment. Your staff does an excellent job representing business interests in Montpelier and acting as the voice of our 2,500 employer members, and their 60,000 employees. But, like everything else, legislative advocacy has changed. We can no longer be content to tackle issues with overreaching policy statements and accept a hands-off approach from the membership. Our elected officials need our stories, our passion, and our perspective. They need to know what stands in our way and what helps our cause. The Chamber staff (Dawn and



Jeff Beer, Chair of the Chamber's Board

Cathy) needs to hear from each of us, and we need to be ready to hear from them.... because we will. You may be asked to call a state rep, perhaps send an email, or even make an appearance in Montpelier. As Chair of this organization, I have challenged the staff to become the force that organizes our collective voice so we can clearly communicate the goals and concerns of the private sector to the new administration as it works its way through some very difficult decisions.

We have a tremendous responsibility to carry on the great work and tradition of the private sector in Vermont. These are challenging times, but as I look around at the talent and passion of the business community, I am optimistic that we can do our part. We must be, and will be, a more vocal, active membership and we will put our stamp on the first part of the next 100 years.

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as Chairman of the Board and thank you for your continuing support of the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce.

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Governor Peter Shumlin Addresses Capacity Crowd at Our Legislative Breakfast

Newly sworn-in Governor Peter Shumlin spoke to a packed house at the Chamber and GBIC's Legislative Breakfast in January. Following a standing ovation, Governor Shumlin shared his thoughts on the challenges and opportunities Vermont faces. As a preview to the state budget he released following his budget address on January 25, Governor Shumlin indicated that the budget will be an austere one that will put Vermont on a sustainable spending path without raising broad-based taxes.

The Governor also talked about the bright spots he sees in our economy, specifically mentioning opportunities in the areas of manufacturing, technology, renewable energy and agriculture. He emphasized that in order to grow jobs, we need to tackle

four priorities: health care, broadband access, education and taxes. On health care, Governor Shumlin remarked that the first order of business is to stop the rising cost adding that the problem in Vermont is not one of access but of cost. In response to a question from the audience, the Governor stated that we need to move to an outcome-based system of medicine that rewards good outcomes. He also sees technology playing a large role in areas like electronic medical records and payment at the time of service. The Governor also states that he would not sign a health care reform bill that did not get the cost burden of health care off of employers.

On broadband, Governor Shumlin indicated that he's working with Chamber and GBIC Board Members

Karen Marshall and Steve Terry to get access to everyone in Vermont by 2013. He also wants to develop a 21st century education system that helps Vermont employers fill the jobs they create. Finally, the Governor remarked that Vermont needs a tax system that grows wealth and incents job creation. With regard to the work being done by the Blue Ribbon Tax Commission, he indicated that it's very important for Vermont's tax rates to be competitive and that he finds the sales tax on services proposal interesting. In one of several moments of humor, the Governor referenced Sarah Palin's view of Russia indicating that he can see New Hampshire from his home in Putney.

We hope you can join us this month for the second breakfast on February 7. Register at www.vermont.org.

NYR: cont'd from page 2

decisions are delayed and agendas become labyrinthine. The challenge is that we don't get a chance to set our own goals: either we close the deficit or we accept an unbalanced budget creating further instability next year. With a new Governor coming into office, there are high hopes that bold steps will be the name of the game; however, as a state we need to realize that solving the \$150M nut is not just a matter of cutting large swathes of budget. There is a significant amount of value for our future in understanding that we must also focus on growing out of our deficit. Strategically placed reductions will make government leaner, but if we don't also fuel our economic engine and put it on a focused path, we will find ourselves

stagnating.

GBIC is working with a consortium of partners on a HUD Sustainable Communities grant that will include an outreach process and document development for a strategic industry sector analysis and economic plan for Chittenden County. These reports will have the capacity to drive not just discussions about how and where our economy can and should go, but to encourage and embolden action. These results will not be immediate, and the development of the projects will likely take some time, however, as these processes and projects develop let me humbly recommend a resolution to employers of all sizes in the greater Burlington area: stay in contact with your legislators. Let them know to call you

if they have a question on a bill that may impact your business, and be sure to pick up the phone when they do. Be proactive in ensuring that the on-the-ground effects of legislation are understood in the appropriate committees; GBIC and the LCRCC are continually working to message legislators with your voices, but nothing speaks more clearly than hearing it directly from the people who create jobs.

If you have questions regarding contacting your legislators, or would like help in finding the appropriate channels through which to voice your opinion, please don't hesitate to contact our legislative team of Dawn Francis (dawn@vermont.org) and Cathy Davis (cathy@vermont.org).

Oil n' Go Provides Much More than Just an Oil Change!

Since Oil n' Go first opened its doors in December of 1996, it has been providing the community with fast, reliable service that's more than just a simple oil change. At Oil n' Go, every oil change comes with their famous seventeen point super-service, which includes topping off essential fluids, lubricating the chassis, inspecting belts, hoses, lights and tires, checking the battery and even washing windows and vacuuming carpets. The trained Oil n' Go technicians make sure that every vehicle that passes through their bay receives a complete check-up.

Besides providing high-quality automotive care, Oil n' Go has also remained steadfastly loyal to its community. Oil n' Go has always been an independent, local Vermont business with a history of serving the

At A Glance
<p>Oil n' Go Susie Wilson Rd. Essex Jct, Vermont www.oilngo.com (802) 879-2707</p>

community by sponsoring student athletic programs and working with locally-active charities. Just this past fall, Oil n' Go raised nearly \$4,500 for Vermont Toys for Tots through a vehicle winterization fundraiser.

Building personal relationships with customers is a big part of what makes Oil n' Go so different from its competition. A relationship built on trust is important in the automobile service industry, and the only way Oil n' Go knows how to do business.

By not being a franchise, Oil n' Go is able to do what they do best, not what they have to do as dictated by some corporate office thousands of miles away. The customer, not the corporation, can come



first with a local business like Oil n' Go. Rob Remillard, General Manager of Oil n' Go, embodies this independent, local, personal spirit and says, "Unique qualities particular to personal relationships with customers aren't in franchises. Businesses with real involvement in local communities have more to gain from personal relationships with customers."

Visit them online on Facebook or at www.oilngo.com.

Workplace Challenges for Vermont Veterans Returning from Overseas

Of the more than 1,400 overseas service members returning to Vermont in the next few months, many are facing new challenges in the workplace due to acquired brain injuries. Two-thirds of these Veterans are returning to jobs, and most of the remaining third will be looking for employment in an already difficult economy.

In anticipation of these returning soldiers, the Vermont Department of Labor has created new job development services to assist Veterans find and keep employment opportunities, as well as provide services for Veterans that may have acquired impairments during their military service. It is expected that 20% of returning soldiers suffer from a traumatic brain injury (TBI), and 19%

of soldiers will meet the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Often, it is difficult to distinguish between a TBI and PTSD; the effects can be similar for each, and there can be ambiguity determining how one affects the other.

These injuries may be subtle and go unnoticed for a long while. A Veteran returning to work often is not aware they suffer from a TBI and/or PTSD. In many cases, it is a family member or coworker that notices changes, that they are "not the same as before." Fortunately, most TBIs are mild or moderate and can be treated. With treatment, the brain can heal and improve over time.

The right workplace accommodations can also make a big difference for a Veteran with an acquired

impairment. In many cases, these accommodations can benefit a Veteran with TBI, cost little or no money, and often already exist in work environments. Some examples of potentially beneficial work environments include: repeating and routine tasks; sequential steps; written assignments; part-time work/flexible schedules; jobs with periods of low activity; and limited distractions.

If you are an employer who suspects an employee might suffer from a TBI or PTSD, or if you are open to hiring returning Veterans who might be recovering from a TBI and would like more information on benefits and supports, please contact Joe Nussbaum at the Brain Injury Association of Vermont, jobdeveloper@biavt.org or (802) 985-3729.

VERMONT CONVENTION BUREAU

802.860.0606 • meetings@vermont.org

Save the Date: 19th Annual YellowBook USA Chamber Challenge Golf Classic!

Tee Up on Thursday June 2, 2011 for the 19th Annual YellowBook USA Chamber Challenge Golf Classic at Basin Harbor Club in Vergennes!



Join us for the annual golf tournament that every year brings together over 150 business leaders throughout Vermont from both our public and private sectors to conduct business and play golf for one magnificent day in June.

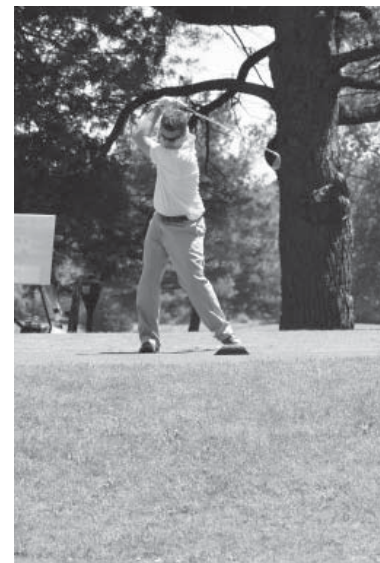
Sign up now with your favorite foursome. The cost is \$750 per foursome or \$200 for individual players which will include your green fees, golf cart, welcome gifts, box lunch and the now famous Lobster

Clam Bake.

Don't play golf but want to be part of the festivities? Sponsorships are available starting at \$250. Utilize this opportunity to showcase your company's products or services to this esteemed group of golfers. Sponsor a hole, put your company name on the golf carts, donate a gift certificate, the possibilities are endless.

Proceeds from the event will go into the marketing fund for the Vermont Convention Bureau (VCB). The VCB is a statewide organization that attracts meetings, conferences and sporting events to Vermont.

This event fills to capacity every year, so don't wait, sign up now! Reserve your foursome or sponsorship today by contacting Ronda Berns at ronda@vermont.org or by calling (802) 860-



Picture yourself here in June!

0606 ext 230. You may also register online at the chamber's website at www.vermont.org.

We'll see you on the green!

Use Your Connections to Bring a Meeting to Vermont!

Connection: anything that joins, relates or connects; a bond; a link. Association, alliance or relation. Usually plural, a group of people with whom one is associated.

The Vermont Convention Bureau has a program called Conference Connections designed to encourage local Vermonter's to promote the state as an ideal destination for meetings, conferences and events. If you belong to a professional/social association or have a company with offices in other locations encourage your colleagues to Meet in Vermont.

Why travel out of state for your next meeting? Vermont has everything your group needs right here. Quaint inns perfect for intimate board

retreats and strategic planning meetings, full service hotels with expansive conference facilities as well as resorts which are ideal for team building and incentives. Let's not forget our beautiful farms, museums and dinner cruises for a truly unique venue for your next event. Meeting in Vermont is easy and the Vermont Convention Bureau offers a free service to assist in every detail.

You'll be recognized as a Most Valued Planner (MVP) and will have access to our free professional statewide service to find the ideal location for your meeting or event.

Why Become A Vermont Convention Bureau MVP?

- Raises community awareness of your industry within Vermont.
- Your event would add economic impact in the form of room's revenue and tourism dollars back into Vermont's economy.
- Recognizes your organization as a leader in the community.
- Utilizes your event as a potential membership and development tool for your organization.
- Recognizes you as a leader within your organization.
- Introduces members of your association, organization or family and friends to Vermont.

Contact the Vermont Convention Bureau at VermontMeetings.com to plan your next event!

It's Harley Time!

Green Mountain Harley-Davidson (GMHD) co-owners David and Debby Pearson have formed a partnership with Community High School of Vermont (CHSVT), an independent, fully accredited school operated by the Vermont Department of Corrections. GMHD factory-certified technicians team up with licensed teachers from CHSVT and high school students from the greater Burlington and Saint Albans communities to work on motorcycles, job skills, and high school diplomas, all at the same time.

With support from the Vermont Department of Labor, the Harley Time course offering is now in its third year of existence. High student interest has led to its expansion to include stu-

dents from four different campuses of CHSVT, including two correctional facilities. The program offers an opportunity for students to build a host of job skills besides familiarity with motorcycle mechanics. Students also gain confidence and experience for a variety of transitions, including from incarceration to the community and from high school to post-secondary employment or education.

On one Monday in January, the Pearson's devoted their monthly management team training to setting up mock job interviews with students. "We see these young adults as the future of Vermont and want to give them every opportunity to succeed. Learning how to craft and present

their job skills to prospective employers allows them the first step through the door," stated David Pearson. Students focused on resume and interview skills that will provide them the confidence to handle difficult questions posed by managers and owners of businesses.

CHSVT vocational education Chief Dana Lesperance commented, "It's a great story and a very good program. These students live and work in our communities, and the more opportunities and options we can provide, the better they will fit in and contribute." What you might not see driving past 157 Pearl is that Green Mountain Harley-Davidson is a rich part of building futures in the community.

Linking Learning to Life

How did you get to where you are today? Who gave you your first break? Who supported an opportunity and opened a door you never knew existed? Creating and fostering these opportunities is what Linking Learning to Life is all about. This article will describe how as a business, you can be a part of a young person's first break and the incredible benefits that come from it.

TIPS (Training Interns and Partnering for Success) is an academic internship program happening throughout the state. Over the past 3.5 years, more than 500 Vermont high school students have spent forty hours contributing to a local business through an intentionally planned and assessed internship experience. Internship placements range in all career fields from physical therapy and auto customization to nursing and financial consulting

to veterinary science. Businesses report that interns have helped them generate new ideas and create new process improvements. While students explain that the internship helps them gain confidence, better understand what they do and don't want to do for a career, and learn time management skills.

In order to be placed at an internship site, students must complete 20 hours (14 classes) of skill preparation. They discover their career related strengths and interests, practice interviewing, create resumes and cover letters and most importantly, meet local business leaders to hear first hand what they are looking for when they hire people. The intention of the course is to ensure that students are prepared to be successful at their internships - that they can ask proper questions, show up on time and ready, display initiative, motivation, a



Prepare. Connect. Achieve.

willingness to learn and contribute to the business. Internships can only be successful when both parties - the student and the business - are benefiting.

Hosting an intern is only one way to be a part of the TIPS program. If you want to be a part of career education, though your business is unable to have an intern for 40 hours, you could host a class tour of your business, come visit the class, or participate in any other of LLL's numerous career preparation programs. This information can be found at www.LLLvt.org.

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Criminal Justice Day a Stark Learning Experience

by Cari Kelley, Director of Leadership Champlain

As the class debriefed their tour of the Chittenden County Correctional Facility with Burlington Police Chief Michael Schirling, some of the takeaways that were highlighted was the amount of movement that inmates have within the facility, the lean amount of staff, the amenities that inmates have access to such as a weight room, basketball, and high school, and how quiet the facility was during the tour. Substance abuse is a large factor to why most people are incarcerated and it's a small city within a city.

The focus of the day was how to look at the current criminal justice system which we have outgrown and what the future system should look like. The expert panel that helped the discussion consisted of: Commissioner of Corrections Andy Pallito, Former Commissioner of Public Safety Tom Tremblay, Superior Court Judge Ben Joseph, and Chittenden County State's Attorney T.J. Donovan.

"Has Vermont Outgrown its Justice System?" was the question that the panel was asked. Tom Tremblay said a resounding "yes!" He reported that Vermont remains one of the safest states in the nation. He talked about how we can't fix everyone and there will always be people that will prey on people who are vulnerable. We need to start with substance abuse and realize that substance abuse is at the heart of crime. Violence against women is the other issue that needs to be addressed and it's a significant issue in the community. What are we doing on the front end with men and boys about making sure they understand and respect violence against women, is a big question. Crime impacts people for a lifetime and what does the system do for victims to make their life better. How do we hold our police officers accountable for their decisions and how do we maintain public trust, is another issue that he would like to see focused on. In closing, he said that community involvement is key to helping keep us safe and building a stronger community.

T.J. Donovan said that we need to reset our priorities. Being "Tough on Crime" is going to change to "Being Smart on Crime" to help with the budget issues relative to criminal justice. We have scarce resources and need to prosecute the most severe cases to the fullest extent possible. You can't talk about criminal justice without talking about poverty, and it's a huge issue that is driving a lot of crime. We need to be proactive and intervene early. The

consequence does not need to be severe, but it needs to be immediate, swift and certain. Social service agencies are critical partners for safe communities. If we address the root cause of the criminal behavior, we will be able to develop them into a productive citizen. This is a reactive system and we need to change our priorities.

Judge Joseph gave a bit of history on the judiciary for the class and how a sentence can be determined. People who can't be rehabilitated need to be jailed and it's not a waste of money. Prescription drugs are very expensive and cause crime and the judge can impose a condition for appropriate drug or alcohol rehabilitation program. At arraignment he would impose an evaluation for the right program and he has worked with Spectrum and Howard Center to have evaluations done and determine the treatment program. This has been a win-win for the system. We have to change and confront the challenges, and we can do it!

Corrections Commissioner Andy Pallito finished the panel discussion by sharing his thoughts. Cutting corrections staff is not the way to go. Incarceration is a very powerful tool, but if it's overused, it's not effective. If you use it as an opportunity to repair, is much more effective. People need a job and a place to live. Substance abuse and mental health are the big issues. We have an opportunity to recreate the rehabilitation model.

The corrections department has been looking at the system in Canada for creative ideas on how to reintegrate. We have replicated the model and Commissioner Pallito feels that we are having success. It's a risk-based model and very exciting.

The afternoon was spent with Chief of Police Michael Schirling educating the class on the aspects of policing in the 21st century and the challenges that are faced, as well as, the opportunities.

The class found the day to be very educational on the challenges that the criminal justice faces and were encouraged to get involved through mentoring programs and other community programs. We want to thank everyone involved!

Leadership Champlain
Scholarships
Sponsored by KPMG
and the Burlington
Sunrise Rotary Club



International Visitors from Sochi, Russia to Study Mountain Tourism in Vermont

From March 3-24, the Vermont Council on World Affairs will be hosting a group from Russia for a program that should be of great interest to Vermonters—especially those of us who are impacted by, or working in, the tourism/hospitality industry. This group from Russia will be here in Vermont for three full weeks studying a theme familiar to us all: Mountain Tourism.

As we know, the importance of tourism on our economy in Vermont cannot be overstated—it not only employs many of our citizens, but also incorporates the idyllic branding of our state that has been so carefully crafted.

With all of our programs, we create connections and opportunities within the industries and areas of focus that we do best here in Vermont. However, it's rare that our programs last as long or delve into as much depth as with this upcoming Mountain Tourism group.

Over the course of three weeks, this group will meet with

business organizations, resorts, lodging establishments, government agencies, nonprofit groups, and many of the other entities—across all sectors—that have a stake in tourism.

For their part, the visiting Russians represent one of the new frontiers of tourism in the Northern Caucasus region. Representing resorts from the tallest peak in Europe (Mt. Elbrus) and with other impressive natural resources, this region is prepped for an explosion. It also should be noted that this area is only a few hundred miles from Sochi, site of the 2014 Winter Olympics.

When the world descends on Sochi, our visitors will be waiting at their respective resorts with arms wide open. Will they be using best practices and ideas formed from their time in Vermont? Absolutely. Will they also be standing side by side with their partners and friends they met in Vermont—we hope so.



VERMONT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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For more information, ask your banker, visit www.veda.org, or call 802-828-5627.



VEDA, 58 East State Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

802.863.3489 ext. 220 • www.vermont.org/chamber/bah.aspx

Burlington Fresh Market a Local Staple for Original Gourmet Food

What do investment companies, doctor's offices, law firms and dentists have in common?

They're just some of the professions and businesses that get their company and business lunches at Fresh Market on Pine Street in Burlington. They love the food, of course - after all, Fresh Market is Burlington's original gourmet market. They know Fresh Market can arrange bigger, catered lunches from their catering menu or provide freshly-made sandwiches, salads, and baked goods for casual office lunches. And they really like Fresh Market's free delivery on any weekday!

They cater all kinds of events - large and small, formal and casual, corporate and personal. They create wonderful menus for all occasions,

Business After Hours

Date: Thursday, February 17, 2011

Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Location: Burlington Furniture Company
400 Pine Street

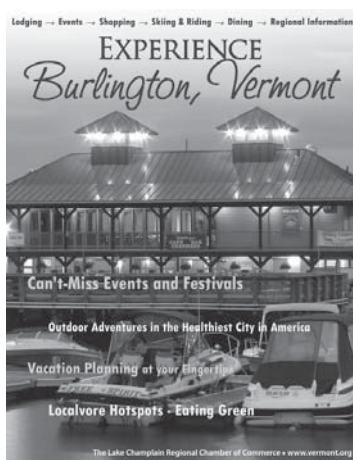


from beach barbecues and theme parties to bar mitzvahs and weddings. Your guests will delight

in Fresh Market's fabulous cuisine, wonderful wines and attentive service. Fresh Market can help you with other aspects of your planning for a wedding or larger event, too. They can take some of the pressure off you by arranging tents, beverages, barbecues, or whatever your event calls for. So if you have a wedding reception or summer party coming up, now is the time to call Fresh Market Catering at (802) 863-3968. Or, look on-line at freshmarketvt.com. Browse through the catering menus, and see for yourself why Fresh Market Catering is the choice of the area's most discerning hosts. Fresh Market at 400 Pine Street in Burlington: Burlington's original gourmet market. Visit them online or in person!

Looking for More Ways to Advertise Your Business?

Expose Your Business or Event in *Experience Burlington* for \$225!



Experience Burlington, Vermont, the Chamber's yearly flagship tourism magazine, is currently in the process of being re-designed for 2011. If you are interested in gaining exposure for your business, attraction or accommodation property, take a look at *Experience Burlington*! With 100,000 copies of the magazine circulated throughout the year in Vermont and beyond, this magazine is the perfect place for you to let incoming tourists know about your event or destination.

With ad rates as low as \$225, we can connect your business to incoming visitors at a low cost. If you act quickly, we can even design your ad at no cost! **Ad deadline is March 3, 2011.**

Contact Matt McMahon at matt@vermont.org or 863-3489 ext. 208 for more information.

Business After Hours at Burlington Furniture Company

Thursday, February 17, 2011

Time: 5:30-7:30 pm
Location: Burlington Furniture Company
Food: Fresh Market
Music: Larry Brett's Jukebox
Theme: A Pine Street Affair

50/50 Raffle: Spectrum Youth and Family Services

Directions: On Main St. head towards lake. You will see the Flynn Theatre on the left. Pass through the first light after the theatre. The second light is the intersection of Pine St. and Main St. Take a left onto Pine St. and drive approx. ½ mile. We are on the left-hand side of the road. Look for the sign with the red fan that reads Burlington Furniture Company.



Thursday, February 17 Business After Hours at Burlington Furniture Company

- Enclosed is my check for \$_____ (\$8/pre-registered member; \$12/day of event; \$20 guests)
 Credit Card Number (Visa, Mastercard, American Express): _____ Exp. _____

Name (s): _____

Business: _____ Phone: _____

Please return WITH PAYMENT OR COUPON by Noon on February 17 to:
LCRCC, 60 Main Street, Suite 100, Burlington, VT 05401

Fax this form to (802) 863-1538 or register online at www.vermont.org

Pre-registration is encouraged but not required. All payments are non-refundable.



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