

Recreate. Relax. Repeat.

Burke Vermont



BURKE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - 2023 - THE YEAR IN REVIEW

2023 Board of Directors: Chris Andrews (completing 1st of 3 year term), Michelle Cleveland (completing 2nd of 3 year term), Burton Hinton (*joined board in 2023, to be voted in for 3 year term beginning 2024*), John Kascenska (completing 1st of 3 year term), Karen Kennedy (completing 1st of 3 year term), Jennifer Palmieri (completing 2nd of 3 year term), Elaine Lind Wentzell (completing 1st of 3 year term)

2023 Officers: John Kascenska, President; Chris Andrews, VP; Michelle Cleveland, Secretary; Karen Kennedy, Treasurer

MEMBERSHIP – We currently have 295 members

MISSION STATEMENT

The object of the Burke Area Chamber of Commerce, Inc. shall be to promote the economic, civic and social welfare of the people of Burke and vicinity. The Burke Area Chamber of Commerce, Inc. is organized to advance the general welfare and prosperity of the Burke area so that its citizens and all areas of its economic community shall prosper. Promotion shall be provided and particular attention and emphasis shall be given to the interests of the area.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA

As the BURKE AREA Chamber of Commerce, our geographic area includes Burke, VT and other towns within a 40-mile radius of Burke. We also welcome members from other areas who have an interest in the Burke Area and the objectives of the Chamber as stated in our bylaws.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

- **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU – OUR MEMBERS!** At any time, you can email the Chamber or a board member with questions, concerns, ideas, news to share, etc.
- **Chamber Financials** –The Chamber is in good shape financially. We have just under 300 individual and business members which is a lot for a small chamber in a rural area.
- **Collaboration with Local Groups** - We continue to collaborate with One Burke, The West Burke United Methodist Church, Burke Mountain Club and other local groups where possible. One Burke had vendor space at the Strawberry Festival where they shared updates about projects with the community. They were given vendor space at the Burke Fall Festival but were unable to attend. One Burke Meeting minutes can be found at burkevermont.com/listing/One-Burke. The West Burke United Methodist Church had vendor space at both events where they raised money with bake sales. The West Burke United Methodist Church also assisted us with the Santa Visit to West Burke last year and will be part of the event again this year. The Burke Mountain Club is the venue for the Burke Fall Festival Craft Fair and plans to participate in our Halloween Event. They also assist us with the Christmas Tree Contest/Display in the village.
- The Chamber is responsible for the **free Wi-Fi** (The Burke Connection) available in East Burke Village.
- This year, we updated the **Burke Area Kiosk Display** located on the green at the Burke Mountain Club/East Burke Library. The large display was designed by Flek and includes photos highlighting area offerings and a list of popular annual events. It includes the website address, burkevermont.com, as well as the website QR code.
- This year, we also changed the date of the Chamber Annual Meeting so that it does not interfere with holiday celebrations. We also created a new **'Business of the Year' award** to be presented at the Annual Meeting in early November. The award is meant to recognize a member business that demonstrates outstanding customer service, a positive work environment, community support and responsible business growth. Nominations were submitted by fellow chamber members. This year we are honored to present that award to Mike's Gas & Redemption of West Burke.

EVENTS

- June – We hosted the **Strawberry Festival in West Burke** which featured two food trucks, live music and, of course, strawberry shortcake. The event was much appreciated and we estimate an attendance of about 250 people.
- September –**The Burke Fall Festival** had an amazing turn out and perfect weather! It was one of the most well attended festivals in the last 10 years with positive feedback from attendees and craft fair vendors. We look forward to doing it all again on September 28th, 2024.
- October – Back by popular demand, together with East Burke Market and other local businesses in East Burke Village, we will be hosting **The Gloaming** which will consist of various Halloween activities. In addition to a Trunk or Treat, there will be trick or treating at village homes/businesses, a haunted trail as well as activities at the Burke Mountain Club, Café Lotti, The Village Inn and East Burke School
- December – **Santa** will be visiting West Burke on Sunday, December 10th from 11am-1pm. The event will be held at the Community Building in West Burke with wagon rides, cider, cookies and more. The West Burke United Methodist Church will be joining us at the event with some fun activities for the kids to do while they wait to meet Santa. The **Christmas Tree display/contest** on the green in East Burke Village will be up for the holiday season. Five winners will each receive \$100 to a charity of their choice. There will be a **Tree Lighting & Holiday Party on the green at the Burke Mountain Club on December 10th from 3-5pm**. Winners of the tree contest will be announced at the event.

MARKETING INITIATIVES COMPLETED AND IN PROGRESS

- **E-newsletters** are sent on the first of each month and include info for residents and visitors such as monthly events, lodging, local deals and other area news. E-newsletters have a high open rate of between 40-50% each month. (According to Constant Contact, the e-news service we use, that is a high open rate percentage).
- The chamber website, **BurkeVermont.com** is regularly updated with events, listings, area news and more. The site receives an average of 50,000 visitors per year.
- Regular posts are made to **facebook** and we have over **4,800 followers/likes**.
- Regular posts are also made to our **Instagram** page which has over **700 followers**.
- The Chamber puts together a **printed list of weekly events**. The list is emailed to all chamber members each week and posted on facebook and Instagram. A print edition is posted at select locations in Burke/Lyndonville.
- **Print advertisements**: We will have a two-page coop ad in the 2023/2024 *Snowmobile VT* early winter edition. We also have a featured listing in the *VT Inspiration Guide Stay & Play Directory* (print and digital editions) published by the Vermont Chamber of Commerce.
- **Online ads**: Vermont.com (annual campaign) – We receive 100-200 website referrals each month from this campaign.

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

We are thankful for the support of our members and the community and look forward to a healthy & prosperous new year for all. The Chamber will continue to provide support to our local businesses and always act in the best interest of the community.

Thank You for your continued membership and support!