

Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce
April 2011 Chamber Corner
By Marji Graf, Executive Director

Congratulations Okemo Valley! Here we grow again.

After a year and one month we received our **Scenic Route 100 Byway designation!** Our byway runs from Andover to Pittsfield. Our next step is to obtain a grant to help create a logo, marketing materials, brochures, website and signage. Our phase 2 goal is to continue it north to hook up with the Mad River Byway and south to connect with the Molly Stark Byway.

Other projects the Chamber is collaborating on include:

Village designations - Both Ludlow and Chester are finalizing their applications for Village Center designation. Our next step would be to make them wireless zones. Ludlow is being done as part of the e-vermont grant and we're working with the SWCRPC to help develop a broadband plan, identifying needs, and strategies to address those needs.

We will be creating an **economic development video** for the Okemo Valley. We are meeting with the economic development committees in our towns. The goal is to interview existing businesses to identify why it's fun to live and work here. We want to attract like-minded businesses to our area. We will run this video loop at trade shows, fairs, our website, and have on hand to send to interested parties.

Chester Bridge update: The Chamber has been working with our legislators, the State of Vermont, the Town of Chester, the business community, local newspapers, other Chambers and ChesterUnited, for signage, brochures, and maps, so we have a coordinated effort for dissemination of information and materials for the bridge closings. The State is having maps and signs made. The Chamber will push them out on our mobile app and website. The Vermont Country Store is handling press releases and will be creating and staffing an information center at their Rockingham location. Gallery 103 is forming a committee to plan a bridge reopening party. We have all been working really hard to minimize the effects of the bridge closings.

Coffee with the Chamber. We will be hosting informal breakfasts' in each town to share with the community what the Chamber is doing and how we might be able to help each community. Please join us at 8am for a free continental breakfast.

May 19th Crows Bakery and Opera House Café-Proctorsville/Cavendish
June -Mount Holly – tbd
July - Chester –tbd
August 15 - Ludlow –tbd
September 15 - Wilder House Restaurant at President Calvin Coolidge State
Historic Site in Plymouth
October 24 – Bryant House in Weston

SHOWS & FAIRS the Chamber will be attending:

May 26 from 11-4pm, The Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce will share a booth with other Chambers at the VT Business & Industry Conference in Burlington.

June 25 we will have a booth/tent at the Fair Haven Welcome Center

Month of July we will have a display case in Guilford for Chester businesses

Sept 10 we will have a booth at the Made in Vermont Festival in Burlington

Sept 23 & 24 we will be at the Big E in Agawam Mass.

The Chamber took tables at these events so our members can showcase their products and services at no charge.

Other **member benefits** include:

1. [LaValley Building Supply](#) invites Chamber members to become an Okemo Valley/LaValley Retail Member. Show your M2M card and fill out a LaValley/Middleton member form. Currently this program is to provide a standard 5% discount, however, if you sign up for the e-member program, you will also receive the latest specials and updates on products and services. Yard items are not included in this program. Call Ron Godfrey for details 228-4665 or stop in today!!
2. Staples invites Chamber members to join our group discount. We will have a master account offering a core list of product savings. Every member will have the opportunity to customize their products for their specific business needs. Call the Chamber for more details.

See us in the News:

Okemo Valley advertising includes:

- May issue of Yankee Magazine (print, online, email)
- May – August issue of Connecticut Magazine (print, online, reader cards)
- Summer Travelhost of Vermont (in state hotel rooms)
- Summer - Southern VT Arts & Living (highlighting festivals, music)
- Winter & Summer Vermont Vacation Guides
(inside front and inside back covers)

Okemo Valley Summer/Fall Regional Guidebook

Will be out by May 25th

Google Ads campaign around events in our Valley.

August 10 Okemo Valley Business Expo at Green Mountain Banquet & Conference Center in Chester from 5:30-7:30pm. Call the chamber to reserve your booth.

The Chamber welcomes the following **new members**:

Springfield Area Adult Day - Springfield
Ludlow Pharmacy - Ludlow
Heritage Family Credit Union - Ludlow
Bay State Financial - Woodstock
Flether Farm Foundation, Inc. - Ludlow
Electronic Payments, Inc. - Plymouth
Skygate Financial Group - Chester
The Richards Group - Ludlow
Ludlow Dental Office - Ludlow
The Odd Indian - Cavendish
Mount Holly Farmers Market - Mount Holly
Wilderness Taxidermy - Cavendish
Mountain Leather Designs - Chester
New England Deck & Patio - Ludlow
Adventure Trek USA, Inc. - Bellows Falls
Crows Bakery & Opera House Café - Proctorsville
Celebration Rentals - Brandon
Rose Arbour Tea Room, Gift Shop & B&B - Chester
Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation - Plymouth
Promo Focus - Proctorsville
Peace Positive Yoga - Ludlow
MadeInVermontUSA - Barre

Our next **mixer** is May 11 at Outback Pizza in Ludlow at 5:30p. Please join us.

Be sure to watch our show **on lpctv** or online at www.lpctv.org. Our guests include Tisha & Paul Chevalier of Mountain Leather Design in Chester and Shannon Porter of Aromatherapy Designs of Ludlow.

Chamber **Golf Tournament** is Thursday, September 15 at Okemo Valley Golf Club. Please call Mary Knight of Knight Tubs to be on the committee.

China trip - SAVE THE DATE - **May 16 at 5:30pm** in the Cornerstone Room at Jackson Gore Inn. Tour operator Citslinc, will be here from California to give us a trip orientation. The Chamber is offering the China trip to anyone who wants to go. This is the trip I just came back from. Please call the Chamber office if you're interested. It's a 9-day all inclusive trip for \$2200 leaving on March 26, 2012. You visit four cities; Beijing, Suzhou, Hangzhou and Shanghai.