

# Connect

A Report to Skagit County from Chinook Enterprises



SPRING ISSUE 2004

360-428-0140

## People Are Saying...



"I have received services from Chinook Enterprises for about 15 years and they have always been there to help me with my job when I needed it. They treat me like I am an important person."

Kathy Child  
Costco Employee



"Laurie is a great worker, shows up on time with a smile on her face and does the work she is asked to do."

Jean Fantin  
Donatello

"I enjoy working at Donatello's in Anacortes. It's fun working for Jean."

Laurie Mueller  
Donatello's



"I enjoy working with Dan and am very happy with the valuable services that are provided by Chinook Enterprises."

Russ Pittis  
City of Anacortes

## A United Way Agency



Contact Us At

Chinook Enterprises  
2026 La Venture Road  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
(360) 428-0140

Email: chinook@chinookenterprises.org

Website:

www.chinookenterprises.org

## Connecting With Business AMS; Assembly and Manufacturing Services

AMS, Assembly & Manufacturing Solutions is the new name for Chinook Enterprises Production Services Division. New name, yes, but it is the same dedicated, customer focus, and quality driven programs that we have been providing for almost 25 years. Why the change? The answer is simple: market recognition and visibility.

Providing quality service that meets and exceeds each and every one of our customer's expectations is and has always been the basis by which we operate. But to reach more markets in the current manufacturing industrial environment, we felt that it was critical to consider some bold steps. We decided that we needed to create a separate market identity for the division, not detached from Chinook Enterprises and our overall mission to "support full participation in community life for people with disabilities or other barriers," but one that would enable us to com-

pete more effectively with industrial organizations having similar capabilities and size, to offer subcontract services and partnerships to companies that could see the value in aligning our capabilities with theirs. At

identity and market strategy, we ultimately will have created a larger forum for AMS where we can spread our message far and wide to potential customers seeking a premier resource for their assembly and manufacturing solutions.

So where does AMS go from here? The answer again is a simple one. We continue providing continuous quality improvement and excellent customer service for all our new and existing customers, we reach out and look aggressively for new partnerships and business opportunities, and we do what we have always done - stoke the home fires to keep our mission wheels turning.

Lawrence Franks, Procurement Representative and Business Development, is available to answer any questions at (360) 428-0140. We look forward to AMS progress reports in future issues of the Connect.



Solving Your Manufacturing Puzzle

the same time we are more visible to larger manufacturing companies in and outside of our region and even beyond. To do this we created a name and a logo, developed new marketing collateral, and launched a separate website at [www.ams-wa.com](http://www.ams-wa.com) that would tell people who we are, what we are about, what we have done for others, and what we can do for them. By developing this new

## Did You Get A Ticket?

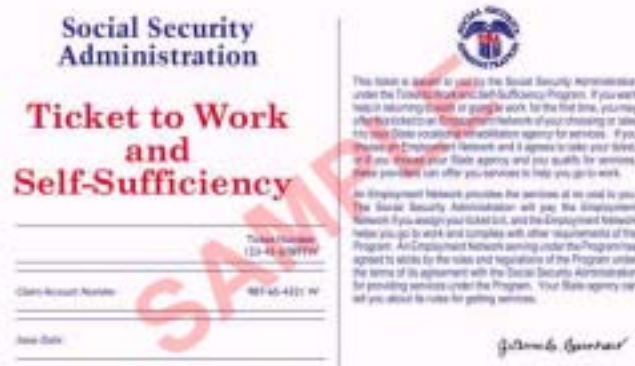
Trying to figure out a system like Social Security can be confusing and challenging. The newest work incentive "Ticket to Work" is no exception. Ticket to Work is a program that has been designed to provide Social Security Administration beneficiaries with disabilities broader choices for receiving employment services, vocational rehabilitation, and other supports needed to secure and maintain employment. In Washington State, the ticket rollout began in November 2003 and will continue through September 2004, when an estimated 3,050 individuals in Skagit County will have received their Ticket to Work.

The primary purpose of the Ticket is to assist individuals with disabilities in achieving self-sufficiency and to reduce the amount of cash benefits paid out by the Social Security Administration (SSA). One of the most important things to understand about the program is that the Ticket is a voluntary program and is targeted at individuals who have not been successful with traditional methods of accessing employment. People

who choose not to use their tickets will not receive any reduction in Social Security benefits or be "punished" in any way. The Ticket is designed to provide SSA beneficiaries with

ties (HWD) is the State of Washington's version of the Medicaid buy-in program authorized by Congress in 1999 and by the Washington State Legislators in 2001. The program allows access to Medicaid at slightly higher income levels than normal eligibility standards by setting up a subsidized premium. People with disabilities who are working pay a monthly premium that is based on a sliding scale based on income. More information about the HWD program and eligibility can be accessed by calling 1-866-272-7630.

Chinook Enterprises has recently become an approved member of the Ticket to Work Employment Network, and staff will be going through training in the coming months so that they can help provide informative choices regarding the program to Ticket recipients. If you have questions about your Ticket or would like to find out how this program might benefit you, call and speak with Jim Halpin at (360) 428-0140.



disabilities more choices for receiving the employment, vocational rehabilitation (VR), and other support services needed to obtain and maintain employment, as well as increase provider incentives to serve these individuals.

One of the fears that often prevents individuals with disabilities from going back to work is the potential loss of medical benefits. In response to this, the State of Washington has added a program that protects access to medical benefits. The Healthcare for Workers with Disabili-

## Chinook Receives Medina and Janson Grants

Chinook Enterprises was awarded \$20,000 in February 2004, from the Medina Foundation. The Funds will be used for General Operation during the 2004 year, according to Rob Martin, Executive Director. "With budget cutbacks from some state funded programs, and many uncertainties in other long term funding sources, individuals who were once able to receive services are now on long waiting lists. We want to impact that. These funds will go a long way towards getting services to individuals and helping meet their needs vocationally where other options are either limited or not available" Martin said. He added that "the Medina Foundation funds will also go towards some of our new marketing efforts, so that we can better stabilize our overall financial situation and better diversify our funding and support base."

Also in February, Chinook was awarded \$3,000 in funds from the Janson Foundation for a computerized work station that will utilize voice recognition software. This software enables users to create and edit documents, spreadsheets, and e-mail by voice. "Software like this is a valuable tool for individuals with physical and/or cognitive limitations", said Jim Halpin, Assistant Director. "This new computer will help individuals with particular disabling conditions access job opportunities which otherwise would not be available to them." Halpin said.

Chinook Enterprises appreciates the many requests received by local Foundations, and we appreciate their confidence in our future!

## Recognizing Costco and United General Hospital

At the forefront of any successful community job placement is a supportive employer. At Chinook Enterprises, we are extremely fortunate to have an abundance of quality employers in Skagit County. We recently honored two of these exceptional employers.

Nominated by staff of the Community Employment Services Unit, Costco was recognized as the Employer of the Year for 2003. Costco was praised for increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Due to the accommodating attitude of Wayne Harris, Costco's General Manager, as well as the managers of the various departments, some positive connections have been established. Presently, there are three



Costco Manager Wayne Harris and staff members accept Employer of the Year 2003 Award.



United General Hospital Superintendent Greg Reed accepts the Employer of the Quarter Award from Chinook Enterprises Executive Director Rob Martin.

individuals hired with the assistance of our organization working in various departments of Costco. Chinook Enterprises Employment Specialist Bari Willard states, "It is a pleasure to work with everyone at Costco. They have high quality expectations while at the same time allowing for individuals to learn and grow on the job."

United General Hospital was chosen as our Employer of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2004. Like Costco, United General Hospital is a leader in the way the management and staff view and work with people with disabilities. Since 2001, Aaron Campbell has been employed in the Linens Department where his main duties include delivering the various linens to all areas of the hospital.

Phil Holboy and Joyce

Holland are the main supports for Aaron and are extremely supportive. They have encouraged growth and independence in Aaron while being exceptionally patient throughout the learning process. Because of this, Aaron has experienced great growth on the job. Employment Specialist Marcia Mueller sums it up by saying, "We are pleased to recognize United General Hospital. Both Phil and Joyce have been great role models for Aaron and have helped him to become a valued team member."

Thank you to Costco, United General Hospital, and all of our valued employers for your support.

## Join these many fine companies and organizations who have made a connection with Chinook Enterprises

- Alf Christianson Seed Co.
- AMF Farms
- Anacortes Chocolate Factory
- Anacortes Senior Center
- Anacortes Yacht Charters
- Arbor-Pacific Forestry Services, Inc.
- Avon-Allen United Methodist Church
- Bates Abrasives
- Baywood
- Bill Bailey Tires
- Blockbuster, Anacortes
- Boeing Commercial Airplane Group
- **Boys and Girls Club, Anacortes**
- BTI
- Burger King, Anacortes
- Burger King, Mount Vernon
- Burlington Chamber of Commerce
- **Burlington Edison School District**
- **Burton Care Center**
- **Cadillac Cables**
- Cascade Pizza
- Chandlers Square
- Christensen's Nursery
- City of Anacortes
- City of Mount Vernon
- Clearsnap
- **Community Action Agency**
- Costco
- **Country Time Alpacas**
- Courtyard Café
- Dave Youngquist Farms
- Donatello
- DSHS Central Services Office
- EDASC
- Encore Shop
- Fidalgo Bay Resort
- First Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Fisher & Son Construction
- Food Pavilion, Mount Vernon
- Frontier Automax
- Grocery Outlet
- Holiday Market
- Immaculate Conception Church
- Jetpoint Technologies
- Jo-ann's Fabrics
- Karma Place
- KLKI Radio
- Kmart
- **Knights of Columbus**
- **La Conner Regional Library**
- Lamar Technologies
- Ledgerline Accounting
- Lennox Hearth Products
- MacGregor's Publishing
- McDonalds, Anacortes
- McDonalds, Burlington
- McDonalds, Mount Vernon
- **McDonalds, Sedro-Woolley**
- Mercer Island Parks and Recreation
- Mount Vernon Building Center
- Mount Vernon Senior Center
- Nordic Tugs
- **North Island Boat Company**
- North Star Cold Storage
- Northwest Hair Academy
- Outback Steak House
- Overlook Golf Course
- Peoples Bank
- Pioneer Center North
- Pleasant Ridge Cemetery
- Port of Anacortes
- Port of Skagit County
- River City Screen Printing
- Sacred Heart Church
- Safeway, Anacortes
- Schell Design Group
- Sean's Yard Care in Shelter Bay
- Sedro-Woolley School District
- Skagit County Courthouse
- **Skagit County EMS**
- Skagit County Health Department
- Skagit County Human Services
- Skagit County Law Library
- Skagit County Mental Health
- Skagit County Parks and Recreation
- Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney
- Skagit County Public Works
- Skagit County Youth and Family Services
- Skagit Gardens
- Skagit Valley College
- Skagit Valley Food Co-op Deli
- **Skagit Valley Herald**
- Skagit Valley Hospital
- The Small Business Resource Center
- Social Security Administration
- Sound Publishing
- SPARC
- Stiles and Stiles Inc., P.S. Attorneys at Law
- Target Stores, Burlington
- Thrifty Foods, Burlington
- Truck Vault
- United General Hospital
- United States Postal Service, Burlington
- United Way
- Upchurch Scientific
- UPS
- Valley Bark and Topsoil
- VSA arts of Washington
- Wal-Mart
- Washington State Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Washington State DSHS Children/Family Services
- Washington State Employment Security Department
- Western Forest Products
- **Where the Heart Is**
- YMCA

**Bold italicized businesses indicate new Connection**

## Accreditations

- Accredited by CARF: The Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission
- Accredited by the U.S. Department of Labor

## Affiliations

- United Way of Skagit County Agency
- Anacortes Chamber of Commerce Member
- Burlington Chamber of Commerce Member
- Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce Member
- Sedro-Woolley Chamber of Commerce Member
- Economic Development Association

## Certifications

- Certified Community Rehabilitation Facility, Washington State Department Of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation & Division of Developmental Disabilities
- ISO 9001-2000
- AS 9100

Chinook Connect Editor:  
Debbie Maxwell

## Volunteers Make A Difference To Supported Workshop



Chinook production worker Aaron Hildebrand receives on the job training support by volunteer Nick Bahrt.

Taking a few minutes out of a very busy day to spend with people you do not know can be very intimidating. The volunteers at Chinook Enterprises take more than just a few minutes. They provide valuable support and personal interaction with some of the most significantly disabled individuals served by Chinook Enterprises. "The volunteers at Chinook provide us with a tremendous resource. Many of the people we serve require a lot of assistance, and through the generous donation of time by our volunteers, we can give our participants the attention they require," explains Rehabilitation Manager- Workshop Lisa Fisher.

Volunteers come to Chinook Enterprises Supported Production Workshop with many perceptions about people with disabilities, but it is not until they spend their valuable time with us that those very perceptions change. They become excited about getting to know the workers they are assisting, which means taking the time to learn about their day at work. This can be variable from the assembly of parts to kitting and packaging. Tasks are not always completed in a "traditional" manner and are often adapted with special jigs and tools dependent on an individual's physical disability. Volunteers also learn that you cannot make assumptions about what a person can or cannot do, and they learn how to think creatively in assisting employees learn their individual job tasks.

Several of our volunteers are students from Skagit Valley College who in the practicum part of their college course work volunteer their time for the quarter on top of their studies and class work. Students from Japan have volunteered, hoping to take back to their country ideas and experiences. While the language may be different, we all share the same compassions and concerns. It has been fun learning to communicate, sharing what the different countries do in work environments, and how we are all striving to make lives for people with disabilities more matched to their needs.

Many volunteers find that they want to spend more than one quarter with us, and this opens up an opportunity to experience many phases of job development skills. These skills will help them in whatever they do with their lives. "We appreciate the fact that there are so many who want to volunteer. The one on one time they can provide and the attention that they give makes a difference in all of our lives," as noted by Chinook Enterprises Volunteer and Board Member Sunshine Allen.

Volunteers are always needed and welcome in our Supported Production Workshop. If you would like more information about volunteering or how you might help, please contact Lisa Fisher at (360) 428-0140.

## Bari Willard selected as Skagit County United Way Volunteer of the Year 2003

The United Way of Skagit County selected Chinook Enterprises employee Bari Jean Willard as 2003 Volunteer of the Year. Bari was a United Way campaign associate and had a positive impact on the campaign by persuading several businesses and their staff that were new to the campaign to participate in the annual fundraising drive. Dr. Paul Chaplik, United Way of Skagit County Executive Director, describes Bari as "an enthusiastic and wonderful volunteer. Bari has an obvious commitment to Chinook and to people in need. Her enthusiasm is evident in everything she does."

During her regular 40 hour week, Bari is an Employment Specialist at Chinook Enterprises. In her position, she provides job placement, training, and retention to individuals with disabilities or other barriers. She also acts as the agency grant writer. "I think that it is a real honor for Bari to have been selected 'Volunteer of the Year.' It is just recognition of the dedication and the immense amount of time that Bari spends helping others. I am proud to have her as a member of our staff here at Chinook," states Jim Halpin, Chinook Enterprises Assistant Director.

In addition to her job at Chinook Enterprises, Bari volunteers in the community. She is a lead teacher in Mount Vernon for Skagit Literacy assisting Skagit County residents learn English as a Second Language, a program of the Skagit County Community Action Agency. Bari is currently serving a second year as Director for the Mount Vernon Lions Club. She is an active participant in the Burlington Chamber of Commerce, serving as a Burlington Chamber Ambassador. Bari also is a member of the Board

of Directors of the Skagit Adult Day Care and acts as the Secretary for that organization. In her spare time, she and her family are active in many other community activities and events.

Bari credits the support of her employer Chinook Enterprises and her family, husband Andy and children Robby, Christopher, Carmen, and Juliana, with her award. "Without their support and giving me the extra time needed to volunteer, none of this would be possible. We



Bari Willard displays the beautiful plaque she received from United Way for Volunteer of the Year 2003.

have an extremely giving community, and I have been blessed knowing the most special people. Rob and Joan Martin, Bill Henkel, and Sandi Everest have been my mentors, along with many others along the way."

### Are You Ready... To Make The Connection With Chinook Enterprises?



## The View From Here

### An Address From Executive Director Rob Martin

If you or someone you know would benefit from our services call:  
**(360) 428-0140** for more Information on how Chinook Enterprises' Vocational Services can assist you.

You can also find us on the web at:  
**Www.chinookenterprises.org.**

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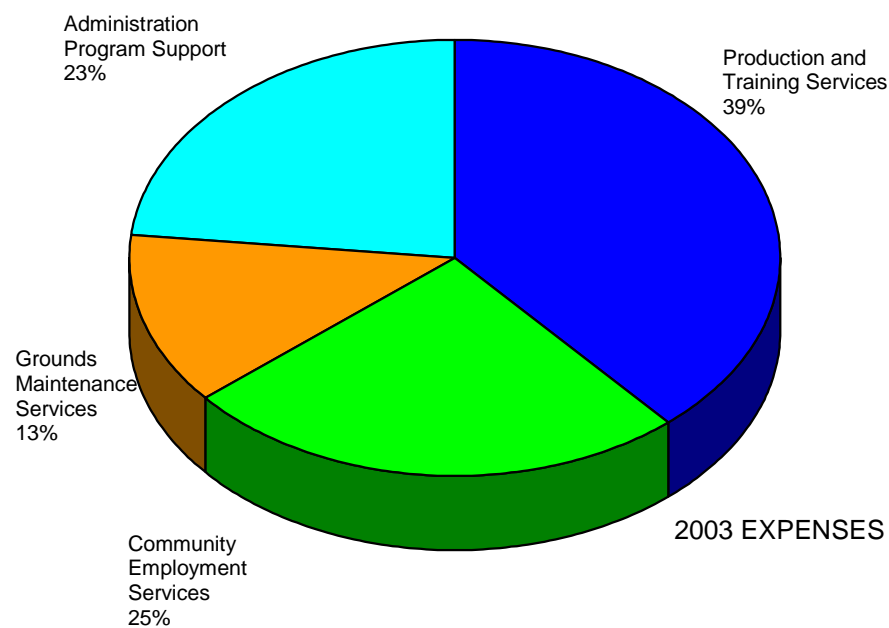
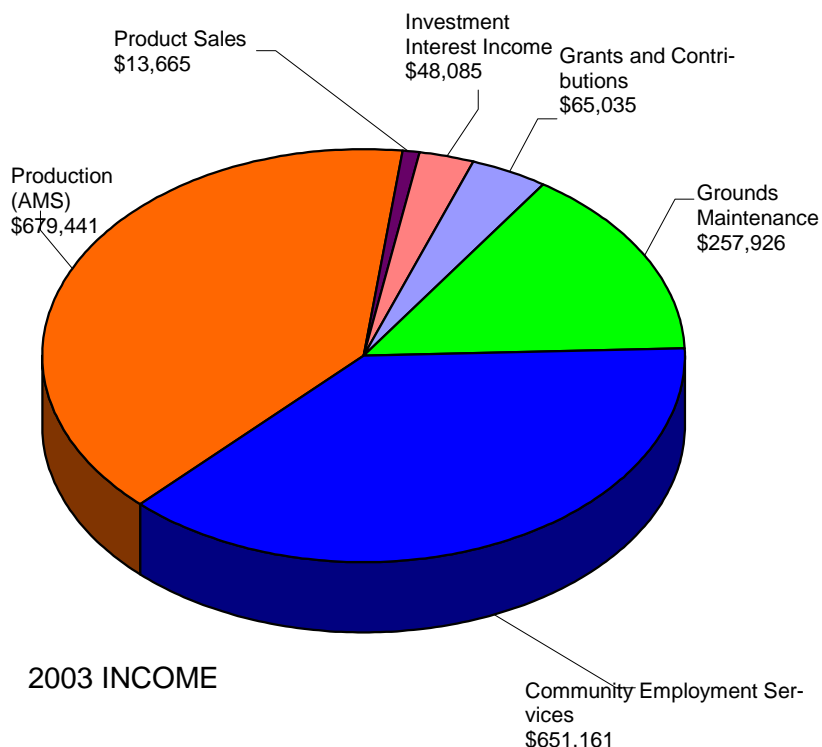
I am very excited about some of the new initiatives we are undertaking here at Chinook Enterprises. We have redesigned our industrial marketing strategy to better target industrial customers in the greater Puget Sound region. As a part of that, our new AMS web site, [www.ams-wa.com](http://www.ams-wa.com), provides a complete description of our industrial services. This will provide our potential customers a better idea of our certifications and qualifications much more quickly than was possible previously. I am pleased to report that these changes have already resulted in us bidding on several new and different projects with industrial partners from all over Puget Sound. Certainly, this has

been a crucial element in our overall business plans and so far, it is working.

Another initiative I am excited about is Positive Space. This is more of a concept rather than a program, but it is designed to bring programs and ideas into Chinook that may be outside of the vocationally oriented focus we are well known for. Positive Space is a mindset. Being in a "positive space" is being in an environment that is all about acceptance, creativity, nurturing, progressiveness, and growth. Positive Space is always open to everyone and it celebrates diversity and individualism. We will find ways to showcase the individual talents and interests through the use of Positive Space in our future efforts.

Chinook has recently been approved as an Employment Network through the Social Security Administration. This means that Social Security recipients who want to, and are able to, go back to work can get assistance from Chinook. This is a new program that is happening all over the US. Many people who receive SSA are very concerned about trying to re-enter the workforce because in the past they not only lost their financial assistance, but also their medical assistance. For many individuals the medical assistance was much more important to them because of high medication or treatment costs. Now, under this new system they will not lose these important benefits for several years after they are in the workforce.

# 2003 Financial Report



## Chinook Recognizes 158 Years of Service 1st and 2nd Quarter Anniversaries



Rob Martin  
24 Years



Jim Halpin  
23 Years



Scott Holt  
14 years



Lisa Fisher  
13 years



Doug Whipple  
10 years



Raul Santos  
8 years



Bobbie Christensen  
7 years



Stanley Beauprey  
7 years



Percy Rodriguez  
6 years



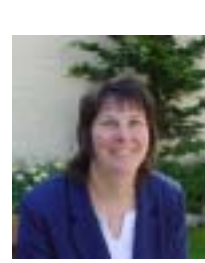
Angela Pratt  
5 years



Cheryl Kaufman  
5 years



Clea Burke  
5 years



Susan Hibma  
5 years



David Wilder  
5 years



Janet Nielsen  
3 years



Beth Rasmussen  
3 years



Kathy Thomson  
3 years



Matt Bounds  
3 years



Steve Core  
3 years



Jim Petrisor  
2 years



David Fukuyama  
2 years



Marcia Mueller  
1 year



Chuck Wells  
1 year

### Chinook Enterprises Board of Directors

Chair: Cheryl Hymes  
 Vice Chair: Kimberly Somers  
 Secretary/Treasurer: Otto Rouw  
 Directors: Sunshine Allen, Paul Chaplik, Kurt E. Hefferline,  
 Jack Henriot, Pam Barden, Peter Stroosma, Colleen Fisher, Patrick Kennicott

### Chinook Enterprises Business Advisory Council Members

Michael Barrett, Writer/Editor  
 William T. Berry, KLKI Radio  
 Mark Conley, Costco  
 Cheryl Hymes, Chinook Enterprises Board of Directors Chairperson  
 Dick Irwin, Director, Burlington Chamber of Commerce  
 Elizabeth Loure, Regional Administrator, US Social Security Administration  
 Maureen Nokleby, Washington State Employment Security Department  
 Ryan Patrick, EDASC and The Small Business Resource Center  
 Kimberly Somers, Human Resources, Whatcom Area Transit Authority  
 Brock Stiles, Stiles and Stiles, Inc. Attorneys at Law  
 John Swapp, Jetpoint Technologies  
 Gary Kent, Board of Directors, United General Hospital

### Here Is How You Can Help

If you have contacts with companies where our services might be needed, please let us know using the form below.

If you know of a job that one of our participants might be qualified for, please contact us.

If you would like information about making a tax-deductible donation to Chinook Enterprises to help us continue to provide quality employment services for people with disabilities, please complete this short form and we will get right back with you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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Chinook Enterprises is a 501(c)(3) organization that qualifies as a tax exempt charitable organization under the Internal Revenue Code. Persons making contributions to Chinook will receive a tax receipt for the value of the contribution.