

# BNI®

## Givers Gain® Monthly

### From Our Executive Director

**A**T THE START OF A NEW YEAR, and considering all that happened in 2020, I want to share some insights that may prove useful in the next 12 months.

Over the holiday break, I found myself reflecting on my role in BNI after the hardest year I've ever experienced. *What do I do, and why do I do it?* I live and breathe what BNI stands for and I love doing it, but in 2020, I had members say incredibly mean and aggressive things to me and about me. In 2020 I also experienced the most kindness I've received in nearly 10 years of being your Executive Director. 2020 has resulted in a lot of pain for many of us, as well an abundance of gratitude. It's been amazing to be a part of that with you – supporting each other as we struggle, and enjoying our successes together.

I'm sure that many of you have considered the effect physical distancing has had on you in 2020, and it's not difficult for us to list our struggles. What I'm not sure of is whether or not you've spent time to consider the opportunities and successes you've experienced in 2020? Taking time to recognize your growth and joys in the past year is, in many ways, more important than dwelling on the difficulties. We have a tendency to focus on the negative, which can lead to a self-created fog of defeat and frustration. Amidst the amount of computer time, the loss of income and time with our friends and family, along with the challenge of balancing our work/home lives, there are so many joyous moments! I found myself turning inward, reflecting on my mental habits, resulting in powerful and important insights. I found myself simplifying my very busy life; reading more books, taking time to be outside, and sending cards.



As a member of a BNI chapter, now is the time to take advantage of one of your Open Networking sessions, and have each person in your breakout rooms share one good thing that has come from Physical Distancing. As you look ahead in 2021, what goals and adaptations have been born of your challenges in 2020? It's not about a new year – it's about building ourselves year-after-year. And with all of that said, I wish you a year filled with personal insights, growth, and joy.

Together, everything is possible!

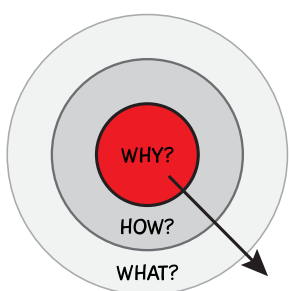
Happy Networking!

**Vickie Wacek**  
BNI Vermont  
Executive Director

## Monthly Networking Tip: “Why do you do what you do?”

[Watch video on YouTube](#)

“Why do you do what you do?” I love this question – especially in an environment like BNI. Being surrounded by small businesses, non-profits, and sales professionals lends itself to a certain buzz of passion and drive! However, as much as we love what we do, it’s surprising how few of us can really answer this question. When asked, most respond with “I like to help people.” Although true, this answer lacks depth. The funny thing about helping people is that I can help people by being a mortgage expert, or a general contractor, or a graphic designer. So, think really hard about this question...



### Why do you do what you do?

Consider what it is about your business, your industry, your location, target market, and clients that makes you enjoy what you do. Ask yourself, “What event(s) happened in my life to lead me to want to work in this field?”

When you come to realize the full story behind this answer, you will have then set yourself apart from the pack of others who also do what you do! Let’s say you’re a chiropractor – there are lots of chiropractors in the area. What makes you different? You might say *well I’m located here*, or *I offer this kind of chiropractic care*, but really, the differentiator is the story or stories that lead you to where you are today. It’s not just about how you do your job or what you provide in the way of products, services, or benefits. People like to do business with people who are truly connected to what they do. So, allow me to ask one more time - *Why do you do what you do?*

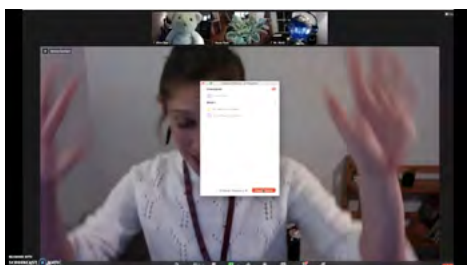
- Vickie Wacek, Executive Director, BNI Vermont

## Monthly Zoom Tip: Quality Breakout Rooms in Zoom

[Watch video on YouTube](#)

Our chapter added “open networking” back into our Zoom meetings a few months ago and we’ve experienced rave reviews. We were all missing the one on one or small group networking at the beginning and end of our meetings. Breakout rooms were the online solution. They were also a logistical challenge and it took several tries to get them set up properly.

Do you know how to create breakout rooms? You may think your President or your Technology Coordinator will always do it and that you don’t need to be able to create breakout rooms. I would urge you to be ready to step in and help with break out room creation! In the online world, this has been my favorite skill in my leadership toolbox when leading meetings in BNI or in my own company. There is a lot of power in being the designated breakout room person. You control who gets to network with who, including yourself! It’s also a skill that requires a little finessing.



In this video, I highlight my two top tricks when creating a breakout room. The first trick is to assign members **manually** to rooms as opposed to automatically. My second tip is to **create several more rooms than you think you will need before opening rooms**. You can never have too many rooms but it is easy to have too few! Once you open the rooms no more rooms can be created. To learn more, or just to see my childhood teddy bear, give my video a quick watch. Happy networking and I hope to catch you on Zoom soon!

- Blair Knowles, Chapter Webmaster, Prosperity BNI

# Continuing Education

## BNI Resources

Have you ever been interested in accessing the BNI Logo? Maybe you missed a recent BNI Webinar to help you learn how to use BNI Connect? What if you would prefer the Givers Gain book you received in the Members Success Program, in audio format? Visit [Support.BNIConnect.com](http://Support.BNIConnect.com) Why not take a few minutes right now to check out what this site has in store for you!

## Member Success Program

The BNI **Member Success Program** is an online course for all new members to support their first 60 days of membership. Its accessibility through [BNIUniversity.com](http://BNIUniversity.com) means that the entire course can be accomplished via the BNI University App on your phone, as well as through the website. Because the workshop is virtual, it can be tackled at a pace that fits each new member (as long as it's completed within 60 days). **Cost:** Covered by annual membership dues.

For those of you that have completed the online BNI Member Success Program, we highly recommend that you follow it up with the **New Member Skills Workshop**. In this workshop you will gain real-life skills to build your business through BNI, including honing your Weekly Presentations and Feature Presentations, learning best practices for 1-2-1's, and discovering ways to effectively use your Contact Spheres. **Cost:** Covered by annual membership dues.

**Chapter Success Programs** are offered individually for each chapter so that all members can easily access the program annually as part of their membership. Each Chapter Success Program is geared to the needs and interests of each chapter and evolves from year-to-year. Check with your Leadership Team for the date of your next Chapter Success Program! **Cost:** Covered by annual membership dues.

The **Advanced Member Success Program** is advanced training available twice a year (May and November) for members looking to take their networking skills to a much higher level. It's recommended for members with 6 months or more of membership and features 5 workshops offered over 5 consecutive days. The program is not offered per workshop and can only be purchased and participated in full. **Cost:** \$250.00. To set up a payment plan for the workshop, contact Vickie Wacek at [Vickie@BNIVermont.com](mailto:Vickie@BNIVermont.com)

### 2021 New Member Skills Workshops

**January 25** · 4:00 – 6:00 pm

**March 29** · 4:00 – 6:00 pm

**May 31** · 4:00 – 6:00 pm

**July 26** · 4:00 – 6:00 pm

### Advanced Member Success Program

**Monday – Friday, May 24 – May 28, 2021**

1:00 – 3:00 pm via Zoom

**Location for all Workshops:**

Virtually hosted until further notice

## Podcasts

**Remember to log your CEUs on BNI Connect:**

1 Podcast = 1 CEU

### BNI Headquarters & Dr. Ivan Misner, Ph.D.

Each Wednesday, BNI Founder, Dr. Ivan Misner posts a Podcast featuring tips on Word-of-Mouth Networking.

**December 16:** [Episode 686:](#) Is There Room for Intuition in Business?

**December 23:** [Episode 687:](#) How a \$5,000 Loan Became a Multi-million Dollar Business

**January 6:** [Episode 688:](#) How to Stay Positive When Life Throws You a Curve Ball

### Additional Podcasts

BNI New Hampshire Executive Director, Tim Roberts, has been presenting his own BNI based podcasts for a couple years. Check out the **BNI & The Power of One** and **Success Through Referrals** Podcasts by visiting your podcast provider, such as Stitcher, Castbox, Spotify, and more.



## **Richard Fox**

*BNI VT*

*Director Consultant*

## **There's No Going Back**

*By Richard Fox, BNI VT Director Consultant*

Throughout history, war has proven to be an effective, if brutal, catalyst for change. In 1941 my grandfather George enlisted in a National Guard cavalry regiment. Horses were the primary weapon in the cavalry then, so George's early service saw him learning to ride, clean tack, and groom his mount.

Once the United States entered World War II and saw how horses fared against tanks and machine guns, it rapidly and haphazardly converted George's unit from horses to Jeeps, half-tracks, and reconnaissance cars. This transition galled the old cavalry troopers who loved their mounts and the style of warfare that accompanied them. It also proved challenging for all troops trained in the pre-war methods: New chains of logistics were created, new tactics were learned, and new realities needed embracing.

When the war ended four years later, George's regiment returned home. To no one's surprise the Army did not immediately scrap the Jeeps and bring back the horses. Indeed, horse cavalry permanently receded into history, and the new weapons and tactics quickly assembled at the start of the war became the standard for decades to come.

The current war against COVID-19 has compelled us all to adopt significant changes to our professional and personal lives. While some changes are welcome improvements, others are nuisances at best and obstacles to growth at worst. Zoom meetings allow us to conduct business communications with groups irrespective of distance and past time considerations, but they also contribute to increased mental fatigue, can reduce effective communication, and often lead to gross overuse due to convenience.

With the possibility of an end to COVID-19 in sight, it is easy to hastily "return to normal" – that is, completely revert to what your business was in February 2020. But before you throw out the Purell and dismantle the plexiglass barriers, consider this:

1. Review your business practices from February 2020: What worked for you, be it marketing efforts, product delivery, or customer contact? What did you want to change even back then?
2. Compare your current business practices: What is working for you now? Have your new practices created savings in time or money, or have they increased financial and other costs?
3. Identify those practices you wish to keep: Love Zoom but loathe having every meeting be remote? Develop criteria for when a Zoom meeting is appropriate and when an in-person meeting is preferable. Did remote working increase morale but decrease productivity? Consider scheduling practices to encourage a balance between production and employee satisfaction.
4. Evaluate your business' future growth and sustainability: Do your business practices enhance your business for the future? Do they allow you to pivot in the event of another global change or catastrophe? Can you reach your business goals (building value, market growth, comfortable retirement, etc.) with the practices you have in place, or is further growth needed?

Businesses are often reluctant to change (Kodak and Blockbuster, I am looking at you), and it is enticing to get back into the saddle after a lengthy and unplanned absence. But while the saddle may be well-worn and comfortable, it might be best to leave your spurs and boots in the stable and instead build your business for what will be, not what was.

## **About the Author**

### **Champlain Connections BNI**

Meets Fridays, 7:30 – 9:00 am

Champlain Connections BNI Virtual Meeting Room

**Current Roles:** BNI Vermont Director Consultant and VP / Membership Committee Trainer; Membership Committee Member, Champlain Connections BNI

**Past Roles:** President, Vice President, Membership Committee, Education Coord, Growth Coordinator

# Events

## New Chapters Forming!

**Bennington**  
**Grand Isle**  
**Manchester**  
**Newport**

**Rutland** – Contact Erin with any interested professionals!  
**St. Johnsbury**

**Stowe** – Contact Heather with interested professionals!  
**Waitsfield**  
**Woodstock**

### Contact Chapter Launch Directors

**Heather Belanger** 802-233-9737, Heather@BNIVermont.com

**Erin Perrin** 802-871-5965, Erin@BNIVermont.com

## Event Calendar

Join BNI members from across the state and the world for webinars, trainings and networking events to enrich your BNI experience by boosting your visibility and perspective!

[www.BNIVermont.com/Events.php](http://www.BNIVermont.com/Events.php)

### JANUARY

- 1/25 New Member Skills Workshop**  
4:00 – 6:00 pm, Virtual Zoom Meeting Room
- 1/26 What is BNI? Interest Meeting**  
Curious about BNI? Come learn what we are all about!  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Zoom Virtual Meeting Room

### FEBRUARY

- 2/1 BNI VT Leadership Team Roundtable**  
2:00 – 5:00 pm, Virtual Zoom Meeting Room
- 2/9 What is BNI? Interest Meeting**  
Curious about BNI? Come learn what we are all about!  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Zoom Virtual Meeting Room
- 2/23 What is BNI? Interest Meeting**  
Curious about BNI? Come learn what we are all about!  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Zoom Virtual Meeting Room
- 2/23 The Business Experience Series – What Do You Do? (Elevator Pitches)**  
3:00 – 5:00 pm, Virtual Zoom Meeting Room

### MARCH

- 3/9 What is BNI? Interest Meeting**  
Curious about BNI? Come learn what we are all about!  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Zoom Virtual Meeting Room
- 3/23 What is BNI? Interest Meeting**  
Curious about BNI? Come learn what we are all about!  
11:00 am – 12:30 pm, Zoom Virtual Meeting Room
- 3/29 New Member Skills Workshop**  
4:00 – 6:00 pm, Virtual Zoom Meeting Room

### APRIL

- 4/2 8<sup>th</sup> Annual BNI Vermont Awards Banquet - Virtual**  
We announce our 2020 Rockstar Members  
5:30 – 8:30 pm, Virtual Zoom Meeting Room

[Register for Events](#)

# Chapter Growth

Congratulations **Champlain Connections BNI** in Burlington, VT!

BNI Vermont chapters are just finishing up the annual *Drive For Five* membership competition and we very proud to celebrate the members of Champlain Connections BNI for winning! And we all win, both our new and established member-professionals, as our BNI family grows and we make the decision to work together to build each other's businesses!

All members of Champlain Connections BNI will receive a BNI Padfolio or Large Card Holder, plus a voucher to a 2021 "The Business Experience" workshop!

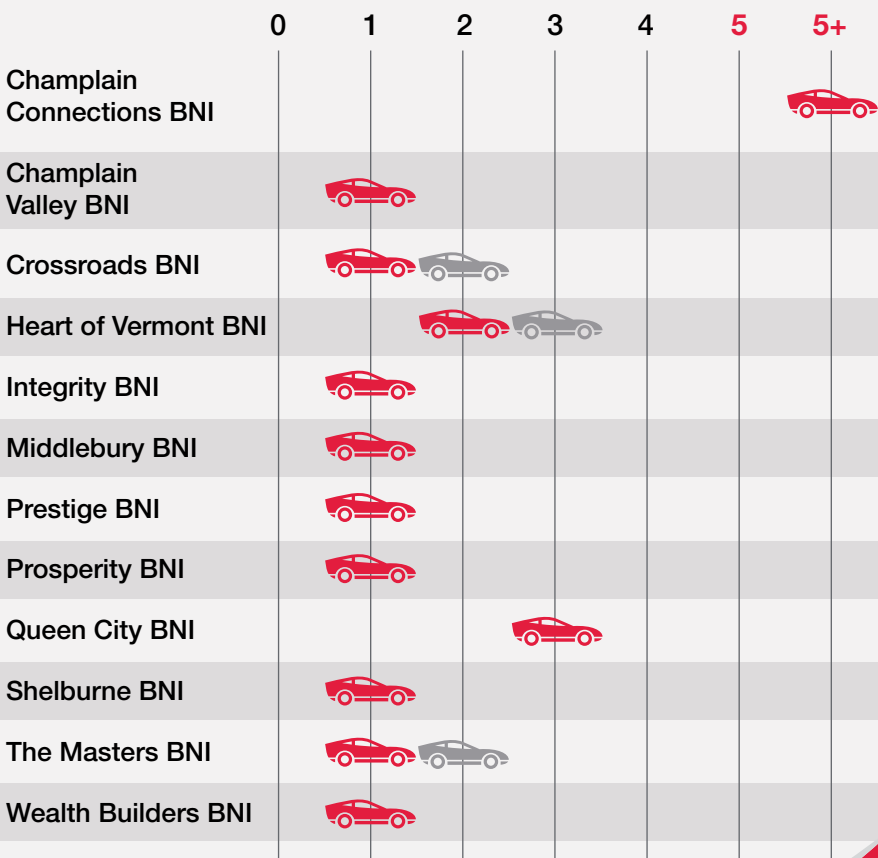
We are also recognizing every member who sponsored a new member between September 1<sup>st</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup> with a \$40 Gift Card to a Vermont-based business of their choice!


# DRIVE FOR FIVE

SEPTMBER 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2020

## THE RESULTS ARE IN!

### Number of New Referral Partners



 = pending applications

# Member Recognition

## BNI Member Profile of the Week

Each week we feature one BNI Vermont Member on all of our social media outlets. If you would like to be considered for this opportunity, be sure to visit [www.BNIConnect.com](http://www.BNIConnect.com) and update your User Profile in full, including your headshot, company logo, business description, T.O.P.S. Profile and G.A.I.N.S. Profile.



**Natanya Lara**  
*Energy Healing*  
**Natanya Lara Energy Healing**  
Shelburne BNI, Shelburne VT



**Steve Hartmann**  
*Employee Benefits*  
**Affiliated Associates**  
The Masters BNI, Colchester, VT



**Katie Frederick**  
*Safety Consulting*  
**ASC LLC**  
Wealth Builders BNI, South Burlington, VT



**Monica Chapman**  
*Restoration*  
**PuroClean**  
Champlain Connections BNI, Burlington, VT

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## Monthly Member Traffic Lights Report **PERFECT SCORES OF 100!**

**Mollie Lannen**

CW Print & Design, Queen City BNI

**Gina Buchanan**

Buchanan Virtual Office LLC, The Masters BNI

**Julia Wilk**

Word & Web, Heart of Vermont BNI

**Timothy Monty**

Financial Professional Associates, Integrity BNI

**John Borch**

Real Property Management Sterling, Wealth Builders BNI

**John Jacob**

Lendio, Wealth Builders BNI

## 6 Months Perfect Attendance

**Aaron Barton**

Extensity Creative, Champlain Connections BNI

**Adam Ashe**

Ashe Insurance, Champlain Connections BNI

**Alan Kinney**

Kinney Insurance, Prestige BNI

**Alex Duval**

Wendell's Furniture, The Masters BNI

**Alice Lissarrague**

Lissarrague College Guidance, Shelburne BNI

**Allison Bogan**

Precision Chiropractic, Shelburne BNI

**Amy Crawford**

Clover Ridge Media, Integrity BNI

# 6 Months Perfect Attendance (cont.)

**Barbara Alpert**

Shabda Wellness, Crossroads BNI

**Blair Knowles**

Ridgeline Real Estate, Prosperity BNI

**Bob Boucher**

Dependable Cleaning, Middlebury BNI

**Brian Miller**

Green Mountain Resolution, Integrity BNI

**Caroline Matte**

Freelance Graphic Design, Champlain Connections BNI

**Caroline S. Earle**

Earle & Freeman PLC, Crossroads BNI

**Catherine Moller**

Sidepony Boutique, Champlain Connections BNI

**Christine Golden**

Golden Consulting LLC, Champlain Connections BNI

**Corey Hevrin**

The Vermont Agency, Champlain Connections BNI

**David Hills**

Waypoint Management Services, Middlebury BNI

**Deborah Phillips**

The World, Heart of Vermont BNI

**Erik Kolomaznik**

CK Financial, Shelburne BNI

**Erin Perrin**

Academy Mortgage Corporation, Queen City BNI

**Geoff Garrow**

Symmytree LLC, The Masters BNI

**Gillian Franks**

Feldenkrais with Gillian Franks, Shelburne BNI

**Gina Buchanan**

Buchanan Virtual Office LLC, The Masters BNI

**Jackie Budgor**

Blue Lotus Cleaning, Champlain Valley BNI

**Jay Vallieres**

Movement Mortgage, Champlain Connections BNI

**Jeff Teplitz**

Academy Mortgage Corporation, Prosperity BNI

**Jessica Hall**

Inspire Physical Therapy, Champlain Connections BNI

**Jessica Hubis**

Missing Piece Bakery, Prestige BNI

**John Borch**

Real Property Management Sterling, Wealth Builders BNI

**Julia Wilk**

Work & Web Design, Heart of Vermont BNI

**Julie Goodall**

Genesis Consulting, Shelburne BNI

**Justin Loati**

La Panciata, Crossroads BNI

**Kassidee O'Neill**

Lila Mae LLC, The Masters BNI

**Kate O'Malley**

Juice Plus+, The Masters BNI

**Kate Tucker**

Hall Communications, Queen City BNI

**Kylie Billings**

Professional Financial Associates, LLC, Integrity BNI

**Larry Gilbert**

Vermont Security, Heart of Vermont BNI

**Larry Hawley**

The Vermont Agency, Prosperity BNI

**Lisa Taft Sylvester**

Interrobang Design Collaborative, Inc., Queen City BNI

**Mary Catherine Jones**

Voice Over Vermont, Champlain Connections BNI

**Mary Whitcomb**

Stella Maris Education, LLC, Champlain Connections BNI

**Matt Stevers**

White Oak Construction, Middlebury BNI



# 6 Months Perfect Attendance (cont.)

**Michael Sealy**

BTV Creative, Champlain Valley BNI

**Nicholas Roop**

Commonwealth Financial Group, Prosperity BNI

**Paul Richardson**

StoryWorkz Photography, Crossroads BNI

**Reed Prescott III**

Prescott Galleries @ Verde Mountain, Middlebury BNI

**Richard Fox**

Law Office of Richard J. Fox PLLC, Champlain Connections BNI

**Robert Caneco**

Robert A Caneco R.A., Champlain Valley BNI

**Robert Diaco**

Sign-A-Rama, Wealth Builders BNI

**Scott Weigand**

Brave Coffee and Tea, Crossroads BNI

**Sharon Grimes**

Sharon Grimes Accounting, LLC, Heart of Vermont BNI

**Steve Hartmann**

Affiliated Associates, The Masters BNI

**Terry Wetmore**

Liberty Mutual, Integrity BNI

**Timothy Monty**

Professional Financial Associates, LLC, Integrity BNI

**Tracy Stolese**

Shelburne Gift Company, The Masters BNI

## New Members – December 2020

**Kristen Faison**

The Gen Chem Tutor, Champlain Connections BNI

**Jillian Bouchard**

BeautyCounter Independent Consultant, Prosperity BNI

**Josh Howell**

Summit Chiropractic, Queen City BNI

**Leora Dowling**

Leora: Public Speaking Coach, Champlain Connections BNI

**Paul Vallerand**

Rich Jones State Farm, Crossroads BNI

## Renewed Members – December 2020

**Aaron Barton**

Extensity Creative, Champlain Connections BNI

**Abby Wadsworth**

Whole Health Nutrition, Champlain Connections BNI

**Chandra Pollard**

Union Bank, Crossroads BNI

**Kristen Mills**

Ridgeline Real Estate, Wealth Builders BNI

**Sue Gosselin**

Hall Communications, The Masters BNI

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## How Do You Givers Gain®?

BNI Vermont is always interested in working with motivated Vermont professionals to continue the important role of supporting Vermont businesses through referrals! If you are interested in learning more about becoming a part of the BNI Vermont Team as an Ambassador, Coordinator Specialist, or Director Consultant, contact Executive Director, Vickie Wacek, at [Vickie@BNIVermont.com](mailto:Vickie@BNIVermont.com).

## Important Links

[www.BNIVermont.com](http://www.BNIVermont.com)

[www.BNI.com](http://www.BNI.com)

## BNI Chapter Facebook Pages

Take a moment to “LIKE” other chapter’s Facebook pages to keep up to date on information and events across the region!

**Champlain Connections BNI**

**Champlain Valley BNI**

**Crossroads BNI**

**Heart of Vermont BNI**

**Integrity BNI**

**Middlebury BNI**

**Prestige BNI**

**Prosperity BNI**

**Queen City BNI**

**The Masters BNI**

**Shelburne BNI**

**Wealth Builders BNI**



## **BNI Vermont**

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[www.BNIVermont.com](http://www.BNIVermont.com)

# **BNI**

*Changing the Way the World Does Business®*