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- 2012 MDA Awards
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- Wayfinding



**President's  
Message  
by Todd Frank**  
*The Trail Head*

I have been the president for all of a week -- not much time to craft a message that will change the course of history. But I have to admit that having the opportunity to speak out on the health and opportunity of downtown Missoula might be the greatest thing about being the president of the MDA board.

For those of you who do not know me, I will warn you that I am never short on an opinion, and sometimes it might not be as well-informed as it perhaps should be. So for my first message, I wanted to make sure that I extend the invitation to speak with me if you have any questions or concerns about downtown Missoula. We may agree or disagree, but I welcome the opportunity to have a conversation about darn near anything. Sports aside, that is.

While speaking at the annual banquet, I made reference to the reality that the world, including our little corner of downtown Missoula, is run almost entirely by those individuals that show up to run it. Years ago, a friend asked me how I was doing. After I complained about how busy I was, he said, "I know you are busy, everyone is busy. What I asked is how are you doing." I want to use that thought to point out that we are all busy, but that does not preclude you from jumping in and helping. I am going to come right out and say it -- show up, or don't complain that things are not how you would like them to be.

*President's Message cont. on page 2*

**Winter BrewFest Comes to  
Caras Park**

On Friday, February 15, Missoula's favorite town square will wake up from hibernation, coming alive for one exciting night -- Winter BrewFest III at Caras Park. Bundle up and meet your friends and neighbors in Downtown Missoula from 5-10 pm for a selection of brews sure to warm you up. The Missoula Downtown Association's third production of this annual gathering will expose beer-lovers to the winter elements by holding the event outdoors for the first time. And have no fear, you can gather around bonfires and giant heaters all night. It's the warmest way to connect with your community over a few glasses of local libations.



"We are hoping Winter BrewFest has found its home in Caras Park, where Missoulians who enjoy being near the Clark Fork can celebrate what we love most about Downtown," says Ellen Buchanan, MDA board member and director of the Missoula Redevelopment Agency.

In addition to hosting over 30 microbrews from around the region, Winter BrewFest III will showcase the musical talent, artistry and tasty eats that make Downtown Missoula a vibrant place to connect -- even in the winter. Mingle amid the music of Three Eared Dog and the Kevin Van Dort Band. Marvel at the on-stage 3D projections performed by Amber Bushnell. Be mesmerized by

*Winter BrewFest cont. on page 2*

**2013 Board of Directors**

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Todd Frank .....The Trail Head

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Harry Watkins .....Zip Beverage

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**Ex Officio Members**

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Ellen Buchanan ..... MRA

Anne Guest ..... Missoula Parking Commission

Michael Tree .....Mountain Line

**MDA Staff**

Melanie Brock ..... Acting Executive Director

Colin Hickey ..... Marketing & Events Director

Jenny Mueller .....Program Director

Robert Giblin .....Finance Director

Julie Walsh .....Administrative Coordinator

*President's Message cont. from page 1*  
I know that everyone has a button to push; there are hundreds of ways to help. Pick one, show up and make it happen. I am constantly amazed by the hundreds of folks who show up and help with everything the MDA does. Every one of those folks is busy and could be doing something else, but they step up and get it done.

The MDA has over 14 standing committees that run the dozen or more events and activities the MDA does each year. If your passion and livelihood is retail, boy have I got a spot for you to help. If it is music and events, pick one - we have plenty to choose from. Community involvement and advocacy your cup of tea? We do that too. Working on how downtown might look in 25 years, yeah we got that committee - it meets once a month and lives the vision. The MDA does all this stuff and more, more than most members have even a small understanding of.

It took me two full years of board involvement to know even half the things the MDA has a hand in. So my request to EVERY SINGLE member is take ownership; commitment to an organization like the MDA is a great investment in your future.

If you want to talk about how you can be involved, give me a call or shoot me an email. (But if you want to talk sports I will have to refer you to someone else.)

- Todd Frank

tfrank@montanatrailhead.net

*Winter BrewFest cont. from page 1*  
our local fire dancers, the spectacular Missoula Sea of Flames. There will even be a wine bar for those in search of a different beverage selection.

To plan this year's event, the Missoula Downtown Association has contracted with Logan Foret, owner of Bassface Productions. Under the leadership of Foret and a BrewFest committee chaired by Buchanan, the event takes new shape at Caras Park. "I am extremely excited to be working with the MDA to host a great event that will only continue

*Cont. next column*

to grow and involve more of our local community," says Foret. The MDA is happy to have a BrewFest team that understands the value in connecting people downtown and looks forward to the flair they are bringing to Winter BrewFest III.



Kegs will be tapped when the work week ends at 5pm. Admission is \$10 per person and includes one 7-ounce commemorative glass and two beer tokens. Additional tokens are \$1 each. Moviegoers at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival are invited to walk over from the Wilma Theatre after the free opening night film, Nina Davenport's "First Comes Love." Bonfires and heaters will be extinguished at 10pm, but everyone is welcome to seek warmth in downtown restaurants and bars afterward.

Folks attending will be required to show identification at the entrance, located on the west side of the Caras Park Pavilion near the Carousel. Parking is free downtown evenings and weekends, and attendees are encouraged to use alternative forms of transportation. Mountain Line bus service runs until 8 pm, and the University of Montana UDASH shuttle runs 15-minute service late into the night for those staying until 10.

At Winter BrewFest III, Missoula will be reminded how lucky we are to have an active community life, even during chilly winter months that make most folks want to stay indoors. So come witness the winter revival of our favorite public park - the laughter, live music and neighborly chatter; the glow of familiar faces around crackling fires; a bite of hot food and the frothy head of a dark winter ale; hats, gloves, scarves and smiles. It's everything you love about summer in Caras Park, and you'll see it again on the night of Winter BrewFest III - Friday, February 15.

## 2012 Annual Awards Announced

The Missoula Downtown Association Annual Awards Banquet drew nearly 200 guests to the Governor's Room at the Florence Hotel on Wednesday, January 16. Each year, we gather with our dedicated and cherished members to honor and celebrate the accomplishments of the past year and the excitement of the year to come. We also recognize individuals who go the extra mile to help a customer, serve his or her business and/or contribute to the betterment of Missoula. These are the people who help connect our community.

### 2012 Downtowner of the Year Matt Ellis

Ellis was nominated for his insurmountable dedication to Downtown and his work implementing the Downtown Master Plan. He owns and runs two small businesses, the MSO Hub and Uptown Diner, and is also the Executive Vice-President for the Missoula Osprey Professional Baseball Team. In his various



he brings Missoula concerts, baseball and fireworks, and still manages to have enough time to be an active volunteer. He is passionate about improving Downtown in the future, and serves on the board of Destination Missoula. He is invaluable as a member of the MDA Board.

### Downtown Employee of the Year Colin Hickey

Hickey serves so many roles downtown that it is hard to know



where to start. However, each of his occupations benefits Downtown. Whether it's organizing

Annual Banquet  
*cont. on page 3*

# Downtown Spotlight

## Community Food and Agriculture Coalition

117 West Broadway  
721-0543

Missoula is quickly becoming known for its great variety of food choices and its focus on locally-grown meats, dairy items and produce. In large part we can thank the Community Food & Agriculture Coalition of Missoula County (CFAC), for its role in making more of these foods available to all of us. CFAC, a new MDA member, is a non-profit multi-stakeholder coalition that addresses community needs related to food and agriculture in a comprehensive and creative way.

Although this a fast-growing national movement, CFAC is locally-based and relies on the dedicated involvement of citizens, public officials, and people with a range of interests, such as farmers and anti-hunger advocates, in working to secure and maintain the health of our local food and farming system. As a membership organization, CFAC has helped put local food on the public agenda -- including farmland conservation, our local food economy, and the health of our children.

According to Bonnie Buckingham, CFAC's Executive Director, CFAC has a number of major priorities. They include working to create

*Cont. next column*

### Welcome New Members!

#### Plum Property Management

Jane Plum  
806 W. Spruce  
721-0543  
jenniferplum@live.com

#### Clover

Shannon Callaghan  
114 E Mail  
542-2213  
shannon@cloverlifestyle.net

#### Top Hat Lounge

Nick Checota  
134 W. Front Street  
544-7440  
nick@tophatlounge.com

a regional and state-wide food and agriculture network that will bring together everyone involved in the production, processing, preparation and presentation of wholesome locally-produced food. CFAC wants to help develop those new businesses that wish to be part of that farm-to-table network. According to Bonnie, CFAC is working with the Sustainable Business Council to localize our food system so that it becomes an economic driver. This includes indentifying and promoting local restaurants that are seeking to find locally-produced foods.

For more information on CFAC and how to become a member of this fast-growing movement, check out their web site: <http://www.missoulacfac.org>

- Kent Watson

Kent Watson & Associates

### Missoula Wayfinding

Efforts are underway in Missoula to develop an attractive, multi-faceted navigation and marketing strategy that will enhance the Garden City experience for visitors and residents alike. Nationally, it's called Wayfinding. A major planning effort starts in February and will take six to eight months to complete. Among many other benefits, a good wayfinding system can lead people to appealing destinations downtown, ease parking, and build a pleasant, welcoming vibe for increased foot traffic and retail customers.

Wayfinding utilizes a combination of tools and strategies to help navigate among destinations and promote the best a city has to offer. These include pre-arrival technology (websites, online maps and GPS), in-town technology (mobile apps and bar coding), and cohesive, well-designed and integrated signage and kiosks.

Good wayfinding systems under-



score the unique character of a place and eliminate excessive signage, improve parking and travel for bikers, motorists and pedestrians, simplify accessing destinations and increase the positive economic impact of visitors to Missoula.

Nearly two years ago, representatives from a broad cross-section of Missoula's agencies and organizations began meeting to explore this recommendation of the Downtown Master Plan, which was adopted in 2009. After studying local needs, collaborating, fundraising and completing an extensive selection process, a wayfinding firm named MERJE has been selected to design Missoula's system. MERJE has helped forty cities with wayfinding. Destination Missoula is the lead organization representing our group in the process.

Initial public planning meetings will begin in late-February. Everyone is invited to attend and give input on how Missoula should approach wayfinding.

Questions or Comments about the project can be directed to the Missoula Downtown Association, which is coordinating communications for the wayfinding project, at [mda@missouladowntown.com](mailto:mda@missouladowntown.com) or 406.543.4238. To learn more, visit the website at: [www.destinationmissoula.org/wayfinding](http://www.destinationmissoula.org/wayfinding).

- Greg Oliver

Chair, Missoula Wayfinding

### MDA Committee Meetings

#### Advocacy

Tuesday, February 12  
4-5 pm MDA Office

#### Caras Park Improvements

Thursdays  
10-11 am MDA Office

#### Master Plan Implementation Team

Thursday, February 21  
12-2pm at 140 West Pine

#### Membership

Thursday, February 21  
4-5 pm MDA Office

#### Marketing Committee

Wednesday, February 27  
10-11 am MDA Office

#### Winter Brewfest Committee

Wednesdays  
4-5 pm MDA Office

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Join us for the MDA's

# Membership Luncheon

Tuesday, February 12  
11:30am - 1:00pm

## Red Lion Inn

700 West Broadway  
Downtown Missoula

Join us for the February membership luncheon at the Red Lion Inn (700 W. Broadway) on Tuesday, November 12 from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. This month's luncheon will feature Susan Hay Patrick, Chief Executive Officer of United Way of Missoula County. Susan will be giving a great presentation on the current work United Way is doing in our community and sharing how you can get more involved with the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Please call 543-4238 or e-mail [mda@missouladowntown.com](mailto:mda@missouladowntown.com) to RSVP!



### MDA Luncheon

Cost: \$12 each

Please RSVP to the MDA office by Friday, Feb 8

CONNECTING OUR  
COMMUNITY

## Member Shout-Outs

### "Signs of the Times" at Fort Missoula

Don't miss the newest exhibit at the Historic Museum at Fort Missoula: *Signs of the Times – A Trip Down Memory Lane*, with a free opening reception on Sunday, February 3, 2013, from 1:00 to 4:00. The exhibit features over 300 original vintage sketches of Missoula business signs, circa 1945 – 1985. There will be many sketches of the historic signs, with numerous photos of the signs as they appeared on location at the various businesses. The exhibit will also address the evolution of sign technology and the art of neon fabrication. Several small vintage neon signs will be on display as well as other artifacts from the sign industry.

### Call for Committee Members

Feel like getting more involved? The MDA is seeking additions to the following committees: Membership & Membership BBQ, Out to Lunch, Downtown ToNight, Garden City River Rod Run, Caras Park Improvements and Business Development. Please call the office at 543-4238 or e-mail [mda@missouladowntown.com](mailto:mda@missouladowntown.com) to learn more about serving on a committee.

### Out to Lunch and Downtown ToNight Sponsorships

Enclosed with this newsletter is a signup form offering sponsorship opportunities for Out to Lunch and Downtown ToNight. Sponsorship is a great way for your business to get in the spotlight while supporting Downtown Missoula!

Stay up-to-date by visiting [www.missouladowntown.com](http://www.missouladowntown.com).