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Promoting, Supporting & Enhancing the Vitality of Downtown Missoula for the Betterment of Our Community



## President's Message by Todd Frank

The Trail Head  
tfrank@trailheadmontana.net

It's always hard to accept the compression of time as we get older. When I was a kid, summer took forever to come. Now I seem to blink and another year has passed. Gone in a flash is my year as president; not sure how it happened so quickly. I am incredibly thankful for all the support I have gotten in my year as president: my wife Mary, the awesome MDA staff I got to work with, and my staff at the Store who stood in my shoes while I was focused on the MDA and not always in the store.

As president of the MDA, I had the opportunity to learn every day as I got more familiar with what it takes to be an engaged citizen, board member and leader of the best civic organization in our community. I also discovered some weaknesses I have and had the opportunity to grow and learn to be a better boss, board member and community participant. It has been an amazing experience.

I do however have one piece of unfinished business. My personal goal this year was to get the membership more engaged with the overall operation and mission of the MDA and the downtown community as a whole. I had hoped, with my inspirational messages every month about engagement, that members would be standing in line to get involved. I have asked everyone all year to join a committee, take on a pet project, anything to engage. In the end, I see the same faces of

## Downtown Holiday Happenings

Once again, we will be holding a holiday window decorating contest. Gather your employees and friends to create a festive storefront that will leave a great impression on customers and passersby. Photos of your decorated window must be provided to the MDA by Wednesday, December 4. Voting will begin on Friday, December 6 and prizes will be awarded on Monday, December 23.

Next on the calendar is the 11th Annual Parade of Lights on Saturday, December 7th. This lively day kicks off at 9am with



the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis and Elf Olympics at Caras Park. Then downtown businesses will host on-site family activities 11am- 5pm. The parade itself begins on 4th and Higgins at 6pm and the Lighting of the Tree takes place around 6:30pm at the red XXXs. There will be caroling, a few words from Santa, and free cocoa and cookies.

Responding to the suggestions of various downtown businesses, the MDA is organizing a new event –Après Holiday – on Saturday, December 7 after the Lighting of the Tree. This collection of Parade of Lights after parties will feature holiday-themed live music and entertainment, special food and drink selections, and other nightlife attractions at Downtown bars and restaurants. Visit our website for the full slate of Après Holiday events.

The Downtown Dialog should be shared with all your staff members! Please pass it around your office.

## 2013 Board of Directors

### President

Todd Frank .....The Trail Head

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John Horner .....First Interstate Bank

### Vice President of Advocacy

Brent Campbell ..... WGM Group

### Vice President of Marketing & Events

Heidi Starrett .....Computer Central

### Vice President of Master Plan Implementation

Matt Ellis ..... Missoula Osprey/Uptown Diner

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Scott MacIntyre .....Badlander/Access ATM

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Harry Watkins .....Zip Beverage

Kent Watson .....Kent Watson & Associates

### Ex Officio Members

Ellen Buchanan ..... MRA

Anne Guest ..... Missoula Parking Commission

Michael Tree .....Mountain Line

### MDA Staff

Linda McCarthy .....Executive Director

Jenny Mueller .....Program Director

Adam Reel ..... Marketing & Events Director

Robert Giblin .....Finance Director

Julie Walsh .....Operations Coordinator

(President's message cont.)  
dedicated board members and volunteers showing up and donating time and energy. Where are all the new faces I thought would come running?

On the flip side, I hear from some members of the community and membership about all that we are not doing for them. The old "what have you done for me lately" approach.

Well folks, the world is truly run by those that show up. I have said it before and will here again. If you don't show up and help or offer to become engaged, you simply have no right to complain about all the work other dedicated volunteers and staff get done. Paying dues is a part of what makes the organization operate, but it is not what creates the ability of the organization to prosper. That comes from the time and expertise that everyone who steps up to help most effectively use those dues to further goals of the MDA.

I have learned that the intangible benefits of the MDA are magnitudes more important than the tangible things we do. The community events are great. They are, however, not the real work of the MDA - that part is rarely in the public view. Unless you are engaged as a member you likely have a limited understanding of all that happens behind the scenes.

On the whole, my experience as MDA president made me a better person; more educated and enlightened about the complexities of trying to achieve specific goals, all while trying to address the needs and desires of a broad spectrum of views. I have little patience for civil discourse that is mean-spirited and personally directed; it is counter-productive and a paramount waste of time.

I have however learned to listen and understand strong and well thought out opinions that I do not agree with. I have also gained much respect for community leaders who are able to find the balance and grind through what are very challenging interactions with

(Message cont. next column)

## MDA Committee Meetings

### Advocacy

Tuesday, December 10  
4-5pm MDA Office

### Master Plan Implementation Team

Thursday, December 19  
12-2 pm at 140 W Pine

### Membership

Thursday, December 19  
4-5 pm MDA Office

### Marketing Committee

TBA  
10-11am MDA Office

(President's message cont.)  
folks who are not engaged enough to understand the complexity of an issue. I hope to take what I have learned as president to become a better citizen and participate with informed and balanced views and respect those I don't agree with.

So my last message is this: Being engaged in the growth and future of downtown Missoula is going to take more than reading this article (Sorry but it is.) We live in one of the great communities in the west, really in all the US, and if you have any expectation that it will remain as vibrant and awesome as it is, best put up or shut up. It's your town; get your skin in the game.

(Holidays cont.)

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be Downtown this month to hear Christmas wishes and take photos with kids at Liquid Planet each Saturday and Sunday December 8th through 22nd. Also on those dates, there will be free horse-drawn carriage rides on East Pine Street. The MSO Hub will be offering free gift wrapping for all downtown gifts throughout December, so send your customers there. The MDA would like to thank all the wonderful people at downtown businesses for the spark you add to the holiday season in Missoula. It's your creative window displays, delightful gifts, exquisite menus and dedication to all-ages fun that help make the season bright!

## MDA Seeks Nominations for 2013 Downtown Awards

Each year the MDA honors four outstanding individuals during the Annual Awards Banquet held in January. With over 450 member businesses, 23 board members, 10 committees and more than 11,000 MDA member employees, there are plenty of excellent nominees for these awards. Nominees must be business owners, managers, employees, staff members or professional member affiliated with the Missoula Downtown Association. Please help us recognize the people who greatly contributed to the heart of our city in 2013 by nominating them for one of the following:

**Downtowner of the Year:** One of Missoula's most prestigious honors, the Downtowner of the Year is awarded to an individual who has made Downtown Missoula a better place by his/her unselfish and extraordinary efforts, activities or contributions.

**Downtown Employee of the Year:** The Downtown Employee of the Year is awarded to an exceptional employee or an employee providing outstanding customer service.

**Committee Member of the Year:** The Committee Member of the Year award recognizes the dedicated efforts of an individual who goes above and beyond the call of duty to produce an MDA event or serves as a leader on an MDA committee.

**Board Member of the Year:** The Board Member of the Year award honors an MDA Board Member for his/her engaged, enthusiastic and dedicated stewardship and active leadership in Downtown Missoula and the Missoula Downtown Association. This person must be a Board Member of the Missoula Downtown Association.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, Dec. 13. To submit, follow the QR code, visit [www.missouladowntown.com/about/mda-annual-awards-program/](http://www.missouladowntown.com/about/mda-annual-awards-program/), or email [jenny@missouladowntown.com](mailto:jenny@missouladowntown.com).



## Downtown Gift Cards: Good for Business & Consumers

As the holidays arrive, the Missoula Downtown Association wants to ensure members and downtown customers are fully informed on the benefits of the Missoula Downtown Gift Card program.

Due to a variety of problems and the desire to grow the program for our members, the MDA switched from paper to plastic in the fall of 2009. Prior to conversion, consumers were depositing the paper certificates into their bank accounts, making small purchases and pocketing the cash balance, using the paper program to pay utility bills, and redeeming the certificates at non-member businesses. Redemption rates hovered around 75%.

Converting to a closed credit card system improved utilization at MDA member businesses only; improved financial tracking of purchases and redemptions; increased overall growth in sales and redemptions; reduced confusion at the point of redemption; and improved the overall customer and member business experience.

Since implementation, Downtown Gift Card sales have increased by 125% percent, and last year's redemption rate was 90%.

StoreFinancial, the MDA's contracted service provider, is also on contract with Southgate Mall, the Downtown Billings Partnership, the Downtown Boise Partnership and many other downtown organizations and shopping centers across the nation. In 2009, StoreFinancial was one of only three businesses that provided multi-merchant gift card programs and was, by far, the most recommended among the three.

However, one disadvantage to this program is the contract-required inactivity fee of \$2.50 per month following 12 consecutive months of no activity on the card.

Cont. next column

This can be avoided if the owner uses the gift card at least once every 12 months. MDA staff members work diligently to educate the consumers about the fee at the point of purchase, both orally and in writing on the plastic cards and on the packaging wrapped around the card.

Here are some other interesting facts you should know about the Downtown Gift Cards:

- Montana law does not allow for gift card expiration fees. However, multiple-merchant gift cards are exempted from this law (Section 30-14-102 (5)(b))
- Both consumers and merchants can verify the balance on any Downtown Gift Card via phone (800-755-0085) or online ([www.getmybalance.com](http://www.getmybalance.com)) in less than two minutes. This information is printed on the back of every card.

- In the last year more than \$160,000 were redeemed at 165 MDA member businesses, an average of almost \$1,000 in additional sales per business, and the highest redemption rates are greater than \$6,000 per year.

The MDA works diligently to promote the program and educate the consumers about the Downtown Gift Card. Staff have responded to consumer and member suggestions, and efforts to draw attention to the inactivity fee now include notification of the fee in six different ways, including a "Use By" sticker on the front of the card.

While there may be drawbacks, the benefits of the Downtown Gift Card program far outweigh the disadvantages, and our goal is to continue to grow this benefit of membership that improves the downtown economy, supports Missoula's locally-owned businesses, and provides a great gift option for friends, family, employees and more. As always, the MDA welcomes questions and suggestions for improvements.

## Holiday MADE Fair 2013

Come check out the 7th annual Holiday MADE Fair with even more artists and room to shop! It is a full day of creative indulgence and holiday shopping, featuring over 150 local and regional artists. Buy locally this holiday season and bring home a one-of-a-kind present that will be treasured for years to come. Join other inspiring artists



and crafters Sunday, December 8th, 11am-6pm at our new location with plenty of room to shop, the Adams Center.

Receive additional discounts, savings, or free gifts with purchase from a variety of participating vendors of the EARLY BIRD door buster (11am-noon) and the LAST BEST sale (5pm-6pm). Check out the new student art show, non-profit information and activities, Mamma Feeding Zone, MADE Fair merch booth, and the ZACC gift wrapping station. Free parking & entry, and always family & hipster friendly.

Check the website for more up-to-date details and a list of participating artists at [missoulamadefair.com](http://missoulamadefair.com).

We would like to thank all of the sponsors that help make this event possible: *Independent*, Missoula Indoor Ads, Montana Radio Company, Rockin' Rudy's, Selvedge Studio, and Zoo City Custom Apparel. The Holiday MADE Fair is presented by REcreate designs, Courtney Blazon Illustrations, and Design Missoula.

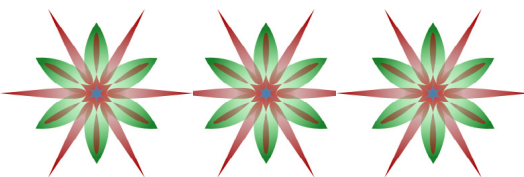
- Carol Lynn Lapotka  
REcreate Designs

# MISSOULA Downtown

CONNECTING OUR  
COMMUNITY



*The Missoula Downtown  
Association and the  
Holiday Inn Downtown  
invite you to*



# *Celebrate the Sparkle & Successes of Downtown Missoula*

*at the*

## *Downtown Christmas Party*

*Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2013  
5-7 pm at the  
Holiday Inn Downtown  
200 South Pattee Street*



*Holiday hors d'oeuvres,  
beer, wine, punch and cof-  
fee to be served.*

*Confirmed attendance  
required  
by Friday, Dec. 6  
at 543-4238 or  
mda@missouladowntown.com.*

### **First Night Missoula 2014**

The Missoula Cultural Council proudly presents a diverse collection of music, dance, theatre, and kid-friendly activities to ring in 2014. First Night Missoula is a community-wide, New Year's Eve celebration of local arts and culture. This year marks the 20th anniversary of First Night Missoula and we couldn't be more excited to share this tradition with Missoula once again.

First Night Missoula is a showcase of the abundance of talent and creativity that our community creates and will be held in Downtown Missoula, University of Montana campus and Southgate Mall. What better way to welcome the New Year than to embrace the creative energy that makes Missoula such a rewarding place to live. This spirited, cultural celebration is open to the entire Missoula community and is an alcohol and drug free event.

We have over 80 performing groups and activities all over Missoula, so whether you're into jazz, bluegrass, ballet, rock or even punk, we have a variety of musicians and artists ready to entertain you. Some artists have been with us all 20 years while others are making their First Night debut. Join us in celebrating all our old favorites along with the rising stars. And if you want to see the next generation of talent, come to First Night Star, our most popular event showcasing local high school musicians.

Young or old, new to Missoula or 4th generation Montanan – nearly everyone has been affected by First Night Missoula. In honor of our 20th anniversary and the wonderful traditions that have sprung up from this festival, the MCC is curating a blog featuring First Night Stories from our community. We'd love to publish your First Night experience. Send your stories and anecdotes to



matt@missoulacultural.org.

Admission buttons are available now throughout Missoula and the Bitterroot at several retail locations as well as on the MCC website. Purchase your button early for only \$15 or on December 31 for \$17. First Night Star tickets are available at the MCC office or online.

First Night is a community effort and would not be possible without the sponsors, donors and volunteers that contribute every year. If you are interested in volunteering contact the Missoula Cultural Council at 406.541.0860 or matt@missoulacultural.org. For complete event listings, visit [www.missoulacultural.org/firstnight](http://www.missoulacultural.org/firstnight).

- Matt Anglen

Missoula Cultural Council

### **Join an MDA Committee!**

MDA events are a great way to volunteer with us throughout the year, but if you'd like to get more involved, consider joining a committee in 2014.

MDA committees plan events, head up downtown projects, and help further the MDA mission. Our committees include Membership, Marketing, Annual Awards Banquet, Out to Lunch, Downtown ToNight, Garden City River Rod Run, Business Development, Advocacy, Master Plan Implementation, Parade of Lights, Winter BrewFest, Garden City BrewFest, and River City Roots Fest.

Please call the office at 543-4238 or email [mda@missouladowntown.com](mailto:mda@missouladowntown.com) to learn more about serving on a committee.



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## Downtown Spotlight

### Leanne Young, MA, LCPC

111 N. Higgins Ave., Suite 508  
(406) 360-3262

Leanne Young, MA, LCPC is a licensed clinical professional counselor in downtown Missoula and a returning member to the Missoula Downtown Association. Her office is conveniently located on the 5th floor of the Florence building at 111 North Higgins. Ms. Young has over 22 years of education and experience in her field. She has a long tenure in downtown and served on the Downtown ToNight committee for many years.

Ms. Young has extensive experience providing psychotherapy with adults, couples, families and adolescents in various capacities. Leanne aims to flexibly structure the course of treatment to accommodate her client's therapeutic needs. She assists people to transform from feeling blocked in some area of their lives to achieving their own definition of success from weekly sessions.

The decision to attend therapy is a significant one. People seek therapy to deal with issues, conflicts, and problems associated with a range of topics. What underlies a successful therapeutic relationship is the creation of a safe place for one to explore conflicts, issues, and feelings. From that premise, meaningful and significant growth occurs. The kind of growth one is seeking is best decided upon by careful collaboration between the therapist and the client.

Working as a general practitioner, she has additional specialized expertise in depression, anxiety, eating disorders (anorexia, bulimia, and overeating), couples counseling, parenting, and divorce adjustment.

Ms. Young is an active and accomplished runner having completed 5 Missoula Marathons. She enjoys the outdoors, art, cooking and travel and loves living and working in downtown Missoula.

- Brent Campbell  
WGM Group



## Welcome New Members!

### Apothecary Aesthetics

Anna Rummel Tenenbaum  
200 E Pine  
544-0785  
anna@apothecaryaesthetics.com

### Empyrean, Skin Care

Vanessa Barger  
P.O.Box 5262  
360-9422  
vanessa@empyreanskincare.com

### Imagination Station of Missoula

Denise Magstadt  
227 N. Higgins  
926-3325  
missoulatoys@gmail.com

### Mama's Pantry LLC

Erin Horner  
1900 Brooks Street, Suite 6  
396-3220  
mymamaspantry@gmail.com

### Pi Property Management LLC

Libby Schneider  
101 E. Broadway, Ste. 510  
763-6752  
pipropertymanagementllc@gmail.com

## Celebrate the Holidays with Clark Fork Coalition!

It's time for the Clark Fork Coalition's annual Holiday Party! Join headline sponsor Montgomery Distillery on Friday, December 6 from 5-10pm in the heated tent outside the CFC offices at 104 S. 4th St. West. Tickets are available for purchase at the door or online for \$25. The \$25 ticket includes a 1-year CFC

membership, food. If bought online, the ticket comes with one free specialty cocktail at the party. All proceeds from the party support the Clark Fork Coalition's mission to protect and restore the Clark Ford watershed. Look forward to special "river-themed" cocktails created by Montgomery Distillery for just \$8, photo booth with holiday prints for just \$10, and the famous wine raffle of 30, 40, or 50 bottles of wine. See you there!



## Think Outside the Box [stores]

As consumers, we're about to collectively spend a large portion of our annual shopping budget on holiday gifts. Have you ever considered where that money goes once it's out of your hands?

So many of us get caught up in the advertising blitz that surrounds Black Friday and Cyber Monday. But nestled in between is a quiet little event called Small Business Saturday. Although the 'holiday' is part of a national campaign to shop small, the Sustainable Business Council is happy to encourage it because shopping small invariably means shopping at locally-owned merchants—and buying local is a big part of building a thriving sustainable business environment.

When shoppers buy from locally-owned businesses, 30-60% of their dollars stay in the local economy, versus just 15% when buying from a chain or 'box store.' Buying Local ensures the success of our community, not only in promoting variety and local character, but in many other ways as well. For example, local businesses are more involved in their communities—financially and personally—than chain stores. Buying local often reduces energy use and carbon emissions, and allows shoppers to vote with their dollars to help make locally-produced goods successful.

In the past few years, the Buy Local movement has gained ground in Missoula and the surrounding areas, thanks in part to the efforts of the Sustainable Business Council. To help promote the Buy Local movement, SBC conducted a Buy Local Challenge contest in November, and is continuing the message with a Buy Local punch card and "Think Outside the Box [stores]" advertising. In addition, the SBC is working with the Mayor's office to have December declared as Buy Local month.

To learn more about buying from local businesses or what it means to shop sustainably, visit the SBC's updated website ([www.sustainable-businesscouncil.org](http://www.sustainable-businesscouncil.org)).

-Lisa Hensley  
SBC Buy Local Coordinator



218 E Main St, Suite C  
Missoula, MT 59802  
Ph: 406.543.4238  
Fax: 406.543.9831

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

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Promoting, Supporting & Enhancing the Vitality of Downtown Missoula for the Betterment of Our Community

## How is the MDA Connecting our Community in December?

### Advocacy

Advocating for improvements to the Aggressive Solicitation and Pedestrian Interference ordinances; participating in Missoula broadband study

### Marketing

Starting to work on a strategic marketing plan for 2014.

### Master Plan

Reviewing maps, signs and kiosks for Downtown Wayfinding; vetting consultants for a Downtown market analysis; commencing study on Front & Main conversion.

### Membership

Winter outreach to members and invoicing for 2014 dues.



## Member Shout Outs

**Yo Waffle Closing for the Season.** Downtown's favorite frozen yogurt shop is closing up for the winter! Sweet-tooths fear not - they will re-open on Friday, February 14 with a 'buy one get one 1/2 off' special for the entire day.

**Mrs. Claus at Walking Stick for Stories in December.** Walking Stick Toys is happy to announce that Mrs. Claus will visit their Hip Strip shop at 829 S. Higgins every Monday morning to share a story hour. Beginning on Monday, December 2nd at 10:30am, Mrs. Claus will be reading some of the newest holiday books and spending precious time with your wee ones.

**Willy Wonka Opens at MCT this month!** Enjoy an evening with the whole family at MCT, Inc for the delightful adaptation of Roald Dahl's book *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The musical *Willy Wonka* runs December 13-15 and December 18-22, with a special MCT VIP Night on December 12. Thursday through Saturday showtimes are 7:30pm, Sundays are 6:30pm, and weekend matinees are at 2pm. Tickets, ranging \$15-\$21, can be purchase at MCT, Inc. at 200 N Adams, or online at [www.MCTinc.org](http://www.MCTinc.org). Seating is reserved, so act fast and don't miss your chance to watch this cast of 50 locals dazzle you with song, dance and sweets this December.

CONNECTING OUR  
COMMUNITY

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