

Missoula Downtown Lowdown



Connecting our Community

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



President's Column by Aimee McQuilkin

Betty's Divine
aimee@bettysdivine.com

I don't know about you, but living in a community as vibrant and happening as Missoula, I have come to rely on these few quiet winter months to reset myself. One of my traditions of doing so has become riding the bus to work in January and February. Those pre- and post-work errands...they can wait. My bike is hibernating in the garage for the season and scraping my windshield has become tiresome. As I stand at the corner a few blocks from my house, sometimes the Mt. Jumbo elk herd reveals itself, grazing on the steep slopes of our city mountain above. The bus arrives, and where before there would just be a few passengers on before me, now that we have gone zero-fare (because as we all know, Missoula is bad-ass and ahead of

the game), riders fill the seats and I try to squeeze in near a copy of the Missoulian, the 7 minute ride is the perfect space of time to get a news update.

This year however, I resolve to put aside the paper, to keep my phone silent in my pocket, and instead, to look around and make eye contact with the other riders. Maybe get to know my neighbors better. I arrive at the transfer center with 15 minutes to spare, sometimes I rush over to Office City for pens or printer ink, but more often I take my time walking down Higgins Ave. Passersby say good morning, and their undaunted frequency never ceases to amaze me, even on the coldest of days, the sidewalks are alive with people. I take in every detail of the many thoughtfully designed shop windows. The names of bands and upcoming events streaming across The Wilma's marquee gets me excited for the weeks to come.

The walk across Higgins Bridge to open my shop on the Hip Strip can be windy and brisk, but I sneak

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Downtown Gift Card Sales Continue to Increase

Downtown Gift Card sales and redemptions saw another increase in 2015. Gift card sales increased by 14% and redemptions increased by 19% from 2014.

In 2015, the MSO Hub began selling Downtown gift cards, expanding the program so that customers can purchase gift cards on evenings and weekends.

When a customer redeems a gift card, the entire transaction amount is given directly to the local business;



the MDA does not charge any processing fees. The \$205,162 redeemed in 2015 went straight back into the local economy, supporting all local businesses.

Downtown gift cards can be accepted on any point of sale system and are currently accepted at over 160 businesses.

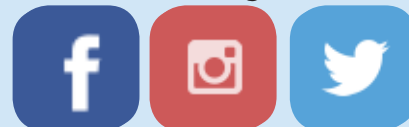
For more information on how to accept Downtown gift cards at your business, please contact topher@missouladowntown.com or call 406-543-4238.

2015 Downtown Gift Card Sales
Total Number of Cards Sold.....6,062
Total Amount of Card Sales.....\$242,808
Total Amount of Redemptions.....\$205,162
Total Cards Sold at the MSO Hub.....504
Total Sales at MSO Hub.....\$20,271

February 2016

- Spotlight: The Confident Stitch
- Downtown Award Winners
- Big Sky Documentary Film Fest
- Retail Therapy for Retailers
- Winter Brew Fest Feb. 19

Please share with friends
and colleagues!



MissoulaDowntown.com

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Downtown Award Winners Announced!

The MDA recognized Downtown community members who were nominated for 2015 Downtown Awards at their Annual Banquet at the newly renovated Wilma Theatre.

The banquet theme was "40 and Forward", celebrating the MDA's last 40 years and looking forward to the future. Speakers reflected on the development of Downtown by decade and highlighted the ways that the MDA will continue to promote and enhance the vibrancy of Downtown.

The Downtown Award Winners are:

- **Downtown Committee Member of the Year:** Harry Watkins, Zip Beverage
- **Downtown Board Member of the Year:** Heidi Starrett, Missoula Independent
- **Downtown Employee of the Year:** Ryan Torres, Wilma Theatre/Top Hat Lounge
- **Downtown Volunteer of the Year:** Karen Snow
- **Downtown Business of the Year:** Roemer's Tire Factory
- **Downtowner of the Year:** Nick Checota, owner of the Wilma Theatre/Top Hat Lounge

Thank you to all who attended and to the Wilma Theatre and Bravo Catering for hosting the banquet.

Here's to another 40 years of the MDA!

Winter Downtown Reminders

The Missoula Parking commission would like to remind folks not to pile snow around the base of the LUKE multi-space parking meters. It makes it difficult for customers and visitors to get to the LUKE machines. A better place to store snow is over the tree grates so the trees get a head start on their Spring growth from the melting snow!

Remember not to shovel or plow snow into the handicap parking spaces. Those spaces are provided for people with disabilities—let's invite them to our Downtown by making their visit safe and convenient!

President continued

peeks at the ice formations below on the Clark Fork River, the brave waterfowl, and the even braver river surfers. As I sweep my front sidewalk and flip on my open sign, I can't help but to smile at the wonderful place we live and do business in. It's easy to take for granted all the events at Caras Park, the multitude of choices when it comes to deciding on a spot for dinner with the family or any number of unique and friendly shops to find the perfect gift to send your Mom for her birthday.

Being reminded on these winter bus commutes to stop and breathe in what Missoula Downtown has to offer, truly sets me right for the New Year. After 20 years of living here, and 10 of owning my own business Downtown, it still brings tears to my eyes. The members and staff of the Missoula Downtown Association and their 40 years of hard work and dedication to this city we love should be proud of what they helped to create, just as I am proud to serve as this year's president.

Huzzah!

Big Sky Documentary Film Festival Announces Selections for the 13th Annual Event

More than 200 films have been selected for screening at the 13th Annual Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (BSDFF), which takes place February 19-28, 2016, in Downtown Missoula, MT. The 2016 lineup was curated from over 1,500 submissions, which was the largest, most competitive open call for submissions to date. Entries came in from around the world, and feature an array of films covering all non-fiction forms and genres. 2016 is another year of growth for BSDFF, with more screenings in more venues than ever before.

Continuing a 10-year tradition, the festival kicks off on Friday, February 19 with a free public screening of an upcoming feature from HBO Documentary Films.

This year's opener is MAVISI!, an intimate look at the life of gospel/soul music legend and civil rights icon Mavis Staples and her family group, the Staple Singers.

In addition to the lineup of new films, BSDFF welcomes Lucy Walker and Ondi Timoner, two hugely talented and influential directors, as retrospective artists. Walker, a British director whose films include features *The Crash Wheel* and *Waste Land*, has earned more than 80 awards and two Academy Award nominations. BSDFF will screen her entire body of work, as well as a new virtual reality project. Timoner is the only two-time recipient of Sun-

dance's Grand Jury Prize, for the documentaries *Dig!* and *We Live in Public*. Seven of her films will be screened during the 10-day festival, including her 2015 film, *Brand: A Second Coming*, about the actor, comedian and activist Russell Brand. Walker and Timoner will be among the many filmmakers in attendance, offering festival goers the chance to engage in post-screening Q&As.

The themes of "impact" and "change" are at the forefront of this year's DocShop, Big Sky's filmmaking conference that takes place during the festival (February 22 - 26). For five days, content creators from across the nation will come together and

share their stories of making media that has proven to be a catalyst for positive change. In addition to helping visiting filmmakers hone their skills and develop their careers, DocShop offers the general public a fascinating look inside the business of documentary filmmaking. Filmmakers, activists, content creators and life-learners will engage in panels, workshops and works-in-progress review sessions from some of the most accomplished media-makers and industry professionals on the planet.

Visit bigskyfilmfest.org for more information and to purchase passes.



New Member Spotlight

By Kim Klages-Johns

The MSO Hub

In our 'Cookie-Cutter' world where everything is the same, it's great to have the option to be different. With The Confident Stitch in Downtown Missoula you're not just different, you're original.

Kate McIvor and Fred Rice have been living in Helena but longed to come back to Missoula so they took advantage of an open building on Front Street and came back home. The Confident Stitch is located in the old Monte Dolack building next to McKenzie River Pizza. They have redesigned it to fit their needs while Monte and his staff showcase art downstairs.

At The Confident Stitch you can choose your own fabric, de-

sign your own garment and create a wardrobe specifically for you. Kate's goal is to guide you with professional instruction while sharing the confidence that comes with knowing you are crafting a garment made just for you. There is an assurance that comes along with creating a wardrobe that is unique

to your style and even more important, fits your body. Every woman's body is different and Kate will make sure your creations will be tai-

lored to fit you perfectly. In a fashion world of ever-changing size charts, it is refreshing to step into a garment made just for you. In the unique elegance and brilliance of our downtown, it's nice to know we now have a place to create clothing as individual as we each are.



Tourism Business Improvement District offering funding for events aimed at bringing visitors to Missoula

By Brittany Petaja
Destination Missoula

Within the past year, the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) has awarded \$77,500 through its grant fund which equates to a potential direct economic impact of \$5,725,358 for Missoula. "The opportunities provided by the Missoula Tourism BID [TBID] grant program allow for organizations to bring events and conventions to Missoula," said Linda McCarthy, executive director of the Downtown Missoula Partnership. "These events and conferences are good for our economy because folks spend money in our hotels, restaurants, coffee shops, retail stores and gas stations. Bringing tourists, sporting events, conferences or conventions to the Garden City is a good piece of business for all."

The Missoula TBID grant funds are generated from a \$2 per-room-night fee collected by participating hotels. The purpose of the Missoula TBID grant fund is to provide funding for new and/or growing events, preferably in non-peak months (Oc-

tober-April) that will provide an economic benefit through increased hotel room nights and other spending within the Missoula Community.

"The [Missoula] TBID grants have served our hotel community well and stimulated our local economy almost from inception," said Dan Carlino, general manager of the Doubletree Missoula Edgewater. "As a TBID organization, we have been able to financially support organizations in order to bring groups and/or events to Missoula that would have otherwise gone elsewhere."

The next application deadline for the Missoula TBID grant fund is March 1. Destination Missoula and the Missoula TBID hope to generate as much awareness around the availability of these funds as possible so that more event planners from Missoula will apply.

For more information on criteria and how to apply for a TBID grant by the next application deadline of March 1, 2016, please visit www.destinationmissoula.org/tbid/grant-opportunities.

Welcome New Members!

Liberty Electric

Janice Couch
9660 Summit Drive
(406) 721-4177

janice.couch@libertyelectricinc.co
libertyelectricinc.com

Pattee Street, LLC

Alan Newell
P.O. Box 2046
(406) 360-9817

alannewell@blackfoot.net

Retail Therapy for Retailers!

Connect to our Downtown Community in 2016 through coffee and conversation by creating opportunities for retailers to get to know each other a little more, share information, learn something new, and create partnerships for success. The first event will be a coffee hour meet and greet on Thursday, February 11 from 8:30-10 am. Come to the Downtown Missoula Partnership office at 218 E. Main to mingle with fellow Downtown retailers. Stay tuned for future networking events and workshops coming this spring! Contact the Downtown Missoula Partnership at 406.543.4238 or info@missouladowntown.com for more information.

COMMUNITY = UNITE

Join Us Wednesday,
February 10, 2016

5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Kettle House
Northside Taproom



Missoula
Downtown
Foundation

A portion of each pint
sold will go to the
Missoula Downtown
Foundation



MISSOULA Downtown CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY



218 E Main St, Suite C
Missoula, MT 59802
Ph: 406.543.4238
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 This Month?

Advocacy

(Meeting Wed., Feb. 10 at 8:30 am)
Outreach and public education on
LUKE parking meters.

Marketing

Partnering with Dynamic Aerial
Media to produce a Downtown
marketing video featuring drone
footage of Downtown.

Master Plan

(Meeting Thurs., Feb. 18 at 12 pm)
Installation of pedestrian-level
wayfinding signage begins in
February.

Membership

(Meeting Tues., Feb 16 at 4 pm)
Checking in with members to en-
sure that they are maximizing their
MDA membership. Did you know
that your membership includes:
Discount on Caras Park rental
Access to professional services and
member-to-member benefits
Monthly newsletter and regular
e-communications
Monthly networking socials
Access to MDA Membership List &
mailing labels
Please let us know if you feel that
you are missing out on any mem-
bership opportunities! Contact
topher@missouladowntown.com to
set up an appointment.

Events

Planning Winter BrewFest for Friday,
Feb. 19 and accepting applica-
tions for food vendors and perform-
ers for Out to Lunch and Down-
town ToNight. Seeking sponsorships
for the 2016 event season.

For more information, contact
info@missouladowntown.com



Shout Outs

Celebrate Winter Bike to Work Day on Friday, February 12th. Missoula In Motion will be handing out FREE coffee and treats to bicyclists and pedestrians from 7:30 – 9:30AM along the River Trail underneath the Madison St. bridge. Photo contests, raffles, group rides and more to get you warmed up about biking. Visit www.MissoulaInMotion/Events for more details.

The Taste, March 4 at Neptune Aviation from 6- 9 pm. Join the Montana Food Bank Network and enjoy over 60 different samples from more than 20 local chefs, brewers, distillers, and wineries. Spend the evening enjoying local food & beverage while supporting MFBN in the fight against hunger with a silent auction & raffle. Please purchase tickets in advance at mfbnevents.org/thetaste or contact Cassidy Green at cgreen@mfbn.org or 406-215-1774.

The Missoula Writing Collaborative announces The Writers' Room on March 5, a one-day writing workshop on poetry, fiction, and nonfiction. Geared to the general public, classes will be taught by twelve professional writers of the Missoula Writing Collaborative. The workshops are held 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in four Downtown Missoula locations and are \$60 per class or \$120 for three. A \$12 luncheon at the Top Hat features the film, "Kicking the Loose Gravel Home," about Montana poet Richard Hugo and a cocktail hour at day's end is at Radius Gallery. Visit www.missoulawritingcollaborative.org for more information.

The City of Missoula is now accepting nominations for Historic Preservation Awards. The Historic Preservation Commission and Preserve Historic Missoula recognize individuals, projects, and organizations who have restored, rehab'd, or constructed new and historically compatible additions with historic preservation awards in May. If you have an outstanding project you'd like to nominate, visit www.ci.missoula.mt.us/1713/Awards. The nomination deadline is March 4, 2016.

Beat the Winter Blues with Montana Made Brews!

6th Annual Winter BrewFest

Friday, February 19 5-9 pm

Caras Park

\$12 includes glass & 2 tokens

Additional tokens 2 for \$3

Must be 21 & Older

Must show ID.



Grab your friends and winter gear to kick off your weekend at the **6th Annual Winter BrewFest!** Join us at Caras Park on Friday, February 19 from 5-9 pm to enjoy some Montana beers and food from Covered Wagon Hot Dogs, El Cazador, Piezanos, and MacKenzie River Pizza Company. This is the first year that Winter BrewFest will be featuring only beers made in Montana!

Performances by Ted Ness and the Rusty Nails and Off In The Woods will keep you movin' and shakin' all evening! Gather around the fire barrels with drinks, food, and friends to make your weekend kick-off memorable.



Heidi Starrett reflects on her time as the 2015 MDA Board President at the 2016 MDA Awards Banquet held in the newly-remodeled, historic Willma Theatre in Downtown Missoula. (Photo by Neubauer Media)

Sponsor a 2016 Downtown Event!

The Missoula Downtown Association produces over 30 public events every year, connecting more than 250,000 people to the heart of Downtown Missoula. Showcase your business to the Missoula community by supporting these quality events:

- 24th Annual Garden City BrewFest (May 7, 2016)
- 31st Annual Out to Lunch (June 1 - August 24, 2016)
- 16th Annual Downtown ToNight (June 2 - August 25, 2016)
- 16th Annual Garden City River

- Rod Run (June 24-25, 2016)
- 11th Annual River City Roots Festival (August 26-27, 2016)
- 14th Annual Parade of Lights (December 3, 2016)

For more information on any of these events and how to get involved, please contact us at 406.543.4238, info@missouladowntown.com, or visit our website at missouladowntown.com/mda-events.

Connect to Downtown Through Committee & Volunteer Service

With event season around the corner, the MDA is looking to recruit committee members and volunteers for events. It takes hundreds of volunteers each year to accomplish the greater goals of Downtown Missoula, please keep the following volunteer and committee opportunities in mind when planning how to get involved this year.

- MDA Advocacy Committee
- MDA Membership Committee
- Out to Lunch Committee
- Downtown ToNight Committee
- Garden City River Rod Run Committee
- Parade of Lights Committee
- MDF Fundraising Committee
- MDF Outreach Committee
- Downtown Retail Committee
- Montana Special Olympics Barbecue Committee

Not sure if you're ready to commit to a committee? Volunteers are needed for most MDA events. Please contact the Downtown Missoula Partnership office at (406) 543-4238 or info@missouladowntown.com for more information.



Now Accepting Vendor & Band Applications

The MDA is now accepting vendor and band applications for Downtown ToNight and Out to Lunch event series! To apply for vending, visit missouladowntown.com/mda-events. To submit your band, visit the missouladowntown.com homepage and click the Bands Wanted banner.

Applications are due on Wednesday, March 2.



Member Socials **40 Years** CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

February 2016

Membership Luncheon

Tuesday, February 9, 11:30am - 1pm - The Loft of Missoula (119 W. Main St.)



For February's Luncheon we will be learning about two of Missoula's favorite events. First up is Off the Rack, Blue Mountain Clinic's primary event every spring. Coming up on February 13th at the Wilma, this condom fashion show is a conversation about safer sex and not to be missed.

The Big Sky Documentary Film Festival returns on February 19-26 in Downtown Missoula. This amazing festival features a diverse assortment of documentaries from all over the country. Don't miss this Luncheon at the Loft!

Coffee Talk

Tuesday, February 17, 8 - 9am - Rocky Mountain School of Photography (216 N. Higgins Ave.)



Join the MDA Membership at the Rocky Mountain School of Photography (RMSP) for the first Coffee Talk of 2016. RMSP is a family-owned photography school that has been teaching students since 1989. People come from all over the world to attend RMSP here in Downtown Missoula. Their world headquarters boasts state-of-the-art print labs, computer labs, and access to the latest technology in the world of photography. RMSP is proud to be located in Downtown Missoula, and we are so glad they are here! Come down to 216 N. Higgins Ave and grab a cup of coffee at this awesome event!

Downtown On Tap

Tuesday, February 23, 5 - 7pm



Get your stock pots ready for the annual Territorial Landworks Chili Cook-off at Downtown on Tap. We are excited to partner with Territorial Landworks (TLI) to host this event, and all proceeds support the Missoula Food Bank. All are welcome to join the Cook-off and all entries will receive a chili cook-off apron and TLI t-shirt. Reserve your spot in the cook-off by emailing nikkiz@territoriallandworks.com. You don't need to be a top chef to enjoy this Downtown on Tap! All attendees will be able to try the chili and drink some brews and everyone is invited to bring canned goods or other donations to benefit the Missoula Food Bank!

FEBRUARY 2016

more info at missouladowntown.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Groundhog Day	3	4	5 First Friday Gallery Night	6
7	8	9 MDA Luncheon @ The Loft of Missoula 11:30 am	10 MDF Community Unite @ Kettlehouse North 5-8 pm	11	12 Lincoln's Birthday	13
14 Valentine's Day	15 President's Day	16	17 Coffee Talk @ Rocky Mountain School of Photography 8 am	18 Winter Bike to Work Day	19 Big Sky Documentary Film Fest Begins 	20
21	22	23 Downtown On Tap @ Territorial Landworks 5 pm	24	25	26	27
28 Big Sky Documentary Film Fest Ends	29					

MARCH 2016

more info at missouladowntown.com

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 First Friday Gallery Night	5 The Writers' Room Workshop
6  MDF Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament	7	8 MDA Luncheon	9	10	11	12 St. Patrick's Day Parade
13 Daylight Saving Time Begins	14	15	16 Coffee Talk	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Easter	28	29 Downtown On Tap	30	31		