

events at the MDA, booking music at the Badlander, keeping us all plugged in with MissoulaEvents. Net or acting as DJ for a roller derby bout, it's always about Downtown. Our community is lucky to have Hickey's energy and smiling face. He has been an employee at the MDA since 2011, co-owns HB Enterprises with Molly Bradford and has produced events at the Badlander and Palace since 2007. When it comes to Downtown life, Hickey is truly a jack of all trades.

Board Member of the Year

John Horner

Horner served an unprecedented back-to-back two-year term as



President of the Board in 2011 and 2012. He has been exceptional at leading and representing the MDA, writing monthly newsletter columns without prompt, emceeing the membership

luncheons, attending multiple monthly meetings and socials, volunteering to staff events and much more. Horner also serves the MDA as co-chairman of the city's newly-created Economic Development Committee, and he has worked diligently to improve human resource management and benefits for the staff. He has been a steadfast and inspiring leader as chair of the MDA Board for the past two years, and the MDA is a better organization as a result of Horner's leadership and commitment.

Committee Member of the Year

Ellen Buchanan

Despite being a non-voting member of the board, Buchanan serves as chair of MDA's three largest community events: Winter Brew-Fest, Garden City BrewFest and River City Roots Fest. She gives a significant amount of time to each of these events, selecting



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entertainment, selling sponsorships, recruiting volunteers and more. The events Ellen heads up account for nearly \$225,000 of MDA's annual income, and her leadership is evident and appreciated. She also serves as a watchdog for Downtown in meetings that are unappealing to many: Long Range Transportation Planning, Transportation Policy Coordinating Committee and Transportation Technical Advisory Committee. She is undoubtedly one of the most engaged members of the MDA board.

The general membership also elected its officers and new board members for the 2013 year. Joining the Board of Directors are:

- Larry Brehm, A.I.A., Architect
- Anders Brooker, Runner's Edge
- Lynda Brown, Tamarack Management, Inc.
- Wade Herbert, Black Knight Security
- Scott MacIntyre, Co-Owner/Owner, The Badlander/Missoula Mobile ATM

Elected to serve as officers for 2013 are:

- President: Todd Frank, The Trail Head
- Past President: John Horner, First Interstate Bank
- Vice President-Advocacy: Brent Campbell, WGM Group
- Vice President-Marketing & Events: Heidi Starrett, Computer Central
- Vice President-Master Plan: Matt Ellis, Osprey/MSO Hub/Uptown Diner
- Vice President-Membership: Rachel Rausch, R2 Distinctive Brand Management

Inclusive Play Comes to Downtown Missoula

Remember heading to the playground as a kid? Playgrounds meant fun and freedom—the freedom to be a kid and just...play. Parks and Recreation, with the help of a devoted group of parents, wants to give all children the freedom to play in a new, "inclusive" playground in McCormick Park.

An inclusive playground features play equipment that can be

enjoyed by kids of all ages and abilities—including those in walkers or wheelchairs, or those with other special needs. Parents of special needs kids here in Missoula approached Parks and Recreation roughly 18

months ago with a dream of building a new playground in



McCormick Park that incorporates the latest technology in adaptive play. Led by Montgomery Distillery co-owner Jenny Montgomery, this group of "super moms" (and dads) have raised over \$240,000 for the Playground Project in McCormick Park.

Parks and Recreation Director Donna Gaukler says Missoula's downtown is the ideal location for the project. "We're very excited to be building the first playground of this type in the state of Montana, and it will draw visitors from around the region, just as MOBASH Skatepark, Dragon Hollow, and the Carousel do. Special amenities in parks and a healthy built environment are essential to our quality of life and economic vitality. With the addition of this playground, we're creating a universally-accessible recreation zone, including Currents Aquatics Center, Silver's Lagoon, and the Ronald MacDonald Riverfront Trail System," Gaukler said.

Playground construction could start as early as summer, 2013—with your help. Financial support for the project has come from City ADA funds, the Helen and Morris Silver Foundation and many other generous organizations and individuals. About \$60,000 is needed to start construction later this year. You can donate to the project by visiting www.allabilitiesplayground.org. To view the playground's conceptual design and learn more about the project, visit www.missoulaparks.org or phone Parks and Recreation Director Donna Gaukler at 552-6265.

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

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Big Sky Documentary Film Festival Fuels Downtown Economy During Winter

The long, post-holiday stretch of winter can cast quite a chill on Missoula's vibrant culture. But in recent years, the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival has increasingly brought a welcome thaw during the month of February. Now one of the Garden City's biggest annual events, the festival draws a regional audience of thousands — along with more than 100 filmmakers from across the country — providing a chance for restaurants, shops and hotels in downtown Missoula to enjoy elevated levels of commerce during a traditionally slow time of year.

What began as a poorly kept secret among documentary film buffs has evolved into the largest cinema event in Montana and the premier venue for nonfiction film in the American West. The festival now attracts a high level of films and filmmakers, who find themselves welcomed by a vibrant and engaged audience that values not only great films, but also Missoula's great downtown scene.

This year's festival will open at 6 p.m. on Friday, February 15, with a free screening at the Wilma Theatre of "First Comes Love," a wry autobiographical story of a single woman choosing to have a baby on her own. The ensuing line-up of films covers a wide range of subject matter — from a biopic on Dick Cheney, to the plight of small dairy farmers in Maine, to a parking lot circus in Rio de Janeiro. Films by several Montana filmmakers will be featured, including the world premiere of Damon Ristau's "Saved By the Birds" and a sneak peak of Andy Smetanka's animated feature, "And We Were Young."

Throughout the festival, our urban core will be a scene of heightened activity and excitement that reaches far beyond the actual



theater spaces. In addition to the screenings themselves, the festival will host many events and parties in the downtown area, including an ongoing public café at Montgomery Distillery where filmgoers can reflect on the films they've watched, view trailers for films to come, and enjoy handcrafted, Missoula-made spirits from the Distillery alongside coffee from local roaster Black Coffee.

Passes to the festival can now be purchased at www.BigSky-FilmFest.org — make sure to invite your out-of-town friends! And a variety of sponsorship and advertising options are available to help downtown businesses increase their traffic and patronage during the festival. Don't miss the opportunity to reach this truly captive audience. For details, please contact us at: info@bigskyfilmfest.org.

Repairs Needed at Brennan's Wave

Since 2006, Brennan's Wave has been a huge success for Missoula and the Clark Fork River, increasing interest in this phenomenal resource and creating advocates who will work to protect the river for future generations. It has provided a free, healthy recreational amenity and hosted popular events, including Olympic Trials for the U.S. Freestyle Kayak Team. Brennan's Wave has been featured in countless advertisements and articles, local and national, generating outstanding publicity and financial benefits for our community and businesses. In 2012, Missoula was listed as one of the Best River Towns in America by Outside Magazine — due in large part to Brennan's Wave.

The Wave was completed in

March 2006 with the generous support of many individuals and organizations. The project replaced a dangerous and dilapidated irrigation diversion with a modern engineered structure which is safer, more stable, enhances recreational opportunities and ensures Orchard Homes Ditch Company continues to receive its irrigation water.

Now, after six years in service, Brennan's Wave has become an important part of downtown Missoula and needs help from the town that loves it!

The force of recent unusually extended and high spring flows has eroded the riverbed below the structure, causing a crack to develop in the center channel and dislodging one or two large boulders near Caras Park. If this condition is not repaired before the next spring runoff, it could become worse.

The repairs are not difficult but are complicated by their location and the need to temporarily dewater sections of the structure. In 2005, Brennan's Wave placed \$20,000 in an endowment account for maintenance, yet necessary repairs will cost \$50,000. The Brennan's Wave board of directors is asking the community for help closing that funding gap of \$30,000.

Donations are tax-deductible



and can be made by mail to the address below, or in person at any

First Interstate Bank location. With permit applications submitted and contractors lined up, they hope to complete repairs by the beginning of March 2013. Brennan's Wave can be saved, but only with the help of Missoulian's like you!

Brennan's Wave
c/o Trent Baker
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