

# Missoula DOWNTOWN Díalog

June 2013



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- Block Party
- Real Change
- Localfest
- Member Spotlight:
- Bike Reimbursement
- Graffiti Forum



## President's Message by Todd Frank

The Trail Head  
tfrank@trailheadmontana.net

It's interesting how we begin to see our community with different eyes as we get a little older, perhaps a little wiser, and for sure a little more experienced. As a somewhat more engaged citizen, I see communities in a different way. I recently had the chance to go to Boise for a soccer weekend with my daughter. I looked at things like traffic, parking, streetscapes, business mixes and even bike racks. Ten years ago, I would have not noticed any of it unless it directly impacted me in that moment.

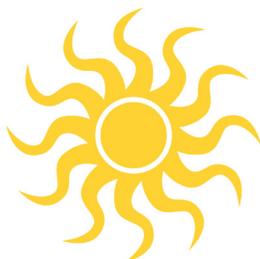
Coming home to Missoula and walking across downtown on the Monday following my trip, I was struck by how the vision of past community leaders gives us such a great cohesive downtown footprint today. Sure it is a work in progress and much is left to do, but I wanted to take the opportunity to point out to the membership how much has been done. North Higgins - does anyone remember it before the new lights, traffic reconfiguration and utility updates? How about all the amenities that we have downtown like the Children's Museum, the new spectrUM, the Art Museum, and of course Caras Park, Brennan's Wave and the Carousel; these are all huge community assets that took the vision of many dedicated community members. For my block, how about the new Park Place parking structure with Montana's biggest

(President's message cont. page 2)

## 1st Annual Summer Solstice Sidewalk Sale

To kick off the official start of summer, retailers across downtown will be participating in the 1st Annual Summer Solstice Sidewalk Sale, June 21-23.

Now is the best time to stock up on last season's favorites and get a jump start on this season's hot merchandise. Downtown merchants



offer unique and exclusive lines you can't find anywhere else, not to mention amazing Made in Montana Products. Bring your own bag and SHOP THE SIDEWALKS!!!

There will be specials, daily deals and clearance items available. Shop local, visit the events in Caras Park, and enjoy live music Friday night in Blues Alley (between Top Hat and the Rhino).

## Park Place Block Party

Summer is finally here and we have many reasons to celebrate - the new Park Place parking structure, the City of Missoula's public art piece "Go with the Flow", the preview of Market on Front, First Friday and warm weather in downtown Missoula!

Everyone is invited to attend the Park Place Block Party Friday, June 7 starting at 5 pm at the Park Place parking structure located on the corner of E. Front and Pattee Streets. There will be a short program at 5:30 including Mayor John Engen, Dana Boussard from the City of Missoula Public Art Committee, the artist Mike Golins, and Ben Sokoloski, owner of Market on Front. City (Block Party cont. page 2)

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(President's message cont.) solar installation and the new Market on Front opening soon. What about all the new dining options downtown? They would not be happening if we did not have leaders with a vision years ago.

The Missoula Greater Downtown Master Plan is not a blueprint for exactly what we should do, but it offers that vision I am talking about. It is our promise for what downtown could be and is a tremendous guiding document. Every year that we complete a few projects from the master plan, those remaining get a bit more dated. The plan needs to be reviewed and updated. A friend once said that the reason those villages in Europe are so cool is they took a thousand years to build, but the reality is they always had a plan. It might have been to keep all the important buildings inside the walls, but that is a definite plan.

I encourage you all to log onto the MDA website and review the downtown master plan. It should open your eyes to what we have accomplished, and what is still left to do. My ask again from membership is to get involved, show up and become one of the leaders people look back on in 10 years and say thanks to.

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(Block Party cont.) Councilman Dave Strohmaier will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

Please come explore Park Place and the state's largest installation of solar panels on the top floor, talk with Mike Golins about his sculpture and experience Market on Front and its offerings. There will be refreshments and appetizers, live music by Three Eared Dog, a drawing for several wonderful prizes and the chance to celebrate what makes our downtown so incredibly special.

This party is made possible by the support and contributions from the Missoula Parking Commission, the Public Art Committee, Market on Front, First Interstate Bank, Holiday Inn Downtown, the Trail Head, Pearl Café and Blackfoot Telecommunications.

### **Welcome New Members!**

#### **Access Lock & Security LLC**

Mark McMillin  
1605 S. 10th W.  
829-1234  
missoulalocksmith@yahoo.com

#### **Coo Baby**

Gillian Fetz  
311 N Higgins Ave.  
(406) 926-1990  
coobabymt@gmail.com  
**do TERRA Essential Oils & Health  
and Wellness Products**

Nancy Serba  
5 Marilyn Dr.  
549-0259  
nancysmk@yahoo.com

#### **Five on Black**

Tom Snyder  
325 N. Higgins  
926-1860  
tom@fiveonblack.com

### **Real Change Campaign Launched for the Season**

Memorial Day is the start of the annual Real Change campaign downtown. This year the campaign gets a facelift that includes a webpage for making online donations and new cash boxes for store counters.

Contributions to the campaign help fund the Homeless Outreach/Transition Teams managed by the Poverello Center, which have a huge impact on getting those in need connected with services to get them off the street.

This year, the Missoula Downtown Foundation and MDA join forces with the Downtown BID, Mayor's Downtown Advisory Commission and United Way of Missoula County to sponsor this fundraising effort that lasts through Labor Day. Over \$10,000 has been annually donated through the generosity of residents and visitors wanting to make an impact while discouraging panhandling.

We thank our members who host Real Change boxes in their businesses and encourage those interested in helping to visit [www.missouladowntown.com/about/realchange/](http://www.missouladowntown.com/about/realchange/) for more information or to make a tax-deductible contribution.

Please email [ambassadors@missouladowntownbid.org](mailto:ambassadors@missouladowntownbid.org) with any questions.

### **Garden City Localfest V and Local Fortnight II**

Garden City Localfest V will be held on Saturday, June 22, 2013 at Caras Park 11 am-5 pm. The Sustainable Business Council hosts this fair to celebrate the unique local character of the Missoula area and to raise funds for its ongoing Buy Local campaign that supports local business, jobs, infrastructure and community.



The event is the culmination of their Local Fortnight campaign that runs from June 8-22 and encourages Missoulians to shop, eat and contract locally whenever possible. Individuals who bring a receipt from or photo of their visit to an SBC member during Local Fortnight to the SBC table at Localfest will receive a canvas tote bag, poster or other gift valued at \$5-10. Several media sponsors are offering special advertising deals to SBC members during Local Fortnight.

Highlights this year include: 2nd Annual Local Gourmet Chef Challenge; Local vendors, beer, wine and summer mixed drinks; Kids' activities and sustainability demonstrations; Fashion Show; and The Josh Farmer Band.

This year's new low vending/tabling rates are \$40 for SBC members and \$65 nonmembers until June 10. Fees increase by \$10 after that. Sign up to vend online or download printable forms, learn more about the day's schedule and the Local Fortnight advertising deals or see the photo gallery from past events at [www.gardencitylocalfest.com](http://www.gardencitylocalfest.com). Contact Susan at 406-721-3000 ext 1119 or [localfest@sustainablebusinesscouncil.org](mailto:localfest@sustainablebusinesscouncil.org) if you have questions.

**CONNECTING OUR  
COMMUNITY**

## Downtown Spotlight

### Coo Baby

311 N. Higgins  
(406) 926-1990



Coo Baby is a distinctive retail shop that has added new flare to Downtown Missoula and the Missoula kid scene. Located at 311 N. Higgins

Avenue between Specticca and Blacque Owl Tattoo, Coo Baby provides a shop for parents that want to raise their little ones in style. Coo Baby is a chic baby boutique offering exclusive and unique items for babies including quality basics, new mom and dad merchandise and children's books. Coo Baby seeks to become an integral part of the family experience in the heart of downtown Missoula by providing hip, high-quality merchandise with a serious sense of style. The owner Gillian Fetz, a mother herself, meticulously evaluates every product to ensure its durability, play-ability and overall appeal. Coo Baby prides itself on providing the best quality and personal service in the industry. The goal is to provide a mid-line store for what parents can't find at Target or other children's boutiques. "A niche needed to be filled," said Gillian when asked what made her decide to open a baby boutique in downtown Missoula. "I wanted to do something special and unique."

Whether you are looking for furniture, toys, clothes, baby care items, nursery items, mommy & daddy must-haves or just a trendy gift, Coo Baby is the store you have been looking for. Coo Baby brings sophistication and contemporary style to our parenting community. Stop in and see the new addition to downtown Missoula or visit the website at [coobabymt.com](http://coobabymt.com) in June where you will be able to purchase items online. A perfect option for the busy Missoula parent on any budget.

Mark your calendars for Down-  
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### MDA Committee Meetings

#### Advocacy

Tuesday, June 11  
4-5 pm MDA Office

#### Caras Park Improvements

Thursdays

10-11am MDA Office

#### Master Plan Implementation Team

Thursday, June 27  
12-2pm at 140 West Pine

#### Membership

Thursday, June 20  
4-5 pm MDA Office

#### Marketing Committee

Wednesday, June 26  
10-11am MDA Office

town on Tap in October, which will be hosted by Coo Baby.

- Brooke Redpath  
Missoulian

### Bicycle Commuting Reimbursement

There is a little-known type of fringe benefit that allows employers to reimburse employees for bicycle expenses without the reimbursement being subject to payroll or income taxes.

**Reimbursements.** The annual limit is \$20 per month for the number of months the employee commuted by bike. For example, an employee who did not bike in January and February would be eligible for reimbursement of \$200 for the year.



The employer has the option to reimburse the employee throughout the year or all at once for the entire year (by March 31 of

the following year).

**What qualifies?** Reimbursements can be for "reasonable expenses incurred by the employee during the calendar year for the purchase of a bicycle and bicycle improvements, repair, and storage, if such bicycle is regularly used for travel between the employee's residence and place of employment" (IRC 132(f)(5)(F)(i)). The employer must keep record of the reimbursed expenses.

**Restrictions.** Employees are ineligible to receive bicycle reimbursement benefits in months they  
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receive parking, transit pass, or highway commuter vehicle reimbursements (the other qualified transportation fringe benefits).

**Incentives.** This benefit is an inexpensive way to incentivize employees to bike to work or reward those who already do. In the example used earlier, an employer's reimbursement of \$200 would actually cost \$170 for an employer in the 15% tax bracket. Because it's a fringe benefit, the employer does not pay payroll taxes on it but can still deduct it as a business expense. For employers who may be unable to offer more competitive compensation, this is an affordable and novel option many employers do not offer.

Administering bicycle commuting reimbursements are easy (no election or registration with any government body is required), and they are a great perk to offer potential or existing employees.

See the full article at [missoulainmotion.com/resources](http://missoulainmotion.com/resources).

Scott L Colunga, CPA  
Galusha, Higgins & Galusha

### Downtown Graffiti Forum

The arrival of spring unfortunately meant an uptick in graffiti vandalism downtown. Join us on Thursday, June 6th for coffee and conversation about the costs and solutions of graffiti vandalism.

The MDA, Downtown BID, and Mayor's Downtown Advisory Commission are hosting a forum for downtown businesses and organizations at the First Interstate Bank Building in the basement classroom from 8:30am - 9:30am. There will be panelists giving an overview of graffiti prevention, policing, and removal options. Panelists include Robert Scheben, Missoula Police Department; Keithi Worthington, Deputy City Attorney; Laurie Johnson, Downtown BID Ambassador; and Dean McCollom, Access Lock & Security/Hellgate Technologies. If you have any questions about the Forum, please email Melanie Brock at [melanie@missouladowntown.com](mailto:melanie@missouladowntown.com).



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

**Check out  
the Roots Fest  
band lineup  
and join us  
August 23-25!**



**Saturday, Aug. 24**

Railroad Earth  
Goose Creek Symphony  
Dead Winter Carpenters  
Lil' Smokies  
The Whizpops

**Sunday, Aug. 25**

The Gourds  
Chuck Prophet  
& the Mission Express  
Western Union Swing Band

**MISSOULA  
Downtown  
CONNECTING OUR  
COMMUNITY**

**NEW Downtown Dollars!**

Downtown Dollars can be purchased at the MDA office or at Out to Lunch and Downtown ToNight. Gift them to your employees to encourage them to take lunch at Caras, or use them as incentives or rewards. Downtown Dollars work the same as cash at Out to Lunch and Downtown ToNight all summer!



**Member Shout-Outs**

**Garden City River Run volunteer and goodie bag opportunity.** Join us for Missoula's largest show and shine Friday and Saturday, June 28-29! It's a fun-filled weekend of amazing cars, good food, live music, a car parade, awards and more. Let us know if your business would like to include any items in the registration bags that go out to over 250 downtown visitors. The MDA is also looking for volunteers to help with this event, so give Julie a call (543-4238) or email ([mda@missouladowntown.com](mailto:mda@missouladowntown.com)) if you would like to help!

**Membership BBQ and call for donations.** Mark your calendars! This year's MDA BBQ, boasting an exciting fiesta theme, will take place on Tuesday, July 16, 5:30-8:30 pm in Caras Park. Any business interested in donating a salad, desert or raffle item for the event of the summer should contact the office at 543-4238.

**Bridges Planning Public Meeting.** The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) will discuss the Missoula Bridges Planning Study at an informational public meeting. The meeting will explain the planning study process, present information about existing and projected conditions, and gather public feedback on issues and concerns related to the Higgins and Madison bridge crossings. The meeting is Wednesday, June 12 at 6pm at the Missoula Senior Center (705 S. Higgins Ave). Questions and comments can be emailed to Sarah Nicolai ([snicolai@dowhkm.com](mailto:snicolai@dowhkm.com)) and more info can be found at <http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/missoulabridges>.

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