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President's Message
by Todd Frank

The Trail Head
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How does the MDA Benefit YOU?

When I first owned the Trail Head, I asked myself the same question while writing out the check for my membership dues. Was this a "re-tail" organization, or was it something else with a different agenda? Like all small business owners who struggle with cashflow, I am keen on cutting expenses that I cannot see a tangible benefit from. So as you sit down to review your expenses, I ask that you take an honest look at how much the MDA does for downtown Missoula. It took me a number of years to get even a slight grasp on all the MDA does.

I hear it every time I make my pitch to a non-member: the MDA doesn't do anything for me; events in downtown Missoula hurt my business, not help it; the marketing campaigns don't send people to my front door; all the traffic the MDA brings to downtown is bad for my business.

It's clear some business owners do not fully understand the MDA. Not only do events in downtown Missoula bring thousands of potential customers to your doorsteps, the events also generate the cash to pay for the thousands of things MDA does to make downtown such a vibrant core of the community. Your dues, a percentage of the MDA's yearly budget, are critically important to help create a vibrant downtown. I urge you all to recruit one business or professional to join in the MDA's mission. Get two to join and lunch is on me!

Rod Austin Announces Resignation

We all knew when Rod Austin purchased a home in Florida last year he would someday in the distant future move there to set up a new life full of sunshine, ocean breezes and relaxation. Little did we know that it would become a reality so soon! Rod

just announced that his last day as Director of Operations of the Downtown Business Improvement District of Missoula, Chair of the Missoula



Parking Commission Board of Directors and ex-officio board member of the Missoula Downtown Association will be Friday, March 15th.

While we all congratulate Rod and wish him the best, his decision leaves us with a sense of bitter sweetness. There is no doubt that Rod will leave big shoes to fill in Missoula's downtown and greater community. We are deeply grateful for all the years, talent and good nature he has committed to making our downtown a safer, cleaner and more vibrant place to enjoy.

Here's to wishing Rod good luck, safe travels and thanks for the tremendous legacy he has left us. We will miss you!

CONNECTING OUR
COMMUNITY

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Michael Tree Mountain Line

MDA Staff

Melanie Brock Acting Executive Director

Colin Hickey Marketing & Events Director

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Top Hat Lounge to Reopen

After a three-month remodeling hiatus, the Top Hat is preparing to reopen its doors on March 15. According to the Top Hat's new owner, Nick Checota, the objective of the remodel is to transform the Top Hat into the best music and entertainment venue in the Northwest. To achieve this objective, the remodeled Top Hat includes a new front facade, a renovated interior, a more open floor plan and new bathrooms.

The new and improved Top Hat will not only involve physical renovations, but will also include enhanced operations. At the center of these changes, the Top Hat will offer a full-service restaurant that will be open for lunch and dinner. With a tapas-style menu, the Top Hat restaurant intends to offer a healthier dining experience, while remaining at a price point affordable to all Missoulians. The restaurant will start operations with lunch on Monday, March 18.

Along with the restaurant service, the Top Hat will be initiating some new services, including Monday Movie Nights, bi-monthly Comedy Nights and a Music Dinner Series. All three events will allow customers to enjoy food and cocktails while they enjoy great entertainment. Not lost in the changes, the Top Hat will stay true to its history. Great local and national music will be a staple of the Top Hat. Additionally, the Top Hat will continue to feature Family Friendly Fridays. The grand reopening on March 15 will feature an evening of bluegrass and some tastings of the new menu. Doors for the event will open at 5:00 PM and music will start at 7:00 PM. The event will be free to the public. For more information on the grand reopening, visit www.tophatlounge.com.



Green Light to take over 406® Clothing Sales

The Green Light and Zoo City Apparel are happy to announce a new partnership for the sale and distribution of the 406® clothing brand.

Created by Zoo City Apparel owner Chris Johnson in 2006, the iconic "[406]" imprinted t-shirts have been imprinted and sold by Zoo City Apparel for the last 7 years.

"I feel that, over the years, 406 grew into something much bigger than Zoo City and I'm thankful to have an opportunity to put it in the hands of another Montana business with values that jive with my own," says Johnson.

Of these "values" are requirements ensuring 406 products are Made in the U.S.A., imprinted in Montana and always sourced locally, regionally and nationally, in that order. "It's a tool that we are using to control how these products are made now and in the future," says Johnson. "So much of what we buy is from abroad, and those statistics you hear a b o u t the significance of a dollar spent locally are no joke—the impact is direct and incredibly important."

To best accommodate the new relationship, Zoo City Apparel will be closing its downtown location at 139 E. Main St. in March. It will continue selling its designs online and at select retailers. Zoo City Apparel has contracted with the Green Light to continue printing the 406 line, so fans can expect the same quality clothing and some fresh updates for Spring 2013. Zoo City Apparel will also continue to offer custom screen printing at the company's expanded printshop inside the Ceretana building. More information can be found online at zoocityapparel.bigcartel.com and facebook.com/zoocityapparel.

[406]

Introducing the NextExitHistory App

Thousands of visitors experience Missoula every year—either enjoying our community for a day or two or just passing through. One proven way to enhance visitors' experience and entice tourists to stay a little longer is to get them excited about local history and culture. That's why Historical Research Associates, Inc. (HRA), based in downtown Missoula, has partnered with the University of West Florida to offer NextExitHistory™. NextExitHistory™ is a website and mobile-media program supported by iPhone and Android applications that identifies



and displays site-specific information about historic locations and events. Using Google Maps, NextExitHistory™ offers a dynamic way to highlight local history digitally at the actual site of the historic event. Each NextExitHistory™ "site" displays multiple photos, audio, video and graphics. Sites can be aggregated geographically or thematically into "backpacks" downloaded before visiting the historic location. And, best of all, the NextExitHistory™ application is free.

To demonstrate the app, HRA has prepared historical content for sites in downtown Missoula. Log on at <http://nextexithistory.com/> and use the map to locate and select sites in Missoula. Or, use the below QR code to download NextExitHistory™ to your mobile device and explore the Downtown Missoula Backpack. Our goal is to ensure folks driving by Missoula see the historic district signs along the interstate and literally take the next exit and patronize Missoula's downtown businesses while taking in the rich heritage of the Garden City.

For more information, contact project manager, Dave Strohmaier, at 721-1958 or dstrohmaier@hrassoc.com



Downtown Spotlight

International Choral Festival

312 E. Pine
721-7985

As defined by their website, The International Choral Festival is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting artistic excellence, global understanding, friendship, and goodwill through choral music. As defined by us in the community, The International Choral Festival is an amazing event we are fortunate enough to host in Missoula. One of our new members to the MDA, The International Choral Festival is gearing up for this year's international event from July 17-20. After 3 years of planning, the festival committee is set to welcome 20 exceptional choirs from 5 continents to Missoula this summer. This is shaping up to be one of the largest groups of choirs ever and there are still 4 months to go!

The International Choral Festival is working on some great new additions for this summer's event. First, on Thursday, July 18th they will offer a "Meet the Choirs" no-host lunch in Caras Park. Also, during the Festival, before each choir performs, brief informational videos on the choir and their hometowns will be shown. For the first time, the Finale Concert will be hosted at Ogren Park Allegiance Field. And lastly, the festival will offer an event mobile phone application called "Guidebook" that will feature concert schedules, choir photos and bios, ticket info, and social networking.

Putting on an international event this size is not easy. There is still much to be done and the festival offers the following ways for you to be involved. First, their biggest need is for host families to accommodate 600 international singers. Second, they are seeking volunteers to help at the festival. Third, sponsorships in the program are being sought



Cont. next column

to help with the costs of the event. Lastly, they invite you all to attend the events during the festival, download the new Guidebook mobile application, like their Facebook page to get updates, and visit www.choralfestival.org for more information.

- Matt Ellis: Missoula Osprey,
MSO Hub, Uptown Diner

Welcome New Members!

5th House Consulting

Rachel Gooen
PO Box 7175
(406) 360-7685
rachel@5thhouseconsulting.com

Clove Cart Pizza Peddlers

Kendall Lewis
838 Stoddard St.
274-4602
lewiswindsong@gmail.com

GCS Research

Alex Philp
115 S. 4th St. W.
532-3254
aphilp@gcs-research.com

Hertz Rent-a-Car

Kim Woodahl
5225 W Braodway, Ste 12
721-7985
kim@hertzmissoula.com

Imagine Missoula

Nina Alviar
P.O. Box 758
(406) 546-4697
imaginemissoula@gmail.com

International Choral Festival

Melissa Blunt
PO Box 8203
721-7985
info@choralfestival.org

Missoula Copy Center

DougHannan
2304 McDonald Ave.
549-2679
missoulacopy@bresnan.net

Missoula Dickey's Barbecue Pit

James Gibson
4338 Expressway, Ste 21
203-1557
missouladickeysbbq@gmail.com

Naturalist's Mercantile

Mat Seidensticker
131 E. Main
(406) 544-0227
mat@naturalistsmercantile.com

Training Ground Church

Greg Shawgo
2342 Burlington Ave., #10
470-4566
greg@traininggroundchurch.com

MDA Committee Meetings

Advocacy

Tuesday, March 12
4-5 pm MDA Office

Caras Park Improvements

Thursdays

10-11am MDA Office

Master Plan Implementation Team

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

Membership

Thursday, March 21
4-5 pm MDA Office

Marketing Committee

Wednesday, March 27
10-11am MDA Office

Connecting our Community through Transit

Are you taking advantage of all your membership benefits? As an MDA member, you and your employees are eligible to receive the MDA EZ Pass and ride the Mountain Line bus anywhere, anytime at no charge!

During March, MDA staff and board members will distribute 2013 MDA EZ Pass packets and to member businesses, who will passes for up to 150 employees. The purpose of the program is to encourage Downtown employees to choose Mountain Line as their mode of transportation to and from work, thus leaving parking spaces open for customers.

"As a frequent and enthusiastic Mountain Line passenger, I can tell you that riding is an easy and convenient way to commute. I enjoy all the many friendly faces I have met over the years riding the bus, including two other MDA Board members," said Diane Lannin, former MDA president. Another benefit of the MDA EZ Pass is you are eligible for commuter rewards from the Missoula In Motion "The Way to Go!" Club, which rewards those in the community who are busing, biking, walking, car/vanpooling or telecommuting rather than driving alone. Visit missoulainmotion.com for commuter rewards information. By choosing sustainable transportation for your daily commute, you will help to eliminate traffic congestion, reduce pollution, save money and gain satisfaction from helping the community.

How is the MDA Connecting our Community in March?

Advocacy

Visiting with City Council members about Downtown priorities in 2013

Marketing

Creating a business recruitment brochure.

Master Plan

Hearing public comment on a wayfinding system for Missoula

Membership

Hand-delivering the MDA EZ Pass to all members.

Events

Getting ready for event season after a successful Winter BrewFest!



Member Shout-Outs

Mario Schulzke Joins MDA Board. The Missoula Downtown Association welcomes new board member Mario Schulzke to our team. Schulzke is the new Assistant Vice President of Marketing at the University of Montana. A UM alum, he spends his time on campus working on branding, marketing and the University's digital presence, in addition to teaching a marketing analytics course at the business school. Prior to returning to Missoula, Schulzke ran the digital business units of two independent advertising agencies. He is the founder of IdeaMensch, a community where entrepreneurs share their stories. The MDA is thrilled to have University representation on the board and is looking forward to Schulzke's service.

Chamberlin Rail Jam in Caras Park, March 8-9. The Chamberlin Rail Jam makes its way to Downtown Missoula for the first time on Friday and Saturday, March 8 and 9. This epic winter event will be filled with big rails, music by Gramatik, Minnesota, Protohype, and DCarls, a full bar, giveaways and a great time. This high-energy event will be at Caras Park both evenings, with an after-party Saturday at Monk's Bar featuring performances by Eliot Lipp and Ebrola Syndicate. General admission and VIP tickets are on sale at Eventbrite.com, and those hoping to compete must register by March 1. Find more information at facebook.com/railjam.

Wayfinding Public Discussion. Members are invited to attend the Missoula Wayfinding Public Discussion on Wednesday, March 20th at 5:30PM at the Doubletree Hotel. Please encourage your staff and associates to attend this important session to give feedback on the creation of Missoula's wayfinding system. Call the MDA office with any questions.

Stay up-to-date by visiting www.missouladowntown.com.