

Chamber News

» Official Business Publication Of The Kalispell Chamber Of Commerce «

Driving the Local Economy through the Positive Impact of Tourism

The February Chamber Luncheon will feature a presentation by the Montana Office of Tourism and the Kalispell Convention & Visitor Bureau on the impact of tourism on our economy.



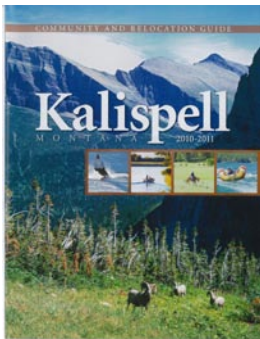
Nonresident travel is a leading sector of the Flathead County economy. The development of effective

continued on page 10 >>

Community and Relocation Guide

Dear Chamber Members:

The 2011-2012 Kalispell Community and Relocation Guide is now being published in partnership with the Daily Inter Lake. Your participation as an advertiser



allows us to provide a high quality, glossy,

continued page 11 >>

Medical Chief Promotes Integrated Health Care

Northwest Healthcare Chief Medical Officer Dr. Craig Eddy paraphrased



Dr. Eddy

Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changin'" for his theme promoting a cooperative approach to survive the flood of changes from health-care legislation. "If health care for you is worth saving, you better

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At a Glance

>> FEBRUARY LUNCHEON

Driving the Local Economy through the Positive Impact of Tourism
Tuesday, February 15, 2011
11:45am - 1:30pm

>> UNWIND

Friday February 18, 2011
5-6:30 PM
Northwest Montana Wedding & Event Professionals
Trade Center Building at the North end of the Fairgrounds

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Chamber Snapshot

Visitor's Center Information Requests:

	Dec '10	YTD
Phone Calls:	167	6,073
Walk-ins	91	5,161
Email Inquiries	31	386
VACATION		
Packets	39	866
RELOCATION		
Packets	23	434
Phone Books	3	22
Misc & Maps	1	18
WEB ACTIVITY		
Unique Visits	2,995	49,416
TOTAL VISITS	3,350	62,376

Officers

Tom Lund, Chairman of the Board, Rocky Mountain Bank

David Mitchell, Vice Chairman of the Board, CTA Architects and Engineers

Jim Ness, Secretary/Treasurer, Glacier Bank

Terry Kramer, Immediate-Past Chairman, Kramer Enterprises

Directors

Susie Burch, Flathead Valley Community College

Kris Carlson, A+ Plus Healthcare

Mark Gronley, Northwestern Energy

Reed Gunlikson, R. Gunlikson CPAs

Scott Hagel, Crowley Fleck Law Firm

Mark Johnson, Merrill Lynch

Jason Manger, Applied Materials - Semitool

Denise Nalty, Nalty Realty

Chris Ohler, Insured Titles

Jim Oliverson, Northwest Health Care

Kelly Robinson, Plum Creek Timber Company

Loren Sallee, Loren's Automotive

Bob Schneider, First Interstate Bank

Holly Walsh, Western States Insurance

Rick Weaver, Daily Inter Lake

Ex-officio Directors

Mike Pence, Flathead County Administrator

Jane Howington, Kalispell City Manager

Professional Staff

Joe Unterreiner, President 758-2804

Cary Aubrey, Executive Assistant 758-2803

Diane Bebee, Receptionist 758-2809

Doug Bolender, Government Contracting. 755-4221

Diane Medler, CVB Director 758-2808

Chris Parson, Small Business Development 758-2802

Jill Seigmund, Leadership Flathead. . . . 758-2810

Consultants

Anderson, Baker & Swanson - Government Affairs

Edge Communications - Media & Public Relations

JCCS - Tax & Audit Counsel

Janet Schwalk - Bookkeeping

Kalispell Chamber of Commerce Mission Statement

The central mission of the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce is the cultivation and development of entrepreneurs and communities through the spirit of enterprise.

New Members

Please welcome these new members with your business.

BEST WESTERN KWATAQNUK RESORT CASINO

Primary Contact ~ Alicia Pierce
49708 US HWY 93 E
Polson, MT 59860
Email: alicia.pierce@kwataqnu.com
Website: www.kwataqnu.com
Phone: 406-883-3636
Fax: 406-883-9317



KwataqnuK Resort Casino sits on the South shoreline of beautiful Flathead Lake in Polson, MT (55 miles south of Kalispell on HWY 93) Offering 5000 square feet of meeting space, 140 passenger cruise boat with daily tours and private charters, and a beautifully remodeled property.

EAGLEVIEW WEST

Owner ~ Jennifer Crowley
2690 Haywire Gulch
Kalispell, MT 59901
Email: eagleviewwest@centurytel.net
Website: www.eagleviewwest.com
Phone: 406-212-0620
Fax: 406-752-6275



Professional Care Management. Eagle View West provides elder care management, life care planning services, and design optional health and wellness for chronically ill and/or disabled individuals.

THE GREAT NORTHERN BREWING COMPANY

Owner ~ Dennis Konopatzte
Primary Contact ~ Marcus Duffey
2 Central Ave
Whitefish, MT 59937
Email: brewmaster@greatnorthernbrewing.com
Website: www.greatnorthernbrewing.com
Phone: 406-863-1000



Great Northern Brewing Company is a craft brewery in Whitefish, Montana and the makers of the award-winning Black Star beer. The brewery is the on-premises Black Star drought house which serves up 16 of the finest quality ales and lagers and boasts the best views in town. Grab a warm bite to eat, fill a growler-to-go, take a six pack and pick out a t-shirt!

continued next page >>

New Members

>> from page 2



KALISPELL SUNRISER LIONS CLUB

Primary Contact ~ Ron Hoye
PO Box 905
Kalispell, MT 59903
Email: rahoye@centurytel.net
Phone: 406-257-6860
Fax: 406-257-1775

Lions Club serving the youth of Kalispell. Meetings at Red Lion each Monday at 6:30am.

MONTANA MYSTIQUE FLY SHOP

Owner ~ Tim Braun
1404 Airport Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
Email: fish@mtystique.com
Website: www.mmflyshop.com
Phone: 406-752-5331
Fax: 866-830-4331



Browse Montana Mystique Fly Shop for quality fly fishing gear and equipment. We also have guided fishing trips to hook you into the best fishing Montana has to offer.

PET BOARDING RETREAT PBR KENNELS

Owner ~ Linda Radabah
1836 Trumble Creek Road
Kalispell, MT 59901
Email: lrpbr@montanasky.net
Website: www.petboardingretreatkennels.com
Phone: 406-257-4363



PBR Kennels is a dog and cat boarding facility. We offer day care, short term and long term care, indoor heated and air conditioned kennels with large outside exercise areas.

Flathead Regional Business Center Partners

15 Depot Park
Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 758-2800
(406) 758-2805: Fax

Business Expansion and Retention

Chris Parson
(406) 758-2802
sbdc@kalispellchamber.com
www.nwmontanabear.com

Flathead Community Foundation

Marc Lorenzen, Board President
(406) 756-9047
info@flatheadcommunityfoundation.org
www.flatheadcommunityfoundation.org

Flathead Job Service Workforce Center

Mora McCarthy, Business Resource Consultant
(406) 758-6241
mmccarthy@mt.gov
www.employflathead.com

Flathead Valley Community College

Jodi Smith, Workforce Training Director
(406) 758-2809 (Wednesday's only)
jsmith@fvcc.edu
www.fvcc.edu

Kalispell Chamber of Commerce

Joe Unterreiner, President
(406) 758-2800
joe@kalispellchamber.com
www.kalispellchamber.com

Kalispell Chamber Foundation

(406) 758-2800
info@kalispellchamber.com
www.kalispellchamber.com

Kalispell Convention & Visitor Bureau

Diane Medler, Director
(406) 758-2808
dianem@kalispellchamber.com

Leadership Flathead

Jill Seigmund, Manager
(406) 758-2810
seigmund@centurytel.net
www.leadershipflathead.com

Montana Manufacturing Extension Center

Bill Nicholson, Manager
(406) 756-8329
bnicholson@coe.montana.edu
www.mtmanufacturingcenter.com

Northwest Montana SCORE

Scott Roberts, Chapter Chairman
(406) 756-5271
nwmtscore@montanasky.net

Procurement Technical Assistance Center

Doug Bolender, Director
(406) 755-4221
ptac@kalispellchamber.com

Small Business Development Center

Chris Parson, Director
(406) 758-2802
sbdc@kalispellchamber.com
www.kalispellsmallbusiness.com

"Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration."

UNcover What's Interesting, New and Developing

Chilly weather did not deter guests from attending the January 19th UNWIND at Farmers Insurance-Savage Agency & Keller Williams on the South end of town. Subway provided a yummy assortment of sandwiches built on braided loaves of mixed white and wheat bread. There was plenty of room to find a corner to have conversations while enjoying the food.

Door prizes included Ski Passes won by David Hibbs of Club Z, and a Dinner & a Movie package won by Kim Gabriel. Nancy Streibich, the new Executive Director of the Flathead Business & Industry Association won Split the Pot.



Farmers Insurance - Savage Agency and Keller Williams Realty UNWIND



Kari Gabriel from City of Kalispell wins a Dinner and a Movie Package



David Hibbs from ClubZ wins a Ski Package

Renewals

10 Plus Years

A Plus Health Care
 American Electric, Inc
 Architects Design Group, PC
 CenturyLink
 Flathead Lake Lodge
 Glacier Park International Airport
 Greg Bain & Co
 Immanuel Lutheran Communities
 KAJ TV 8/18
 Kalispell Medical Equipment
 KCFW-TV
 Mackenzie River Pizza Co
 Meredith Construction Co
 Montana Gold Bullet Inc
 Mooses Saloon
 North Valley Hospital
 Premiere Real Estate Professionals Inc
 Professional Therapy Associates
 Rosauers
 Swank Enterprises
 Tinseth & Associates
 Western States Insurance - Kalispell

5 to 9 Years

Collision Craft
 Glacier Symphony and Chorale
 Philip Harris & Associates Inc

1 to 4 Years

Amore' Salon & Spa
 Flathead Beacon
 Flathead Insurance
 Flathead Valley Hockey Association
 J & H, Inc.
 Pro Clean Carwash & Valvoline Express Care
 Scott & Kienzle, P.A.
 Stelling Engineers, Inc



Next UNWIND

Friday February 18, 2011
 5-6:30 PM
 Northwest Montana Wedding & Event Professionals
 Trade Center Building at the North end of the Fairgrounds

Medical Chief Promotes Integrated Health Care

>> from cover



**KALISPELL REGIONAL
MEDICAL CENTER**

start swimming or you'll sink like a stone," Eddy said Tuesday at a meeting of the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce at the Red Lion Hotel.

Scheduled to speak about Kalispell Regional Medical Center's \$42 million expansion, Eddy focused mainly on the larger picture. He borrowed cartoon character Maxine's characterization of the reform process for perspective: "Let me get this straight...We passed a health-care plan written by a committee whose chairman says he doesn't understand it, passed by a Congress that hasn't read it but exempts themselves from it, to be signed by a president who also hasn't read it and who smokes, with funding administered by a Treasury secretary who didn't pay his taxes, all to be overseen by a surgeon general who is obese, and financed by a country that's broke. What could possibly go wrong?"

Eddy elicited a good laugh from the audience then said that all the talk of repeal is probably just talk. He said the avalanche of changes has begun rolling down the mountain, building along the way a stack of regulations the equivalent of a 12-story building. "We are going to see health-care reform," he said. "It's incredibly important as we move from here into health care changes that we partner in this." Eddy said that Washington, D.C., won't solve local problems. He called for cooperation instead of competition between hospital and hospital, physician and hospital, local governments and the hospital.

Eddy said the reform law brings a new set of rules that almost certainly require a new model to maintain in the Flathead Valley, where a Dartmouth Institute of Study documented "high quality health care with costs that rank among the lowest in the state and nation." He said he was brought in by President and CEO Velinda Stevens to work as her partner as Northwest Healthcare moves into the integrated medical model that brings physicians as well as community

members into the administration of the hospital. He brings unique qualifications to his position.

Eddy, a former cardiothoracic surgeon, was a founding member of the International Heart Institute that once provided heart surgery in Kalispell as well as at St. Patrick Hospital in Missoula. After a critical hand injury, he obtained a law degree.

For seven years, he served as chief medical officer at St. Patrick. Eddy said he became dissatisfied when the hospital's parent company began to exert too much influence, eclipsing local influence and control over the provision of medical services in Missoula.

"It is such a blessing that we have a local board," he said. Eddy was headed for Virginia Mason to play a similar role when he contacted Stevens for a reference but instead received an offer to help continue building the new integrated model, bringing more physicians and clinics into the Northwest Healthcare structure.

"Health care that is administered by a partnership of physicians and administration has the highest quality health care and the lowest cost," he said. Along with being chief medical officer, Eddy also serves as president of the employed physicians' group. He said all the physicians who have joined the medical center in the last year chose to become employed or integrated, a term he prefers.

Since May 2010, Family Health Care, Northwest Family Medicine, Northwest Oncology and Hematology and Bigfork Medical Clinic also have integrated with Northwest Healthcare.

Eddy said integration allows physicians to govern themselves while working together with the administration to better patient care. New bundling of services instead of fees for each service in health-care reform demands efficiency

amount of money and we have to figure out how to take care of patients with that money," Eddy said.

He said Northwest Healthcare has 99 lay people providing direction through various boards of directors, managers and trustees as well as advisory committees and other groups.

"St. Pat's has gotten to the point where it has none," he said. "We need you to bring us back to what the valley needs."

Eddy drew a picture of the symbiotic relationship Northwest Healthcare has with the community with an annual payroll of \$95 million from 2,300 employees in 78 departments. He calculates the community benefit at \$33 million. "You are a part of us and we are a part of you," he said. Eddy credited the board of directors with championing this as the best time for the surgical tower expansion with low interest rates and high unemployment.

"The hospital can help carry the valley through this fairly dark time," he said. In response to questions, Eddy said the expansion will take 22 months. He said the plan calls for reserved parking close up for patients, more distant parking with a shuttle service for employees and a valet parking service for the disabled. ●

Reprinted with permission of the Daily Inter Lake, Candace Chase reporter.



2010 Report on Government Contracting

The following information sums up the Kalispell PTAC government contracting activity for the recent calendar year ending December 31, 2010.

Active client base	316	
Outreach events sponsored or participated	45	
Initial counseling sessions	163	
Follow-up counseling sessions	845	
Awards received by small businesses	204	
Total award amount	\$27,421,561	
Awards received by Small Disadvantaged businesses	16	\$587,800.00
Awards received by Women Owned small businesses	16	\$309,041.00
Awards received by HUBZone certified small businesses	100	\$13,338,957.00
Awards received by Service Disabled Veteran Owned	12	\$862,321.00
All Department of Defense (DoD) awards	11	\$2,612,549.00
Other Federal (Civilian) Agency awards	184	\$21,080,552.00
State and Local Government awards	6	\$3,402,989.00

2011 Fire Information and ARRA projects scheduled for 2011 on the Flathead National Forest can be found on their website <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead>. Scroll down to the sections titled:

You can reach Doug Bolender, the Kalispell PTAC Manager for assistance at 755-4221.



Small Business Development Center (SBDC)–Kalispell

The SBDC had a successful 2010 that included several highlights. The SBDC logged over 500 hours of 1 on 1 business counseling, spread over 150 different clients. These business counseling services provided the building blocks to helping 9 new businesses start up in the Flathead Valley. The SBDC training sessions were well attended, with well over 50 business owners and entrepreneurs attending. The SBDC also helped secure over \$1.8 million in small business investments for local businesses. An important highlight for the SBDC in 2010 was a focused concentration and effort on 2nd stage businesses through the PEERSPECTIVES program, a roundtable focused on “Leveraging peer experiences for next level success”. 2011 is off to a strong start, with a significant increase in client activity, and we look forward to many more 1 on 1 client meetings, training sessions, and success stories.

If you are looking for business assistance or start-up help please call Chris at 758-2802 or email at SBDC@kalispellchamber.com. Thank you for a great year and good luck in 2011! ●

BEAR Business Expansion and Retention

The 2011 BEAR team consists of many professionals including the Flathead Regional Business Center partners, PTAC, SBDC, Job Service, City of Kalispell, Montana West Economic Development, SCORE, Montana Manufacturing Extension Center, Flathead Valley Community College, and Whitefish Chamber of Commerce. In 2010 the BEAR team conducted well over 25 interviews and visits while securing over \$70,000 in the Incumbent Worker Training grant program. In 2011 the BEAR team will strive to provide assistance to businesses by assessing concerns and needs of local businesses through interviews. In 2011 the BEAR team will continue to provide referrals for businesses from these interviews and share the information with appropriate resources so the business climate can thrive. The BEAR team invites you to request a re-interview or new interview and learn what is available for your business needs. Contact Chris at 758-2802 or email at SBDC@kalispellchamber.com. ●



Chamber Calendar

February 2011

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

All Meetings are at The Chamber unless otherwise stated.

1

2

Education & Communications Committee Meeting
8:00am - 9:00am

Kalispell Tourism B.I.D. Meeting
3:00pm - 5:00pm

3

Associated Chamber Meeting
3:00pm - 5:00pm

4

Government Affairs Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm

Flathead Young Professionals
4:00pm - 5:00pm

5

6

7

Leadership Flathead Meeting
3:00pm - 5:00pm

8

9

Ambassador Meeting
4:00pm - 5:00pm

10

11

Government Affairs Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm

12

13

14

15

Executive Board Meeting
7:30am - 8:30am

Luncheon
11:45pm - 1:00pm
Flathead Community Foundation
2:45pm - 5:00pm

16

Transportation Committee Meeting
4:00pm - 5:00pm

17

18

Government Affairs Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm

19

20

21

BEAR Meeting
4:00pm - 5:00pm

President's Day
Chamber Closed

22

Board Meeting
7:00am - 8:30am

23

24

25

Government Affairs Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm

UNWIND
Wedding & Event Professionals
5:00 pm - 6:30pm
Fairgrounds

26

27

28

Look for these events in March:

15 Luncheon

16 UNWIND at Red Lion Hotel

Government Affairs

BUSINESS DAYS AT THE CAPITOL

The Flathead was well-represented at Business Days at the Capitol on January 3-4. A highlight included presentation and discussion with 12 members of the Flathead Legislative delegation on key issues we are facing in this Session. Look for additional information on priorities and actions taken in this and future issues of Chamber News. The Flathead Business delegation included:

Name	Business
Aiden Myhre	Anderson, Baker, Swanson
Bob Nystuen	Glacier Bank - Kalispell
Carol Pike	Columbia Falls Chamber of Commerce
David Greer	Plum Creek Timber Company
Dee Brown	Columbia Falls Chamber of Commerce
Diane Medler	Kalispell Chamber of Commerce
Haley Beaudry	Columbia Falls Aluminum Company
Jane Karas	Flathead Valley Community College
Jim Ness	Glacier Bank - Kalispell
Joe Carbonari	Rocky Mountain Images
Joe Unterreiner	Kalispell Chamber of Commerce
Karissa Rice	Anderson, Baker, Swanson
Lin Akey	Glacier Bank - Whitefish
Mark Baker	Anderson, Baker, Swanson
Pam Carbonari	Kalispell Business Improvement District
Patrick Green	Wells Fargo Bank
Steve Clawson	Wells Fargo Bank
Terry Kramer	Kramer Enterprises
Tom Lund	Rocky Mountain Bank

Legislators at the Briefing:

- SD 2 Ryan Zinke
- SD 3 Bruce Tutvedt
- SD 4 Jon Sonju
- SD 5 Verdell Jackson
- HD 3 Jerry O'Neil
- HD 5 Keith Regier
- HD 6 Bill Beck
- HD 7 Randy Brodehl
- HD 8 Steve Lavin
- HD 9 Scott Reichner
- HD 10 Mark Blasdel
- HD 11 Jana Taylor



EPA GIVES A BREAK TO BIOMASS

The US Environmental Protection Agency is easing up on rules restricting the ability to burn biomass for energy. This news was greeted warmly by FH Stoltze Land and Lumber Company and by Plum Creek Timber Company who along with forest industry representatives and Senator Baucus asked the agency to reconsider its position the carbon from wood-products would be emitted anyway when wood rots. "This is great news for the regional economy, the forest industry, and the potential role for biomass in our nation's renewable energy future", said Joe Unterreiner, Kalispell Chamber President. "The EPA recognizes that woody biomass is an important resource that we could and should be developing and has acknowledged the need to step back and take a closer look at the science". In other news, Cheryl Talley of Flathead Electric Coop was named committee chairman.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE PUSHES FOR GREATER INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

This year the Chamber will push for completion of the Alternative Truck Route, and press for the creation of an air bank that will provide resources for commercial airline expansion and the addition of new air hubs. The committee believes we must keep pace with transportation infrastructure to compete for business and community investment. Ted Luehr, Advantage Water Consulting, was renamed committee chairman for 2011.

Ribbon Cutting

Nonprofit Development Partnership



Legislative Report—January 24, 2011

Prepared by: Anderson, Baker, Swanson

The 62nd Session of the Montana State Legislature is entering its fourth week today. Legislators have been busy working on a number of issues that will dominate the rest of the session. Top issues include the budget and tax, workers compensation, eminent domain, DUIs and medical marijuana. All of these issues have started to see some activity associated with them, whether behind the scenes or as actual introduced bills.

Budget: HB 2, the main budget bill, has been introduced and the various joint appropriations subcommittees are currently holding hearings and taking executive action within their respective jurisdiction.

Taxes: Efforts are underway to present proposals on the business equipment tax, reappraisal and possibly school funding. Workers Compensation: Rep. Reichner has been appointed by the Speaker of the House to lead the Republicans effort on workers compensation reform. His bill draft, LC 305, will probably be introduced early this week (perhaps today) and initial analysis indicates a 25% reduction in costs to the system.

Eminent Domain: Several bills have been introduced to address eminent domain concerns. The legislature will need to balance the concern for private property rights with the desire to proceed with large economic development projects in the state.

DUIs: Much work was done over the interim to address the state's laws in relation to Driving Under the Influence. A number of bills requested by the interim committee have been introduced and are being heard by the respective committees.

Medical Marijuana: As with the case of DUIs, the legislative interim committees addressed the growing concern over medical marijuana. Several bills have been introduced for outright repeal, voter referendums, increased regulation and workplace concerns. Hearings are just

getting underway.

We have compiled a list of bills to monitor that are of important interest to the Kalispell Chamber. The list appears below. For copies of bills as they are drafted or other legislative information visit the State web-site at [http://laws.leg.mt.gov/laws11/law0203w\\$.startup](http://laws.leg.mt.gov/laws11/law0203w$.startup) or click on any of the bill numbers below for a direct link to look up specific bill information.

BILLS OF INTEREST:

- HB 43 by Rep. Gary MacLaren—Clarifying employer's rights related to employee use of medical marijuana. **Support.** In First House Human Services Committee—nontabled. Hearing scheduled for 1/24/11 at 3:00 PM.
- HB 59 by Rep. Tony Belcourt—Revise renewable portfolio standard to include hydropower expansions. Transmitted to Senate on 1/22/11.
- HB 100 by Rep. Gordon Vance—Require fiscal notes to include business impact. **Support.** In First House Business and Labor Committee—pending. Hearing was on 1/12/11.
- HB 111 by Rep. Wayne Stahl—Improving tax administration by depositing state agency lodging tax in general fund. **Oppose.** Passed Tax Committee on 1/21/11.
- HB 137 by Rep. Scott Reichner—Authorize bounties, commercial hook-line fishing for lake trout in Flathead Lake. In the First House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee—nontabled. Fiscal Note signed and printed on 1/05/11.
- HB 140 by Rep. Cynthia Hiner—Transfer funds from the economic development special revenue account. **Oppose.** In First House Appropriations Committee—nontabled. Hearing was on 1/11/11.
- HB 167 by Rep Keith Regier—Criminalize offense involving death to an unborn child. Transmitted to Senate on 1/21/11.

- HB 316 by Rep. Rob Cook—Redistribute certain revenue and income to state general fund. **Oppose.** In First House Appropriations Committee—nontabled.
- SB 70 by Sen. David E Wanzenried—Eliminate net operating loss carryback provisions. **Oppose.** In First House Taxation Committee—nontabled. Hearing was on 1/18/11.
- SB 94 by Sen. Ron Erickson—Revise "waters edge" provisions of corporation taxes. **Oppose.** In First House Taxation Committee—nontabled. Hearing was on 1/19/11.
- SB 111 by Sen. Jon Sonju—Limit noneconomic damages in motor vehicle accidents. In First House Highways and Transportation Committee—nontabled. Hearing on 1/25/11 at 3:00 PM.
- SB 131 by Sen. Cliff Larsen—Allow business improvement district to make an assessment on a percentage basis. **Support.** In First House Taxation Committee. Hearing on 1/18/11 was cancelled at Sponsor's request.

LEGISLATIVE BILL DRAFT REQUESTS OF INTEREST:

- LC 305 by Speaker Millburn, Rep, Reichner - Generally revise workers' compensation. **Support.** Draft delivered to Requestor on 1/21/11.
- LC 592 by Rep. Cary Smith - Revise joint and several liability. Monitor. Draft on Hold on 1/22/11.
- LC 1335 by Rep. Cary Smith - Revise civil laws to require caps on appeals bonds.
- LC 1336 by Rep. Cary Smith - Revise pre- and post-judgment interest.
- LC 1502—Require cost-benefit analysis of mandated health insurance coverage of service. Monitor. In the Drafting Process. ●

Positive Economic Impact of Tourism

>>from cover

tourism marketing strategies creates a vibrant and sustainable tourism climate. Katy Peterson, consumer marketing manager of the Montana Office of Tourism, will highlight the Montana brand and the success that has been achieved to increase awareness of Montana as a travel destination. Diane Medler, director of the Kalispell Convention & Visitor Bureau, will outline the branding and marketing strategies underway to position Kalispell as a year-round leisure travel and meeting destination. You are invited to join us for the Chamber Luncheon on Tuesday, February 15, at the Red Lion Hotel, Noon – 1:30 pm. This luncheon is sponsored by Kalispell Tourism Business Improvement District.

Luncheon tickets are \$16 each for Chamber members and \$21 for non-members. Tables of eight may be reserved for \$120. Tickets are purchased in advance by calling 758-2800 or at www.kalispellchamber.com

Luncheon is sponsored by:



Flathead Regional Business Center Brown Bag Series: Save Your Business Money with Free and Open Source Software

- Software represents a significant cost to your business.
- Don't spend money you don't have to.
- Discover how the use of free and open source software can save you money.
- Learn how your business already benefits from the cost savings afforded by free software.
- Find what other free software may be right for you and your business.
- There are plenty of myths around open source software; learn the truth and see why the open source model could represent the future of technology.

This month's facilitator: Shannon Hanson, The Computer Doctor
Facilitator: Shannon Hanson has been working with and around computers for nearly 30 years and writing software for almost as long. When he is not solving technology problems he is building web sites with open source software.

Shannon has become known for his ability to get to the core of the issue to solve the problem. These skills are a complement to his ability to explain technical details in an easy to understand manner placing him in demand as a trainer as well.

Today Shannon operates the Computer Doctor in the Flathead. The Computer Doctor focuses on PC repair and technology consulting. Shannon also teaches classes on social media at FVCC and is planning a book on open source software.

Monthly Blueprint for Business Success brown bag sessions feature business professionals facilitating informative discussions. Attend to receive relevant information, opportunities to ask questions of the professionals, and network with peers.

Who should attend? Employers interested in growing and evolving more effective organizations. Why?

- Utilizing all available resources to operate and grow makes for smart business.
- Exchanging ideas, insights, and real-world solutions directly impacts your bottom line.
- Making better decisions quickly requires more and better information
- Engaging and energizing your staff helps make your business more successful.

Date: Wednesday, February, 2011
Time: Noon – 1:00 pm
Location: FVCC Arts & Technology Bldg, Room 139
Cost: No cost!
RSVP: Terri Haueter @ 758-6279 or thaueter@mt.gov

Ways to Improve Your Heart Health for 2011

Montana Chamber Choices Health Insurance Program offers several ways to improve the heart and performance of your business in 2011. The following benefits can uniquely increase collaboration at your worksite, raise the energy level and make you look like the best boss ever.

STOP HEART DISEASE. Yes, it's already February the month of cupid hearts and heart disease awareness. Heart disease kills more US men and women than any other disease. Luckily you and your employees can take steps to reduce their risk at work and at home.

QUIT. 70% of current smokers say they want to quit, are you one of them? Call the Montana Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW to get free cessation counseling, a free personalized quit plan, 6 weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy (gum, patches, or lozenges), discounts on prescription cessation drugs and more.

SHAPE UP MONTANA. High cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and excess weight are all risk factors for heart disease and miraculously each of these can be reduced, controlled or resolved by participating in the statewide, team-based Shape Up Montana physical activity (or weight loss) challenge. Montana Chamber and Montana Chamber Choices customers receive a 33% discount off of the \$15 fee to participate in the competition by registering by February 9th at www.shapeupmontana.org/shapeupcc11.html.

GET YOUR WELLVISION EXAM. High blood pressure can be detected

continued on next page >>

Flathead County Annual Average Cost-of-Living Figures for 2010 Released

Information released by the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce revealed that average annual cost-of-living in the Flathead County for 2010 is 1.2 percent below the national average.

The Flathead County cost-of-living index measures differences between areas in the cost of consumer goods and services, excluding taxes and non-consumer expenditures. It is based on 57 items for which prices are collected quarterly. Local data is combined with information from 318 communities to create the ACCRA Cost of Living Index. ACCRA is the national association of community and economic research professionals. Other Montana areas participating in the survey include Bozeman and Missoula.

The ACCRA Cost-of-Living Index for Flathead County in 2010 is as follows (average of 318 total urban areas = 100):

Composite.....	98.8
Groceries	116.3
Housing	95.2
Utilities	82.2
Transportation.....	103.6
Health Care	104.6
Miscellaneous	97.8

Kalispell Community and Relocation Guide

>>from cover

magazine-style publication to those interested in the Kalispell region as a place to live, work, and recreate.

Five thousand copies of the Community and Relocation Guide are distributed during the year. It is the primary piece the Chamber uses to fulfill requests for relocation information, community information, and services available throughout the Valley. It contains a complete roster of Chamber members and is used to answer the question "May I have a list of your members?" Real estate offices provide it for clients. Employment offices and employers use the piece for employee searches. Chamber members use it when choosing with whom to do business.

I urge you to give consideration to advertising this year. Your advertising support allows us to make a good first impression with those thinking of living, working, or recreating in the Flathead Valley. Contact your advertising representative at the Daily Inter Lake, or call 755-7000 for more information. This year's advertising deadline is Friday, March 18.

Sincerely,
Joe Unterreiner, President and CEO



15 Depot Park
Kalispell, MT 59901

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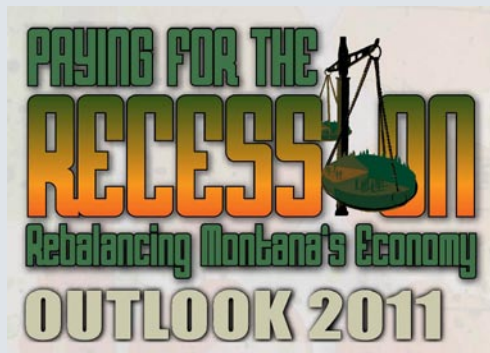


36th Annual Economic Outlook February 11, 2011 *Seminar Paying for the Recession: Balancing Montana's Economy*

Putting off retirement for another few years? Pushing back that home remodel for a while? The economy is emerging from the worst recession since the 1930's, but the damage is apparent: diminished personal income, uncertain housing markets, high unemployment rates, permanent closures in key industrial facilities, and budget pressures on state and local government. How do we rebalance the economy?

At the 36th Annual Economic Outlook Seminar, Patrick Barkey, director of The University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research, will discuss challenges the recession has presented for all sectors of Montana's economy and what it will take to bring it back into balance.

This half-day seminar and luncheon will highlight the latest economic trends and forecasts for local, state, and national economies. Bureau economists Patrick Barkey and Paul Polzin will present economic outlook forecasts for each seminar city, and industry experts will provide the outlook for Montana's



important industries: nonresident travel, health care, agriculture, manufacturing, and forest products. Also included will be an update on Montana home sales. At the luncheon, longtime Montana journalist, Ian Marquand, will moderate a panel of community leaders and industry experts on local economic issues.

The Seminar will be held in Kalispell on Friday, February 11, 2011 and runs from 8 am to 1 pm at the Hilton Garden In. For more information or to register for the seminar, visit the BBER website at <http://www.bber.umt.edu> or call 406-243-5113.



Ways to Improve Your Heart Health for 2011

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through a thorough eye exam. Luckily, as of January 1, 2011 all employees covered by Montana Chamber Choices health insurance have a VSP vision benefit that includes a \$10 copay at a VSP provider for an annual WellVision exam and eyewear discounts. Schedule your appointment today.

BUY-UP. Help the heart by insuring it. Every Montana Chamber Choices employee health insurance customer has a \$5,000 base life insurance policy and the opportunity to buy-up additional life insurance. Prices are outrageously low (\$1.05 a month for \$10,000 of coverage for a 34-year old, for example) so call your Montana Chamber Choices agent today and help the heart beat more easily.