

Chamber News

» Official Business Publication Of The Kalispell Chamber Of Commerce «

Your Co-op
Flathead Electric
Community . . . Integrity . . . Reliability

Flathead Valley winter events and recreation featured at January Luncheon

Winter in the Flathead Valley provides a wide range of activities and experiences for visitors and locals alike. Our vast outdoor recreation, a variety of cultural opportunities and special events are sure

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Government Affairs Briefs

REGISTER FOR BUSINESS DAYS AT THE CAPITOL JAN 18-19

You are invited to join a delegation of businesspeople from the Flathead Valley in attending the Chamber of Commerce "Business Days at the Capitol" on January 19-20. There will be a panel of House and Senate leadership presenting their preview of the key legislative issues of the session. Full registration is \$135 with rates available for individual events. To register, contact Leah Weaver at leah@montanachamber.com or 406-442-2405 x102.

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New Directors Join Chamber Board

Join us in welcoming three new directors to the Kalispell Chamber Board:

- Jim Peterson, Valley Ford
- Kristen Jones, Flathead Valley Community College
- Lisa Brown, Red Lion Hotel



Jim Peterson, Valley Ford

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At a Glance

- >> **January Luncheon**
Tuesday, January 24, 2012
Winter Event Expo
 11 AM- 1:30 PM
 Red Lion Hotel
 20 North Main Street
- >> **January / February UNWIND's**
- >> **Tuesday, January 10, 2012**
 5-6:30 PM
 Hilton Garden Inn
 1840 US Hwy 93 South
 Kalispell, MT 59901
- >> **February 7 Date Available**
- >> **Wednesday, February 22, 2012**
 5-6:30 pm
 Valley Ford
 1177 Hwy 2 E
 Kalispell, MT

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Chamber Snapshot

Visitor's Center Information Requests:

	Nov '11	YTD
Phone Calls:	83	2,609
Walk-ins	156	1,352
VACATION		
Email Inquiries	37	921
Packets	45	1,264
RELOCATION		
Packets	59	599
Phone Books	1	16
Misc & Maps	1	7
WEB ACTIVITY		
Unique Visits	6,465	57,654
TOTAL VISITS	6,788	67,426

Officers

David Mitchell, Chairman of the Board, CTA Architects and Engineers
Jim Ness, Vice Chairman of the Board, Glacier Bank
Mark Johnson, Secretary, Merrill Lynch
Reed Gunlikson, Treasurer, R. Gunlikson CPA's
Tom Lund, Immediate-Past Chairman, Rocky Mountain Bank

Directors

Lisa Brown, Red Lion Hotel
Kris Carlson, A+ Plus Healthcare
Brian Clark, Fun Beverage
Mark Gronley, Northwestern Energy
Scott Hagel, Crowley Fleck Law Firm
Kristen Jones, Flathead Valley Community College
Jason Manger, Applied Materials - Semitool
Denise Nalty, Nalty Real Estate
Chris Ohler, Insured Titles
Jim Oliverson, Northwest Health Care
Jim Peterson, Valley Ford
Kelly Robinson, Plum Creek Timber Company
Loren Sallee, Loren's Automotive
Dave Waldenberg, Central Heating and Cooling
Holly Walsh, Western States Insurance
Rick Weaver, Daily Inter Lake

Ex-officio Directors

Mike Pence, Flathead County Administrator

Professional Staff

Joe Unterreiner, President and CEO ... 758-2804
Cary Aubrey, Executive Assistant ... 758-2801
Diane Bebee, Administrative Specialist. 758-2803
Rob Brisendine, KCVB Group Sales ... 758-2820
Vonnie Day, Travel Counselor. ... 758-2809
Diane Medler, KCVB Director ... 758-2808
Jill Seigmund, Kalispell Chamber Foundation ... 758-2810
DeAnn Thomas, Business Expansion and Retention. ... 250-8077

Consulting Staff

Anderson, Baker & Swanson - Government Relations
Edge Communications - Media & Public Relations
Janet Schwalk - Bookkeeping
JCCS - Tax & Audit Counsel
Partners Creative - Creative Agency

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.

KMART

2024 Highway 2 E
 Kalispell, MT 59901
 (406) 752-4261
<http://www.kmart.com>

Proudly serving the Flathead Valley since 1974, your Store of The Neighborhood.



MONTANA ELEMENTS MAGAZINE

PO Box 1944
 Bigfork, MT 59911
 406-212-4223

Help your friends discover great places to visit by recommending Montana Elements Magazine.



SWAN MOUNTAIN OUTFITTERS

PO Box 13027
 Coram, MT 59913
 (406) 886-3900
info@swanmountainranch.com
<http://www.swanmountainranch.com>

Swan Mountain Outfitters is the core company in the Swan Group of Companies. We offer guided hunting trips, guided fly fishing and float trips, summer pack trips, as well as wagon rides and trail rides in and around the Swan Valley and the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Additionally, the Swan Group of Companies include the exclusive providers of trail rides in Glacier National Park and West Glacier, daily and multi-day llama treks and the premier snowmobile outfitter for tours and rentals in the Flathead Valley!"



Renewals

10 Plus Years

All Pro Flathead Property Management
 Amazing Painting, Inc
 Brendan House
 CARQUEST Auto Parts
 City Service Valcon
 Community Action Partnership
 Conrad Mansion Museum
 Eisinger Motors
 First Interstate Bank Downtown Kalispell
 First Interstate Bank Eureka
 First Interstate Bank Evergreen
 First Interstate Bank Hutton Ranch
 First Interstate Bank Polson
 First Interstate Bank Whitefish
 Flathead Beverage Co
 Flathead Farm Mutual Ins. Co.
 Flathead Travel Service
 Flathead Valley Community College
 George Best Attorney at Law

Glacier Bank
 Glacier Bank - Bigfork
 Glacier Bank - Buffalo Hill Kalispell
 Glacier Bank - Columbia Falls
 Glacier Bank - Downtown Kalispell
 Glacier Bank - Eureka
 Glacier Bank - Evergreen
 Glacier Bank - Libby
 Glacier Bank - Polson
 Glacier Bank - Reserve Drive, Kalispell
 Glacier Bank - Whitefish
 J C Penney
 Mahugh Fire & Safety LLC/Accurate Fire Systems
 Natural Choice Products
 TD&H Engineering
 Wells Fargo Bank Kalispell Downtown
 Wells Fargo Bank Kalispell North
 Wells Fargo Financial MT Inc
 Wells Fargo Home Mortgage
 Western States Insurance - Bigfork

continued next page >>

Renewals

5 to 9 Years

>> from page 2

Brian C Tanko Esq
Building By Jon
Flathead Health & Fitness
Flathead Youth Home
Humane Society of Northwest Montana
New West Health Services
Nomad Technologies Inc
Summit Preparatory School
Western Outdoor

1 to 4 Years

Holiday Inn Express
Montana Land and Home, Inc
Waatti Engineering

2012-13 Kalispell Vacation & Community Guide

The 2012-2013 Kalispell Vacation and Community Guide is being published with the Daily Inter Lake. Your participation as an advertiser allows us to provide a high quality publication to those interested in the Kalispell region as a place to live, work and recreate.

Eighteen thousand copies of the Vacation and Community Guide were distributed during this last year. We anticipate an increased distribution of 22,000 for 2012. It is the primary piece the Chamber uses to fulfill requests for vacation, relocation and 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.

You are urged 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 the call the Advertising Director, Cindy Sease, at 758-4410. This year's advertising deadline is Friday, January 13.

Annual Member 'Thank You' Holiday Party a Success



Our 2011 Holiday Party was a great success! Members showed up prepared to be generous and have a good time. We were able to contribute \$275 to The Flathead Food Bank to keep the pantries full. They give out over 130,000 pounds of food every month. By coupon-shopping they are able to get 'more bang for their bucks' when shopping to supplement the food donations they receive. Feedback for 'Contributing the Pot' rather than 'Splitting the Pot' for this annual event was overwhelmingly positive, so we have decided to do this every year at our Annual Holiday Party.

This year's party spilled nicely into the newly remodeled Visitor Center. Vista Linda Catering put on a great 'spread' in the Visitor Center while the Chamber conference room served as 'Beverage Central' with Glacier Sun serving some of their locally made wines while Chamber Ambassadors dispensed Mission Mountain Winery wines, draft beer from Black Star Draught House and bottles of beer from Big Sky Brewing.

WINNERS:

Kim Taylor of Investment Centers of America won the Turkey and the bag of Ceres cookies that was donated by Northwest Drywall.

Sandy Hensen of Celebrate Party Rentals won the gift basket that was donated by Rising Sun Bistro.

Windy Vernon of Paper Chase was the lucky winner of the Hilton Garden Inn/Blue Canyon Gift Certificates.

Flathead Regional Business Center

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

Business Expansion and Retention

DeAnn Thomas, Manager
(406) 250-8077
deannthomas5@gmail.com
www.nwmontanabear.com

Flathead Community Foundation

Marc Lorenzen, Board President
info@flatheadcommunityfoundation.org
www.flatheadcommunityfoundation.org

Flathead Job Service Workforce Center

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

Kalispell Chamber of Commerce

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

Kalispell Chamber Foundation

Jill Seigmund, Director
(406) 758-2810
jill@kalispellchamber.com

Kalispell Convention & Visitor Bureau

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

Montana Manufacturing Extension Center

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

Northwest Montana SCORE

Liz Scholter, Chapter Chair
(406) 756-5271
nwmtscore@montanasky.net

Procurement Technical Assistance Center

Doug Bolender, Director
(406) 755-4221
doug@mtcdc.org

Small Business Development Center

Chris Parson, Director
(406) 758-2802
sbd@kalispellchamber.com
www.kalispellsmallbusiness.com
"Funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration."



Business Days at the Capitol: January 19-20

KNIGHT TO KEYNOTE BUSINESS DAYS

Lyle Knight, President/CEO of First Interstate BancSystem, based in Billings, will keynote

the Lawmaker Appreciation Banquet of the State Chamber's 2012 Business Days at the Capitol. Knight will speak Thursday night, January 19, 2012 at the Best Western Premier Helena Great Northern Hotel.

Business Days at the Capitol is the largest annual event of the Montana Chamber of Commerce, occurring even when there is no legislative session. Business Days features two days of programs about business issues, along with the traditional "State of Business" address by the Montana Chamber Board Chair, the Banquet, the Eggs & Issues breakfast, and concluding luncheon, this coming year, January 19-20.

Knight is retiring in 2012, following over 40 years in the banking industry. He and his wife Toril have lived in Montana since 1998, when he was selected to run the First Interstate BancSystem. During that time, Knight also served on the Board of Directors of the Montana Chamber of Commerce, and as Chair of the organization from 2003-2004. He also served on the Board of the Montana Chamber Foundation and as Chair, 2005-2007.

"We are delighted to have Lyle provide our keynote address this coming Business Days," said Webb Brown, President/CEO of the Montana Chamber of Commerce. "He has given a lot to this organization and Montana and we look forward to his remarks."

Sponsors for Business Days at the Capitol currently include BlueCross BlueShield of Montana, Liberty Northwest, Montana State Fund, Mountain West Benefits, MWI Benefits Group, and NorthWestern Energy. More information can be found at <http://Events.MontanaChamber.com>.

Government Affairs Briefs

>> from cover

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Government Affairs Committee meets on the first Friday of the month and will meet again on Friday, February 3, at noon. Lunch is available for \$5.00. These sessions are used to advance our Business Agenda and to hear from Legislators and others about bills affecting the business environment and the community health of the Kalispell and the Flathead Valley.

You are invited to join us. To receive meeting notices, call 758-2800 or info@kalispellchamber.com.

Small Business Development Center - Kalispell

Closing out 2011 for the SBDC showed over 500 hours of 1 on 1 business counseling and over 160 different clients. Some successes included helping start 5 new businesses in the Flathead Valley and having well over 40 business owners and entrepreneurs attend our training sessions. The Kalispell SBDC also helped secure over \$2.2 million in small business investments. The SBDC in 2011 focused on 2nd stage businesses with a successful year of PEERSPECTIVES, a roundtable focused on "Leveraging peer experiences for next level success".

In 2012 the Small Business Development will be moving to Flathead Valley Community College a welcomed change. This transition will provide new opportunities and additional resources that will no doubt provide enhanced services to North West Montana small businesses.

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 2012!



Chamber Calendar

January 2012

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

1 New Years Day	2	3 Government Affairs Committee Meeting 12:00pm - 1:00pm	4 Education & Communications Committee Meeting 8:00am-9:00am	5 Associated Chambers Meeting 10:30AM- 12:00pm	6	7
8	9 IWT Meeting 1:00pm - 2:00pm Leadership Flathead 3:00pm - 5:00pm	10 UNWIND Hilton Garden Inn 5:00-6:30pm 1840 Hwy 93 S	11	12	13	14
15	16 IWT Meeting 1:00pm - 2:00pm	17 Executive Board Meeting 7:30am - 8:30am BEAR Meeting 4:00pm - 5:00pm	18 Natural Resources Meeting 7:00am - 8:00am Ambassador Meeting 4:00pm - 5:00pm	19	20	21
22	23 IWT Meeting 1:00pm - 2:00pm	24 Board of Directors Meeting 7:00-8:30am Flathead Valley Winter Events Expo Red Lion 11:00am -1:30pm Flathead Community Foundation 2:45pm - 5:00pm	25	26	27	28
29	30 IWT Meeting 1:00pm - 2:00pm	31	<div data-bbox="766 1734 1258 1927" data-label="Text" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Look for these events in February: 10 2012 Economic Outlook Seminar 21 February Luncheon 22 UNWIND at Valley Ford</p> </div>			<p>All Meetings are at The Chamber unless otherwise stated.</p>

37th Annual Economic Outlook Seminar

Friday, February 10, 2012 • 8 am – 1 pm
Hilton Garden Inn, Kalispell

MONTANA'S NEW ENERGY FRONTIER What are the Prospects?

Ranchers in Sidney, Montana, are receiving \$1 million royalty checks. Homeowners are renting unheated garages to oil workers for \$600 a month. And new technology has opened up 4 billion barrels of oil in the Bakken, arguably the largest inland oil find in the U.S. in the past 50 years. Is Montana's eastern energy boom here to stay? What does it mean for statewide employment? Tax revenues? The environment? Are we next in line for North Dakota's payday?

Hear from Tom Richmond, administrator and petroleum engineer for the Montana Board of Oil and Gas, as he discusses developments on Montana's new energy frontier and our prospects for future growth at the 37th Annual Economic Outlook Seminar.

This half-day seminar and luncheon will highlight the latest economic trends for local, state, and national economies. Bureau economists Patrick Barkey and Paul Polzin will present economic forecasts for each seminar city, and industry experts will provide the outlook for Montana's important sectors: nonresident travel, health care, agriculture, real estate, manufacturing, and forest products. Longtime Montana journalist, Ian Marquand, will moderate a luncheon panel of community leaders and industry experts on local economic issues. Continuing education credits are available.

FEES:

Cost is \$80. Includes the seminar, a proceedings booklet, lunch, and a one-year subscription to the Montana Business Quarterly, the state's award-winning business journal (a \$35.00 value.) Group rate of \$50/person for groups of 5 or more (does not include a subscription to the MBQ).

AGENDA:

7:45 – 8:00	Coffee and Registration
8:00 – 8:05	Introductions – Ian Marquand
8:05 – 8:45	Keynote – Tom Richmond, administrator for Montana Board of Oil & Gas
8:45 – 9:15	National and State Outlooks – Patrick Barkey
9:15 – 9:30	Local Outlook- Paul Polzin
9:30 – 9:40	Coffee Break
9:40 – 10:00	Nonresident Travel - Norma Nickerson
10:00 – 10:20	Health Care – Gregg Davis
10:20 – 10:40	Agriculture - George Haynes
10:40 – 10:50	Coffee Break
10:50 – 11:10	Real Estate – Scott Rickard
11:10 – 11:30	Manufacturing and Forest Products - Todd Morgan
11:30 – 11:50	Local Perspective - Zinc Air
11:50 – 12:00	Break
Noon – 12:50	Panel Discussion on Outlook
12:50	Closing Remarks

For additional information, contact Christina Henderson, Phone: 406-243-5113; Fax: 406-243-2086 Email: christina.henderson@business.umd.edu

January Luncheon

>> from cover

to create special memories of winter in Montana. In order to update members on all the unique and authentic winter opportunities the Kalispell Chamber will feature a Flathead Winter Events Expo.

The Expo will be held in the Red Lion Kalispell Center Hotel main ballroom from 11:00 am until 1:30 pm on Tuesday, January 24. Members and guests will have an opportunity to visit booths of local activity and event providers such as ski areas and other outdoor activities, park representatives providing trail information and maps, as well as museums and a variety of retailers offering indoor classes, activities and events. Stop by each Expo booth to learn about what's going on and enter to win prizes that will be raffled off at the end of the Expo. Lunch will be served starting at 11:45 am.

What is your favorite way to spend a winter day in the Flathead Valley? We want to hear your answers. Submit your favorite Winter Itinerary prior to the January 24th luncheon and be eligible for a Winter Montana Get-Away. Guidelines for the Winter Itinerary contest are available at www.discoverkalispell.com/news

While many visitors stop by the Kalispell Visitor Information Center, many obtain their information about area activities from family, friends and employees of stores, hotels and restaurants. According to Kalispell CVB director Diane Medler, the Flathead Winter Event Expo is designed to communicate the variety of winter activities available and encourage all members to be ambassadors for Kalispell and the Flathead Valley. Luncheon attendees will learn about the expectations of the winter traveler, how Montana fits into those choices as compared to other winter destinations, initiatives in place to attract visitors to the Kalispell and how local business owners can leverage those messages.

The Expo and luncheon are

Your Co-op
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sponsored by **Flathead Electric Coop**. Luncheon tickets are \$17 each for Chamber members and \$22 for non-members. Tables of eight are available for \$130. Luncheon registration is separate from the booth registration and fee. Because many of the recent luncheons have sold out, the Chamber urges members to make their reservations by Friday, January 20. Call 758-2803 or visit the Chamber website at www.kalispellchamber.com. Members are encouraged to take advantage of the new Business Card Express Check-in system that allows individuals to bypass the check-in table. Detailed instructions are available online on the luncheon reservation page.

What is your perfect winter day?

If you could spend a winter day in the Flathead Valley doing whatever you wanted what would it include? Create your ideal itinerary and submit it to the Kalispell Chamber/CVB **Winter Discovery In Every Direction Contest** and be entered to win a winter get-away package which includes lodging, dining and winter activity certificates. Winning itinerary will be presented at the January 24th Kalispell Chamber Flathead Winter Event Expo.

Winter Itinerary should:

- Start and end in Kalispell
- Incorporate both our natural resources and local businesses or cultural amenities
- Include a suggested location for at least one meal
- Logistically feasible to be done in one day

Bonus points will be given for the itinerary that is most unique and clearly demonstrates the Kalispell brand:

- We are in the Middle of Montana's most iconic natural places
- We are a vacation filled with Discovery
- We are Balance for an outdoor-centric trip
- We are Genuine hospitality
- We are Affordable variety

Post your itinerary on Discover Kalispell Facebook or email to info@discoverkalispell.com Deadline for entries is Jan. 14, 2012.

Ribbon Cuttings



Sally Truscheit, Peggy Kirby, & Jennifer Griffith cutting the ribbon for Rising Sun Bistro Bar in Kalispell



Ian Fee, Jodi Fee, Josh Evans, Kylee Mack, Erik Whelan, Jarred Stevens, & Amber Collier helping to cut the ribbon for The Zone Family Fun Center



*Flathead Lutheran Camp:
Brooke Ells, Aaron Ells, Tonya Erickson, Margje Fiedler,
Margette Dahlgren*



*Fennelly Chiropractic Clinic, Inc:
Dr. Alex Phillips, DC, Dr. Sampson Fennelly, DC*

State Legislative Report

The **Legislative Finance Committee** (Rep. Janna Taylor –Dayton) met on December 5 and 6 to get a general fund budget and revenue update. The state's surplus by mid-2013 is projected to be much larger than estimated by the 2011 Legislature, according to the state's legislative fiscal analyst, Terry Johnson. He is estimating the state **treasury's ending fund balance, or surplus, will be \$426.7 million on June 30, 2013. The estimate is based on projected higher tax collections. Individual income tax collections led the way with a proposed \$117.3 million higher adjustment over the next two years;** corporation license taxes are up \$31.9 million; and oil and gas production taxes are up \$25.2 million. Vehicle fees and taxes are projected to drop by \$15.6 million, while other taxes are forecast to decline \$24.8 million. No change is expected in general fund revenue from property taxes. The committee also discussed security issues at the Capitol and heard updates on various agency programs including an education funding update and pension fund update. Next meeting is March 8, 2012.



The **Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee** (Sen. Bruce Tutvedt-Kalispell) continued to work on three studies: SJR 17 study of centrally assessed (CA) property valuation; SJR 23 study of tax exemption for nonprofits, and HJR income tax study. In the SJR17 study,

an overview of valuation methods used by several other states was shared with the committee. The report generated significant discussion on the exemption of intangible property and the methodology for valuations of CA properties. BNSF made a presentation on the formula valuation used for railroads and the stability it provides the company. Meanwhile the Department of Revenue Director presented charts comparing assessed value, taxable value and taxes paid for residential, commercial and centrally assessed properties in MT. The Director stated that if the centrally assessed properties were reduced then it would increase the taxes for agricultural and residential properties. Public comments with viewpoints different than the DOR were provided by AT&T; BNSF; Verizon; and Montax. Nancy Schlepp with Montax made three important points: our taxes need to be competitive with the taxes in the surrounding states; centrally assessed companies need stability; and Montana needs to get 3rd parties with different views from the DOR to address the issues.

The SJR 23 study started with a presentation on charity healthcare and bad debt of hospitals. This was followed by a review of how other states treat commercial property and real estate of non-profits, and an overview of the impact of market changes of tax exempt property in the seven largest counties. In Flathead, the change in taxes that might result if exempt property was no longer exempt showed a decrease of \$38.96 per \$100,000 of valued property. In Flathead 2010 taxable market property value is \$8,209,517,616 while the exempt property value is \$212,771,947. The 2010 property tax revenue in Flathead County was \$126,594,460. The committee received information on how exemptions of nonprofits are treated, and statutes from other states that create multifactor tests for determining whether nonprofits should be exempt from taxation and statutes that address exemptions for hospitals.

The HJR income tax study included a thorough presentation of taxpayer use of tax credits and deductions, the various types of credits and deductions, and an illustration of the effective tax rates before and after credits and deductions. The most common deductions are home mortgage and federal tax deductions.



The **Law and Justice Interim Committee** (Rep. Steve Lavin-Kalispell) met on December 15-16 to hear reports on advisory councils within the public defender's office and the Justice and Corrections Departments. An update on the Public Defender system was provided by its chair, Mr. Gillespie. The committee listened to a panel presentation on youth restorative justice programs; received updates on the Board of Pardons and Parole and the Department of Corrections proposed increase in new secure beds; and heard from the ACLU on a prison reform project.

Reapportionment Commission and staff are traveling around the state visiting with local and tribal officials and other interested groups about the redistricting process. The Districting Commission encourages Montanans interested in the redistricting effort to send in comments about how legislative districts should or could look after lines are redrawn. More information about how to send in comments and to view comments already contributed by others are available on the commission's webpage at <http://www>.

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State Legislative Report

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leg.mt.gov/districting. Stay tuned for future commission activities, including releases of draft maps and a schedule of public hearings in 2012.

Next month – January 2012

Select Committee on Efficiency in Government meets January 9-10 in Helena; Water Policy committee meets January 10-11 in Helena; Environmental Quality Council (EQC) meets January 11-12 in Helena; Energy and Telecommunications meets January 13 in Helena; State Tribal-Relations meets January 13 at a location to be announced; Economic Affairs meets January 19-20 in Helena; and Children, Families, Health and Human Services meets January 28 in Helena.

If you are interested in water and supplying water to subdivisions, the Water Policy interim committee will hear a panel discussion on the topic on January 10-11. The committee is studying exempt wells and how to treat the thousands of these wells in the state used for domestic, stock, and irrigation. A presentation from the Bureau of Mines and Geology will review exempt well development in MT.

The EQC in January will discuss the management of state parks in the Rocky Mountain region along with outdoor recreation and heritage resource programs. A study bill requires a review of these programs and recommendations for improving management of these areas.

Professor John Peters of MSU-Bozeman will provide a presentation titled Hydrogen and the Environment “The Quest for alternative fuels” at the Energy and Telecommunications committee. And, workers’ compensation reform and workplace safety will be on the agenda for the Economic Affairs mtg.

Business Days at the Capital, sponsored by the Montana Chamber of Commerce begins Thursday, January 19 and continues through Friday, January 20.

Other news:

- Kalispell attorney Dana Christensen was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in December to be the next U.S. District Judge for Montana. Christensen replaces U.S. District Judge Don Molloy, who began serving under “senior status” last summer, which means he remains on the bench but takes on a lower work load.
- Governor Schweitzer launched a winter tourism campaign focusing on skiing and winter activities. Visitors spend \$2.5 billion annually in Montana and support 28,000 jobs.
- 2 Republicans have announced their candidacies for seats on the Montana Public Service Commission that regulates utilities. Current State Senator Bob Lake (R-Hamilton) is running for District 4 against incumbent Gail Gutsche of Missoula and Dillon native James Brown (R) is challenging Gallatin Gateway Democrat John Vincent (incumbent) for District 3 seat.
- The Legislative Fiscal Division says non-farm Montana employment shows a slight increase in 2011, but still below the high years of 2007-2008. ■



Montana Chamber Choices is sponsoring Shape Up Montana again this year!

Registration begins December 15, 2011. The fun begins February 1st and goes to May 1st. Shape Up Montana helps Montanans engage in a physical activity and healthy eating program. Chamber Choices customers will receive a discount on their registration!!

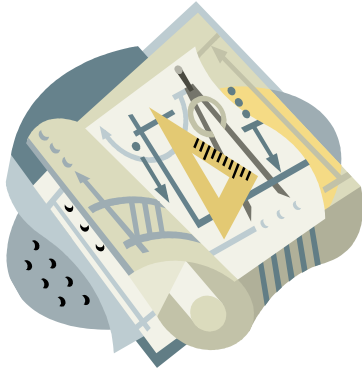


What is Shape Up Montana?

- Team Wellness Program
- Track activity OR weight loss online
- Choose between 5 separate activity divisions OR a weight loss division
- Receive weekly challenges, fitness information and nutrition articles
- Cost \$10 registration fee with Choices discount
- Prize drawings
- Awards for top 3 teams in each category
- “NEW” Interactive exercise videos

Don't be a couch potato this holiday season! Keep it off by participating in a rewarding wellness program! For more information on how to get a discount on your registration contact Kim Weisert at kim@montanachamber.com or 406-442-2405 x 105. ■

Brown Bag Series: Blueprint for Business Success Spring 2012



Become an Employer of Choice

Blueprint for Business Success brown bag sessions feature business professionals facilitating informative discussions. Receive relevant information and have an opportunity to ask questions of the professionals and network with peers.

Who should attend? Employers interested in maximizing their human resources, developing more effective organizations and becoming employers of choice. Why?

- Reducing employee turnover saves you time and money.
- Motivating and energizing your employees helps make your business successful.
- Making better decisions quickly requires more and better information.
- Exchanging ideas, insights and real-world solutions directly impacts your bottom line.
- Utilizing all available resources to operate and grow is smart business.

Calendar of Events

Time: Noon – 1pm
Location: FVCC Arts & Technology Bldg
Room 139

RSVP: Mora McCarthy 758-6241
or mmccarthy@mt.gov
Cost: *No Cost!*

**JANUARY 11,
2012**

FACILITATOR:
Ned Cooney

TOPIC:
Making Meetings
Matter: Strategies
and Tactics



**FEBRUARY 8,
2012**

FACILITATOR:
Beth Morgenstern

TOPIC:
Planning for your
Future, Attracting &
Retaining Quality
Employees

**MARCH 14,
2012**

FACILITATOR:
Mark Riffey

TOPIC:
Transforming
Marketing & Advertising
from an expense to an
investment



**APRIL 11,
2012**

FACILITATOR:
Danielle Coffman

TOPIC:
Montana
Wrongful Discharge
from
Employment Act.

Sponsored by



Providing Economic, Community, and Workforce Development Services



Montana
Department of Labor and Industry
Job Service Operations Bureau



Flathead Job Service
Employers Council





Flathead Regional Business Center Brown Bag Series: “Make Meetings Matter: Strategies and Tactics”

In this session we'll talk about how to make meetings matter and get the results you want.

We'll examine where meetings go wrong, and discuss strategies to address common meeting pitfalls; such as poor agenda design and lack of clarity about outcomes.

We'll identify important tactics to manage the “flow” of meetings:

- Make good decisions
- Ensure balanced participation
- Follow through on commitments

We'll share practical tips and “tricks of the trade” you can use at your next meeting.

This month's facilitator: Ned Cooney, Ascent Strategic Development

Facilitator: **Ned Cooney** owns an independent consulting practice, Ascent Strategic Development, specializing in organizational planning, consultation with staff and board members, and meeting facilitation for nonprofits, community groups, public agencies and businesses. Most of his career has been in the nonprofit sector as staff, volunteer, board member, and now by following his passion for helping people make good decisions together. Ned was raised in Southern California and holds a Masters Degree in Social Work from California State University. Before falling in love with the Flathead and moving with his wife Cathy to Bigfork in 2004, he ran two nonprofits, the Volunteer Center of Riverside County operating a variety of volunteer and social service programs, and the Resource Center for Nonprofit Management, specializing in training and consulting with nonprofit organizations. Currently, Ned is serving as a member of the board or Directors of the Montana

Nonprofit Association and as a member of the Nonprofit Public Policy Council. In his leisure time, Ned enjoys playing guitar, hiking, bicycling, boating, card and trivia games, and spending time with Cathy, friends and family.



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, January 11, 2012
Time: Noon – 1:00 pm
Location: FVCC Arts & Technology Bldg, Room 139

Cost: No cost!
RSVP: Mora McCarthy, 758-6241 or mmccarthy@mt.gov
(for January Brown Bag only)

UNcover What's Interesting, New and Developing

As a Kalispell Chamber of Commerce Member you are eligible to host an UNWIND at your place of business. This is the perfect opportunity for you to spotlight your business to the business community. There are still dates available for the calendar year 2012. Call Diane at 406-758-2803 for details and to schedule an UNWIND at your business location.

Upcoming UNWINDS

Tuesday, January 10, 2012
5-6:30 PM



Hilton Garden Inn
1840 US Hwy 93 South • Kalispell

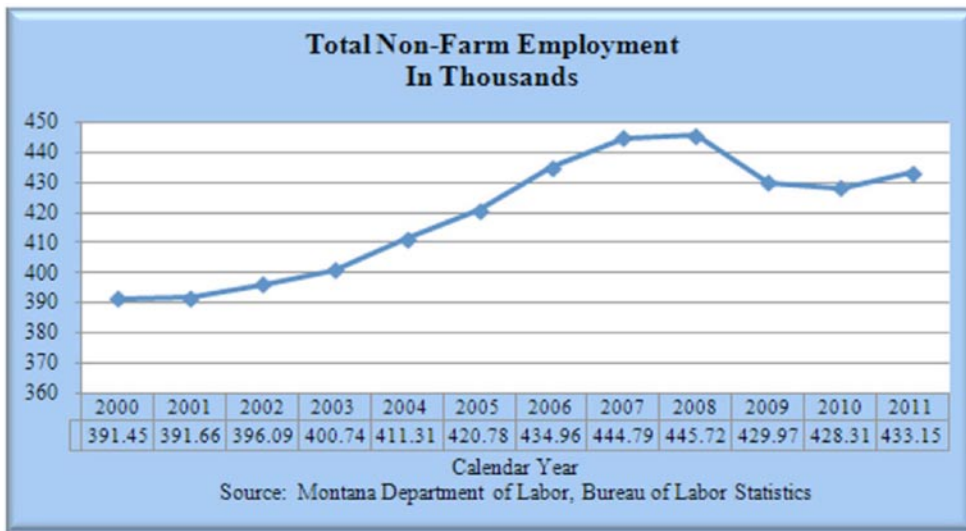
Wednesday, February 22, 2012
5-6:30 pm



Valley Ford
1177 Hwy 2 E • Kalispell



Membership has Benefits!



New Directors Join Chamber Board



Kristen Jones,
Flathead Valley
Community
College



Lisa Brown,
Red Lion Hotel

Small Business Development Center – Annual Report

Closing out 2011 for the SBDC showed over 500 hours of one-on-one business counseling and over 160 different clients. Some successes included helping start 5 new businesses in the Flathead Valley and having well over 50 business owners and entrepreneurs attend our training sessions. The Kalispell SBDC also helped secure over \$2.2 million in small business investments. The SBDC in 2011 focused on 2nd stage businesses with a successful year of PEERSPECTIVES, a roundtable focused on “Leveraging peer experiences for next level success”.

In 2012 the Small Business Development will be moving to Flathead Valley Community College about February 1, 2012. This transition will provide new opportunities that will provide services to North West Montana small businesses.

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 2012!

KALISPELL
Chamber of Commerce

Chamber News

» Official Business Publication Of The Kalispell Chamber Of Commerce «