



# NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2012

**CHECK OUT OUR NEW AND UPDATED WEBSITE!**

We are so pleased to launch our new website. We contracted with Twisted Wire to give our information a new facelift.

There are many new features included in this site, so be sure to look it over. It is user friendly and easy to maintain. We are very excited to keep our information manageable and current.



## Voices of Montana radio interview

One of the most requested presentations that we have completed is the "Oil Impact to the Overall Economy of Richland County." This is a cumulative effort

of research on many aspects of the economy. It covers the impacts of the oil industry and how it affects all sectors in the on-going development.

The Montana Economic Developers Association, several legislative tours, the Montana Ambassadors' and the Leadership MT meetings were the most recent.

natorial meeting, we were asked to conduct an on-air, one hour, radio interview with John Arneson from "Voices of Montana."

We have made this presentation to the communities of Miles City and Malta, as well as to several statewide meetings.

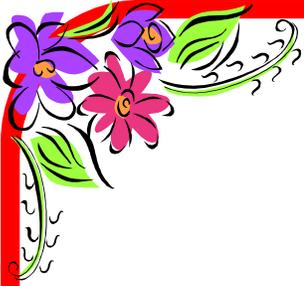
After giving the presentation to the Montana Economic Developers Association and Guber-

The show was aired on March 14, and it covered the information from the oil impact presentation. We have received many great comments from listeners that caught the show.

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**Panel members L to R: Jim Atchison, Loren Young, Kendall McRae, Sylvia Danforth, Leslie Messer, Cami Skinner, and Bill Wade**

## **Miles City Community College Energy Summit**

On March 15, Leslie Messer, Michelle Kelly, Cami Skinner, and Loren Young attended the event as representatives of Sidney, Richland County area.

This event was focused on identifying solutions for communities facing industry impacts.

Brent Moore, Community Planner, CTA, kicked off the summit by delivering his presentation, "Community Change During a Boom". Brent's main focus was urging com-

munities to conduct long range capital improvement planning.

Governor Schweitzer also gave a presentation on his energy accomplishments during his term.

Next, Dr. Stefani Hicswa, President of Miles City Community College, moderated a community panel. Participants of the panel included: John Laney, President of Southeast MT Tourism, Bill Wade, Mid-Rivers, Cami Skinner, Sidney Chamber, Leslie Messer, REDC,

Sylvia Danforth, Developmental Ed Assistance Program, Kendall McRae, Synergy, Loren Young, RC Commissioner, Jim Atchison, SE MT EDC, and Doug Sullivan, Dickinson School District.

Each presenter was given two minutes to give a brief statement on what solutions we had for the impacts we were facing.

The evening rounded off with a social at the Miles City Country Club.

Day two was action packed as well. Patrick

Barkey, Bureau of Business & Economic Research gave a presentation on "Economic Change with a Boom."

Following that were comments by the Congressional reps from MT: Senators Tester and Baucus, as well as Representative Rehberg.

The keynote address was provided by one of our own, Russ Atkins, Continental Resources, Inc.

Wrapping up the event were two additional forums on workforce and industry.



Leslie, Alicia Dahl, Nancy Verschoot

## RLF Award

Richland Economic Development is pleased to announce that the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) committee has awarded its eighth loan for the purchase of an existing business in Fairview. Alicia Dahl was approved for a loan to purchase and make renovations to the former T & C Diner.

Alicia completed an application in partnership with her lead lender, Nancy Verschoot, Richland Federal Credit Union, and presented this project to the RLF committee for review. The funding request was to purchase the building,

equipment, as well as remodeling costs for T & C Diner. The new business venture will be called Downtown Bistro.

Alicia explained that without the assistance of the RLF, it would have been very difficult to move forward and open Downtown Bistro. Alicia, as well as her sons, Parker and Connor, has experience in the food / restaurant business, and is excited about the services that she and her staff will provide to the Mon Dak region.

The RLF committee is pleased to assist Alicia in this business venture. The intent of the

RLF is to offer an additional tool to support new business and business expansion projects. Nancy states, "When Alicia approached me about this opportunity, my first thought was, 'This is exactly what the Revolving Loan Fund was created to do'. I am pleased that we are able to assist Alicia, and to help a business in Fairview as well. We wish her luck."

Richland Economic Development encourages existing businesses and new business start up projects to consider the RLF as a resource. The RLF loan pool of

\$1,000,000 is not free money, but an investment made by the Richland County Commissioners, to assist in the development of business in our economy. The application and review process is achievable, and done in conjunction with the area financial institutions in Richland County.

If you or someone you know is thinking of expanding or launching a new business in Richland County, contact any of the local financial institutions or Richland Economic Development today for an application!





**John Bigovich, Stockman Bank, participating on the assessment tour, listens to the challenges facing Fairview from Mayor Cummins.**

## **MT Needs Assessment Tour**

The Montana Department of Commerce and State Department of Transportation, with the US Department of Agriculture/Rural Development and the US Department of Commerce / Economic Development Administration, visited Eastern Montana to help local governments address the impacts of oil development in the region.

Richland Economic Development facilitated a roundtable discussion with key local officials, businesses, and public housing authorities to determine what resources

may be available to help manage growth, and its effects on public services, housing, economic development, transportation, and infrastructure.

Following the business meeting, we then took the entire entourage on a bus tour to the communities of Sidney, Fairview and Lambert. The assessment team was able to learn of the current impacts to our economy. They also brainstormed ways to creatively utilize the infrastructure funding programs to address the challenges here.

The challenges that were identified for Richland County were:

- Housing: lack of housing, high rents
- Infrastructure: sewer/lagoons, water
- Community Services/Planning: homelessness
- Transportation: streets, traffic
- Economic Develop-

ment: funding programs

- Employment: workforce issues
- Healthcare: recruitment, burnout

The visits were very successful and information shared will be extremely useful for future project development and planning between the federal, state, and local governmental agencies.



**Dept of Commerce staff listens to Scott Adams, Yellowstone Valley River Railroad.**



**Leslie Messer and Governor Brian Schweitzer**

## **MT Ambassadors' Annual Meeting**

Over 140 people attended the 2012 Annual meeting held in Billings, MT, March 22-23. The conference theme was "Imagine the Possible".

"The MT Ambassadors play an important role in sharing our success stories, attracting new businesses, and creating jobs," stated Governor Schweitzer in a recent interview.

During the conference, the Ambassadors honored several winners for 2011's awards.

Leslie Messer was awarded the Montana Ambassador of the Year. Governor Schweitzer states: "Ms. Messer serves on the Ambassadors Board of Directors and exemplifies what it means to be a Montana Ambassador through her service to the organi-

zation and the state of Montana. Ms. Messer works every day with businesses involved in the Bakken development and the growth of Eastern Montana."

Other award recipients were: Outreach Ambassador: Lynda Colucci, Entrepreneur of the Year: Sarah Calhoun, Red Ants Pants, Business of the Year: Stillwater Mining Company, and Educator of the Year: Dr Waded Cruzado, MSU.

The Keynote address was delivered by Harold Hamm, Chairman and CEO of Continental Resources.

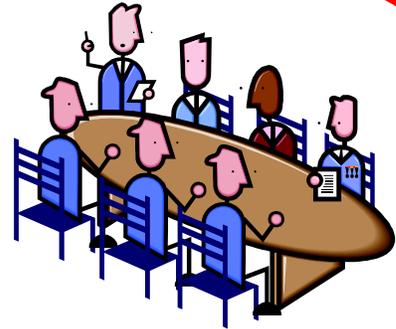
Continental Resources is the largest leaseholder and driller in the Bakken Shale and the nation's 14th largest oil company. Hamm said eastern Montana and western



**Harold Hamm, CEO, Continental Resources**

North Dakota are the best places to be right now. "The Bakken started here in Montana. Started in Elm Coulee, and that's where the code was broken," said Hamm. "This is the biggest oil field in the United States, it's the biggest find in the last 40 years, and we're only about 2% into it."





## Leadership Montana

On March 22-24, Sidney was host to 42 participants from all across Montana. Richland Economic Development was pleased to facilitate the program while the group was here.

Leadership MT is a state-wide, eight month training program that educates the participants on the topics of: issue awareness, leader-

ship skills, trusteeship, as well as team building projects. Craig Herbert and Leslie Messer graduated from the program in 2008.

We would like to thank the following folks for their assistance while the Leadership MT group was in Sidney: Beth Redlin, Bob Evans, USDA, LeRoy Strasheim, Rick Haraldson,

SHC, Miller's Corner, Jim's Catering, Leif Anderson, Beagle Properties, Marcy Hamburg, City/County Planner, Mayor Smelser, Gary Schoepp, Action Auto, Steve Sing, Dave Garland, Ray Carlson, Sidney Sugars, Russ Atkins, continental Resources, and C & L Charlots.

## MonDak American Petroleum Institute (API) Local Chapter Meeting

In an effort to continue communications with the oil industry, the Richland County Commissioners asked RED to facilitate a meeting with the oil companies.

We thought that the most logical means to accomplish this task was to request a spot on the next API meeting agenda. Our office contacted a local API officer and made the

request. All three commissioners were in attendance on February 21, at the Sidney Country Club.

Don presented the projects and road improvements that would be taking place in 2012. These roads are projects that will have the extra overlay treatment.

Don also asked the participants if there were additional needs, concerns or challenges that the County

should be focusing on. Two roads were identified as needing attention.

We are pleased to assist the Commissioners and the oil companies to nurture the continuing communication efforts.





***RED would like to thank All of our members and Welcome our newest!***

***Planet Hair &  
Bubba's BBQ***





**RICHLAND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

1060 S Central Ave Suite 3

Sidney, MT 59270

Phone: 406-482-4679

Fax: 406-482-5552

E-mail: [redc@midrivers.com](mailto:redc@midrivers.com)

A NON-PROFIT COUNTY WIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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*“Coming together is a beginning.*

*Keeping together is a progress.*

*Working together is success.”*

*Henry Ford*

**Thank you for your support!**