



"What's Up Downtown"

The Laramie Main Street E-Newsletter

Vol. 3, Issue 4

April 2009

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Dear Kim

April is here, and Earth Day is coming! There's a lot going on downtown this month -- please read on and mark your calendars. Also be sure to check out our website at www.laramiemainstreet.org.

Thank you for subscribing to the monthly Laramie Main Street Program e-newsletter -- as always, please call (742-2212) or email (mainstreet@laramiewy.org) if you have news for the May newsletter.

Laramie Community Clean Up Day Saturday, April 18th

It is time to spruce up **OUR** town! The Laramie Community Clean Up Day will be Saturday, April 18th. The Laramie Main Street Program is helping organize this event in conjunction with the City of Laramie, the Laramie Economic Development Corporation, the Laramie Boomerang and the Laramie Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Railroad Train Depot on 1st and Kearney will serve as the central meeting location; anyone interested in volunteering should meet at the Depot at 8am on Saturday the 18th. From the depot, volunteers will be sent out with trash bags to locations throughout town. Please be sure to bring work gloves and wear appropriate clothing. From noon-1pm the Laramie Fire Station on 4th Street will graciously offer a complimentary lunch for all participants.

We are currently searching for anyone interested in volunteering for this event. If you or anyone you know would like to volunteer, please feel free to contact the Laramie Main Street Program at (307) 742-2212. You may also contact us via email; please send your inquiries to mainstreet@laramiewy.org, marked to the attention of Nicholas. Please mention in your inquiry if there is a

Come join in on this fun class!
Learn some way-out tricks to keep the sterno burning bright at your fondue get together. Cheese and dessert fondues will be demonstrated and of course dined upon. Contact us at 307-742-1800 to register for this class.

**Where: The Copper Kettle
209 S. 2nd St. Laramie, WY
82979**

When: April 8, 2009

Time: 6pm-8pm

Cost: \$35.00

Contact: 307-742-1800



www.mycopperkettle.com
mycopperkettle@yahoo.com

not remove all the threats to jobs, but it is timely, targeted and temporary.

Some may be surprised how many people in Wyoming make their living from the arts. In Sheridan there are 1,123 people (5.8% of the labor force) working in the creative, arts-based economy according to a recent, very careful study, "Tradition, Expression and Recognition: Creative Opportunities in the New West." Stuart Rosenfeld, the author, gets his data from on-the-ground counts that find the self-employed and others not listed on the standard sources. He also found a cluster of leather and saddle artisans. The study (available from the Center for Vital Communities in Sheridan) is of significance to the whole state and our efforts to increase economic diversity and attract top creative talent. There is much here already that we can nurture. For example, the arts economy in Jackson, according to a recent study by Americans for the Arts (Arts and Prosperity III), is one of the largest in the nation. While the study, using Dunn and Bradstreet lists, misses much of the activity, it does allow comparisons and they are staggering. Jackson has ten times more arts spending per capita than Boulder, Colorado and twenty times more than Boise, Idaho, both places that promote themselves as arts centers. Cody, not included in the study, is probably not far behind Jackson, and clusters of activity can be found in many Wyoming communities, including Casper.

This matches national trends. Rosenfeld found that the arts economy in Arkansas was the state's third largest employer and that in Montana, astoundingly, there were more people working in the arts than in the energy industry. It's no surprise then that arts councils are often part of state offices of economic development, as is the case in Louisiana and Connecticut and that many towns actively recruit artists and promote themselves as arts destinations. Winston-Salem, North Carolina, a decaying manufacturing city has made a huge comeback by stressing music, pottery and food. Each night the downtown swarms with young shoppers and music lovers having a good time and spending money. We know that appealing towns have lots of arts and that arts draw people and businesses. We also know that arts are fun, that they give pleasure and meaning, that strong art lifts the soul and unclutters the mind. We also know they stimulate creativity and train excellent workers. See The National Governors' Association report "The Impact of Arts on Workforce Preparation" and their recent, timely and very well-written "Arts and the Economy" (nga.org/Files/pdf/090/ARTSANDECONOMY.PDF). We know that art museums and concert halls are key parts of attractive communities that draw businesses. So we can keep at the Casper Civic Auditorium project, but let's not forget that the arts are already diversifying Wyoming's economy."

Bruce Richardson is Chair of the Wyoming Arts Council and a board Member of the National Assembly of State

Arts Agencies. You can reach him at brichard@uwyo.edu and 307-268-2393.

The Main Street Manager from Florida

"It has been four weeks since I arrived towing a U-Haul from Florida with my dog, Reba. It is an honor and a pleasure to be the Executive Director of the Laramie Main Street Program. Since arriving I have been welcomed by so many friendly people. I went to the season finale Cowboy Basketball game, I have eaten at most of the downtown restaurants, I have had a beer at the famous/infamous Buckhorn, saw Elton John, Friday night and had Turkey dinner with a great group of people at Atmosphere Mountain Works.

The weather has been interesting to say the least. There is so much to do and I look forward to working with the entire community on many projects that will benefit Laramie.

I would like the opportunity to meet you and hear about your vision of Laramie. If I can answer any questions you may have about the Main Street Program and our goals and plans for the next few years please call 307-742-2212, email mainstreet@laramiewy.org or stop by the office at 313 S. 2nd Street, Suite B (upstairs, side door). Thank you for kind welcome and the opportunity to serve the community."

Kim Skidmore

Kim Skidmore is the new Executive Director of the Laramie Main Street Program.

Sincerely,
The Laramie Main Street Program Team

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