



Twin Falls Business Improvement District newsletter

May
2009

BID enhances downtown communication with newsletter

Welcome to the first newsletter for members of the Twin Falls Business Improvement District, more commonly referred to as the BID. It is the hope of the BID board that the newsletter will help create a better forum for communication for the 200-plus BID members and that it will also enhance the mission of the BID.

In case you're wondering what that mission is, it is multi-faceted. The BID was created in 1982 in order to help business owners in the downtown area pool resources. By working together, downtown business people can draw more people into the downtown area. This unified effort includes marketing the area to the community and region through events and also through making the downtown an attractive and fun place to be. The BID exists also to act as an advocate for downtown. The board is currently re-evaluating the mission of the BID. If you have some ideas, please contact board members.

But first, in order to communicate with your board members, you have to know who they are and how to get in touch with them. Here's their contact information:

- **Chairman Jeff Bulkley, 280-1212, or jeffbulkley@hotmail.com;**
- **Vice Chairman Greg Edson, of First Federal Savings, 733-1921, 383 Shoshone Street North, Gedson@Firstfd.com;**

- **Tim Obenchain, of Obenchain Insurance at 264 Main Avenue South, 733-1076, tim@obenchaininsurance.com;**
- **Kathy Schroeder, of Beacon Burger 'n' Brew, 137 Second Avenue East, 280-0843, nicknkath@cableone.net;**
- **Dan Brizee, of Brizee Heating and A/C, 227 Second Avenue East, 733-2624, dan@brizee.com;**
- **Michele Hamilton, of Scrappin' Girlfriends, 123 Main Avenue East, 734-8592, Michele@scrappingirlfriends.com;**
- **Greg Wills, of Wills Toyota, 236 Shoshone Street West, 733-2891, greg@willstoyota.com.**

In upcoming newsletters, you will always be able to find contact information for members on the last page. being, we plan on distributing the newsletter via e-mail.

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PARKING STUDY AND SURVEY RESULTS

Students from the College of Southern Idaho recently conducted a study on how the eight parking lots and the metered spaces in the downtown area are being used. They also sent out a survey to each of the 200-plus BID members. The purpose of this work was to determine if there is adequate downtown parking and to also find out what the merchants' and property owners' perceptions and opinions are about parking lots and meters.

We had an excellent response rate to the survey, with 70 respondents.

That's about a 30 percent response rate! According to Twin Falls Economic Development Director Melinda Anderson, a 5-percent response rate would be considered good.

"Thirty percent is unbelievable," she said.

Thank you to everyone who answered the survey. Meanwhile here are the results:

- Most respondents are pleased with signage, enforcement, meter rates (\$0.25 per hour), lease rates (\$10 to \$20 per month) and fine rates (Currently a warning, then \$5, \$10, \$20 and \$50 for each consecutive offense within the same month). The approval rates to these questions ranged from 65 percent to 83 percent, with the latter referring to meter rates of \$0.25.

- Respondents were not quite so enthusiastic about parking turnover and who should pay for parking. Only 38 percent think parking should be limited to two hours. Overwhelmingly, those who responded think customers should **not** pay for meter maintenance nor should business owners. Only 15 percent and 17 percent respectively agree with that concept.
- Respondents were somewhat split on whether or not they think parking is adequate for their individual businesses. Sixty-five percent said that metered employee parking was adequate for their own businesses, but only 43 percent thought that metered customer parking was adequate. People split their votes evenly on the adequacy of off-street parking.

The students conducted a study of the metered spaces and parking lots by visiting the area five times over a three-week period during February and March to count spaces that were actually in use. In addition, they visited on different days at different times. Students found there was never a time when at least 80 percent of parking spaces were being used. Generally, results showed there was always parking available for customers.

Parking coordinator Woody Cullen said his observations of availability of parking spaces throughout all seasons is that parking spaces in the customer lots and metered areas are

always available, though sometimes customers might have to walk up to a half block.

To view the actual maps and results of the study go to www.tfid.org, click onto "economic development" under "departments."

EVENTS COORDINATOR HIRED

The BID Board has hired Miranda Henning to coordinate events in the downtown area. She was the marketing director and coordinator for Gold's Gym and SunSations Tanning and Day Spa in both Twin Falls and Pocatello for five years.



Henning has a bachelors degree in corporate training and human resources from Idaho State University, and she also has a real estate license. Henning has sold real estate for the past three-and-a-half years through Exit Realty Concepts.

Henning said her No. 1 goal for downtown is to "get the word out . Not a lot of people seem to know what is going on downtown," Henning said. "There all kinds of great mom-and-pop businesses in the historic downtown area of Twin Falls, and letting people in the region know about these events will draw them into downtown."

The events lined up for the rest of 2009 are listed in the next column:

Twin Falls Tonight — will be held again June 10th through July 15th. Each event will feature a different band, and there will be food and drinks available. It's not uncommon for upwards of 800 people attending these events.

- **Quilt Walk** — July 1-4. This is the first year of this event. Stitchin' Time owner Cathy Reitz, who brainstormed the idea, said quilts will be hung up throughout the historic downtown area to promote the uniqueness of downtown. "We want to paint downtown with quilts," she said. In addition, there will be arts and crafts vendors.
- **MagicFest** — July 29 -Aug. 1. Another first this year, it will feature free magical performances at sponsoring downtown businesses, a children's movie matinee and a special ticketed stage presentation in the evening at Roper Auditorium.
- **Oktoberfest** — Oct. 2-4, is the harvest festival for Magic Valley. Entertainment includes a German band, a street dance, arts and crafts and an area set aside for the kids to play in.
- **Festival of Lights** — Dec. 4, consists of an evening parade in which all floats must emphasize lights. Downtown is well lit and decorated inside and out to reflect a festive spirit.
- **First Fridays** — is a monthly event at one a several downtown businesses, including Rudy's A Cook's Paradise, The Magic Valley Arts council, Jensen Jewelers and Hands On. The event features live music with local artists, wine and beer by the glass and specialty food tasting. Each event goes from 6 to 9 p.m.

REVIEW OF CITY STAFF SERVICES TO THE BID

In May of 2008 the city began assisting the BID with parking and financial administration. If you need information or help with those services or with landscaping, you should contact the following:

- **Melinda Anderson, administration and financial, 735-7240, manderson@tfid.org;**
- **Woody Cullen, parking, 734-2113, Wcullen@tfid.org;**
- **Todd Andersen, landscaping, 736-2265, Tandersen@tfid.org.**

Meanwhile, the City is interviewing for the position of administrative assistant in the economic development department. Part of the position includes working for the BID, which pays one fourth of the salary.

Personalities, Businesses and More ...

As we move through this new endeavor, the plan is to focus on YOU, the members of the BID. There will be profiles of new and old businesses, profiles of business people, and information about buildings for rent and for sale, in addition to providing information that you tell us you want.

So here goes: A profile of business owner and BID board member ***Kathy Schroeder***.

According to an old adage, if you need something done, look for someone who is already busy. That's certainly the case with Kathy Schroeder, who owns the very popular Beacon Burger & Brew with her husband Nick Schroeder.



But running the Beacon is only one of Kathy's jobs. She is the dietary manager at Bridgeview estates. That's in addition to serving on the BID board and the South Central District Health Food Safety Board. Plus, she is the vice president of the Idaho Dietary Managers Association.

Kathy has decades of experience in the food industry. Lately she is very focused on building up the uniqueness and energy of the downtown.

"People who have businesses downtown really care," she said. "They are personally invested in providing good, friendly service."

