



MEDA ONLINE NEWS FOR APRIL 2013

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20 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP AND PROGRESS MEDA 2013 SPRING CONFERENCE

The MEDA Spring Conference Agenda Committee has almost finished their work. A unique conference is now set for May 8th – 10th, in Hamilton, at the Bitterroot River Inn. Highlights include Professional Development Training with Dr. David Kolzow on May 8th, followed by grilled pizza sponsored by Ravalli Co EDA and Montana Arts Council. May 9th starts out with amazing tours unique to the Bitterroot Valley with a kickoff luncheon featuring Montana made foods. A new format will be experienced all afternoon with speed presentations followed by a lengthy break for attendees to obtain more information on subjects of interest to them. The evening of the 9th an unforgettable program update event is planned – complete with brew tasting and prizes. Friday, May 10th is all about MEDA including a time capsule, annual meeting, committee updates and a 20th Anniversary celebration. [View the agenda and registration.](#)

MEDA COMMITTEE UPDATES

- Nominating: The MEDA Nominating Committee will meet April 2nd to identify officers and board members for 2013. MEDA's membership will vote during the Annual Meeting on May 10th.
- Scholarship: The Rick Jones MEDA Scholarship deadline was March 29th for the spring round. The Scholarship Committee will meet soon to decide scholarship winners.
- Legislative: The tireless MEDA Legislative Committee addressed multiple bills and issues in March. Weekly calls continue at 7:00am each Wednesday.
- Professional Development: Thanks to a sponsorship from PPL Montana and the work of the Professional Development Committee, a top-notch training is to take place on May 8th, prior to the MEDA Conference. Dave Kolzow will train on "Managing Organizations for Efficiencies and Sustainability". Dr. Kolzow is currently President of Kolzow and Associates which does economic development consulting and recently served as the Chair of the Department of Economic Development & Planning at the University of Southern Mississippi for four years. He has over twenty-five years of consulting experience in site selection, real estate development planning, and community economic development.

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1,780 Requests Completed and Counting...



This past week, CEIC got an inquiry from someone wondering if their mother was the oldest person in Montana. Since all individual information is confidential, Senior Economist Joe Ramler used the following table from the Census to assist in answering the request.

Census 2010 - Montana	
Age - April 1, 2010	Total People
100 to 104 years	162
105 to 109 years	12
110 years and over	1

Every week, the CEIC answers diverse requests from all walks of life. **Since June 1, 2009** (when CEIC began tracking requests) almost **two thousand inquires** have been answered by a staff of four full-time employees – the same number the Bureau had when

it was established in 1983 at the Department of Commerce. Since the Bureau is both an Economic Information Center and lead agency for all Montana's demographic information, the spectrum of requests is simply amazing. Here are a few examples for answered requests:

Can you provide all the demographic information necessary to update the growth plan for the City of Great Falls?

How many jobs did the Big Sky Trust Fund create both directly and indirectly?

I am writing a book on the history of mining. How many people have lived in Neihart since the 1800s?

What is the profile of women in Montana (age, race, occupation, earnings, poverty)?

How many ranches are there in Montana and what do they produce?

Can you provide me a map that shows population density throughout Montana relative to the number of dentists?

What are the benefits and costs for a plastics fabricator business?

How many children are there in extremely low-income households that could qualify for assistance from a nutrition grant?

Can you provide an accurate map of businesses that were flooded?

What is the number of 4 bedroom houses in Montana?

I am writing a news story and want to know how many Native Americans live in urban centers?

CEIC is redesigning its website and streamlining services with the goal of answering more of Montanans requests within the same resources giving taxpayers (like us) more for our money. We welcome feedback and ideas, and as always, bring us your questions!

For more information, contact CEIC staff at ceic@mt.gov or (406) 841-2740.



[See Monthly Report](#)

MONTANA BEAR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Nine business visits were held in March; three action items were generated with two closed. Visits in each county: Flathead – 4, Gallatin – 2, Missoula – 1, and Yellowstone – 2. Two task force groups met on March 25th and 26th to revise IWT forms and criteria to assist in strengthening the program.

MEDA WORKING GROUPS UPDATE

MEDA Economic Development Web Portal Working Group

This newly formed group which is a blend of the CRDC/EDD Subcommittee and the MEDA Board continues to pursue the building of an online presence for Montana's economic development efforts. Chris Mehus, Chair, held a meeting on March 8th during which the group asked Chris to compile a draft Scope of Work for the project. Chris completed the draft and it is currently being reviewed by the working group with the final product to be sent to the MEDA Board for approval.

RLF

The Revolving Loan Fund Working Group met via conference call on March 12th and discussed a variety of topics relating to revolving loan funds. Christin Hileman serves as Chair. The next meeting is tentatively set for April 9th at 10:00am.

BEAR

The MEDA BEAR Working Group met via conference call on March 20th to discuss IWT Grant Program, the 2013 BEAR Roundup, and training needs. [Minutes](#) are available. The BEAR Working Group will meet in April to build the agenda for the BEAR Roundup.

GRANT AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- [Check these out! New Community Friendly Grants Extension Community Resources Program weblink.](#) Thanks to David Young, Professor, Community Resource Specialist Extension Service & College of Nursing, MSU, for providing this information.
- **GRANTSTATION:** [Click here to read the entire newsletter](#) or click on the section headings for specific grant opportunities and important announcements. Email [MEDA](#) for the username and password.
- REAP, authorized by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, (Farm Bill) is designed to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses reduce energy costs and consumption and help meet the Nation's critical energy needs. USDA is accepting the following applications:
 - Renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement grant applications and combination grant and guaranteed loan applications until **April 30, 2013**;
 - Renewable energy system and energy efficiency improvement guaranteed loan only applications until **July 15, 2013**;
 - Renewable energy system feasibility study grant applications through **April 30, 2013**.

More information on how to apply for funding is available in the [March 29, 2013 Federal Register](#), pages 19183-19190.

OPPORTUNITIES AND TOOLS FOR YOU

Interested in sharpening your professional skills as an economic and community development practitioner? Looking for new tools to place in your economic development tool box? Check these out.

1. If you need current data about your county, here is a wonderful resource. Very easy to use, simply click on your county on the interactive map.
<http://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/eps-hdt/geography>
2. **The Eastern Montana Energy Expo** is pleased to announce the dates for 2013. The event will be May 15-16, 2013. There will be two days of tradeshow and seminars in areas of interest to the energy industry. A Job Fair will also be going on during the event. Anyone interested in exhibiting, having a Job Fair booth or attending, please call or visit our website at www.emtenergyexpo.com or call [406-377-7792](tel:406-377-7792)
3. **The Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (W2ASACT)** will be sponsoring Spring 2013 infrastructure planning and finance- two workshops and two webinars. The WASACT brochure can be found at: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/ResourceDevelopment/wasact/>
4. **Montana Consolidated Plan Meeting.** The meeting is Wednesday, May 22, at the Holiday Inn Parkside, 200 S. Pattee, St., Missoula, from 7:30-8:30 a.m. The meeting takes place during the Montana Housing Partnership Conference, but attendance at the Consolidated Plan meeting/breakfast is free. The purpose of the meeting is twofold:
 1. It will serve as the required public hearing on the 2012 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). The comment period for the CAPER runs from May 22 to June 10. The CAPER will be posted online May 17.
 2. It will be the first of several meetings regarding the 2014 Action Plan. In particular, the May 22 meeting will allow the public an opportunity to review the 2013 Action Plan, which was submitted to HUD in February, and offer suggestions on developing the 2014 Plan. To look at the 2013 Action Plan, go to <http://housing.mt.gov/cp/default.mcp.x>. During the CAPER comment period, you may submit written comments to the Department at DocConPlan@mt.gov, or to the address below. Save the date: Montana Housing Partnership Conference, May 21 – 23, in Missoula.

MEDA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

MEDA welcomes back Craig Erickson, Great West Engineering, as a MEDA Member. MEDA's membership now stands at 204.

MY TURN: WHAT WILL YOU BRING – TIME CAPSULE

The MEDA Agenda Committee came up with a great idea to commemorate MEDA's 20th Anniversary: a time capsule. MEDA conference attendees will be asked to bring an item for the time capsule. Here are some ideas:

- A small item that represents your region
- A photo(s) of a project you are working on
- Photos of people involved with MEDA
- A DVD or computer file
- Your prediction for the future of economic development in Montana
- Memorable stories of your work in economic development

The time capsule will not be sealed until after the Fall MEDA Conference to be held in Sidney.



Time Capsule Worthy: MEDA's 10th Anniversary with seven founding members: Evan Barrett, Dick King, Paul Tuss, Jim Davison, Dixie Swenson, Tony Preite and Jim Smitham.