



Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture Advantage

Volume 20 Issue 11

Sidney, Montana

November 2010

Special points of interest:

- November 2
Election Day
- November 4 - 6
Eastern C Volleyball
Tournament
- November 6
Wine & Food Festival
- November 8
R.E.D. Annual Banquet
- November 9
Pheasants Forever Banquet
- November 11
Big Sky Series:
"Saxophobia"
- November 16
B.A.H. at Sidney High
School
- November 17
JSEC Culture Clash
Seminar
- November 18
Foundation for Community
Care Planned Giving
Seminar
- November 20
Direct Sellers Showcase
- November 21
Concert at the Confluence
- November 25
Thanksgiving
- November 26
Christmas Stroll &
Parade of Lights
- November 26 - 28
Jr Gold Hockey
Tournament



Candidates Forum

The Moose Lodge meeting room was packed on October 19th for the Candidates Forum which is co-sponsored with the Richland County Farm Bureau. The total turnout for this event was estimated at 130 people. All candidates for the local contested races were in attendance along with several other single entrants. Also in attendance were candidates for the House of Representatives and Public Service Commissioner. The night was started with a welcome by Chamber President Marci Albin and then Moderator Greg Breuer took over to lead the program.



Senator Don Steinbeisser provided a discussion on ballot initiatives as an intermission between the candidate presentations and the public question portion of the agenda. The Chamber would especially like to thank Jerry Nypen for being the official timer, and Renee Goss and Heather Cotter of the Sidney/Richland Library for projecting the questions and other meaningful information on the screen.

Let's Dazzle Sidney at the Stroll

The Trade Promotion committee has set the theme for this year's Stroll and Parade of Lights as "Dazzling Ornaments". A great day is being planned that will draw people to Sidney. The Stroll will be held from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., with the parade starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Reynolds parking lot on November 26.

Several events are similar to past years including Santa making a round on the fire truck at 2:00 p.m., entertainment and food vendors on East Main Street, pictures with Santa at the Yellowstone Marketplace, a soup contest at Restorx, and extended shopping hours throughout the town. The Chamber will have live remote broadcasts in the morning to create interest in the day. We will also highlight the Boys & Girls Club annual Christmas Tree Auction.

Entertainment and non-profit vendors are needed, entries for the parade are needed, and a person is needed to take care of the fire pits. And of course set-up and take-down help is always welcome. Please plan on being part of a "Dazzling" event in Sidney.

Sidney Chamber 2010 Board of Directors

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Ben Larson	Safflower Technologies	Kathy Nicholson	Candy Bouquet
David Garland	Sidney Sugars	Jay Frank	Sidney Country Club
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Keep Customers At Home With The Big Bucks Loan Program & Christmas Cash Giveaway

At the last Trade Promotion meeting, the 3 bank sponsors of the Big Bucks Loan Program met to go over details on the program for 2010. The Sidney Big Bucks program is scheduled to commence on November 1st and will be available at Stockman Bank, Richland Federal Credit Union, and 1st Bank. Participants can receive up to a \$1000 (big bucks) no-interest loan for a fee of \$15. Those Big Bucks are then spent with participating Sidney Chamber members who redeem them at the participating banks at 97% of the face value by December 30th. The last day to use the "big bucks" is December 24th. Last year a total of \$46,950 was loaned out for spending with participating members.

Christmas Cash will begin in November with posters and signup slips being provided to participating members. It will be advertised as well with the "Sidney's Got It" program. Each member will draw a winning slip on December 17th, and on the 18th a live remote broadcast will be held with Power 95.1. Three drawings for a total of \$1,000 in Chamber Bucks will be drawn during the broadcast.

The Chamber encourages everyone to call in soon if you aren't signed up for these promotions and would like to participate.



Leadership Task Force Seeks Recruits

The Sidney Area Leadership Task Force is looking for some new members. The task force meets the first Thursday of the month. A very organized committee, this energetic group guides the "academic" year for the leadership class. If you have an interest in leadership and want to ensure the development of leaders for Sidney's future, then this is your place! Join us on November 4th at 7:00 a.m. for our next meeting. If you have any questions you may call the chamber office at 433-1916 or the committee's chairperson, Dana Jonsson at 433.8600.

Customer Service: 7 Qualities of Customer Care

Most people believe that the hardest part of starting and maintaining a successful business is finding the right product or service. In reality, this is hardly ever enough, it is simple the starting point. To be truly successful you need to see your business through your customer's eyes. What do they want and need to keep coming back to you time and again?

There are seven qualities of customer care that will take a business from the great product or service to the great company that will keep customers coming back for more. Here's what it takes to win and keep your customers.

➤ 1. Accessibility

It starts by making it easy for your customer to do business with you. Accessibility includes things such as ample parking, phone systems that are easy to use, returning e-mail the day it is received, and a website that is clear and easy to navigate. It means you use language that is clear and easily understood by all. If you have diverse customers, it means translating your materials into their native language.

➤ 2. Availability

Are you there when your customers need you? Make sure that your business hours are compatible with your clients/customers needs. If your business takes appointments or reservations, allow your customers to make them for the same day that they call you. On days when your business is closed, have a place or person that your customers can go to get information. This could be a website, a person on call, or a helpful message on your phone system. Nowadays, people seek information 24/7 -- make sure that they can get what they need when they need it.

➤ 3. Affability

Everyone wants to do business with nice, pleasant people. Seems simple, right? But sometimes the simplest of things are the hardest to accomplish. Having to deal with the realities of life, like traffic, arguments or just not feeling well, can make being pleasant seem impossible. However, making a point of warmly greeting your customers on the phone or in person can have an amazing impact on the success of your business. Everyone (from the janitor to the CEO) should greet customers warmly. Affability is everyone's responsibility. This will help ensure your customers get the treatment they deserve.

➤ 4. Agreeability

Customers want to hear "Yes" when they ask you for something. But, how many times do you say "No" to your customers? Perhaps you hide behind policies and procedures. Do you really think that it feels better when your customers hear, "No, sorry it's our policy?"

But obviously you can't say "Yes" every time your customers ask for something. So how do you know when to say "Yes" without it becoming a problem? Put it through a very simple filter. If it isn't illegal, immoral or unethical, say "YES."

Even if you can't say, "YES," don't say "No." Instead, stop, take a breath and say, "Let me see what I can do." Then do something: find a way around the issue-- call a supervisor -- be creative -- show the customer that you are doing everything possible to accommodate them.

When you say "YES!" you are showing your customer that you value their business and that you care about their best interests.

➤ 5. Accountability

Take ownership of your customer's needs and issues. Let them know that you will do what it

essential. Don't just wait for their requests, talk to them, ask them about their experience doing business with you. What do they like about your business? What do they dislike? Then give them what they want.

More than keeping up, make sure you exceed your customers expectations. If you always provide something exceptional, they will grow to expect it, and it ceases to be exceptional. When exceptional becomes the norm you need to figure out new ways to surprise and delight them.

➤ 7. Ability

It might seem strange that ability comes last on the list. If you do all the things described above successfully, customers will be far more willing to accept that you are not perfect. But this doesn't mean that you don't have to strive for continuous improvement.

Your customers are getting more and more knowledgeable. The internet has made it easy for them to gain expertise. You need to do as much research as they do. More than ever, you need to be an expert about your products and services. Take 15 minutes out of your day and learn something new: read what your customers read; find out what others are saying about your products and services; learn about your competition.

You can truly set yourself apart from the competition when you strive for more knowledge and expertise every day.

Candy Bouquet Celebrates With A Grand Opening

On October 12, Joanna Dunn and Sandy O'Donnell, the new owners of the Candy Bouquet, celebrated with a ribbon cutting, open house, and Business After Hours. The Sunrise Ambassadors participated in both the ribbon cutting and BAH.

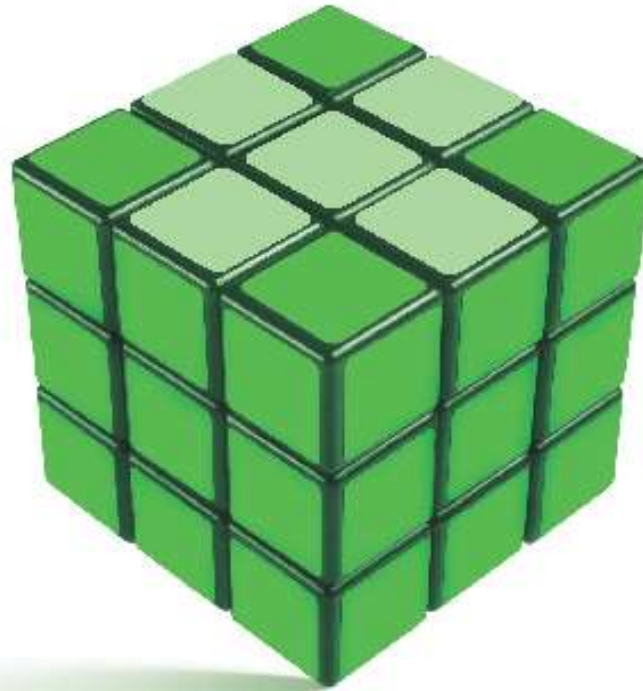
The store has been thru a complete transformation and now includes a variety of new gift lines plus new food items. Joanna and Sandy used this opportunity to highlight and share these new additions with the community and Chamber members. The M & M's on the outside of the store

grab your attention and the large bins of M & M's inside make you marvel at all the different colors they have available. Other products are also amply available as well. It is definitely a "sweet" place to visit.

The Chamber thanks these ladies for their membership and letting us help with their Grand Opening festivities. Candy Bouquet is located at 108 E. Main St., and they can be contacted at (406) 433-2263.



Pictured Left to Right: Ambassadors Enid Huotari and Lola Herbert, Nancy Verschoot of the Richland Federal Credit Union, Candy Bouquet co-owners Joanna Dunn and Sandra O'Donnell, Ambassador Ann Armstrong, Richland Economic Development executive director Leslie Messer, Ambassador Billie Giese and administrative assistant LaVanchie Starkey.



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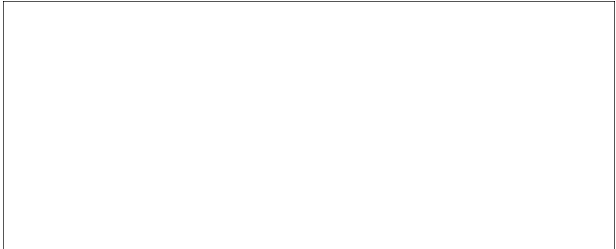
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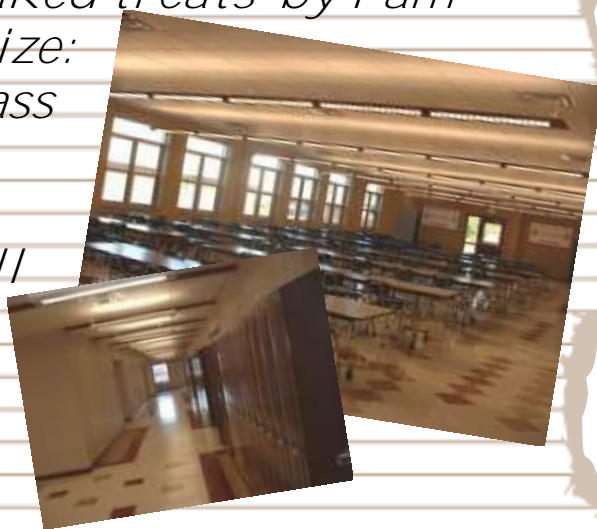
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We're on the web!
www.sidneymt.co

Sidney High School B.A.H.

November 16 4:30 - 6:00 pm

- *Check out the new cafeteria and 300 wing*
- *Tours of the school*
- *Fresh baked treats by Pam*
- *Door Prize: season pass to Girls and Boys Basketball Games*



NFL Books

The Sports & Recreation Committee will be offering their NFL Books for sale again this year. They will go on sale after Thanksgiving and make great stocking stuffers! They sell for \$10 each with \$5 being used to pay the winners. The funds raised for the Chamber help to pay for the Class C Tournaments held in Sidney each year.

Contact the Chamber if you are interested on purchasing a few.

We wish to keep everyone informed that the District 2 C will be having a combined boys and girls tournament this year on Feb. 14-19 of 2011. That will be followed up with the Eastern C Divisional Boys Basketball Tournament on March 3-5. Please plan to have help available for these events if at all possible.