



Special points of interest:

- January 1
New Years Day
- January 8
Kiwanis Club
Pancake Supper
- January 13 - 14
MonDak Ag Days
- January 16
Concert at the
Confluence
- January 18
B.A.H. Stockman Bank
- January 20 - 21
State of the Community
Countywide Conference
- January 26
Leadership Issue Day #4
- January 29
Frontier Military
Winter Encampment
Ft Buford
- January 31
Chamber Annual
Banquet
- January 31
Dawson Community
College View Day



Chamber Pleased to Present Laurie Brown

All members are encouraged to attend the 2011 Chamber Banquet on January 31 at the Sidney Elks Lodge. It begins with a no-host social at 6:00 p.m. and viewing of the Terrific Tables that businesses and groups can decorate. An open invitation is extended to everyone to host a table and promote your business to fellow members. The program starts at 6:30 p.m. and is broken down into several sections including the delicious meal provided by Jim's Catering, listening to reports from the Board and Director, hearing the Keynote Speaker Laurie Brown, and presentation of six Chamber awards.



The *Chamber Advantage* has featured articles by our banquet speaker Laurie Brown since August. Her message at the banquet will tie in with the customer service workshop she will have the next morning at the USDA Tech Transfer room. Laurie comes to us from Ferndale Michigan.

Tickets for the banquet are now available at the Chamber and are \$35.00 each until January 26th. After that they will be \$40.00. We look forward to seeing everyone there and celebrating a successful 2010.

Meet Our 2011 Chamber President



David Seitz will be leading the Chamber during an exciting year as we help Sidney celebrate its centennial. David came on as a director in 2009 and was elected to second vice president. He served last year at 1st Vice President. In Chamber work he has been involved with the Town & Country Festival, the Christmas Stroll and Parade of Lights, and helped at tournaments.

He is the owner of Seitz Insurance with his brother John. Seitz Insurance is a corporate member of the Chamber and is very diligent about helping the Chamber with major events including the beer gardens at the Richland County Fair and Rodeo this summer. David is also active in Kiwanis.

Sidney Chamber 2011 Board of Directors

Past President:	Marci Albin	The Lucky Buckle		
President:	David Seitz	Seitz Insurance		
1st V.P.				
2nd V.P.				
Treasurer:	Lorilee Norby	Mitchell's Oilfield Service		
Rowdy Cvancara	1st Bank	Greg Miller	Millers' Corner	
Idelle Badt	R.S.V.P.	Nick Lonski	Edward Jones Investments	
Kathy Nicholson	Private Member	Jay Frank	Sidney Country Club	
David Garland	Sidney Sugars	Lisa Aisenbrey	Sidney Health center	
Staff:	Wade J. VanEvery, Executive Director		LaVanchie Starkey, Administrative Assistant	

Foundation for Community Care Hosts B.A.H.

The Foundation for Community Care hosted a great Business After Hours on December 7 at their offices. Featured during this event was the campaign for the SHC Cancer Treatment Center that they are currently involved with. Pictures and displays were up to show visitors all about the new Center. The staff provided home-made Holiday treats and beverages which were served with the help of the Sunrise Ambassadors.

They reported a steady stream of visitors for the entire time, and are encourage that some gifts to the Center were received later as a result of this evening.



February Basketball Tournaments Return

The Sidney Chamber is helping with a "first" as the District 2C will be having a combined boys and girls basketball tournament at the Sidney High School gymnasium. This tournament will be a 6 day event on February 14th thru the 19th. The Chamber views this as an unmatched time to have basketball teams and fans in town for 6 days straight. Heading up this effort is Cara Nelson, chairperson of the Sports and Rec. Committee. Cara is currently seeking groups that would help take shifts setting up and overseeing the hospitality room. Fred Lake will be organizing a 2C Legacy Room to view memorabilia from participating schools.

Two games will be held on the first day (Monday), and then 4 games per day for the next four days, and then six games on Saturday the 19th. The Chamber will be seeking ticket sellers, ticket takers, and door watchers for these days. It has been arranged with the tournament manager to recognize what businesses are currently helping with each game. This way members will receive publicity for their support in this undertaking. Please plan to help if possible.

Customer Service: When Good Customer Service Rules Go Bad

Tony did exactly as he was trained. He sent a hand-written thank you note to his customer. However, when his customer received it she was furious and tore it up into little pieces before throwing it out.

How could something as well intentioned as a thank you note (hand written, at that) create such a negative reaction? As it turns out, this customer was still in the process of getting a serious issue resolved with Tony and his company. The thank you note arrived before this issue was dealt with, he never mentioned it, and he never apologized for the problem. Even though the thank you note was handwritten, it was as impersonal as a mass produced letter that starts with "Dear Customer." If you only train your employees to routinely do things without understanding the subtleties and context of their actions, you run the risk that they'll do the right things but in the wrong way. Here are some of the most common customer service rules, when to break them and alternative best practices to apply instead.

Rule One: Always Use the Customer's name

Dale Carnegie said "The sweetest sound in any language is the sound of one's own name." Though it may be true that using a customer's name can create a sense of intimacy, it can also have the opposite effect. Watch out for the following mistakes:

1. Using the customer's name too often.

"Well, Bob, you can see that this is the perfect solution for your business, don't you agree Bob? After all Bob, studies have shown this to be true. And Bob..." Overusing your customer's name may make them uncomfortable, seeming like an insincere gimmick rather than a true connection.

2. Mispronouncing your customer's name.

Some people have names that are hard to pronounce or have an unusual pronunciation. In either case it is always good to ask the proper way to pronounce their name. Once you've heard the proper pronunciation, it's essential that you pronounce it correctly. Customer's may forgive you for not saying it right, but it will still grate on your customer's nerves to hear his or her name said wrong repeatedly.

3. Being too formal or too informal when using your customer's name.

Some people prefer to use their first name; some prefer an honorific such as Mr., Miss, Ms, Mrs., Ma'am, Sir, etc. It is far more respectful to start off by being formal letting your customer tell you their preference.

Best Practice: Use your customers name in a way that shows respect and begins to build rapport.

Rule Two: Always Shake Your Customers Hand

For decades salespeople have been taught to shake hands in order to connect and build trust and rapport with their customers. However, there are a number of situations where offering a handshake can create more tension than trust.

1. Cultural Issues.

There are many cultures and religions in which handshaking is either forbidden or considered rude. If you are dealing with a multi-cultural customer base, learn all you can about the appropriate ways to greet and welcome them.

2. Social Anxiety.

For some people, the mere thought of having to shake hands creates a level of tension that can ruin the entire interaction.

3. People with compromised immune systems.

In 1918 the town of Prescott, Arizona outlawed handshaking to attempt to slow down the spread of the flu epidemic. Many people have been told by their doctors that they should not shake hands in

Continued next page

order to protect their fragile immune systems. There are also perfectly healthy people who are afraid of the germs that can be transmitted by a handshake.

Best Practice: Instead of initiating the handshake it is better to wait until your customer makes the first move. Keep your arms relaxed but ready to respond. If they start to shake your hand, you can easily reach out and grasp their hand in return.

Rule Three: Always Send a Handwritten Thank You Note

In this impersonal business world a handwritten note will help you stand out and make a great impression, but sometimes a note can have the opposite effect.

1. Sending a thank you note before a problem is successfully resolved

As in the opening story, don't send a thank you note if your customer has an unresolved problem. Don't send a note unless it's an apology, not a thank you.

2. Impersonal note

A perfunctory "thank you for doing business with us" can fall flat like a form letter, ruining whatever connection you may have with your customer.

Best Practice: Although a handwritten note is still somewhat personal in its nature, you need to take it a step further by writing something unique that relates to each customer. Your note should include references to what you have spoken about with the customer (i.e. Their kid's baseball game; the health of a loved one, etc.)

Rule Four: Follow the Golden Rule

From the time we are children we have been taught to follow the golden rule. "Do unto others as we would have them do unto us." Following this rule can create a number of problems:

1. Treating your customer in a way that makes them uncomfortable.

It is somewhat egocentric to assume that your customer always has the same wants and desires that you do. For example, if you are a gregarious person who likes lots of conversation and connection, you risk pushing your customer away if that kind of treatment makes them uneasy.

2. Missing an opportunity to surprise and delight.

When you only use yourself as a reference about what would impress your customer you lose the ability to be nimble and creative. When you listen carefully to your customer he or she will give you clues about what you can do to go the extra mile.

Best Practice: Use the Platinum Rule; "Treat others the way they want to be treated." This ensures that your customer will be treated in a way that meets his or her needs.

The bottom line to all these rule breakers and best practices is to keep your customer service personal. Don't just follow the rules, choose the best way to apply them to meet and exceed your customer's needs

JSEC & Chamber Host Workshop

The Chamber is privileged to partner with the Sidney JSEC Committee to bring Laurie Brown to our community for a customer service workshop on February 1. This will be held at the USDA-ARS Tech Transfer room starting at 8:00 a.m. and ending at noon. Laurie has called several of our local Chamber members to receive information to customize her presentation to our community. She has been published in many magazines including *Affluent*, *Golf Business Magazine*, *Benefits Marketing Online*, and *Agents Sales Journal*. A partial client list includes Ferndale Chamber of Commerce, Chrysler, Ford Motor Company, GMAC, K Mart, and the National Assoc. of Career Women. The Chamber and JSEC reviewed her videos on her web site at www.thedifference.com. Please register your people soon to insure that they have the opportunity to attend this experience.



Fight the Flu with Montana Chamber Choices!

The Flu and Cold season takes its toll across Montana businesses each year resulting in loss-time hours, absenteeism and work-flow disruption.



Preventing the Flu is important! Take these easy steps to stop the spread in your business:

- 1) **Cover** your sneeze and cough with your arm
- 2) **Wash** your hands thoroughly and often
- 3) If you feel sick, **stay home**, except to seek medical care
- 4) Talk to your primary care provider about a yearly **vaccination** to prevent the Flu.
- 5) Get a **Flu Kit** from your Chamber of Commerce to spread the prevention message.

Common Flu Symptoms may include:

- Fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue

When should you get vaccinated?

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) the yearly flu vaccination should start in September or when the vaccine is available and vaccination should continue until peak season (December-January).

Who Should Get Vaccinated

- Pregnant Women
- Children younger than 5, but especially babies younger than 2 years.
- Health Care workers
- People of high risk populations (chronic health conditions, asthma, diabetes, etc.)
- People 65 or older

What to do if you get sick

Limit your contact with others. Stay home for at least 24 hours, except to seek medical care. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and wash your hands frequently.

Montana Chamber Choices offers many preventative benefits - including the flu vaccine! If you are on Montana Chamber Choices Health Insurance get your flu shot today!

Big Bucks & Chamber Bucks Programs Encourage Local Spending

Our three Big Bucks bank participants reported on the 24th of December that they had loaned out \$36,950 in 45 interest free loans. The Chamber applauds 1st Bank, Stockman Bank and Richland Federal Credit Union for their contribution to Sidney's trade. Total Chamber Bucks purchased in 2009 is \$31,395. This generates a total of \$68,345 in local trade by the Sidney Chamber. If the multiplier of 7 is used for the time a dollar is turned over in a community, the Sidney Chamber created over a half million dollars for the local economy.

MonDak Ag Days

The Chamber is involved with Ag Days in several different ways. We will have a booth there to promote our members, and impress upon visitors that Sidney is an important Agri-Business community. The Sidney Centennial will also be featured with raffle tickets available for the commemorative items.

The social before the banquet will be operated by the Ag Committee and Board volunteers. This will be in the trade-show area, and will encourage visitors to look over all the commercial ag technology on display.

It is a long standing tradition that the Chamber Ag Committee and Board do the cooking and servicing for the breakfast. We look forward to using the new kitchen facilities for this endeavor.

TERRIFIC TABLES 2011



Terrific Tables is an eagerly anticipated part of the annual banquet, the creativity displayed each year is incredible, our participants continually impress us with the fabulous displays!

Join the fun and enter your business in the table decorating competition at this year's Chamber banquet. Shown are a few examples of last year's tables demonstrating how you can use this great opportunity to "show off" your business. We don't care how you decorate (as long as it's tasteful please!!)

Advertise a new product or service, you're guaranteed to have a captive audience of at least eight people sitting at the table with your business' information in front of them for two hours (probably longer!) Feel free to leave gifts or takeaways at the table settings. Tables can be decorated from 1:00 to 5:00 pm on Monday, January 31st.

The tables will be judged, the winning table will receive a free sponsorship of the *Chamber Advantage* monthly newsletter which includes one 8 ½ X 11 page advertisement for your business, a \$100 value. Contact the Chamber at 433-1916 to reserve a table for your business!!



2011 Chamber Committees

Our Committees are indeed the very heart and soul of the Chamber. It would be very difficult to have a successful organization without their hard work and commitment. Listed below are the active committees, the chairs and information for each committee. Meetings are held at the Chamber once a month and any member is welcome to attend – Come join us and get involved with your Chamber!

Agriculture

Chair: Ben Larson, Safflower Technologies

Purpose: Plan events that promote agriculture in both farming and ranching.

Activities: Ag Appreciation Golf Tournament, Field Day, event during National Agriculture week, Harvest Fest Tractor Pull.

Meetings: First Tuesday at 6:45 am. Enjoy breakfast & a meeting at various locations.

Meetings: The first Tuesday at 12:00 pm. BYO lunch.

Sunrise Ambassadors

Chair: Rene Goss, Sidney Public Library

Purpose: Serve as Ambassadors for the Chamber

Activities: Business After Hours and any Chamber event that they are needed.

Meetings: Second Tuesday at 3:00 pm

Christmas Stroll

Chair: Idelle Badt, R.S.V.P.

Purpose: A sub-committee of the Trade Promotion, this committee plans and organizes the annual parade & festivities to kick off the Christmas Season.

Date: November 25, 2011

Meetings: Scheduled as needed.

Sunrise Festival of the Arts

Chair: Deb Sing

Purpose: Plan and organize an event that will attract visitors to Sidney.

Date: July 9th, 2011

Meetings: Second Tuesday of each month at 4:15 pm

Leadership Task Force

Chair: Dana Jonsson, Stockman Bank

Purpose: Oversee the Sidney area Leadership Program that includes seven issue days and three skills development seminars.

Meetings: First Thursday at 7:00 am. The task force meets with members of the last graduating class to plan the issue days.

Town & Country Festival

Chair: Marci Albin, The Lucky Buckle

Purpose: To bring Town & Country together in a fun-filled day of celebration. This year the committee is focusing on the Sidney Centennial Celebration.

Date: June 25th, 2011

Meetings: Fourth Wednesday of each month at noon.

Membership

Purpose: Develop member benefits and work on membership recruitment & retention.

Activities: Membership appreciation event

Meetings: Scheduled as needed.

Trade Promotion

Chair: Greg Miller, Miller's Corner

Purpose: Plan and promote retail activities and Sidney events.

Activities: Sidney's Got It! Campaign, Coupon Packets Fall promotions, Christmas Stroll & Parade of Lights, Christmas advertising.

Meetings: Second Wednesday of each month. 7:30 am at the Chamber.

Sports & Recreation

Chair: Cara Nelson; Farm Bureau Financial Services

Purpose: Bid on tournaments and raise funds to support tournaments.

Activities: District & Divisional Class C Tournaments, Concessions at District 2C track meets, NFL books

Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture
909 South Central Avenue
Sidney, MT 59270

(406) 433-1916 phone
(406) 433-1127 fax
schamber@midrivers.com e-mail

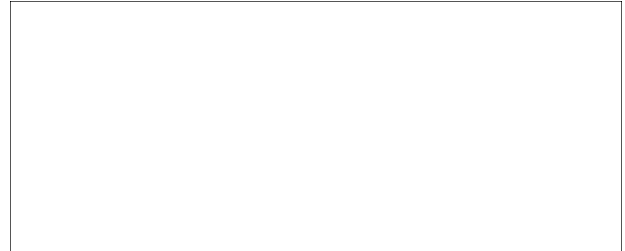
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Corporate Members:

Hi-Line Trucking
Lower Yellowstone REA
Montana-Dakota Utilities
Mitchell's Oil Field Service
Richland Federal Credit Union
Seitz Insurance
Sidney Sugars
Stockman Bank
Wells Fargo



PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Sidney MT 59270
Permit No. 300



The Advantage is published monthly by the Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture. Periodical postage paid in Sidney, Montana 59270, bulk permit #300.

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

Sidney Centennial Plans Under way

The Town & Country Festival will be coordinated with the City of Sidney to celebrate the centennial of Sidney's incorporation. The T & C Festival will be on June 25th, with additional centennial activities happening on the 24th and 26th. Several things are already in the works. Board members have conceived a package of commemorative items for a raffle, that include a 1894 Winchester replica rifle and pistol set, a hand made pair of spurs and straps, and a Centennial Quilt. The rifle is also for sell by itself also. This is all being kicked off at the Ag Days Chamber booth.

The Chamber parade will have a Centennial theme and entries are being requested from throughout the region and state. Festivities downtown will be quite similar, but with more people coming out to enjoy and celebrate Sidney. Other committees will be involved with the day with activities and

*Thank You to These
Renewing Members In 2010*

American Welding & Gas
Redline Audio & Cellular

Join your fellow Chamber Members

Stockman Bank Business After Hours

January 18, 2011
4:30 - 6:00 pm

- ≈ Enjoy Refreshments
- ≈ Tour the facility and see all the new remodeling
- ≈ Guess how many pennies are in the piggybank and win a prize

