

# 2009 RURAL COMMUNITY CONFERENCE

## Breakout Sessions & Keynote Speakers

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### **Tuesday, May 12 1:00 – 1:45 Conference Kick-off Keynote Address:**

#### **Ballroom A**

*Nancy Matheson*, Special Projects Coordinator in Agricultural Marketing and Business Development, Montana Department of Agriculture.

#### Nourishing Communities: Redeveloping a Montana-based Food Economy

This keynote address will explore how re-localizing Montana's food economy can increase the health and security of Montana's people and communities, and how Montanans are helping make that happen.

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### **Tuesday, May 12 1:45 – 3:15 BREAKOUT 1**

#### **Ballroom C**

#### Practical Strategies for Making Policy and Environmental Changes to Increase Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

To many people, the idea of trying to make policy or environmental changes to improve health may seem unfamiliar, overwhelming or even frightening. What is a policy, how do you know if it is good or bad, and how can you change it? And how can you possibly change something as big as "the environment"? In this session, staff of the Montana Nutrition and Physical Activity Program (NAPA) will explain why policy and environmental changes can provide affordable, sustainable strategies for supporting good health. They will give specific examples of strategies that are being used in this state to: Promote worksite wellness by: encouraging healthy eating and physical activity among employees; increasing physical activity by enhancing community infrastructure; improving breastfeeding rates by updating health care practices in hospitals; increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables by upgrading restaurant and grocery store offerings. Time will be built into this session for you to ask questions about specific conditions in your area and discuss practical steps you might take to move forward. Representatives of large and small Montana communities will be available to share their experience making policy and environmental changes. NAPA staff will provide contact information so that you can phone them or e-mail them to ask for technical assistance in the future. Resources and handouts will be displayed and distributed. This session is designed to help you get the practical information you need to make healthy policy and environmental changes in your own community.

Presenters: *Ninia Baehr*, Program Manager, MSU Nutrition and Physical Activity (NAPA) Program; *Cathy Costakis*, Physical Activity Coordinator, NAPA; *Lynn Hellenga*, Nutrition Coordinator, NAPA; *Shelly Sutherland*, Evaluator, NAPA; *Robin Mochi*, Co-Coordinator, NAPA.

#### **NW Lounge**

#### Bridge to Prosperity: Anaconda Horizons Project

Participants will learn the successful steps Anaconda implemented to mobilize their community, form strong grassroots participation, involve over 15% of their low income families and 35% of the population, resulting in programs reaching and improving the lives of those most at risk in their community. The session will feature a few of the 14 projects already implemented from 2007 – present

Presenters: *Jim Davison*, Director, Anaconda Local Development Corporation; *Barbara Andreozi*, MSU Extension Agent, Deer Lodge County; *Dan Villa*, State Representative; *Adam Vauthier*, Co-Owner, Vauthier-Ferguson Design.

### **SUB 233**

#### One Stop Shopping for MSU Extension Resources on Nutrition, Family, Finances and Housing

Participants will be able to identify easy access to information and resources in the areas of nutrition, family finances, parenting, caregiving, housing, and emergency preparedness to meet the needs of Montana consumers, families and communities. Offered by MSU Extension Family and Consumer Sciences, panel members from MSU Extension will provide an overview of current information and resources available through county and state Extension offices, websites, and training. Resources for each topic will be highlighted in this informative session, plus other innovative programs addressing comprehensive health concerns. Participants will explore resources and develop plans for utilizing these resources with suggestions for tailoring to specific needs offered by panel members.

Presenters: *Lynn Paul*, Food/Nutrition Specialist, MSU Extension; *Mike Vogel*, Housing and Environmental Health Specialist, MSU Extension; *Sandy Bailey*, Family and Human Development Specialist, MSU Extension.

### **SUB 235**

#### Schools as an Opportunity for Food System Change in Rural Communities

With K-12 schools in Montana purchasing more than \$19 million worth of food annually, a great opportunity exists for local food system improvement by targeting these institutional foodservice programs. Under the umbrella of Farm to School programming, efforts are underway throughout Montana that will serve to connect local food producers to school district foodservice programs. Some challenges that face those working to improve the procurement of locally produced food products by Montana school districts include: pricing; volume and consistency of product availability; regulatory/sanitation rules and issues; lack of distribution infrastructure; and processing needs of institutional foodservice programs. Many successes have also been experienced in Farm to School efforts in Montana including: food mapping projects to identify sources of local foods for foodservice directors; AmeriCorp Vista program called FoodCorp – placing volunteers in institutional foodservice programs to improve procurement of local products; school gardens; farm to school curriculum tying together classroom, cafeteria and community; and local food school fundraising program, among others. With the school serving as the heart and soul of many rural communities, Farm to School holds potential for revitalizing communities throughout the state.

Presenters: *Mary Stein*, Nutrition Specialist, MSU Dept. of HHD; *Christine Emerson*, Director of School Nutrition Programs, Office of Public Instruction; *Kevin Moore*, Grow Montana Farm-to-Cafeteria Connections.

### **Theater**

#### Community Foundations: Preserving and Strengthening your Town through Philanthropy

This session will inform participants about what a community foundation is, why community foundations are important to preserving small towns and how capturing part of the intergenerational transfer of wealth can provide resources to rebuild our rural communities. The session will include a panel discussion of representatives from former Horizon communities and other rural communities in Montana that have started a community foundation to share their views about the challenges and opportunities. Finally, Cathy Cooney will discuss the programs available to help start a foundation in your area and how to begin the process.

Presenters: *Linda Reed*, President/CEO, Montana Community Foundation; *Cathy Cooney*, Program Director; Montana Community Foundation.

### **Union Market Room**

#### Rural Energy: Community Needs and Energy Opportunities

This session will attempt help communities focus their interest in rural energy by exploring their needs and assets as well as examining how potential energy sources may interact with these specific needs and assets. Panelists have experience with biofuels, wind energy and other renewable energy technologies.

Presenters: *Joel Schumacher*, MSU Extension, Economics Department; *Al Kurki*, Energy Program Specialist, NCAT; *Gordon Britton*, Professor Emeritus Former Director of the Wheeler Center; *Dan Lloyd*, Neighborhood Conservation Club Coordinator, Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO).

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## **Tuesday, May 12 3:30 – 5:00 BREAKOUT 2**

### **Ballroom C**

#### Innovative Childcare Solutions for Rural Communities

In this session, speakers will share examples of how rural communities around Montana have successfully provided childcare services to those in need within these rural communities.

Presenters: *Jean Wallace*, Daycare Supervisor, Wheatland Memorial Healthcare, Harlowton; *Mary Jane Standaert*, State Collaborative Coordinator for Early Childhood System, Head Start; *Kristi Wilson*, Daycare Supervisor, Kristi's Kiddie Korner; *Karen Thomas*, Director, Childcare Resource and Referral, Havre.

### **NW Lounge**

#### What Do You Do With an Empty School – or Any Other Empty Building, For That Matter?

Participants will get ideas on how to use former school buildings, business buildings, churches, etc. that have been left vacant because of school consolidations and out-migration of inhabitants. By using an asset-based approach to identifying possible alternatives, participants will learn to look at these facilities as possible assets not liabilities. There will be a heavy emphasis on local food systems as that is the example that will be highlighted in the presentation. Participants will be given tools to do their own community analysis to determine what is right for their situation. This presentation may be a sounding board for a potential region-wide symposium of the same title in 2010 or 2011 to be held in the northern Great Plains.

Presenter: *Bruce Smith*, MSU Extension Agent, Dawson County, & Farm-to-Table Project.

### **SUB 233**

#### Troubleshooting Grant Proposals: Common Pitfalls

How many of you have written and submitted grant proposals? How many of you have been asked to work as a collaborator or consultant on a proposal? Do you ever feel that proposal writing is an act of futility? What if there were a few tricks of the trade that would improve your competitiveness? Topics will include: 1) Seeking and finding appropriate funding sources, 2) Getting started (letter of intent/ letter of inquiry), 3) Marketing and selling your idea/project, 4) Goals and objectives, 5) Methods and evaluation, 6) Budget and budget narrative, and additional items. We would encourage you to bring questions about proposals you are currently working on or have submitted in the past. Hopefully, when you leave the session, you will feel the process has been demystified in many ways and feel confident in taking the plunge once more.

Presenters: *Patricia McGlynn*, MSU Extension Agent, Flathead County; *Dave Young*, Community Resource Specialist, MSU Extension; *Mike Vogel*, Housing and Environmental Health Specialist, MSU Extension.

### **SUB 235**

#### Projects to Strengthen your Community Food System

This session will highlight food projects such as starting a community garden, conducting a community food assessment, creating a farmer's market, and improving local food awareness in rural communities. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about strategies for improving their community's food system, through a panel discussion exploring how rural communities in the State are working to change the way we produce, process, distribute and consume our food. *Diana Taylor*, Mayor of Big Timber and *Mark Rehder* of the Livingston non-profit Farms for Families, will offer examples of food-related projects currently being carried out in their communities. A question and answer session will follow the panel discussion, which will allow participants to gain additional advice on how to get food-related projects started in their communities.

Presenters: *Diana Taylor*, Mayor, Big Timber; *Mark Rehder*, Executive Director, Farms for Families.

## **Theater**

### Building Rural Philanthropy in Troubled Times

We will describe successful collaborations in Montana that are expanding philanthropy, and involve attendees in discussing strategies to foster stronger collaborative efforts to develop more philanthropic resources for Montana's rural communities. Montana ranks 49th in in-state foundation assets and 46th in per capita grantmaking. In difficult economic times, philanthropy gravitates toward alleviating human suffering and helping meet basic human needs. The challenge before our state is how to meet these growing charitable needs while concurrently encouraging strategic investments that build increased philanthropic resources for our state. Collaborative initiatives have been developed in Montana that have brought funders together in new ways that are expanding the amount of grant dollars available to nonprofits in both rural and urban areas.

Presenters: *Mike Schechtman*, Executive Director, Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits; *Laurie Bishop*, Board Member, Solid Rock Foundation; *Tawnya Rupe*, Program Director, Mountain Sky Guest Ranch; *Gerald Sherman*, President/CEO, Indian Land Capital Company; *Mary Peterson*, Board President, Big Sky Institute for the Advancement of Nonprofits.

## **Union Market Room**

### Walking Trails 101

In this session, speakers will share examples of how rural communities around Montana have funded and built walking trails. This session will involve two practitioners at the local level and two sources of assistance for communities, one from the state and one from the national level.

Presenters: *Ted Lange*, Community Trails Planner, Gallatin Valley Land Trust; *Mandie Reed*, MSU Extension Agent, Wheatland County; *Gene Townsend*, Mayor, Three Forks; *Steve Gilbert*, Fish, Wildlife and Parks Recreational Trails Program.

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## **Tuesday, May 12 7:15 – 9:15 pm Evening Keynote Address**

### **Ballroom A**

*Philip Aaberg*, Composer and Musician from Chester, MT

### Small Town, Big Heart or "What's a rock 'n roller like you doing in a nice place like this?"

Philip Aaberg speaks of his personal experience in returning home to super-rural Montana to raise a young son and run a business with his wife, Patty. This is a story of community immersion, not escape. It's also about local pride, local economy, and the myth versus the reality of "isolation."

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## **Wednesday May 13 8:30 – 9:00 am Morning Keynote Address**

### **Ballroom A**

*Gary Cunningham*, Vice President of Programs and Chief Program Officer of Northwest Area Foundation

### Toward a Better Rural Future

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## **Wednesday May 13 9:00 – 10:30 am BREAKOUT 3**

### **Ballroom C**

### What Does Worksite Wellness Have to Do with Our Community?

Participants will be able to identify current standards, strategies, and resources for Worksite Wellness based on a comprehensive well-being framework. Also, participants will be provided with a brief assessment tool to determine current Worksite Wellness activities and future plans. Additionally, barriers to implementing Worksite Wellness strategies in our rural state will be discussed and participants will gain skills to overcome those barriers. Speakers will provide an overview of the current key components, standards, strategies and resources for Worksite Wellness in Montana. In this discussion, the panel will provide information on who is involved, past and current efforts, and future plans, highlighting the work accomplished by the Montana Worksite Health Promotion Coalition. Also, panel members will lead a discussion on Worksite

Wellness for small businesses in rural areas. Participants will have an opportunity to assess current Worksite Wellness activities in their town/region based on Worksite Wellness quality standards.

Presenters: *Linda Krantz*, Health Education Specialist, Montana Cardiovascular Health Program; *Lynn Paul*, Professor and MSU Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist, Montana Worksite Health Promotion Coalition; *Chelsea Fagen*, Health Benefits Director, Montana Chamber of Commerce; *Rachel Hess Meech*, Preventive Health Strategist with TwoMedicine Health and Financial Fitness; *Kirk Keller*, Wellness and Innovative Product Coordinator, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana; *Kristin Juliar*, Director, and *Shalina Mirza*, Project Coordinator, Montana Office of Rural Health/AHEC.

### **NW Lounge**

#### Initiating Creative Partnerships in Natural Resource-Dependent Communities in Montana

This session will present experiences by the session leaders from a variety of rural community settings on the methods to address and negotiate conflict and initiate and implement creative partnerships in natural resource-dependent communities in Montana.

Presenters: *Liz Shanahan*, Assistant Professor, MSU; *Jill Belsky*, Professor, University of Montana; *Laurie Yung*, Director, Wilderness Institute, University of Montana.

### **SUB 233**

#### The Center for Native Health Partnerships: Reducing Health Disparities of Native Americans in Montana Through Community-Based Health Projects

This session offers an overview of the resources available to communities from the Center for Native Health Partnerships. The mission of the Center is to reduce health disparities of Native Americans in Montana through community-based health projects that are conducted in partnership between community members and health researchers. The Center is based at Montana State University, and was established through a five year grant from the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHHD) at the National Institutes of Health. The Center provides grant funding for research partnership development, and also employs half-time Community Organizers at each reservation. In this session, we will give an overview of the research grants, and CO's will discuss their roles with the Center.

Presenter: *Deborah LaVeaux*, Program Coordinator, MSU Center for Native Health Partnerships (CNHP); *Vickie LaFromboise*, Associate Scientist, CNHP; *Annette Sutherland*, Community Organizer, Rocky Boy Reservation; *Mike Todd*, Community Organizer, Fort Peck Reservation.

### **SUB 235**

#### MSU Extension SNAP-Ed - Buy Better. Eat Better. An Opportunity for Community Nutrition Education

Teaching food budgeting techniques and eating nutritious foods are essential to making healthy lifestyles choices. In this breakout session the overall goal is to introduce session attendees to the benefits of MSU Extension SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education) programming and resources. SNAP-Ed participants are Montana families with children, seniors, singles, individuals with developmental disabilities, and youth. The goal of SNAP-Ed is to provide educational programming that will increase, within a limited budget, the likelihood that all SNAP recipients and eligibles are making healthy food choices and choosing active lifestyles. MSU Extension SNAP-Ed is a far-reaching and dynamic program; a unique opportunity for our Montana communities.

Presenters: *Coleen Kaiser*, Extension Nutrition Education Coordinator, MSU Extension; *Dana Thompson*, Assistant Nutrition Education Coordinator, SNAP-Ed; *Stephanie Daigle*, Fiscal Manager, SNAP-Ed; *Shirley Schermele*, Assistant Nutrition Education Coordinator, SNAP-Ed.

#### Growing Resources and Sustaining People

Beginning with five counties identified by the GRASP committee, the project coordinator will establish a nutrition coalition for each county. Each of the five coalitions will first assess the level of access to and participation with existing nutrition services in their respective counties, identify areas to target for improvement and then finally develop action strategies to be carried out at the county level in order to improve identified areas. Each coalition will develop targeted measures of improvement and establish action strategies that are specific and appropriate to the strengths of their community in order to meet set targets. It is the intention of the GRASP project to facilitate the continuation of each county's nutrition coalition as additional counties, beyond the original five, take focus.

Presenter: *Minkie Medora*, Registered Dietician and Licensed Nutritionist, Montana Food Bank Network.

## **Theater**

### Don't Feel Like the Lone Ranger: Help Available and Lessons Learned in Addressing Community Housing Needs

The goal of this session is to give participants the information they need to go back to their communities and address their housing needs. How do you analyze what your housing needs are? How do you get community support? What programs and resources can you access? What are the pitfalls in implementing programs? The panel will feature practical advice and lessons learned from veterans in providing both home ownership and rental housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents in a range of Montana communities. Through case examples provided by the panel, and questions and discussion generated from the participants, this panel will help local leaders know that they don't have to feel like the Lone Ranger in addressing community housing needs. Peers are there for advice and support, and there are programs offering technical assistance and funds depending upon the type of housing need.

Presenters: *Nancy Leifer*, Homeownership Program Manager, Montana Board of Housing, Department of Commerce; *Sheila Rice*, Executive Director, NeighborWorks Great Falls and NeighborWorks Montana; *Gene Leuwer*, Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Development Council; *Gus Byrom*, Program Manager, Community Development Block Grant Program, Montana Department of Commerce; *Deborah Chorlton*, Montana Housing Program Director, USDA Rural Development; *Andrea Davis*, Executive Director, homeWORD.

## **Union Market Room**

### Getting on the Same Page: Organizing a Community-Wide Reading Program

Paula and Sarah will give the group a brief background on how the One Book-One Bozeman program was launched, including a description of: how they assembled a team of volunteers; the budget for the project, and how in-kind donations were solicited; the calendar and events for the project, with key lessons learned; how the book was selected, and why it was successful; how different age groups in the community were involved; and how they communicated about the program. Paula and Sarah will work with the group to brainstorm ideas on how to launch community-wide read programs in the participants' communities. They will also share a list of online resources for people to tap that will help them streamline their planning.

Presenters: *Paula Beswick*, Director, Bozeman Public Library Foundation; *Sarah Glover*, Founder, One Book - One Bozeman.

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## **Wednesday, May 13 10:45 – 12:15 pm BREAKOUT 4**

### **Ballroom C**

#### Youth Leadership Programs: Engaging Teens in Community Service

Hopa Mountain's Youth Leadership Program engages youth with the fewest resources in challenging activities in their community and outdoors to prepare them for productive lives as capable, contributing members of their families and communities. The Youth Leadership Program was created in 2006, and is grounded in the belief that youth are some of our most valuable citizen leaders. Hopa Mountain has created a program manual to guide other organizations through the process of implementing their own youth leadership programs and is committed to help Montana's rural communities create positive opportunities for youth.

Presenters: *Liz Mack*, Youth Programs Coordinator, Hopa Mountain.

#### The Challenges of Bringing Best Practices to Rural Communities

This session presents information on the importance of using best practices and evidence-based programs, forming coalitions to pool resources, and specific challenges that face rural communities in this process.

Presenter: *Sue Chvilicek*, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, Park and Sweet Grass Counties.

#### Do You Know How 2 Go? Helping Students Plan and Prepare for College

In this session, participants will learn about several of the resources available to students to help better prepare them for college. In particular, we will focus on the Know How 2 Go campaign (KH2G) and the Montana Career Information System (MCIS). KH2G breaks down college preparation into four steps. 1. Be a Pain (in a good way), 2. Push Yourself, 3. Find the Right Fit, and 4. Put Your Hands On Some Cash. During the MCIS section, we will discuss several different aspects of MCIS that can help students identify potential career interests and

locate post-secondary schools that will help them reach their career goals. Additionally, we will demonstrate the use of the Financial Aid Sort available on MCIS that gives students access to more than 3000 scholarships.

Presenter: *Emily Fleming*, MSU Campus Outreach Manager, Student Assistance Foundation.

#### Developing School Skills Using Common Household Items as Toys

The goal is for parents to learn how to develop and reinforce the skills necessary for early school success in their children. Since our senses feed the brain information, the presenter will explain how sensory stimulation can be used as play in the home environment. Language development, pre-reading skills, mastery of large and small muscle activities, auditory and visual memory and discrimination are essential to school readiness. Common household objects become toys and are used in the activities.

Presenter: *Ann Marshall*, Director, Bright Lights Tutoring for Young Children and Their Parents.

### **NW Lounge**

#### Tapping into the Creative Arts Economy

Montana has been called "The Land of Creativity" because Montanans express themselves in a multitude of ways. However, in the past Montana's creativity has not been viewed as an important resource for helping to build economic health in rural communities. Lucrative markets seem distant; customer bases limited, and arts-supporting foundations rare. Come to this session to learn about the untapped power of Montana's creative sector and how recent strategies are working to integrate the growth of the artistic spirit with the development of solid business practices. Participants will leave the workshop armed with ideas and strategies for identifying and nurturing the creative sector in their communities.

Presenter: *Cindy Kittredge*, Folk Arts and Market Development Specialist for the Montana Arts Council

### **SUB 235**

#### Communities in the Rural West in a Global World

Historically, most rural communities were economically dependent on resource based industries such as agriculture, forestry and mining. For several decades, employment in these industries has declined as machines have replaced human labor in the production process. More recently, employment in the manufacturing sector has declined as multinational corporations have outsourced their plants to foreign countries to take advantage of lower wages. Consequently, many rural communities experienced economic and demographic declines. Recently other changes have created opportunity for rural areas. Specifically, rapid developments in information and communication technology have reduced the relevance of location. With the internet, email and cell phones it is possible for an increasing number of individuals and businesses to locate where they wish and still be connected to the necessary markets and consumers. As a consequence, many families and businesses are choosing to locate in the high amenity communities of the rural west. Many rural communities of the west have been able to take advantage of new opportunities and have experienced significant economic and demographic growth. These changes, however, have often resulted in increased levels of poverty and inequality. On the one hand, trophy homes and high dollar ranchettes are found in many western communities. On the other hand, many rural workers displaced from the natural resource industries and manufacturing lack the education and skills to obtain adequate employment in information, communication and the emerging service sector. While the emerging industries tend to create some high quality jobs, they also create numerous jobs that could best be described as low-skill, low-pay, and temporary and seasonal. Coping with increased poverty and inequality represent significant challenges for rural communities in a global world. Understanding these changes and coping with the subsequent issues are the topic of this discussion.

Presenter: *Don Albrecht*, Director, Western Rural Development Center; *Carol Mulford Albrecht*, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Social Work and Anthropology, Utah State University.

#### The Draw of Rural Hometowns

Two types of population change cause concern in rural communities: 1) high in-migration that alters the size and composition of places; and 2) population decline, often brought on by outmigration of young adults. Outmigration of 'the best and brightest' reduces not only the population size but also shrinks the labor force, and the entrepreneurship and leadership pool. I argue that it is not the outmigration of young adults that should be hindered, but the return migration in later years that should be fostered. I am focusing on return migration to rural places in geographically isolated, low amenity regions, which tend to draw few new migrants.

From interviews at high school reunions I learned what draws some people back to their hometown, and what keeps others from moving back. Rural communities can benefit from the insight gained and devote efforts toward facilitating return migration.

Presenter: *Christiane Von Reichert*, Professor, Department of Geography, University of Montana.

### **SUB 233**

#### Native American Nonprofits: Successful Models for Working in Indian Country

Strengthening the Circle – A Native Nonprofit Leadership Program - aims to strengthen the capacities of experienced and emerging nonprofit organizations on or near Indian reservations. This program offers training in organizational development plus the tools, skills, and technical support to successfully develop and strengthen nonprofit organizations working with youth in Indian Country. Graduates of the program have built up nonprofit resources, capacities, collaborations, and staff skills in their communities for work on community-based projects. For this session, organizations that have participated in the Strengthening the Circle program will talk about the growth they have seen in their organizations as well as the change they have inspired in their communities. Representing several reservations across Montana, panelists will address the importance of working in culturally appropriate ways while also running successful youth serving nonprofit organizations.

Presenters: *Heather Miller*, Program Coordinator, Native Nonprofit Leadership Program, Hopa Mountain; *Richard and Helen Horn*, International Games Society; *Tina Begay*, Executive Director, National American Indian Business Leaders (AIBL) Program; *Peggy White WellKnown Buffalo*, Executive Director, The Center Pole; *Susan Kelly*, Program Director, The Center Pole.

### **Theater**

#### The Economic Profile System

Ray Rasker will give a tutorial on the use of the (free) Economic Profile System (EPS). EPS is designed to allow users to produce detailed socioeconomic profiles automatically and efficiently at a variety of geographic scales using Microsoft Excel. Profiles contain tables and figures that illustrate long-term trends in population; employment and personal income by industry; average earnings; business development; retirement and other non-labor income; commuting patterns; agriculture; and earnings by industry. Databases used for EPS profiles are from: Bureau of the Census including County Business Patterns, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Regional Economic Information System (REIS) of the Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce. EPS is a useful tool because it saves time and money that would normally be spent gathering data and making figures and tables, adjusting income data for inflation, etc. EPS is also a great tool for a community-wide discussion on the economy, its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. EPS is used by over 15,000 people, including 25 universities, the Bureau of Land Management, Forest service, county planning department and economic development organizations.

Presenter: *Ray Rasker*, Headwaters Economics.

### **Union Market Room**

#### Using PA's for Health Education in Schools

Session is to describe a novel program in Sheridan and Twin Bridges, Montana utilizing Physician Assistants (PA's), at no cost to the schools, to teach health related topics one day per week in high school, middle school and elementary classrooms. Process, content and preliminary response to the *program will be presented and discussed.*

Presenters: *Roman M. Hendrickson*, Physician, Ruby Valley Hospital and Clinic; *Carey Byers Wilson*, Physician's Assistant, Ruby Valley Hospital and Clinic.

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## **Wednesday May 13 1:30 – 2:00 pm Capnote Address**

### **Ballroom A**

*Flint Rasmussen*, Professional Bull Riders Entertainer of the Year, Choteau, MT

#### Rural Knows Best

A fun look at life in small-town America, exploring the quirks and advantages that people from rural communities take for granted every day. Flint will share stories of travels across the country, showing how growing up in a small town has helped mold him into a person who can adapt to any situation. Flint believes that preserving our culture is critical in continuing to raise motivated and influential young people to carry on our values and work ethic.