



ANNUAL REPORT

2014

Hailey Chamber of Commerce

ABSTRACT

The Hailey Chamber of Commerce is pleased to present this annual report for fiscal year 2014 (October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014).

Hailey Chamber of Commerce

2014 Annual Report

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

Board of Directors

Fourteen members served as directors throughout fiscal year 2014 (October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014).

Jane Drussel – President	Dale Ewersen – Interim Vice President
Joan Davies – Secretary	Justin Larsen – Treasurer
Patrick Buchanan – Past President	Beth Crawford – Member
Debra Hall – Member	Jim Mason – Member
Tanya Olson – Member	Lisa Patterson – Member
Chris Roebuck – Member	Richard Stahl – Member
Staci Thomas – Member	Freda Wilson – Member

Expanded Board of Directors

The Chamber Board of Directors embarked on a course to expand the number of directors from fourteen to nineteen. A nominating committee consisting of Richard Stahl, Dale Ewersen and Joan Davies submitted a slate of members for election to the board, filling the seats of those going off the board due to a six year maximum term of service, and filling seats on the expanded board.

Newly elected directors include: Mike Glenn, Blaine County Schools; Maggie Howard, Citywide Home Loans; Hallie Star, College of Southern Idaho; Sandi Viau, CPA; Sheri Thomas, Boulder Mt Property Management; Stacey Doby, St Lukes Hospital; Susan Englehart, All Star Properties; Kirsten Hjelun, Webb Landscaping.

Strategic Planning

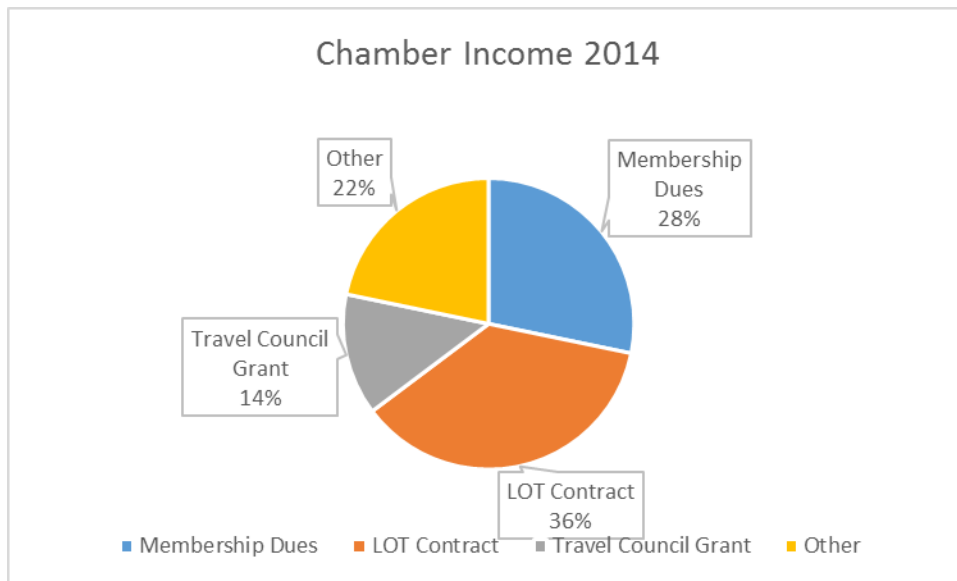
The Chamber held its annual planning retreat on March 12, 2014 at AmericInn. The twelve board members and two staff present, participated in a SWOT exercise, identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the organization. The Board of Directors adopted the Strategic Plan on August 27, 2014.

The following organizational goals are taken from the Strategic Plan and are based on the critical issues facing the Hailey Chamber and the implementation activities needed to address those issues.

1. Develop adequate financial resources to increase services to chamber members while maintaining existing services.
2. Expand events and services to chamber members.
3. Maintain sponsorship of key community events while identifying opportunities for events during “slack” season.
4. Communicate the chamber’s mission and goals to members and the community using every available technique (print, meetings, website, and social media).
5. Communicate and celebrate successful events with community stakeholders.
6. Collaborate with the Sun Valley Marketing Alliance and other stakeholders to enhance the visibility of Hailey and the Hailey Chamber to potential visitors to the area.

Financial Status

As of the end of the fourth quarter, total regular and other income was \$167,031, payroll and expenses totaled \$151,857 netting a balance of \$15,174. During the year, the Chamber monitored the budget closely to ensure compliance with state and local requirements and to assure that the chamber operates within available income. Income for the Chamber comes from three primary sources, membership dues, Idaho Travel Council Grant and City of Hailey LOT. A grant application for 2014 was submitted to the Idaho Travel Council and a 2015 contract was successfully negotiated with the City of Hailey. A major sponsorship in the amount of \$7,500 was received from Albertsons and \$3,000 received from Cox this year.



Staff

Staff serving the chamber during 2014 include Pat Bowten, Office Manager/Events Coordinator; Kristy Heitzman, Membership Director; and Geegee Lowe, Office Assistant. The Chamber hired Patricia Bowton in January 2014 for the position of Office Manager. After analyzing the cost of outsourcing, the Chamber assigned accounting and payroll duties to the Office Manager. Late in the year, Kristy Heitzman resigned from her position as Membership Director and the vacancy was advertised.

Staff support is augmented through many hours of volunteer activity, The Ambassador Program. These volunteers assist with events such as Wake Up Hailey and Business After Hours and in staffing the Welcome Center.

Visitor Services

A core function of Chamber staff is the provision of visitor services both in person at the Hailey Welcome Center and through phone and internet. As of the end of the fourth quarter, the Chamber provided visitors support services to a total of 2,897 individuals (1,865 individuals to the Hailey Welcome Center and 1032 phone inquiries). Services included providing maps, directions, event information, referrals to local businesses, and relocation information. For the same period, we had 46,899 website visits, 927,416 website hits and 2,367,633 Facebook visits.

Membership

As of the end of March 2014 272 members had renewed or joined the Chamber, a 95% member retention rate. Gross revenue from membership for the period was \$44,682. To encourage early renewal of memberships, the Chamber offered an “Early Bird Discount” for those paying prior to the end of the year.

Staff promoted the many benefits of Chamber membership throughout the year: advertising on the Chamber Website (www.haileyidaho.org), Hot Deals for business to business, event promotion, monthly electronic newsletter, Facebook and e-Blasts. Discounted advertising is offered through KECH, KSKI & KYZK, Locally Owned Radio , The Weekly Sun and KMTV.

Wake Up Hailey and Business After Hours continue to be very popular among chamber members. During fiscal 2014 12 Wake Up Hailey events and 11 Business After Hours events were held. Average attendance at Wake Up Hailey was 30 and at Business After Hours between 120 and 150.

The Chamber held a Membership meeting May 6th at McClains Pizzeria from 12 – 1pm, discussing the benefits of membership and what the Chamber has been working on for the past few months and a Q&A session with Mayor Fritz Haemmerle.

The Chamber has partnered with ‘The Weekly Sun’ in publicizing member businesses, submitting feature articles on businesses twice each month.

Events and Programs

The Hailey Chamber works year round on event promotion and creation. Creating and maintaining events is an integral part of keeping business in Hailey thriving. The Chamber is the organizer and promoter for four major events and participates in other events as promoter, using social media, print advertising, over-the-road banners, posters and press releases.

Halloween Hoopla, October 31st

The Chamber organized a Halloween celebration in Downtown Hailey in cooperation with the South Valley Merchants Association. The event included candy distribution by downtown businesses, a scarecrow contest and a costume contest. Thousands of pieces of candy were distributed to hordes of costumed participants. The Chamber contributed money, staff support and marketing for this event.

Hailey Hometown Holidays

The 2013 Hometown Holidays event was held adjacent to the Willis Building and Janes in Downtown Hailey. The event featured a gas-fired fire pit, community Christmas, craft vendors and prize drawings on the Saturday’s between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The City provided the fire pit and Christmas Tree and the Chamber organized the prize drawings. A mid week Santa Stroll was included in the event this year.

Kids Carnival June 6th

The Hailey Chamber held an old fashioned carnival including Hamster Balls, clown strike, a 60’ obstacle course, ring toss, coin toss, shooting gallery, spill the milk, etc. on the last day of school.

4th of July Celebration and Parade

A successful 4th of July Parade and Fireworks was held in cooperation with the City of Hailey. The theme this year was “Wood River Valley Inspires” and our Grand Marshall was Dick Fosbury, Olympic gold medal winner. This major event drew thousands of spectators to downtown Hailey. A 4th of July Criterion was held in Downtown Hailey following the parade, complementing the many other bicycle events in the area.

Other Community Events and Projects

The following events took place during this period with the promotional support of the Hailey Chamber.

Trailing of the Sheep, October 19th through 21st

Crosstoberfest, October 18th and 19th

Hailey Hometown Holiday Raffles

Sun Valley Film Festival, March 13th through 16th

Easter Bunny Visit, April 12th

ArborFest, May 10th

Fiddlers Inc. State Championships May 17th

Flowers on Main Street, all summer

Kids Carnival June 6th

Idaho British Car Club Tour 2014 June 20th

Skatepark Competition, June 21st

4th of July fundraiser at Sun Valley Brewery June 26th.

Sheeptown Drags Races June 26th

Smithsonian “Hometown Teams” Traveling Exhibit, July 29th until September 2nd

Sawtooth Rangers’ Rodeo, July 3rd through 5th

Professional Bull Riding, July 25th

Northern Rockies Music Festival, August 1st and 2nd

Kiwanis Car Show, August 2nd

Ride Idaho bicycle tour August 6 – 8, 2014

Hailey Ice Fund Raiser, July 31st

Mexican Rodeos, July 20th and August 17th

Intermountain Professional Rodeo Association, August 30th

Community Support and Partnerships

The Chamber is involved with multiple project related to improving the local economy and community: Fly Sun Valley Alliance, Sun Valley Economic Development, Rotarun, Do the Right Thing, South Valley Merchants Association and City of Hailey. The Chamber is represented on the boards and committees of these organizations and actively participates in cooperative strategies to grow the economy of Blaine County. In particular, the Chamber actively supported the successful effort to raise the Local Option Tax (LOT) by 1% to benefit air travel and tourist promotion through public education.

Workshops and Seminars

The Chamber held 4 Business Development Classes on ‘Search Engine Optimization’ (SEO) during 2014. The training was provided by Brent Carnduff with Echelon SEO. The Chamber worked with HUB International Insurance and Kathleen Harrison Insurance to offer information on the new federal healthcare requirements (3 separate events). A class titled ‘Email Newsletter for Your Business’ was also held. These events were well attended and we are planning more over the next several months.

The Chamber partnered with Zion's Bank to bring the Sun Valley Business Showcase to Hailey in 2014. The event was held November 5th at the Blaine County Community Campus.

Marketing and Public Relations

The Chamber markets the City of Hailey as a travel destination and markets local businesses and events through various avenues. These marketing efforts are funded through a grant from the Idaho Travel Council and funding from the City of Hailey LOT.

Chamber Bucks Program

This program is designed to help promote shopping locally. Chamber Bucks sales were \$26,001 for the year, and redemptions totaled \$22,217. Hailey Chamber Bucks are a popular local gift certificate that can be redeemed at over 75 local businesses. Hailey Chamber Bucks can be purchased at the Hailey Welcome Center.

Marketing

This year we received additional grant funding to promote the Trailing of the Sheep Festival via a public relations firm. Through a partnership with CW Communications, articles on Trailing of the Sheep (promoting both Hailey and the Festival) appeared in many national publications including Smart Travel, the Huffington Post, National Geographic, and USA Today! The value of this public relations effort is over \$500,000 in coverage. The Hailey Chamber produced press releases that were distributed to national bike media outlets, which resulted in media coverage in the Pacific Northwest for the Crosstoberfest. The Chamber also teamed with Newhoff Communications, beginning in 2013, to produce a commercial promoting the Wood River Valley airing in January 2014. Donated airtime is valued at \$25,000.

Public Relations

This year we received grant funding to promote the Sun Valley Film Festival via a public relations firm. Through our partnership with CW Communications, a total audience of 735 million was achieved. This was done through internet publications, blogs, Twitter, print and social networks. 190 media stories were written on the event including the Huffington Post, Northwest Travel Magazine, AAA VIA Magazine and United Press International. The value of this public relations effort is over \$3.7 million in coverage. The Hailey Chamber assisted with social media marketing for this event.

Website

Most of the information about the City of Hailey and about the Hailey Chamber of Commerce can be obtained through the website, www.haileyidaho.com. The Chamber moved its website to a new software platform during the year. The Chamber ran ads promoting the Hailey Chamber website on Facebook (expense covered in ITC grant). Work continues to add e-commerce to the website and to keep information up to date.