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E-Newsletter of the Montana Association of Community Development Extension Professionals

January 2010

President's Corner

Happy New Year! The Rural Community Conference planning committee will begin 2010 with a meeting to discuss the 3rd Annual Conference. As always, the committee welcomes and encourages your suggestions and input for conference speakers, themes and breakout sessions at: commdev@montana.edu.

-Paul Lachapelle
MACDEP President

Upcoming Events

[Free Family Business On The Road Program Seminar, "Building Excellence Into Your Business"](#)

January 14, 1:30 PM, Best Western Helena Great Northern Hotel, Helena. Montana State University College of Business (CoB) management instructor Craig Ehlert will discuss how businesses can use the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria to drive high levels of business performance.

[Montana Chamber Of Commerce Business Days At The Capital 2010](#)

January 14 - 15, 8:00 AM, Best Western Great Northern Hotel,

MACDEP Happenings/Member News

[2010 NACDEP Conference Early Registration due Jan. 12](#)

The 2010 conference (Bloomington, MN on April 12-14) features more than 80 presentations, in-depth workshops, excellent keynote speakers, a poster session and reception; and a dollar auction. You'll learn about successful strategies and Extension projects, share ideas, explore collaborations and go home with valuable takeaways to help your work in building bridges for sustainable communities. Register by January 12 and save!

[2010 Rural Community Conference](#)

The 3rd Annual RCC planning is now underway. Venue and dates are still to be determined but the dates will likely be in the early autumn of 2010. We'll be providing periodic updates via this newsletter, but if you'd like to receive more detailed updates via the RCC-information listserv, please send a request to commdev@montana.edu.

[Grassroots & Groundwork Conference](#)

On May 13-14, 2010, the Northwest Area Foundation will sponsor a fourth national conference devoted to showcasing the innovative models and tools organizations and communities are using to get out and stay out of poverty. The conference theme is "Seizing Opportunities to Reduce Poverty and Build Community Prosperity." The presentation entry deadline is Jan. 10, 2010. Please use the [online application](#) form to submit your proposal.

Helena. Here is the [Full Registration Information](#) or contact the [Montana Chamber of Commerce](#) for more details.

[Heartland Center Leadership Webinars](#)

The Heartland Center for Leadership Development in collaboration with the RUPRI Center for Rural Entrepreneurship is pleased to announce a new webinar series with the theme Strategies for Community Prosperity. The five-part webinar series will begin in January and conclude in May with the following schedule and topics:

- * January 21, 2010 Rural Communities Can Thrive in the 21st Century
 - * February 18, 2010 Entrepreneurial Coaching--From Crisis to Economic Growth
 - * March 18, 2010 Plowing New Ground--Refreshed Leadership Development for Revitalized Economies
 - * April 15, 2010 Energized Youth--Energized Communities
 - * May 20, 2010 People Count--Rebuilding Rural Communities with People Attraction Strategies
- For more details and registration information about this exciting webinar series, please visit the [Heartland Center's webinar page](#).

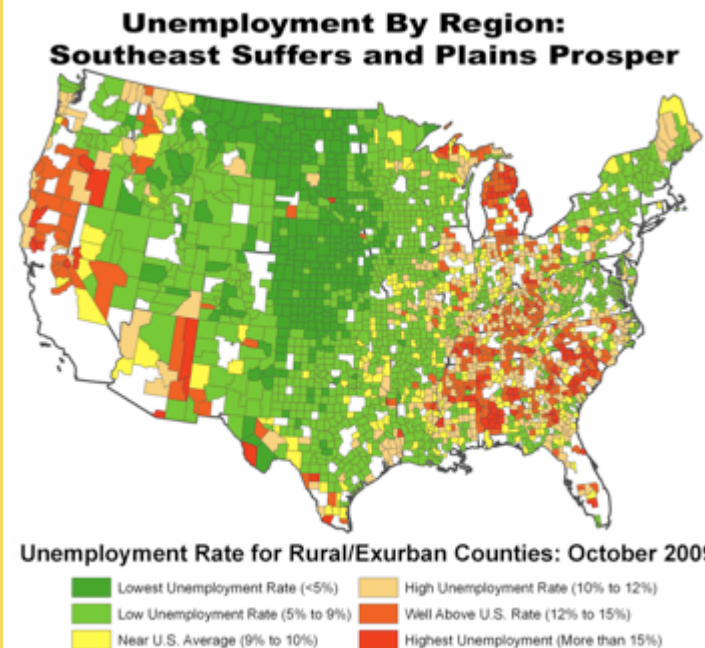
["Women: Want To Do Business With The Government?"](#)

January 28, 9:00 AM, Gateway Center, Helena. The U.S. Small Business Administration and the new Women's Business Center are holding a procurement workshop for women. If you are considering starting or expanding your current operations and want to explore the arena of government contracts as part of your marketing plan, then this workshop is for you.

New Reports/Resources

[Rural Unemployment Lower than City Rates](#)

The unemployment rate in rural America rose slightly in October as the rate dipped slightly in urban counties, according to a Daily Yonder analysis. This map shows the unemployment rate in rural and exurban counties in October 2009. The greener the color, the lower the unemployment rate is; the redder the county, the higher the rate is.



[Strategic Defaults Are Up](#)

According to the Wall Street Journal, homeowners who choose to default on their mortgage even though they could still afford to pay it are likely to exceed one million in 2009, more than four times the level in 2007. This graphic breaks it down by state.

[An Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry](#)

February 12, 2:00 PM, Bozeman Public Library, Bozeman. David Cooperider and Diana Whitney define Appreciative Inquiry (AI) as a "cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves systematic discovery of what gives a system 'life' when it is most effective and capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. In this introductory AI workshop, taught by Bonnie Sachatello-Sawyer and Joe Sawyer, learn how to use appreciative inquiry techniques in business, nonprofit, and government work plus your personal life to bring out the best in your group and self. The workshop is open to everyone and is free of charge. Advance registration is requested by calling (406) 586-2455.

[SAVE THE DATE! Supporting Sustainable Economies Opportunities And Challenges For Community Colleges](#)

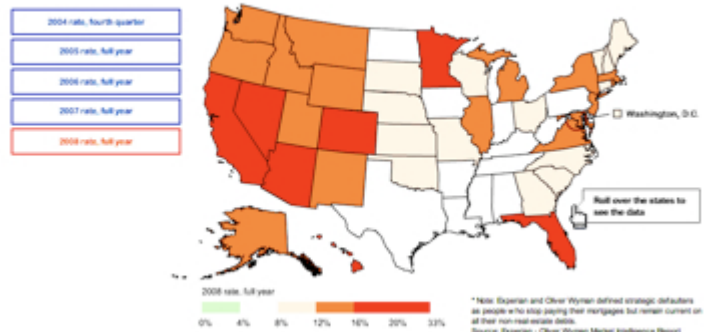
April 26-27, 8:00 AM, Crowne Plaza, Asheville, North Carolina. An international symposium in Asheville, North Carolina in April 2010 will bring together experts and practitioners from the U.S. and Europe to highlight expanded roles for colleges in educating students, businesses, and communities about and for economic opportunities in renewable energy, conservation, ecotourism, and local sustainable agriculture and manufacturing.

Grant/Award Opportunities

[EIGHT New Community-Friendly Grant Opportunities](#)

Strategic Defaults by State

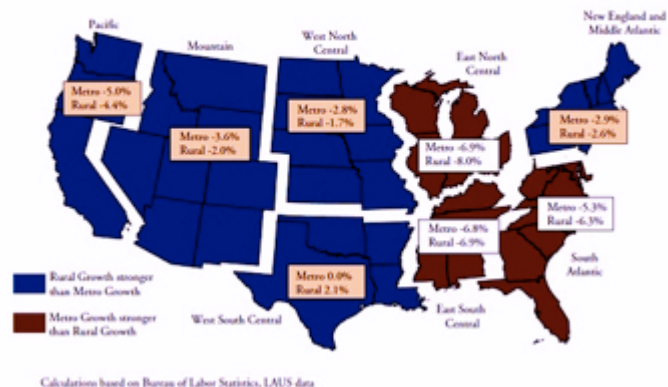
Credit firm Experian and consulting firm Oliver Wyman forecast that "strategic defaults"—homeowners who choose to default on their mortgage even though they could still afford to pay it—are likely to exceed one million in 2009, more than four times the level in 2007. Click on the buttons at left or roll over any state to see the percentage of all defaults in each state that Experian and Wyman consider strategic.



[Prospects for a Rural Recovery](#)

Rural America has fared better during the recession than cities in most parts of the country, according to a report from Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City officer Jason Henderson. This image shows how rural areas across the country generally have seen better employment figures than have cities.

U.S. EMPLOYMENT GROWTH, SEPT. 2007 TO SEPT. 2009 (THREE-MONTH MOVING AVERAGE)



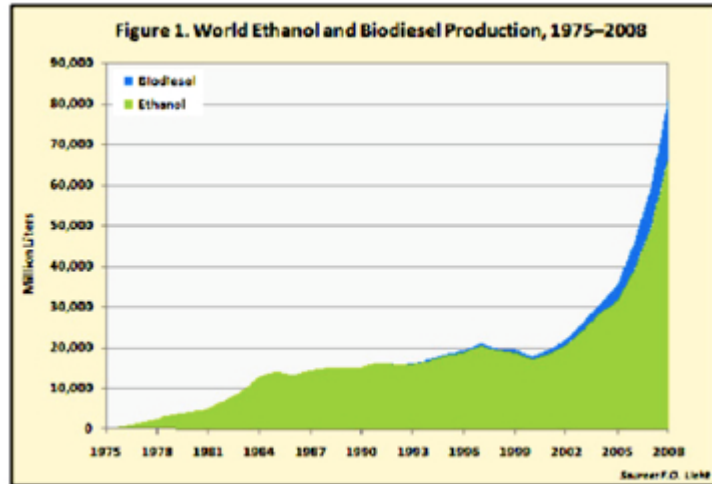
[Biofuel Production Up Despite Economic Downturn](#)

Global biofuel production topped 81 billion liters in 2008, an increase of more than 36 percent over the previous year. This includes more than 66 billion liters of fuel ethanol and nearly 15 billion liters of biodiesel. The image below is from the [report from Vital Signs](#).

These and more have been listed on the [MSU Extension website](#).

[Grant Opportunity for Rural Montana Communities](#)

The Montana Community Foundation is again partnering with The Steele-Reese Foundation to provide 10-12 grants to nonprofit organizations for rural communities in Montana with a population of under 5,000. Grant size is \$500 to \$5,000. The proposal deadline is Friday, February 12, 2010. Grant application materials can be found on the [Montana Community Foundation's website](#).



[Report Follows Recession's Effect on Intermountain West Cities](#)

Brookings Mountain West, a partnership between the Brookings Institution and the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, released a [report](#) that examines the effect of the housing crash and the recession on cities in the Rocky Mountains region.

[Small Business Survival Index 2009 Ranks State Policy Climates for Entrepreneurship](#)

The 'Small Business Survival Index' helps business owners and investors understand the public policy burdens placed on entrepreneurship and small business, with the states ranked accordingly. Montana placed at #31.

[GOOD Ideas for Business, Cities, Education, and Health etc.](#)

GOOD is a collaboration source for individuals, businesses, and nonprofits pushing the world forward. We are a company and community for the people, businesses, and NGOs moving the world forward. GOOD's mission is to provide content, experiences, and utilities to serve this community. GOOD currently produces a website, videos, live events, and a print magazine. Launched in September 2006, the company has garnered praise for its unique editorial perspective and fresh visual aesthetic and is quickly positioning itself as a significant new voice in our culture.

[Community Almanac Puts Small Town America on the Map](#)

This unique online tool helps users create lasting records of the places they love. Community Almanac's non-profit sponsors ([Orton Family Foundation](#) and

The [Open Planning Project](#)) want to help communities articulate, implement and steward their heart & soul. It's a lasting record of the place you love—the place you call home. Anyone can contribute! And it's free! Just find your community and start adding to its almanac—written stories, photos, videos—anything you'd like to share.

[Community Development Resource Guide](#)

The Center for Rural Affairs has published a resource document for accessing funding for community projects.

[The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America: Case Studies from Communities Across the U.S.](#)

This report is the result of a joint project of the Federal Reserve System and the Brookings Institution. The document contributes to an understanding of the dynamics of poor people living in poor communities, and the policies that will be needed to bring both into the economic mainstream.

[Nonprofit Sustainability: Doing More With Less](#)

This topic is the focus of the Housing Assistance Council's Fall issue of Rural Voices. Articles include "Speaking to the Community," "Nonprofits in the Current Recession," and "Nonprofit Organizational Sustainability through Community Partnerships." Download a free copy of the publication.

Community Development "In the News"

[Nature Conservancy Gets 327 Acres of Montana's Front for Christmas](#)

The 327 acres of land in the Ear Mountain area east of the Pine Butte Guest Ranch northwest of Choteau was donated by Mary Jane Lindner to the 14,500-acre Pine Butte Swamp preserve. Great Falls Tribune; Dec. 24

[Land Deal in Montana Could Create State's 2nd Largest Park](#)

The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department hopes to have its \$14-million deal with The Nature Conservancy for about 41,000 acres of former Plum Creek Timber Co. land and are plan to create a 6,864-acre state park near Alberton Gorge on a portion of it. Missoulian; Dec. 24

[Ravalli County Voices Support for Darby Special Events Center](#)

The county is lending its weight to a project to transform a former lumber mill in Darby into a huge special events center. Ravalli Republic; Dec. 24

[Montana Projects to Share \\$55M From Defense Funding Bill](#)

The \$636-billion defense spending bill recently passed by the U.S. Senate contains \$55 million for 18 projects in Montana, with five in Bozeman. Bozeman Daily Chronicle; Dec. 22

[Montana Will Probably See Economic Recovery in 2010](#)

The northern tier of the country should slowly climb away from the recession in 2010, with Montana's outlook brighter than other parts of the region, a pair of economists said. Billings Gazette; Dec. 22

[Despite Stiff Opposition, Montana Land Board Approves Vast Coal Development](#)

Montana's top elected officials backed a plan Monday to put vast tracts of coal up for lease, bucking pressure from environmentalists. Flathead Beacon; Dec. 21

[American Prairie Foundation Gains Ground in Montana Quest](#)

The American Prairie Foundation's vision for Montana's high plains is to create a "Serengeti of the northern plains." Billings Gazette; Dec. 21

[Natural Gas Moves to the Forefront in U.S. Energy Picture](#)

The lower price of natural gas and its lower carbon footprint has made that fuel source an emerging winner in the nation's energy debate. Denver Post; Dec. 21

[Pikuni Industries on the Blackfoot Indian Reservation, Awarded \\$3.2 Million for R & D](#)

The U.S. Senate has approved millions in funding for a Browning-based business that develops and tests new lightweight materials for use in missile construction. Great Falls Tribune; Dec. 20

[Local Group Buys Three Missoula Radio Stations](#)

Bucking a long-standing trend that has seen radio station ownership nationwide consolidate into handful of large chains, a troika of Missoula media entrepreneurs have acquired the Trail 103.3 and two other local radio stations. New West; Dec. 18

[Wind Projects Express Interest in Montana, Wyoming Power Lines](#)

Alberta-based TransCanada says new interest is being shown by wind-power developers in the lines. Billings Gazette; Dec. 18

[Montana County Uses \\$100K of PILT Money for Microloan Program](#)

The Ravalli County Commission approved allocating \$100,000 of federal money to create a microloan program for small, single-person or home-based businesses that wouldn't qualify for loans from traditional financial institutions. Ravalli Republic; Dec. 18

[Economic Recovery Lags in Mountain West](#)

The Mountain West has been hit harder than the rest of the country by the Great Recession, according to a new study from the Brookings Institution. New West; Dec. 17

[Montana Property Reappraisal Wrath Keeps Growing](#)

Soaring property tax bills have Montana residents looking for help, and lawmakers laying blame. New West; Dec. 17

[National Park Service's Bioprospecting Plan Draws Fire](#)

Several groups urge National Park Service Jon Jarvis to rethink the plan that would require commercial enterprises growing out of research done in parks to share their profits with parks. Jackson Hole Daily; Dec. 17

[Big Ag Forces Farmers to Buy GE Seeds, Report Says](#)

The nation's farmers are in the grip of powerful corporations like Monsanto and find it increasingly difficult to plant seeds of their own choosing. New West; Dec. 15

[Canadian Company Refurbishes Montana Gold, Silver Mine](#)

Crews from Canada-based RX Exploration have been working for more than a year to dewater the Drumlummon mine near Marysville, with the hope that gold and silver mining at the Montana mine can begin in April. Helena Independent Record; Dec. 15

[Montana Telecoms Question Grant Process](#)

Within the next two months, two federal agencies will decide who receives millions of dollars in federal grants or loans to build new broadband infrastructure to enhance high-speed Internet service in rural Montana. Billings Gazette; Dec. 13

[Recovery Act is Aiding Montana's Economy](#)

Many readers will be surprised and pleased to learn recovery funds are being spent locally, and wisely. Missoulian; Dec. 13

[Montana Board Votes to Craft Regulation on Carbon Emissions](#)

In a 5-2 vote on Friday, the Montana Board of Environmental Review decided to begin work on crafting the state's first rule on regulating greenhouse gas emissions, a move industry groups said was premature. Great Falls Tribune; Dec. 12

[The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office Goes Green Light For Green Technologies](#)

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office stated that it will pilot a program to accelerate examination of certain green technology patents. MATR; Dec. 11

[Making Diesel from CO2 and Sunlight](#)

A new "electrofuels" program announced this week by the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (Arpa-e) will fund research into novel ways to make renewable fuels. MIT Tech Review; Dec. 10

[Solar Panel Designed With the Novice in Mind](#)

Solar technology is going where it has never gone before: onto the shelves at retail stores where do-it-yourselfers can now plunk a panel into a shopping cart and bring it home to install. Seattle Times; Dec. 10

[Montana OKs Wind Turbines on State School Lands](#)

The Coyote Wind Project is the first wind farm in Montana's Sweet Grass County, and eight of the 44 turbines in that project will be built on state school trust land, generating \$21,600 annually for schools when the farm goes online. Great Falls Tribune; Dec. 10

[Getting Rural](#)

The recession and fewer urban job prospects are driving young American families to try rural living. Wall Street Journal; Dec. 5

[Planners vs. Climate Change](#)

Some say that planners ought to take on a larger role in advocating for greener technology and strategizing to end climate change. Next American City; Dec. 4

[Job Creation? Look to Entrepreneurs](#)

The mom-and-pop shops, garage start-ups and small businesses across the country will put Americans back on the payroll. Boomtown Institute; Dec. 3

['Smart Grid' Coming to Montana Soon](#)

The good news is that the electric power industry is changing. Missoulian; Dec. 3



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