

# Getting Involved is Good for Your Business and Community

Philanthropy and volunteerism enhance your business's bottom-line

## Molly Killien

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS  
CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION

A new leaf has turned in the business world. Philanthropic work, volunteerism and sponsorship contributions quickly are becoming key criteria for local businesses to be competitive within the Steamboat Springs market. Customers are starting to demand more from companies: Community involvement, neighborhood ownership and genuine philanthropy is what customers have come to expect.

Profits and revenues always will be important components of a business' bottom line. In addition, more potential clients, customers and guests anticipate that businesses go the extra mile to support community initiatives and events. Reputations are at stake, and authentic community involvement is the answer.

"Having a well-run, competitive business gives us the opportunity to give back to the community," says Scott Marr, owner of the Holiday Inn and 2009 Business Philanthropist of the Year.

"We hope that people in town know not only about our property and the services we provide, but also about how our company is reinvesting back in the community," Marr says. "In our business, we rely heavily on community referrals, and the philanthropic work that our company does gives us exposure to a broad base of potential guests and customers."

The benefits of volunteerism may not be instantly apparent. Immediate gratification (i.e. an automatic increase in business) is not realistic. Before a business sets its sights on philan-

thropic efforts, it is important to make sure the partnership is mutually beneficial and that volunteers are working for the right reasons.

Networking is an incredible side effect of volunteering. When people volunteer, they are opening themselves up to gaining new business and building new relationships outside of the typical work environment.

In a town like Steamboat Springs, news travels fast. If a business in town needs its carpets cleaned or it is looking for a new business location to lease, word of mouth is an extremely effective tool, and being involved can help spread the message.

Bob Larson, the owner representative/manager at Sundance at Fish Creek shopping center, notes that local collaboration and his involvement in various community programs has helped his business and has positively influenced the tenants of the Sundance at Fish Creek shopping center.

"It was through my involvement in the Steamboat Springs Economic Development Council that I was able to make lasting connections within the business, local government and CMC communities. Connections and relationships that were made based on mutual interests and trust, became solid community links for me to utilize within my own realm of business," Larson says.

"With the relationships I have built from my involvement with community groups, I have been able to link people within the community together. For example, a couple years ago when a promising entrepreneur approached me with a business model, I knew the right people at Colorado Mountain College



MOLLY KILLIEN/CHAMBER RESORT ASSOCIATION

**Jaime Morgan and Barkley Robinson**, co-owners of Mountain Cuts in Sundance at Fish Creek shopping center, are true representatives of how networking and community involvement can help business. Mountain Cuts was established partly by local collaborations, based in philanthropic and volunteerism efforts.

to connect him with to develop a business plan," Larson said. "The business ultimately became Mountain Cuts, a successful, locally owned and operated business, and the benefit for my business is that we now have a long-term landlord tenant relationship."

Relationship building is increasingly important. Trust, confidence and loyalty are developed through community involvement. Getting to know people outside the walls of business can build trust and referrals.

Another factor that can commonly be overlooked is how fun and rewarding it is to make contributions (money, time, expertise) and delve into the community. There are so many opportunities in the Steamboat Springs area to get engaged. With all the organizations, nonprofits and event groups looking for dedicated

people to help, getting involved never has been easier.

Looking for a volunteer or philanthropic avenue to meet new people, make business connections and give back to the community? Look no further than the Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association. The Chamber has committees and groups looking for dedicated individuals to contribute their time and expertise.

Become a Chamber Ambassador and help promote Chamber membership, welcome new businesses to the community and volunteer with Chamber after-hours mixers and other events. The Young Professional Network of Steamboat Springs is looking for new members to get involved in the community by providing an outlet to build partnerships through professional development, philanthropic involvement and cul-

## For more

Looking to get involved with Chamber programs and committees? Here's who to contact.

### Chamber Ambassadors

Meagan Coates  
Meagan@steamboatchamber.com  
970-875-7003

### Young Professional Network of Steamboat Springs

Marion Ayer  
marion@steamboatchamber.com  
970-875-7008

### Hosting a Chamber after-hours mixer

Meagan Coates  
Meagan@steamboatchamber.com  
970-875-7003

### Steamboat in the Summertime event volunteer opportunities

Kristi Bernitt  
kristi@steamboatchamber.com  
970-875-7006

### Steamboat in the Summertime event sponsorships

Kara Givnish  
kara@steamboatchamber.com  
970-875-7002

### Chamber Committees (such as Economic Development Council, Lodging Committee, Marketing Committee and the Chamber Board of Directors)

Sandy Evans Hall  
sevans@steamboatchamber.com  
970-875-7007

tural, recreational and social opportunities.

Chamber committees such as the Economic Development Council, Lodging Committee, Marketing Committee and the Chamber Board of Directors are nomination-based committees but offer a great outlet to be involved in Chamber projects.

Reciprocity is the name of the game. When local businesses work together toward mutual gain, the wheels start turning and things happen. There is something to be celebrated about wanting to be involved with others and working together to create sustaining relationships and valuable community partnerships.



www.steamboatchamber.com  
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## Upcoming Events

### August 11

#### Pinnacol Assurance Safety Seminar

This seminar is titled "Meet Your SelectNet Provider". This is a great way for employers to meet their providers, understand what SelectNet is, why designating a SelectNet primary care provider will benefit them, and learn about the provider's services and philosophy. Please RSVP to Amanda.cocker@pinnacol.com to attend.  
**8:00-9:00 am at Rex's American Grill & Bar, Free**

### August 12

#### Business After-Hours Mixer

Join your fellow chamber members for free drinks, free food, and excellent business connections! Prize drawings, too! Sponsored by Napa Auto Parts, Steamboat Motors, Cold Stone Creamery, Big House Burgers, Waste Management, GO Alpine and Steamboat Powersports  
**5:00-7:00 p.m. at Steamboat Motors**

### August 20-23

#### 1st Annual All Arts Festival

Come experience this high-class celebration of the arts that entertains and inspires through featured performances by the Avett Brothers, George Winston and the Steamboat Springs Orchestra conducted by Ernest Richardson. The fine art festival along the Yampa will be the heart of the event and will showcase award-winning local and regional visual artists. Experiential and educational workshops will be available all weekend and open to all levels.  
**For a complete schedule and to purchase tickets, please visit [www.steamboatallartsfestival.com](http://www.steamboatallartsfestival.com).**



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## New Members

### Fusion Fit

(970) 870-1444

1625 Midvalley Dr.

Fusion Fit specializes in personal training, Cross Fit workouts and various other classes from yoga to spinning. They are Steamboat's only Cross Fit gym, offering multiple daily Cross Fit classes and personal Cross Fit training. Fusion Fit is conveniently located behind Staples on Mid Valley Drive with ample parking. Stop by for additional information or go to our website [www.fusionfitsteamboat.com](http://www.fusionfitsteamboat.com).

### Steve Jensen Hypnotherapy

(970) 439-5886

842 Lincoln Avenue, Suite #4

Hypnotherapy specializing in weight-management, smoking cessation, stress management, relationship resolution, insomnia, self image and self esteem, bereavement.

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**For leasing information please contact Bob Larson at 846-6899**