



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

NEW BIGFORK GREEN BOX SITE

CFBB was successful in convincing the Flathead County Commissioners and Solid Waste Board to keep Green Box Sites in Bigfork, Lakeside and several other sites located around the County. Construction of a new Bigfork site will begin this May and should be completed by September. It will house two recycling bins and a cardboard compactor. The site will be set back from Hwy 83 close to where it intersects with Hwy 35, be gated and landscaped to minimize its visual impact.

As part of our commitment, the CFBB will be coordinating and helping to pay for the moving and planting of over 80 evergreen trees. Special thanks to Dick Whitaker, one of the original founders of CFBB, for donating up to 50 trees for the site.

DOWNTOWN STORM WATER RUNOFF CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

After seven (7) years of effort by the CFBB, the County agreed to complete the final 2 phases of the new storm water runoff system in downtown Bigfork. The construction will begin in September of this year and be completed within 3 months. The new system will significantly reduce pollutants flowing into the Bigfork Bay and Flathead Lake via state-of-the-art filtering systems. In addition, the project will add significant benefits to downtown with the addition of new curbing and sidewalks on the north and south sides of Bridge Street.

SLITER PARK

To stop the County from closing Sliter Park, CFBB donated \$3500.00 to the Park Department to help offset some of their costs to operate the Park. We will be donating the same amount this year as well. CFBB is also paying a private contractor to help the county keep the park maintained and the bathrooms clean and supplied throughout the summer months. We will also attempt other improvements as funding allows.

Our goal is to ensure that the park will remain open through at least 2031 when the County's current lease with PacifiCorp expires.

HARRY HORN PARK

The CFBB and several other concerned community members were successful in convincing the Montana State Park staff to revise their plans regarding changes to Harry Horn Park's use and the access it provides to Wayfarers State Park. The proposed changes in the original plan were so significant that the original intent of Harry Horn Park, to serve as a day rest stop with a children playground, would have been significantly degraded.

Based on our input, a much better plan was developed, reviewed by the public and approved. Work begins this summer on Phase 1 of the plan and will include a new bathroom, playground equipment, an improved entry way to Wayfarers State Park and a permanent host station.

NORTH SHORE LAKE ACCESS

Improving access to the north shore of the Flathead Lake is an important goal of CFBB. We supported community efforts to keep the existing road access off of Holt Drive open. To do so, we paid to have the existing easement resurveyed to ensure its exact location. We are also paying to have engineering drawings prepared to build out more parking spaces on Holt Drive for those wishing to access the lake from that location. Our next challenge is raising the funds to add parking spaces for better access.

BIGFORK ART AND CULTURAL CENTER

We are continuing with our improvements to the Art and Cultural Center which houses the Bigfork Museum of Art and History and a branch of the Flathead County Library. Last year we replaced the building's roof, re-stained the building's outside and improved the rain gutters. We also reorganized the lobby entrance to offer our visitors more information on what Bigfork and its surrounding communities have to offer our visitors. We also expanded the Holiday decorations to include a "Polar Express" theme and display.

DOWNTOWN PUBLIC BATHROOMS

We are expanding the hours of access to the Art and Cultural Center bathrooms so they can continue serving as public bathrooms when the Library and Museum are closed. This will entail signage, and adding automatic locks to the entry doors to the building. We will have the bathrooms cleaned and restocked daily.

ONE-LANE BRIDGE STREET

The one-lane bridge on Bridge Street is over 100 years old and is one of the very few metal bridges remaining in the State. The County wants to replace our iconic bridge with a new two lane bridge. CFBB is doing what we can to make sure the bridge keeps its historical look and one lane feature if and when it is upgraded. To this end, we have prepared an application for the State Historical Preservation Office requesting the bridge be listed on the National Register of Historical Structures. The application will be presented to the Historical Board at their May 30th meeting. Given its historical importance, we are confident that it will be placed on the Register.

It is our hope that this listing will help convince the County and State to preserve our one lane bridge's historic style and value to the community.

CHILDREN'S PLAYHOUSE BUILDING

We continued our support of the Children's Playhouse by paying over \$3000.00 for window and insulation replacement. We will also be donating up to \$4000.00 in materials for work being performed by AmeriCorps volunteers who are making major improvements to the building. CFBB's stated goal is to sell our majority interest in the building to the Children's Theater to give our youth a permanent home support to foster their artistic and creative talents.

SWAN RIVER NATURE TRAIL

We continue to maintain and protect the trail and the amenities we have installed (dog pollution stations, picnic tables, and bike racks).

We are also coordinating the use of the trail for special events. This July 4th, we are again providing the trail for a fundraiser by Grateful Nation Montana for their efforts to pay for a college education for the children of Montana soldiers that have fallen in Iraq or Afghanistan. The trail will be used to support the Bigfork River Run/Walk Fundraiser to raise money for the Bigfork Cross-country team, and a run/walk fundraiser for Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS).

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

As Bigfork is an unincorporated community, the CFBB has been devoted to building our community's cultural opportunities, economic base and infrastructure. In 2014 alone, we spent nearly \$90,000.00 just to maintain Bigfork and its current amenities.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT (continued)

This included, among many other things,

- Maintaining and improving the Art and Cultural Center
- Overseeing and maintaining the Town Clock
- Landscaping and upkeep of the town's entry way signs
- Paying rent for Sliter Park and paying to help keep it clean
- Maintaining downtown benches
- Keeping the community clean by installing and emptying downtown's decorative garbage cans
- Paying insurance for the "Bigfork Elves";
- Snow plowing sidewalks on Grand Ave;
- Weekly sweeping of downtown streets during the summer months;
- Re-striping downtown parking spaces including handicapped parking areas
- Maintaining the "Historical Downtown Walking Tour" display and brochures
- Installing and maintaining several doggie pollution stations in town and on the river trail
- Maintaining several bike racks in downtown and on the River Trail
- Maintaining downtown security cameras
- Helping to keep Harry Horn Park clean and safe
- Wasp and insect eradication during the summer months

In addition to the above, the CFBB continued its financial support for several community activities.

We continued our Community Service Grants Program. The Program encourages our youth to become active in the community by undertaking service projects serving Bigfork. Previous grants have focused on recycling efforts, cleaning up the Fork and Harry Horn Park, helping with the Festival of the Arts and assisting the Bigfork Elves in light bulb twisting for our holiday decorations.

CFBB also made donations to several groups including Bigfork Center for the Performing Arts, The Crown of the Continent Guitar Foundation, Nordic Ski Center, ACES After School program, to name a few.

ANNUAL AUCTION & FALL EXTRAVAGANZA

Last year's auction was very successful, thanks to one and all! This year will mark our 15th annual auction! It will be held at the Garden Bar, Thursday, September 3rd at 5pm. Last year we raised nearly \$40,000.00 to support our work. Mark you calendars now and join in the fun!!