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# Miracle of America Museum

MEMBER:  
MUSEUM ASSOC.  
OF MONTANA  
AND  
AMERICAN ASSOC.  
OF MUSEUMS

Spring 2020

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

36094 Memory Lane Polson, MT 59860 406-883-6804 [www.miracleofamericamuseum.org](http://www.miracleofamericamuseum.org) • [info@miracleofamericamuseum.org](mailto:info@miracleofamericamuseum.org)

## Executive Board of Directors

Gil Mangels, Chief Executive Officer  
David Bauer, Board Chair  
Nancy Pray, Secretary  
Ryan Gage, Treasurer  
Board members: Brandy Wallace,  
Cathleen Wilde, Helen Mangels,  
Annette Schiele, Art Mangels,  
Sam Allred, Carol Edger,  
and Nola Dupuis-Catlett

## Visitation booms before pandemic

It's no surprise that we've all been negatively affected by COVID-19. It has caused chaos, paranoia, loss of jobs, loss of life, and loss of attendance at the MOAM.

Before it started up in earnest, we had visitors from 27 states, seven countries and three Canadian provinces. We expected three busloads of 20 persons each from Holland this summer, but they may be forced to cancel.

We chose to stay open, but have increased our health safety precautions. Marj and Ramona have always kept things clean, but now they are disinfecting knobs, handles, registration pens, light switches, restroom facilities and interactive displays.

Many visitors just wanted to escape what some refer to as voluntary isolation or some drop in for a chance to add a bit of levity to the situation (call it "house arrest,") and get out and do/see something.

We've had an increase of phone inquiries to see if we are open before journeying from Butte, Columbia Falls, Missoula, Whitefish, etc. They are grateful when we reassure them, "9 to 5 daily," if it is their only time to see us and they haven't been exposed to the virus. We have taken down our reader board advertising our traditional hours. To put this thing in greater context, we instead quote Isaiah 26: 20: "Come. My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." This is from the King James Version which happens to be my favorite.

As we near the days of the Passover celebration, we read part of the instruction to the Israelites in verse 22 of Exodus 12 that after they had painted their lintels and door posts, they were to stay in their houses till morning.

## Chatter from the Chairman –

MOAM Board Chairman David Bauer

It seems the last newsletter announcing the re-organization of the board of directors has caused a bit of confusion.

For the sake of clarity, I would like to add this: Gil is, and forevermore will be the founder of MOAM. He is also the Chief Executive Officer of the museum, making day to day decisions and running the museum as he always has. The role of the Board of Directors is to focus on funding the endowment, assuring the future of the museum.

These changes are meant to take the majority of these responsibilities off Gil.

It may take a while to grease all the wheels, but it is expected that board members will take a greater role in finding funding to ensure that our mission is accomplished.

It has always been the mission of MOAM to teach the Constitution (in its original form) to upcoming generations.

With the current affairs of our great county and the hardship we are all enduring, we truly believe this to be an "Essential Service".

Thanks, and may God bless you and our country.

David



## Why donors and volunteers support MOAM . . . In their own words

Why would someone donate time, expertise, and money to the Miracle of America Museum?

In their own words: **Ron Castle Photography**, [photosofthewest.com](http://photosofthewest.com) writes: "My wife and I loved your museum! You're welcome to use any of my photos for your website. Consider it a donation to your good work."

**Mike Howard** emailed this: "It is a real honor to work on your website. I resonate so deeply with all you are doing and am a tremendous fan. You're preserving more than the artifacts; but also the heart and soul of America. The Museum displays the values that built America..."

## Doll Collectors – *Your Advice Needed*



*David awaits his fate in his original packaging.*

We need your advice on this NIB (New in Box) donation from **Vince Lovato**.

While not extremely old, (1993) this handcrafted collectible porcelain doll “David” is still new in its original packaging and box. David is from the Ashton-Drake Galleries, and is a first issue in Yolanda Bello’s “Precious Playmates” collection.

In some collector circles, the packing is as important as the subject, so collectors are encouraged to keep items in their original packaging.

The Museum’s quandary: Do we leave David as is, his precious head hidden in the

cellophane wrap and leave him enslaved in his original box, or should we liberate him for all to see his exquisite beauty and display the box behind him?

In this case, the unusual packaging has caused Gil to reach out for some advice. His first inclination is to save the box, but take off the packaging that hides the beautiful creation inside. We’ll see what advice he gets.

So now, collectors, David’s fate lies in the judgments of the majority.



*Left:* Kids who visit MOAM can hop in this interactive Dragster Race Car for a photo-op;

*Right:* Hose reel fire cart donated by **Jens and Jackie Gran**.



## Volunteers improve and help fund upcoming MOAM website

The internet is one of our best tools to draw people, thanks to the work of family members, especially daughter **Cathleen Wilde** and grandson, **Ned Wilde**. With advanced technology and new volunteers on the horizon, we are making improvements and adding to our website.

Over the course of this next week, the recently redesigned website will be published and available for viewing at [www.miracleofamericamuseum.org](http://www.miracleofamericamuseum.org)

Thanks go to **Ron Castle Photography** who took many of the photos including the beautiful upcoming aerial shot

and vimeo; **Garry Wunderwald**, photographer; **Jim Pomajevich** for his funding of this project and hours and hours of time; **Mike Howard** at a greatly reduced rate for design and formatting; and **Julie Bilbrey** of [www.bilbreywebsevrices.com](http://www.bilbreywebsevrices.com).

So instead of posting a lot of pictures this issue, we are inviting you to take a look at our more inviting website and become more familiar with our facilities and attractions.

**COMING SOON** at [www.miracleofamericamuseum.org](http://www.miracleofamericamuseum.org)

## ***Pomajevich resources benefit MOAM –*** **Your support of Endowment is encouraged**

Jim Pomajevich has been a great financial help in building projects and matching funds for our endowment fund, as well as donating vintage tractors and equipment. Let Jim tell you why:

“Donna and I believe in the Miracle of the American Way. The Museum continues to portray this story in a meaningful and educational way to all generations. We are especially mindful of the importance of planning for the cost of operations when we can no longer rely mostly on

volunteers in lead positions. The endowment allows for a way to continue the Museum into the future.”

Please consider the Miracle of America Endowment Fund. Donations are tax deductible.

You may send contributions to the Museum directly, or through the Montana Community Foundation (MCF) with your check payable to “MCF/ Miracle of America Museum. Mail to 1 North Last Chance Gulch, Suite 1, Helena, MT 59601. See [www.mtcf.org/Giving/Ways-to-Give](http://www.mtcf.org/Giving/Ways-to-Give).

## *A test for you historians out there –*

What item do you think most families owned and saved, at least from the 1920s through the 1960s – An item that would most likely end up taken to the museum? At times almost apologetically, to save it from ending up at the transfer station (politically correct name for “dump”)?

If you guessed a camera, without taking the hint from the picture at right, you are correct.

This tendency has resulted in our collection of almost 800 cameras.

We didn't have this exact model and are grateful for the nice Hawkeye Brownie camera and original box just donated by **Janet Hunsucker**. The original box is in excellent condition, which enhances its display value.

Janet also contributed several outdated license plates that we can use as fundraisers in our gift shop. Old license plates are very popular with tourists seeking “real Montana Souvenirs” to take home. It's a painless way **you** can help us as well, by donating your expired license plates and aluminum cans.



## *We salute our Members and Donors*

### **Annual Support Levels:**

- Single \$50
- Family \$100
- Corporate \$200
- Life \$1,000



**Membership includes free admission, newsletter and discount in our Gift Shop, plus the satisfaction that you are supporting our mission to preserve history.**

## **Donors boost Endowment**

Thanks to our many donors, great and small, we accumulated enough to deposit \$10,000 to the endowment fund.

Now, with declining income, we have had to use emergency funds on overhead expenses, like utilities.



## *Stumped for the perfect Graduation or Mother's Day gift idea?*

*May we suggest . . .*

**MOAM donations or memberships make thoughtful gifts!**

**Help MOAM preserve history for posterity.**

**You can choose any amount.**

**It goes into the MOAM Endowment, or your choice of projects, in the recipient's name.**

**Or check out our Gift shop — Many Montana-made items.**



**Other easy ways to give:**

**amazon smile**  
You shop. Amazon gives.

**gofundme**  
CHARITY

**We're open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. all year long  
in spite of closures. We consider ourselves  
"Essential Service" in teaching our  
upcoming generations about the  
importance of the US Constitution. Watch our  
Facebook page for updates.**

**Save the date!  
Live History days, July 18th and 19th, 2020**



*May the peace and joy of renewal and resurrection this  
Easter Season be with you all.  
We wish you good health and many blessings.*



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