

## **Fountains to flood downtown in 2006**

By MIKE SATREN Staff writer

COEUR d'Alene — Remember all the moose in the summer of 2004? The ones that weren't left behind? Well the summer of 2006 will be known for its fountains as local artists build one-of-a-kind art pieces to grace the corners of downtown.

The Fountains of Wishes Community Art Project committee is headed by Eden Moreland who said that they wanted to "maintain the positive impact and energy" of EXCEL's Moose project. Morland founded MERGE, a for-profit organization to produce fundraising events, and the committee for Fountains of Wishes operates under MERGE's umbrella. Fountains of Wishes will also benefit a variety of non-profit organizations.

Moreland is from Kansas City, Mo. - the City of Fountains - which may be one reason for her choice of fountains for the 2006 fundraising project, said Mindy Hayes, marketing chair.

Twenty-five fountains - 25 square feet each - are being planned. The fountains will be assigned to specific downtown corners for the duration of the project, which is mid-May through Labor Day, 2006.

Sponsors choose their beneficiary non-profit organization and the fountain design - from pre-selected drawings.

The original lists of artists were recommended by local galleries and art commissions. These artists were invited to submit drawings to the committee, which selected designs according to artistic excellence, but also with practicality in mind. For example, the water and the pump need to fit inside and the fountain needs to work. One of these artists, Richard Warrington, has already built one fountain, "Water Park Party" for Robideaux Motors and is commissioned to create another, "Lady of the Lake" for Taco Bell. Warrington is a diverse impressionistic sculptor, who has created works for hospitals, corporations, banks, colleges, hotels, public art projects and private collectors for over 30 years.

The committee is anticipating an end-of-January cutoff for sponsorships to ensure that the artists have sufficient time to complete their fountains.

Artists are allowed a \$5,000 stipend - to buy materials - plus the pump to construct their fountains. They donate their time.

Zito Enterprises of Coeur d'Alene stepped forward to be the one and only Premier Fountain and Event Sponsor (\$20,000). Avondale Dental of Hayden Lake chose to become the first of up to three Grand Fountain Sponsors (\$12,000). Taco Bell, Robideaux Motors, Idaho Independent Bank, US Bank, and Mountain West Bank have already committed to sponsor fountains (\$6,000). A number of other sponsors are pending and will be announced at a later date.

Throughout the summer, tourists are encouraged to make wishes with their coins and each fountain will benefit a specific non-profit organization. At the end of the summer, the fountains will be sold by auction and each

non-profit organization will receive the net profits.

So far, participating nonprofit organizations are:

- Boys & Girls Club of Kootenai County with two fountains
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters Kootenai County Satellite CASA with one-half fountain
- Human Rights Education Institute with one fountain
- Kootenai Humane Society
- Idaho Drug Free Youth
- Kootenai Alliance for Families and Children
- St. Vincent de Paul
- The Women's Center with one fountain
- United Way of Kootenai County with one fountain
- Wishing Star with one-half fountain

During the final events on Labor Day weekend, a combination wine tasting and food, tasting will take place throughout downtown. "Food stations" set up in the better downtown restaurants, will serve "small plates" of their offerings and wine merchants will do the same with their wines. The auction for the fountains will be capped by live music.