



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

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Carousel ponies to become solar powered

A Carousel for Missoula is excited to announce that we have received a \$27,000 grant from Northwestern Energy to install 32 360-watt solar panels on the southern roof of the Carousel building. In addition, Big Sky Solar and Wind, the company that will install the panels, is donating a significant portion of its fees to make this project a reality. The panels will be installed at the end of April.

“This is a big step toward helping us keep the Carousel and our planet sustainable for our children and their children,” says A Carousel for Missoula former Executive Director Theresa Cox. “We are pleased to say our ponies will be solar powered by summer.”

The project will include two educational pieces:

A laptop within the building will show real-time production of electricity from the panels and/or energy consumption at the Carousel compared to other uses of electricity.

Outside, between the Carousel and Dragon Hollow, a dragon will lurk in his lair, inviting park visitors to deposit trash, recyclables and compost in appropriately labeled receptacles. Those depositing items will be rewarded with lights and sounds from the dragon. The dragon and his lair will be the creation of John Thompson of Hobby Horse Arts, who is carving the dragon; Dirik Dubay, of Western Montana Patio, who is creating the lair; and Mike Sudik of Big Sky Solar and Wind, who will give the dragon lights and a mighty roar.

“I’ve thought the Carousel needed a garbage eating dragon since the first time I saw the garbage eating goat near Spokane’s Riverfront Carrousel,” explains Theresa Cox. “Working with Mike, who takes renewable energy and sustainability very seriously, we soon came to realize we needed to add recycling and composting into the mix. If we are going to educate our visitors about what they can do to combat climate change, we might as well do it right.”

The Bill and Rosemary Gallagher Foundation has awarded the Carousel a grant of \$5000 toward the dragon project. Missoula Compost Collection, LLC, has agreed to donate \$1000 worth of pickup service, joining Boone Karlberg, PC, and Randy & Theresa Cox in supporting the project. Anyone interested in donating to the solar panels and/or the garbage dragon is invited to contact the Carousel's Executive Director, Tracy Ursery, at 406-549-8382 or mrlacarousel@gmail.com. Donations of \$1000 or more will be recognized on permanent signage near the educational displays.