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NEWS RELEASE

Aug. 3, 2004

Contact: Fraser McLeay, senior manager, Montana World Trade Center, (406) 243-6982.

**MONTANA COMPANIES SOUGHT FOR
TRADE MISSION TO AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND**

MISSOULA —

The Montana World Trade Center is moving forward with plans for a second trade mission to Australia and New Zealand this year. Companies wishing to participate should contact Fraser McLeay at (406) 243-6982 by Aug. 9.

“The decision to move forward with planning a second trade mission was made so that we can be poised to take advantage of new opportunities created by the North American-Australia Free Trade Agreement,” said Arnie Sherman, MWTC executive director.

The trade center led a mission to Australia and New Zealand in March that opened doors for several Montana companies. **Conrad**-based Kaptain Inc. is still receiving orders from those two countries for its mechanical roping steer, which is used for training on the rodeo circuit and in roping arenas. The mission was the company’s first foray into international sales and has proven there is overseas demand for its Montana-made product.

“The site of two men with cowboy hats in the front seat, with Sparky, the name given to Kaptain’s mechanical steer, in the backseat driving down the highways of Australia and New Zealand is forever etched in my mind,” said Fraser McLeay, MWTC senior manager. “This was pounding the pavement at its best, and we could not be more pleased that this Montana

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product is on its way to becoming a staple in the rodeo and roping arenas of Australia and New Zealand, just like it is here in the states.”

Simm’s Fishing of **Bozeman** and Technical Sourcing International of **Missoula** also participated in the first trade mission, and both companies have increased the level of business they conduct in Australia and New Zealand.

As part of the March mission, MWTC’s Geoff Sutton organized an exhibit in a Palmerston North, New Zealand, art gallery. The event featured works by 29 different Montana artists.

“We sold over \$10,000 worth of art on opening night,” Sutton said. The exhibit is still on display in Palmertson North but may soon move to a gallery in Australia.

Billings’s artist Donna Erikson said, “Sutton and the MWTC should be commended for taking the initiative to organize international exhibits of artwork from Montana, and for exposing the work of Montana artists to other cultures and places.”

For more information on the trade mission to Australia and New Zealand and to follow international business-related events sponsored by the Montana World Trade Center, visit www.mwtc.org or call (406) 243-6982.

Based at The University of Montana, MWTC is a nonprofit organization that helps businesses establish and strengthen their international commercial capabilities.

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NOTE: Photos taken during the March mission are available by calling Paige Darden at (406) 259-3134.

PD/cbs

Local, state papers

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