

LIZ MARCHI

making montana
by elke govertsen

I spend a great deal of time thinking about **mamalode**—growth, new concepts, products or paths to explore. I am eternally grateful for those who support me in this endeavor, and there is no one who has championed **mamalode** more than Liz Marchi.

I met Liz last summer at one of Jon Tester's Small Business Opportunity Workshops. More to the point, one of the reasons I went was to introduce myself to Liz Marchi. Her official job titles are:

- Fund Coordinator of the Frontier Angel Fund, LLC
- Montana Angel Network Coordinator

- Principal in Liz Marchi Consulting and Northfork Strategies
- Chair of the Advisory Board of the Flathead Beacon

Unofficially, she is a spark plug for small business in Montana. Liz moved with her family to Montana in 2000. She still carries the charm of a southern belle, but has allowed Montana to impact her in equal parts to the mark she makes. She and her husband Jon also run a cattle ranch where they raise registered Black Angus purebred seed and breeding stock. Their smaller herd is Wagyu (which is what Kobe beef comes from). Liz works directly with the chefs and restaurants who buy their product. "Living on the ranch still feeds my soul every day," she tells me.

I had the opportunity to tour their ranch in Polson. Sitting in that space, I could see where this woman draws her boundless energy from—the thousands of birds who nest around their home, the rapids that drain out of Flathead Lake, the long views of the Mission Mountains and Glacier Park in the distance. Liz has a vantage of the best of Montana, and she sees it in the people too.

Currently, Liz is promoting Innovate Montana, which aims to bring and retain industry and jobs to Montana. Of it, Liz says: "I love it [Innovate Montana]. It celebrates the opportunities we have to create value in our economy

around information technology, life science and clean technology."

"My role is to build 'it' into an effective private and public partnership. For me that means a bridge between businesses and state government that can effectively market and support new business in and for Montana."

The creation of industry in Montana will impact jobs, but also healthcare, education and quality of life. Innovate Montana, if done well, is perhaps more a family program than it knows.

Liz sees connections and then goes on to make them. She was the link for our Connie Chung interview (Issue 6) and knows almost anyone you could want to meet.

She is sincere in her excitement for those overlaps and is humble as the day is long, but the truth is that she is working hard, every day, to support businesses that have no direct benefit to her own.

Liz and I are scheming about a presentation



1. Liz in "Aint She Sweet" 1959
2. With new herd bull at National Western 2010
3. The entire family
4. With the late Liz Claiborne
5. Her girls
6. At her childhood home in Alabama with her family
7. With daughters Annie, Liz, Palmer and Cece

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called "Everything I Know About Management, I Learned from Being a Mother."

Liz says, "Being a mom is amazing management training." Here's what she has learned:

- Everyone brings something different to the task.
- Without a team, you can't get in the car.
- Anticipate, organize, plan, execute and then be totally flexible.
- I had no patience before motherhood.

- Obstacles for mom. TIME, TIME, TIME. It's a level playing field but for that.
- Moms today have amazing tools to be productive at work, family and self.
- With children, your intuition and people radar is exceptional.
- You are developing all the time, that's what every great business does.

I would also have to add presentation, liquidity and some mad negotiation skills. Oh, and humility in spades.

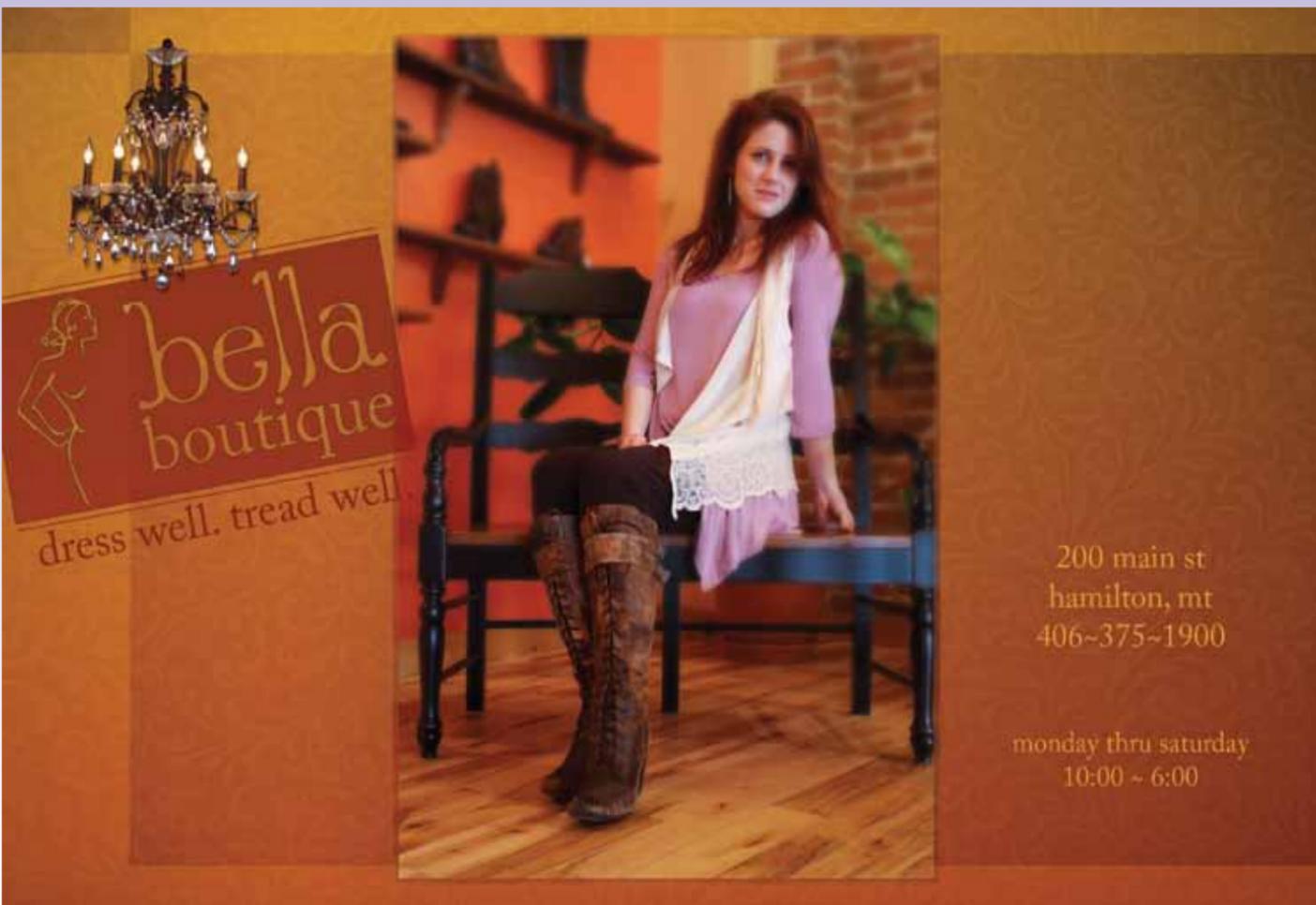
Liz's daughters and step-children are now grown and the first grandbaby is 1-year-old. She holds her kids close. "Motherhood is the richest experience in my life; I continue to learn the most about myself and about life from that relationship. It's the highest of highs and lowest of lows. Our children really do bind us to the past and to the future."

She may not have been made in Montana, but Liz Marchi certainly is making Montana something special, for her family and for yours. ●

The Ranch | www.marchiangus.com
 Innovate Montana | www.innovatemontana.com
 Frontier Angel Fund | www.frontierangelfund.angelgroups.net

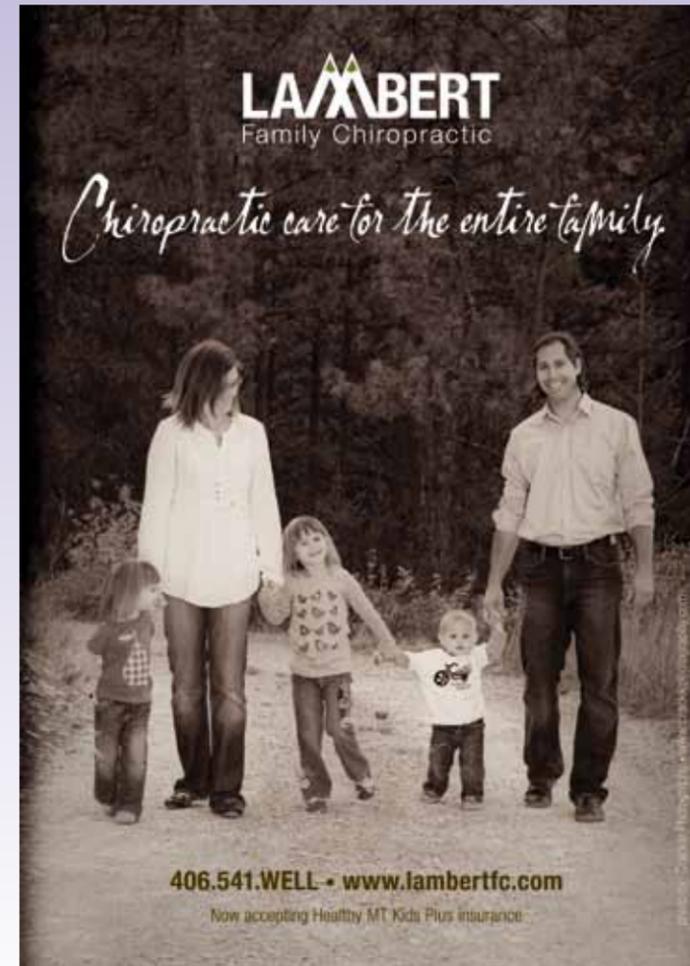


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I ♥ Home

We'd been living in Corvallis, Oregon for nine years. He was in Scottsdale for a 6-month post liver transplant checkup and I was working from home when the telephone rang. "Do you have the TV on?"

It was hard to believe that anything this world could offer up would compete with the medical ordeal we'd just been through—but 9/11 ranked right up there.

For days, I watched the mayhem and connected with those who mattered most—my Missoula clan. All I wanted was to run to Mom's house, the "big house" on the corner of 39th and Buckley. I wanted to curl up on her couch and eat her canned pears and toast.

If the world was coming to an end, I wanted my last glimpse to be of Mount Sentinel, my last sound to be the roar of the Clark Fork River during spring runoff and my last smell to be something, anything, cooking in Mom's kitchen. I physically ached to be home, surrounded by all things familiar and familial.

We loved Oregon, but a liver transplant coupled with 9/11...those were game changers. We decided to go home. Home is where the heart is. And I heart Missoula.