



The Home of Kevin Lynch
Volume 38, Number 37 June 12, 2015 \$1.00 per issue

County jail mill levy fails

by Judy Killen
BILLINGS - Voters in Yellowstone County have turned down a mill levy to pay for expanding the county jail. Of the 34,203 ballots cast in the Tuesday election, 18,861 — 55.2 percent — voted against the measure. Polling results showed 15,307 people — 44.8 percent — voted for the levy. With 64,176 registered voters, the total vote count of 34,203 was 53.3 percent. The mill levy would have paid to build additions and cover ongoing maintenance for the Yellowstone County Detention Facility.

County Elections Officer Bret Rutherford had forecast voter turnout of over 50 percent. Officials had sought an annual safety levy increase of up to six mills to help fund a proposed \$7 million, 100-bed addition at the jail for women inmates, other major updates and renovations to the aging facility. Costs for additional staffing were included as well as future maintenance. The county has been struggling with the issue of an over-crowded jail for a number of years. The original facility, built to accommodate 100 inmates in 1985, now

deals with daily populations of between 450 and 550 inmates. County officials are concerned that current conditions at the jail could lead to a human rights lawsuit that could be even more costly to the county. On any given day there are fewer than 10 inmates from outside the county housed at the jail. Also, people with misdemeanor offenses are usually not jailed pending court appearances. The impact of the six mills, if fully levied, would be \$8.10 on a \$100,000 home and \$16.20 on a \$200,000 home, to be assessed annually.



The Lockwood Fire District's new station is nearing completion and should be ready to occupy later this summer. The project is well under budget, allowing fire officials to consider options such as additional electrical outlets. (Jonathan McNiven photo)

On time, under budget: Lockwood's new fire station is nearly finished

by Evelyn Pyburn
LOCKWOOD - The July meeting of the Lockwood Fire District Board probably won't be in their new building, but it almost could be. There's no doubt their August meeting will be held in the new station. The final touches are being made and contractors and Lockwood administrators will be going through the "punch list" in just a few more days, reported, Kris Koessler of A & E, the district's construction representative, last Wednesday. The project is coming in \$66,000 under budget. The balance of the contingency fund — about \$57,000 — is being used to insulate and finish the storage building that was built a couple years

before station construction was started. Lockwood Fire District Board member Robert Gunther suggested that some of the contingency be spent on adding more outdoor electrical outlets. In the long term, the six that were included in the station design will not be enough and it will be less expensive to add additional outlets now, said Gunther. The board agreed and gave approval to Koessler to explore the cost. The board meeting got off to a late start while two members waited for the arrival of a third so they would have a quorum. Chief John Staley was absent since he was out of town, participating in the Montana Testing Consortium.

Board member Frosty Erben reported on the cost of getting an appraisal on the old fire station building. An appraisal would cost between (Continued on page 8)

River search turns up car part



Yellowstone County Sheriff Mike Linder and Undersheriff Kevin Evans used the sheriff's department boat on Thursday to find an object in the Yellowstone River at Huntley. Linder said a concerned citizen reported seeing something floating just below the water, which turned out to be a car bumper cover. Linder said they were able to get the bumper cover out of the shallow water by hand, and then used the sonar on the boat to scan the bottom in the area but found nothing suspicious. (Jonathan McNiven photo)

Man dies from self-inflicted gunshot wound at Worden residence

by Judy Killen
WORDEN — A Worden man died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound Monday evening. After an investigation by Yellowstone County Coroner Cliff Mahoney, the man has

been identified as James Mickelson, 64. Yellowstone County Sheriff Mike Linder told the Yellowstone County News that a deputy responded to a resi- (Continued on page 7)



Water covered the Shepherd Road north of Scandia Road Wednesday afternoon, forcing the closure of that road and several to the north. Severe thunderstorms moved through the Shepherd area Wednesday, with rain and golf ball size hail in some areas. Billings Bench Water Association officials reported the irrigation canal overflowed with more than 2 inches of rain reported in less than an hour. (Jonathan McNiven photo)

Change Service Requested



By Jonathan D. McNiven

A black and white portrait of a man with short hair, smiling. He is wearing a light-colored cowboy hat and a dark, collared shirt. The background is a plain, light color.

Montanans who are taking advantage of the federal government subsidies should be concerned because there is a chance that they might have to pay back that money or subsidies that they received during the last year

I would agree, though, that the whole law and intent of the law is very complicated and now up to the Supreme Court to decide the fate of Obamacare (once again). Because it is so complicated, I, too, am not sure how the SCOTUS will decide. However, I do not think the President of the United States should be coming out and trying to persuade the Supreme Court of the United States ahead of their expected ruling on the case. That's why there are three distinct branches of the United States: the

Thanks to the Shepherd Lions Club
for their calendar. To order a calendar or
add a name, call Calendar Chairman
April Beddes at 671-5960.

Letters to the editor

Lauris Byxbe
Pompeys Pillar

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The Outdoors

by Carl Wolf

OK, something stinks this time of year. Probably some of us should finally take a bath, but the real smell comes from a little black and white polecat. The ones that are all black but with two white stripes down both sides that we call skunks. Spring is when the little “kitties” take their first walks with mom and learn about the world. Since they stand out so much with their bright colors, they take along a liquid concoction that when squirted towards a threat tends to lessen that

threat. Their favorite threat seems to be two black Labs of a certain disabled old veteran who can’t get them to understand that the smell is not good and not something to smear along a pants leg. Skunks will eat most anything and tend to wander far and wide to find whatever there is to fill their



Warning posture of skunk (Wolf photo)

tummies; dog food, for example. The white line or stripe (our critters are usually called striped skunks) actually starts at the tail and goes forward along both sides of the body ending up sort of like a white cap on the head. They have a long, fluffy tail that is used to attract

humans into closer contact. However, when the tail and rear end is raised and more or less aimed at the human, it is time to get out of Dodge. The animals can squirt their smelly form of Mace from scent glands in their rear that reaches about a foot, then turns into a fine spray that can reach about 10 feet. Skunks are nocturnal animals that sleep all day, usually in a burrow made by some other animal, or sometimes just under a downed tree, building or rock. They have

one litter a year of about five youngsters. And before you freak, here is one of the ways to remove the smell: Mix 1 quart hydrogen peroxide in a plastic container with one-fourth cup of baking soda and 1-2 teaspoons of liquid soap. Add warm water if needed (bigger dogs), then mix thoroughly and use immediately. Cleanse the dog, massaging the solution into the coat with a sponge or washcloth, but do not get the stuff in Fido’s eyes, ears, or mouth.

Letters to the editor

Dear Editor:
Lockwood students (K5) expressed their desire for a new playground in a mighty way during their “Laps for Lair” fundraiser. Together they earned just over \$17,000 towards the \$230,000 campaign goal through their efforts. Students collected pledges from their families and the community to run laps and were able accumulate roughly 763 miles in terrain during the three day event in May! That’s the distance from Billings to Deerwood, Minnesota!
“I ran so hard my heart hurt,” stated Ethan, a now graduated first grader at Lockwood School. “I ran extra hard because I wanted to get lots of money for the Lion’s Lair! It will be fun, and then other kids will get to play on it when I’m older.”
Whitney DiFronzo, a kindergarten teacher at Lockwood could sense the determination of the children. “They were so intense, running so fast that they would take the corners a little hard!” “It meant so much to me to see that EVERY child was able to have a sense of ownership just by participating in the laps. Whether they had received pledges or not, there was pride in knowing they personally contributed to the Lion’s Lair.”
The event was facilitated by the Lockwood PTA, a non-profit organization that, in addition to supporting their school and community, has been organizing efforts to raise funds for a new playground for Lockwood School and its surrounding community. For just over 20 years, Lockwood boasted an iconic, massive wooden playground well known to the area as

“Lion’s Lair.” Several years ago, it was deemed unsafe and had to be torn down due to safety concerns, leaving the school and community void a structure or place to gather. With the success of “Laps” and other fundraisers, grants and donations, Lockwood PTA is currently at \$89,000 for Lion’s Lair 2.0. For more information on the project or to learn how you can support its community efforts, please check out their website at www.LockwoodLionsLair.weebly.com or call Sue at (406) 690-5636. Lockwood PTA is currently seeking business sponsorships for their upcoming Golf Tournament Aug. 21, and Fun Run Sept. 12 to benefit the Lair.
Sincerely,
Loree Baasch
Lockwood PTA Lion’s Lair 2.0 Board

Dear Editor:
The recently adjourned session of the state Legislature was characterized in both House and Senate by compromise and coalition. Democrats and Republicans teamed up to pass key pieces of legislation which largely resulted from negotiations between Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock, and the few remaining traditional legislative Republicans. Coalitions are common in Montana and in legislative bodies the world around. Coalitions are not new, but what has developed in Montana is a new coalition. I remember many years ago visiting with Leonard Plank, who had served in the Legislature from Chester in the 1920’s and 30’s. The

Democrats won a huge victory in the 1932 election, and Plank was confident he and his fellow liberals would be in a position to enact major reforms. It didn’t happen, and according to Plank, the reason it didn’t was because a coalition of moderate Democrats and Republicans, directed by the Anaconda Company, successfully maligned the liberals as radicals, and killed every reform. The status quo is hard to overthrow because established ideas and interests are always threatened by change. In Congress, beginning in the 1940s and for decades to follow, a coalition of conservative Republicans and southern Democrats effectively opposed civil rights measures and legislation backed by labor unions. The old Anaconda coalition in Montana maintained its hold for much of the same time period. “The Company” strategy was to keep a low profile, controlling conservatively and carefully. The joke was that the ACM always went along with reform as long as it didn’t change anything. When I first came to the Legislature in the 1970s, the senior member was Democrat Sen. Dave Manning from Hysham, who ultimately served for over 50 years. I was eager to meet him to learn

from his historical perspective. One of the first things he told me in describing the Legislature was, “It’s a coalition, Bob. It’s always been a coalition.” Manning was a moderate. He was a part of the enduring Republican – moderate Democrat coalition that Plank had railed against going back to 1933 when he and Manning served together. The 1970s were a brief progressive interlude in state politics. Manning probably didn’t realize it at the time, but the old coalition he described was dying before his eyes with the adoption of a new progressive state constitution and other reforms not to the liking of the weakening corporate old guard. Pragmatic problem-solver Governors Ted Schwinden and Marc Racicot shaped the next two decades in Montana politics, leading wisely and well, in my opinion.

Now we are seeing the rise of a new more ideological Republican party, determined to bring about great and fundamental change. Government involvement, from social programs to the farm program, has become deeply woven into the fabric of our national culture. The libertarian, “constitutionalist,” and religious based ideas that have come to dominate

(Continued on page 4)

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Date	Temps High/Low	Rain/Snow (") 24 hr	Record Hi/Low for date	Temps High/Low	Last Year High/Low	Rain/Snow (") 24 hr
26	73/47	.40/.00"	95 (1936)/33 (1975)	74/42	85/52	.01/.00"
27	67/51	.05/.00"	91 (1969)/35 (1954)	68/49	76/54	.38/.00"
28	69/49	.42/.00"	91 (1958)/27 (1947)	68/48	87/52	.Tr/.00"
29	62/46	.Tr/.00"	94 (2003)/35 (1959)	64/47	75/58	.40/.00"
30	76/47	.Tr/.00"	95 (1984)/36 (1982)	77/45	78/46	.01/.00"
31	83/52	.Tr/.00"	92 (1940)/32 (1982)	84/48	72/48	.01/.00"
01	83/57	.20/.00"	92 (1977)/32 (1951)	72/56	68/47	.01/.00"

-Valley Weather Almanac supplied by John Pulasky and www.sarc.montana.edu/wx

YELLOWSTONERIVER- NOT UPDATED YET AT BILLINGS

Height (Feet)	Flow (CFS)	80-year mean flow
Not updated at this time.		

River data from the U.S. Geological Survey (waterdata.usgs.gov)

Pictograph Cave State Park presents ‘Junior Ranger Day’

BILLINGS—Montana State Parks will host a Junior Ranger Day at Pictograph Cave State Park from 1-3 p.m. Saturday, June 20.

Do you have what it takes to be a Junior Ranger at Pictograph Cave State Park? Come enjoy a day at the park and challenge yourself to a variety of activities. Get in touch with your senses, see if you are faster than an antelope and draw your own pictograph. This FREE event is fun, educational and an opportunity to earn your

very own Junior Ranger badge! These guided activities will be led by AmeriCorps member Krystal Carlson and are best suited for children ages 5-11.

Local artist Dick Moulden will also display his collection of oil paintings of Montana landscapes. For more information call Carlson at (406) 254-7342.

Pictograph Cave State Park is southeast of Billings, accessed via Exit 452 (Lockwood) on I-90, then 6 miles south on Coburn Road.

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Rail cars filled with normal butane sit on rail tracks in Huntley on Wednesday. Montana Rail Link officials are storing the cars for a corporate client. (Jonathan McNiven photo)

Butane-filled rail cars line tracks at Huntley

by Judy Killen

HUNTLEY — Montana Rail Link is using an extra train track in Huntley to store rail cars filled with butane through the summer.

Jim Lewis, chief sales, marketing and information officer for Montana Rail Link Inc. said the cars “were placed into storage this spring and will ship out this fall.”

The railroad is “currently storing butane in the Huntley area on a short-term basis,” said Lewis, who is based in Missoula. “This is a service MRL has provided to a segment of our Billings area customers for many years.”

The rail cars hold “refinery-grade” butane, otherwise known as normal butane, Lewis said, which will be shipped to refineries in the

Billings area or in other parts of the United States.

Normal butane — which is highly flammable and colorless — can be used at refineries for gasoline blending. It is also commonly used as a fuel, either alone or mixed with propane.

It is commonly used in lighters, some curling irons and barbecues, among other household uses. Blended with propane and other hydrocarbons, it becomes liquefied petroleum gas, often called LPG.

Asked whether the stored butane posed a hazard to people or property, Lewis said the rail cars and butane are not a threat.

“The railcars in which the product is loaded are designed to store this type

of product,” he said. “MRL has a robust safety program to address all segments of our business, including the storage of customer products. MRL prides itself on providing industry leading, reliable and safe service to our customers and the communities in which we operate.”

Montana Rail Link operates over 900 route miles of track in Montana and Idaho. The railroad operates 82 locomotives, 1,100 railcars and in 2014 shipped 390,000 carloads.

In Yellowstone County, the railroad operates on tracks owned by Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railway. Montana Rail Link routes end just east of Huntley at a junction with BNSF tracks coming north from Wyoming.

Letters continued...

(Continued from page 3)

modern Republican thinking are incompatible with the long established socio-economic safety net that is now inherent in our way of life.

A political party that attempts to impose radical change that people aren't ready for, will not succeed. A

party that must force “group think” on its members to carry out its purposes cannot survive.

Coalitions form and end for a reason. Republicans can eliminate the reason for their division either by becoming a more in touch and inclusive party, or a purer, smaller party. If they start down the purification path, it will continually become narrower, and it will lead to Democratic majorities. Then, if they learn from the example of the Republicans, Democrats may not have as great a challenge managing a majority.

Sincerely,
Bob Brown
former Montana Secretary of State and State Senate President

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Teens lead deputies on high-speed chase

by Judy Killen

HUNTLEY — Two teenagers who led Yellowstone County sheriff's deputies on a high-speed chase early June 6 that started in Lockwood and wound through Huntley and Shepherd will face felony charges.

They are Chandler Marina Carra, 18, and Tyler Lennick, 19.

According to an affidavit filed in Yellowstone county Justict Court, a deputy was patrolling Old Hardin Road in the Lockwood area when

he saw a pickup in the parking lot of a closed business. He went past the business, turned around and drove back to the parking lot, where he saw a driver wearing a baseball hat and dark sweat-shirt turn onto Old Hardin Road at high speed.

The deputy attempted to stop the driver by turning on his emergency lights, but the driver failed to yield and turned onto Wanda Lane, according to the affidavit, and then onto Nightingale. At that turn, the driver crashed

into a parked car and garbage can, the affidavit said.

The deputy observed the vehicle drive 85 miles per hour in a 35 mph zone on old Hardin road, then run a red light at Johnson Lane at 95 mph.

The deputy followed the pickup at high speeds on Dickie Road, Yellowstone Trail and eventually through Huntley to Homer Davis and 12 Mile Road near Highway 87 North, where the driver turned into a field and a male, later identified as Lennick,

ran from the truck into the field, where the deputy apprehended him.

A Montana Highway Patrol trooper approached a female passenger, later identified as Carra, and searched the vehicle.

Officers allegedly found marijuana, a tube commonly used to siphon gasoline and other paraphernalia in the vehicle, according to the affidavit.

Carra is charged with felony criminal endangerment, misdemeanor fleeing from a

peace officer and criminal possession of dangerous drugs. Lennick is charged with felony criminal endangerment, misdemeanor fleeing from a peace officer and obstructing a peace officer.

Both are scheduled to appear in District Court for arraignment on June 16.

Becraft Lane sidewalk in the pipeline for Lockwood Pedsestrian safety group

by Evelyn Pyburn

LOCKWOOD - Next year's pedestrian safety project for Lockwood will be a sidewalk for Becraft Lane, according to Woody Woods, who serves on the Lockwood Pedestrian Safety District board.

This year's project, a sidewalk along Highway 87 East between Old Hardin Road and Peters Street, will go out for bid on June 19, with bids due on July 6.

At the meeting of the LPSD last week, the board

approved its Lockwood Pedestrian Safety District Non-motorized Transportation Plan, which was the subject of a town hall meeting last month. The plan will now go through the Metropolitan Planning Organization process, for approval on July 21 by the Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC). That group includes representatives of the Yellowstone County, the City of Billings, the Planning board and the Montana Department of Transportation.

Woods said that work on next year's project will begin with seeking a grant from the Transportation Alternatives Program. They hope to get a grant of \$300,000 for what is estimated to be a \$500,000 project. The application is due July 31, 2015. The balance of the project will be funded by an intercap loan through the county, to be paid off by revenues collected from the LPSD.

Factors that pushed Becraft to the top of the priority list include that the average daily traffic count is 2,630 vehicles. One fatality has already occurred on it. And, over 650 households directly feed onto Becraft Lane.

A major high school bus stop is on Becraft, and Lockwood Fire Chief John Staley cited a major safety issue with students congregating on Becraft Lane due to no bus stop standing area.

Commissioners mull online meeting streaming

by Evelyn Pyburn

BILLINGS - One of the items Yellowstone County Commissioners will be considering when it comes time to deciding what to fund and what not to fund in the coming year's budget will be a request from Community Seven Television for additional funding so that they can stream the County Commission meetings online.

While Community Seven broadcasts the commissioner meetings, as well as other local civic meetings, people in the county who do not get cable television cannot see them. The proposal submitted to County Commissioners on Monday by the station's

general manager, Tim Harrington, would make the program accessible for anyone who has access to the Internet. They already provide the service for the City of Billings and School District 2, said Harrington.

In addition to broadening viewership in the county, the process also generates an automatic record for archives. The number of meetings that may be archived is essentially limitless, Harrington told commissioners upon questioning.

Harrington was requesting an addition of \$7,500 to the station's line item contribution from the county of \$20,000. The funding will pay

for the cost of subscribing to the service that manages the video online, making sure it is as high quality as it can be, said Harrington.

County Commissioners said that they would take the request into consideration, along with all others, on Tuesday, Aug. 11, when they finalize the draft budget for FY 2015-16.



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Saturday, June 13
Curt Schmidt, Sarah Graves
Whitney Newman, Helen Bearden
Clint & Cheri Johannes,
Liana Susott

Sunday, June 14
Andrew Fricks, Kaylee Brishin
Riley Dalke

Monday, June 15
Nortons Ann, Keeley Sholley
Tim & Carmen Burdett
Bruce & Laurie Hofmann
Vinny Zapata

Tuesday, June 16
Brandin & Deana Jarrett
Tom Martin, Elmer Kembel
Justin D. Mueller

Wednesday, June 17
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Brenda Oglesby, Ken Hissom
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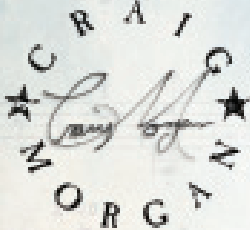
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Nemont






Community art show offered Friday by Heights Family Funeral Home

BILLINGS — Heights Family Funeral Home and Crematory is hosting a free community art show on Friday.

The art show is from 5 to 8 p.m. at the funeral home, at 733 West Wicks Lane in Billings Heights. It will feature artists in different media with appetizers and other refreshments.

Funeral home staff hope to offer a similar community event once each month.

Artists scheduled to attend the art show include Peter Herzog, Big Sky Fractals, Rita Feller, Carrie Sharp, Meagan Boschert, Roundhouse Design Works, John Armstrong, Emilie Huber, Sharon Karlson, Lana Bittner, Margaret Smith, Noel Hawke, Seidel Standing Elk, Dick Moulden , Elliot Eaton and Karen Johnson.

Donors sought for blood drive Friday

HUNTLEY – United Blood Services will host the Huntley Project community blood drive on Friday, June 12. United Blood Services officials said they especially need donations of O- and O+ blood types.

The blood drive will be held at the Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative community room from 3-6 p.m. To make an appointment, call 1-800-365-4450.



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Yellowstone County Sheriff Mike Linder, right center, speaks to deputies in Worden Monday evening. (Jonathan McNiven photo)

Shooting ...

(Continued from page 1)

dence near the intersection of Sixth and Ash Street in Worden “to conduct a welfare check at another individual’s request.”

Linder responded to an email from the Yellowstone County News asking about the incident.

“When the deputy arrived and tried to get the occupant’s attention,” Linder wrote, “he heard what he believed was a gunshot that came from inside the house. The deputy backed off and called for backup.”

Other deputies arrived, set up a perimeter outside the home and cleared people from the immediate area, Linder said. The home is in a neighborhood across the

street from Huntley Project Schools.

“I brought a video camera to the scene and attached it to a pole,” Linder said. “We were able to look inside the residence and saw a subject inside that was not moving. Deputies moved into the

room and located a deceased male in the room.”

No information was released about what may have prompted the requested welfare check, but Linder said, “No one else was in the residence and there is nothing to indicate anyone else was in danger.”

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Lockwood Fire District ...

(Continued from page 1)

\$4,000 and \$5,000 and could take months to get, he said, but an appraisal may not be necessary.

“We have a unique commodity here,” he said. The building was permitted in what was primarily a residential area because it was a government building, he explained. Because of its uniqueness, a “broker’s price opinion” might serve instead

of an appraisal.

Erben said he contacted a commercial broker who would be interested in giving a “price opinion,” but would have to look at the building before he could quote a price. Erben said he would have the information by the next meeting.

The board pondered briefly what to do with the revenue from selling the old fire station. They can spend it in whatever manner they de-

cide, including paying down the cost of the new station.

Guenther pointed out that the district is in serious need of a training facility for firefighters. Land for it is available, he said, and there is no option available since the City of Billings removed the facility at the airport.

Negotiations between the board and the firefighters union reached a conclusion and the proposed two-year contract is awaiting for a vote

of union members on June 11. The union’s initial request for a 7 percent increase in wages was negotiated to a 3.5 percent increase in the first year and 3.5 percent in the second year.

The board also approved its preliminary \$2,120,041 budget.

The board discussed whether the rotation of the terms of the five board members is a problem since three of them are re-elected in one

year. The worry of Chairman Xzlmar Anderson is whether there would be a time the board could not convene because a quorum of three is required to open the meeting. The answer seemed to hinge on whether the terms all begin on May 1, or do they begin on the date they are sworn into office. More information will be obtained to continue the discussion at the next meeting, which will be held July 1.

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Huntley United Methodist Church honors Ben and Lela Gum

HUNTLEY – Huntley United Methodist Church will have a special weekend celebration this weekend.

Events include a Saturday evening Music Night at 7 p.m. followed at 10 a.m. Sunday with a worship service to

remember the ministry of Rev. Ben and Lela Gum. Ben and Lela served churches all over the Yellowstone Conference.

They rounded out their years of service at Huntley United Methodist Church from 1983 to 1986 before retir-

ing to their home in Worden. They remained active members of their community and their local church until 2012, when they moved to Spokane.

Ben passed away in January of this year and their daughter, Glenda Steffek, will be in Huntley this weekend for both the Music Night celebration of their ministry together at the church by Homeward, and the Sunday morning worship service.

Ben had a dance band before hearing his call to the ministry and he enjoyed livening worship up before the service with great renditions of dance songs from the 1940s and 50s (and earlier)

and greatly enjoyed the many nights Homeward came to light up their little church with great music.

Lela was the sweetheart of the church for all their years together here. She survives Ben and is living in Spokane.

All of Ben and Lela’s friends are cordially invited to join in either or both of the celebrations and are encouraged to bring their stories, their pictures and the goodwill they shared while Ben and Lela were our everyday friends. The ladies of the church will serve refreshments following both the Music Night on Saturday and the Sunday worship service.

“Where Montana began” June 19th & 20th, 2015

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Weekly Ramblings - Early Risers

by Krayton Kerns

Because my coffee pot clicks on every morning at 3:45, the dripping awakens me before the trophy wife's alarm trips at 4. On the rare occasion when we stay up to the ungodly hour of 9 pm, we turn off the alarm clock and coffee pot so as to sleep as late as our heart desires. Unfortunately, our morning pattern is so ingrained our heart desires 4:15, meaning we have read scripture, exercised and filled our coffee and calorie tanks by 6:30 am. Only dairy farmers and crazy people begin their day that early and since I do not own any black and white cows, it is obvious where I fit. Benjamin Franklin coined the phrase, "Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise," but he left off the qualifier of having to wait two hours for

the not-so-healthy, wealthy and wise. As long as there are snooze buttons, the world will never be open for business before eight o'clock.

My early mornings began in vet school when I joined a group of country kids who studied in the pre-dawn hours. It was a great time to cram, but it takes time to adjust your internal clock and each day I found myself going to bed and getting up a half-hour earlier than the day previous. On the bright side, by the end of two weeks I was a day ahead of everyone else. After continuing this habit for 32 years, my body clock thinks it is October 10, 2017, thereby explaining my precise political intuition. I can describe America's future using the past tense because for me it has already happened.

(The haters faithfully reading my column out of spite just stroked out.)

America's founders wisely established a constitutional republic where every two to four years the governed has the opportunity to change leadership. Obviously, our founders were early risers, but over the years Americans started sleeping later. Sadly today, complacent voters elect politicians with the indifference typically reserved for choosing socks or underwear. White, reasonably white, and no holes are criteria best left for undergarments rather than leaders of the free world. Make 2016 the year you do not hit the snooze button thus letting the misinformed lead the uninformed into the abyss. To help you, here is my election synopsis I wrote way back

in November 2016. For the next 10 minutes open your minds and ignore the mantra Democrats are for poor people and Republicans support the rich. The cold hard truth is progressives support the ruling class be they Democrats or establishment Republicans. Here is what triggered America's final train wreck in November 2016.

The Republicans offered a smattering of 15 presidential candidates of every sex, size, shape and color during the 2016 primary season. Predictably, the high number in the GOP liberty wing split the primary ticket, thereby awarding a progressive Republican the nomination. Some disappointed conservatives futilely rallied around a third party candidacy, but after the primary, most staggered home

and stayed put.

The Democrats saw three candidates flitter through the flames of the primary, but none could steal support from the frontrunner in spite of her quid pro quo scam while Secretary of State. A June 2015 poll revealed an unwavering 42 percent supporting the Democrat presumptive nominee, so the state run media gifted the final 9 percent needed to capture the White House. Given the choice between a progressive Republican or a progressive Democrat, America plunged off the cliff and that is the way it was, Tuesday, November 8, 2016.

Eagles concert worth \$1 million, just not for MetraPark

by Evelyn Pyburn

BILLINGS — The Eagles concert was a huge success for MetraPark and for Billings, reports Sue DeVries, MetraPark's assistant manager. Even so, MetraPark didn't really "make any money," DeVries explained during the MetraPark board meeting with County Commissioners. The good news is they didn't lose any money either.

Not all of the overhead expenses are in yet, said DeVries. When they are, it may be that MetraPark may actually make a little bit. The county-owned facility did add \$33,422 to the capital improvement fund as a result of the concert held June 2.

"It is hard for people to understand, when you have \$1.4 million in ticket sales, why you don't make any money," said DeVries, but it becomes more understandable when looking at costs. MetraPark essentially had to buy the event — that includes a band that costs \$1 million and \$250,000 for production equipment.

The event would not have been possible without funding from MetraPark's co-promotion fund and from the TBID (Tourism Business Improvement District).

The important thing is, said DeVries, is that with 9,500 people attending the event, Billings businesses did make money. Motel rooms were full and many restaurants in town

were packed.

MetraPark will be embracing similar events in the next few months.

Motley Crue will appear on July 26.

Country music star Miranda Lambert will be in concert at MetraPark on Sept. 25 and Elton John's "The Final Curtain" tour will appear on Oct. 7.

Tickets are still available for the latter two, said DeVries, and tickets are on sale for most MontanaFair events. DeVries urged patrons to try out MetraPark's new on-

line ticketing system.

Montana Fair will be celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Among the many special features to help celebrate the anniversary will be the Budweiser Brewmaster Tour on Tuesday through Saturday of the fair. The Budweiser Clydesdales will also make an appearance.

There will also be a Kid's Explorium in the Exhibit Hall, which will feature games and a Lego contest.

Another special feature will be "Taste of the Fair" on Wednesday night, which will

allow patrons to sample the food of the fair vendors and the products of the Kansas City Barbeque contest, for \$1 per sample.

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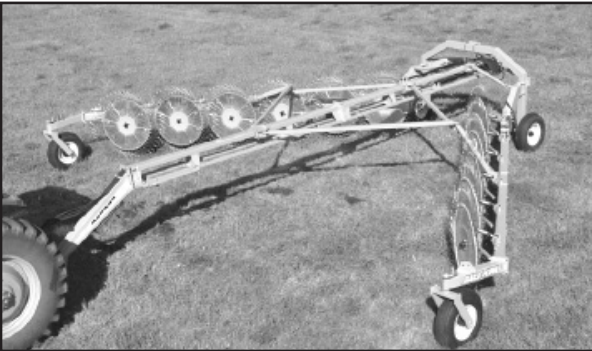
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Justices of the Peace ask for pay large increase

by Evelyn Pyburn
BILLINGS — Justices of the Peace for Yellowstone County are seeking a substantial increase in salary.

Justices of the Peace Pedro Hernandez and David Carter presented their case to members of the Elected Officials Compensation Board last week, asking to change their pay formula from the traditional base pay and longevity to being paid 90 percent of what District Court judges are paid. The salaries of District Court judges are set by the state Legislature.

The change would set the justices' salaries at \$113,518 for 2015-16.

Currently, Hernandez is paid \$85,316.79 and Carter is paid \$72,973.

Carter highlighted the duties of Justices of the Peace and the

value of what they do in presiding over a court-of-record in terms of savings to the entire justice system. Being a court-of-record imposes an obligation upon the justices "to get everything right," he explained, because if a case is appealed, the procedures, evidence and opinions are accepted as a matter of record by higher courts. Those cases are not usually reheard, which reduces costs not only to the system but also legal fees to defendants and plaintiffs. Justices of the peace must have experience and/or legal training which merits pay more on a footing of that of District Court judges, said Carter. Higher pay is important to the county to ensure a high caliber of candidates to fill justice positions in the future, emphasized Carter, who said that he took a pay cut in leaving his position as a deputy

county attorney to become Justice of the Peace.

Carter also pointed out that the proposed change would make it easier to set their salaries in the future.

The Elected Officials Compensation Board meets annually to consider pay increases for the county's elected officials. They will meet again at 10:30 a.m. on June 16, to discuss the justices' request as well as consider other issues regarding the compensation for county elected officials. The board is comprised mostly of elected county officials, including County Commissioners Jim Reno, Bill Kennedy and John Ostlund, Clerk and Recorder Jeff Martin, Sheriff Mike Linder, County Auditor Deby Hernandez, County Attorney Scott Twito and two citizens, Oscar Heinrich and Billie Ruff.

Finance Director Kevan Bryan presented data regarding possible increases to the base pay at 1 percent, 2 percent and 3 percent. They were asked by

Compensation Board Chairman Scott Twito to be prepared at the next meeting to make a recommendation about what percentage pay should be increased.

Current base pay is \$64,744.73. Salaries for elected officials vary beyond that, dependent upon longevity pay and other pay received because of expanded duties or requirements of state law.

State law requires that County Commissioners and the sheriff also receive additional pay of \$2,000. The sheriff's longevity pay is also set by the state, while

other county officials earn longevity pay of \$4,114.41 per year for a maximum of five years, capping at \$20,572.06.

Hernandez suggested the board look at removing the cap on longevity pay, pointing out that the cap had been in place for the last six or seven years. She also noted that the salaries of elected officials still lag considerably behind the pay of hired department heads in the county, even though elected officials often have greater responsibilities.

Other differences in pay include the clerk and recorder and the treasurer receiving supplemental pay of 10 percent for performing the duties of county surveyor and county school superintendent, respectively.

The county attorney is paid according to state law equal to the District Court judges at \$117,600. Next year it will be \$126,132.

Auditor Hernandez is paid \$85,316.79; Clerk & Recorder Jeff Martin, \$86,677.86; and Sheriff Mike Linder, \$82,930.91. County Commissioners are each paid \$87,316.79.

After the next meeting, the Compensation Board will forward its recommendations to County Commissioners for final approval.

Montana Thirteenth Judicial District Court, Yellowstone County
In the Matter of the Name Change of Madelyn Shae Lees, Allison Spiering, Petitioner.
Cause No. DV-15-0710
Judge Rod Souza
Notice of Hearing on Name Change of Minor Child.
This is notice that Petitioner has asked the District Court for a change of name from Madelyn Shae Lees to Madelyn Shae Spiering. The hearing will be on July 30, 2015 at 9 a.m. The hearing will be at the Courthouse in Yellowstone County.
Dated this 9th day of June, 2015.
s/s Kristie Lee Boelter
Clerk of District Court

6/12, 6/19, 6/26, 7/3, 2015
MNAXLP

Notice of Foreclosure sale

Pursuant to MCA 70-6-420, Notice is hereby given of a foreclosure sale to be held at Flying D Mini Storage at 7700 Highway 312 on 6/27/15 at 9am. The 5 storage units to be sold are #735-Gulde, #726-Vorisek, #416-Hoffman, #711 & #104. Items to be sold for cash only.

6/12, 6/19, 6/26
2015 MNAXLP

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Assault

A Yellowstone County sheriff's deputy investigating a report of an assault in the 3500 block of Ember Lane in southwest Billings at 3:24 p.m. June 5 arrested Anthony Michael Grimes, 22, of Rayton, Mo.

According to records at the Yellowstone County Detention Facility, Grimes remained in jail at presstime in lieu of \$1,000 bond. He is charged with assault and being a fugitive from justice.

Structure fire

A sheriff's deputy investigated a report of a structure fire in the 8300 block of King Avenue West at 4:03 a.m. June 8.

Theft from vehicle

A sheriff's deputy investigated the theft of a toolbox and assorted hand tools valued at \$30 from a vehicle in the 1900 block of Muldowney Lane.

Unlawful transactions

A sheriff's deputy investigating a report of a party in the 3500 block of Mitzi Drive where minors were allegedly drinking alcohol at 10:42 p.m. June 7 cited Daniel Travis Pulver of Billings for unlawful transactions with a minor, alleging he had allowed the party to occur at his residence.

Driving under the influence

* After stopping a vehicle for expired registration at mile marker 449 in Billings in the eastbound lane of Interstate 90 at 6 p.m. June 5, a sheriff's deputy arrested Roger Dickens Burckley of Billings for alleged driving while under the influence of alcohol, first offense.

* After seeing a driver throw a lit cigarette out of the window of a vehicle, a sheriff's deputy stopped the vehicle in the west-

bound lane of Interstate 90 at milemarker 453 in the Lockwood area at 12:51 a.m. June 7. After an investigation, the deputy arrested Anthony Lewis Schiffer of Billings for alleged driving while under the influence of alcohol, first offense.

Criminal mischief

* A sheriff's deputy investigated a complaint on June 4 that someone had spray-painted profanity on the window of a vehicle in the 100 block of Northern Avenue in Huntley and damaged a soda vending machine.

* A sheriff's deputy investigated a complaint of slashed tires on Mirco Circle in south Billings on June 7.

Burglary

On June 5, a sheriff's deputy investigated a burglary in the 1800 block of North Fifth Road between Huntley and Worden. According to the report, a black Bushmaster rifle valued at \$900 was stolen, although the exact date of the theft was not determined.

Found property

A man turned in a wallet at the Yellowstone County sheriff's office, saying he had found it on May 24. According to the report, the women's wallet is blue and has two business cards and four credit cards in it.

Deceptive practices

Sheriff's deputies investigated a report of unspecified fraud on May 24. No suspect information was available.

Theft

Deputies investigated a report that a white LG 3 cell phone was stolen from a convenience store in the 8000 block of South Frontage Road on

May 23.

Pursuit, vehicle, feet

Sheriff's deputies arrested Gary Jackson Hugs, 24, of Lodge Grass on May 23 after a pursuit at South 27th Street and Fifth Avenue South. He was jailed without bond and placed on federal hold, according to records at the detention center.

Recovered stolen vehicle

A Volkswagen Passat was reported stolen from the 2700 block of Old Hardin Road on June 6. The sheriff's report said the vehicle was later recovered. The report listed missing items, including a cell phone, a tablet, keys, CDs and a back and pink duffle bag, and it was not clear in the report whether those items were recovered with the vehicle.

Agency service assist

* The Yellowstone County sheriff's office assisted the Montana Highway Patrol with a high-speed chase that began in Yellowstone County and ended in Big Horn County on June 6.

The report said the chase started in Lockwood at Ford Road and Johnson Lane.

According to the report, the suspects surrendered on Highway 91 on the Crow Reservation and agents from the Bureau of Indian Affairs took three suspects into custody.

* The sheriff's office assisted the Department of Family Services with a home inspection on Springdale Drive.

Animal complaint

A sheriff's deputy investigated a complaint that a neighbor's dog bit a dog in the 1800 block of Canary Drive on June 4. The report said the case was forwarded to animal control officers for investigation.

Deceptive practices

Sheriff's deputies investigated a complaint of credit card fraud in the 3500 block of Wapato Avenue in Lockwood.

Disturbance

Sheriff's deputies investigated a disturbance in the 2400 block of Cline Road north of Highway 312 on June 6. No arrests were made.



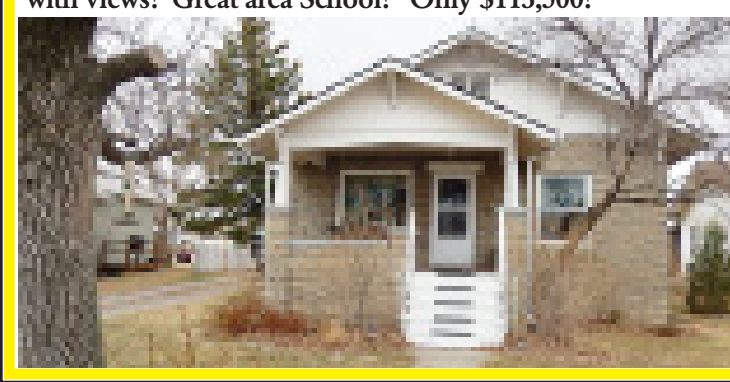
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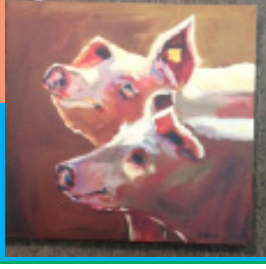
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