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Community Journal

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Week of August 17, 2025

“Master & Mingle” Series to Empower Livingston Businesses

Park Local Development Corporation, in collaboration with MSU Extension Park County, is proud to announce the launch of a new opportunity aimed at strengthening the local business community. The *Master and Mingle* series kicks off with its first sessions on **August 26th and August 28th**, offering business owners a unique opportunity to connect, learn, and grow. Park Local Development Corporation is a Park County-based economic development corporation that seeks to break down barriers for businesses to help Park County thrive. Partnered with MSU Extension, Park Local is excited to build relationships and bring exciting content that the Park County business community needs.

Designed with flexibility in mind, each month will feature **two identical sessions**—one at 6 pm on **August 26th** and another at 7 am on **August 28th**—to accommodate varying schedules. Business owners are encouraged to attend whichever time works best for them, as both sessions will cover the same content.

The structure of each session begins with a networking opportunity, allowing participants to meet fellow business owners and managers

**MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
EXTENSION

and discover what’s happening across different industries in Livingston. Following the mingle, MSU Extension Park County will lead a focused workshop on **balance sheets**. Each month, the content will change to meet the needs of our business community. Whether you’re new to business or have already mastered your financials, all business owners are encouraged to attend to develop relationships.

The *Master & Mingle* series is open to all industries, recognizing that each business has unique needs. By offering dual sessions and relevant content, Park Local Development hopes to make professional development more accessible and impactful.

Interested participants can sign up through the MSU Extension office and Park Local Development Corporation by emailing [park@montana.edu](mailto:park@montana.edu) or by calling (406) 222-4156.

**PARKLOCAL**  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Best of Park County 2025

The *Park County Community Journal* (PCCJ) presents its 9th annual **Best of Park County** poll, a contest intended to showcase our community’s best—the outstanding people, places, and local businesses that make this special community vibrant.

Voting will begin on Wednesday, August 20th, at 9 am and concludes three weeks later on Friday, September 12th, at 5:30 pm. Ballots will be accessible online using QR codes printed in each weekly edition of the newspaper up until polls close. Additionally, paper form ballots printed in the newspaper each week can be submitted at or mailed to the Main Print Shop, located at 108 N. Main Street in Livingston. The shop will accept printed ballots during business hours from 9 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

The survey may also be accessed via Facebook and on our website at <https://www.pccjournal.com>.

In previous years we have included several categories to encompass a full

**Park County Community Journal**  
BEST OF  
2025

spectrum of our community, including local restaurants, recreational destinations, retail establishments and more. To encourage greater participation, we have again reduced the number of categories included in the contest and may continue refining this list in the future.

We ask that each person submit only one ballot and complete at least 50 percent of the form for it to be valid. Ballots with less than 50% completion will be excluded from the final analysis. Results will be published in a special edition scheduled for release on Sunday, September 28th, which will include exclusive stories on select businesses and people. PCCJ will present 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners with award certificates in each category for the 2025 season.

Our goal is to continue expanding this contest each year by increasing the number of residents who participate in voting. So please, take a few moments to show appreciation for the Best of Park County and share this opportunity with your family, friends, and coworkers!

Big Timber Bulk Water Sales Policy

Big Timber—The water war waged to the east in Sweetgrass County has ceased. In Big Timber, a clash between big business and representative democracy saw the latter emerge victorious when city council members and Mayor Greg DeBoer temporarily suspended bulk water sales (excluding support for emergency services) in a split decision during a special meeting led by councilman Jeff Davis scheduled for Monday, August 11th at Carnegie Library.

Bulk water sales are anticipated to resume pending the development and adoption of a policy by the council, spearheaded by the water subcommittee.

The decision came in response to recent public outcry from city residents denouncing city

**Tony Crowder**  
Managing Editor

officials for aiding and abetting the infamous Crazy Mountain Ranch (CMR)—an exclusive luxury resort located in the Shields Valley some 50 miles from Big Timber city limits, owned by CrossHarbor Capital, an investment and asset management firm based in Boston and proprietors of the Yellowstone Club in Big Sky.

CMR recently faced litigation when the Department of Natural Resources filed a lawsuit alleging illegal water use—evidence had surfaced, following an investigation, that the defendants circumvented change of use procedures established through the Montana Water Use Act, constituting a water rights violation. CMR had unlawfully altered existing water rights historically designated for agriculture to instead irrigate a 112-acre state-of-the-art golf course currently under construction.

The lawsuit was settled before the initial hearing with CMR avoiding financial penalties. In the resulting consent decree, CMR agreed to purchase water resources while awaiting approval from the DNRC to modify existing rights after

submitting Change of Appropriation Water Right applications in May. Just prior to settlement, however, CMR had sought and successfully procured bulk water resources through the City of Big Timber—an offering available to a variety of entities both public and private for the last 30 years.

To date, Big Timber municipal has sold just over 1.6 million gallons of treated water to CMR, (peaking at roughly 100,000 gallons daily yet recently reduced to 50,000, according to Public Works Director Kris Novotny) profiting over \$20,000 within a relatively short timeframe. Though lucrative, residents have taken exception

Photo Credit: Jacob Schwarz—schwarzcaptures.com

to this arrangement with numerous concerns, some of which were shared by councilman Davis, who expressed sympathy for his constituents during opening statements at Monday’s meeting.

[See Bulk Water Sales, Page 3](#)

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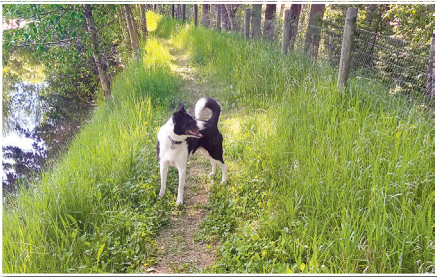
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Obituaries



April 9, 1942

Deanna Larson

July 30, 2025

Deanna Larson, a resident of Erie, Pennsylvania, for 55 years, passed away on July 30th at the age of 83 at Aegis Living Kirkland Waterfront in Washington state. Born April 9, 1942, in Livingston, Montana, to Herbert and Dorothy (Long) Gilbert, Deanna grew up in the town of Wilsall, Montana, and loved the outdoors and mountain scenery that was her home for the first fourteen years of her life. Later, she moved to Vancouver, Washington, with her family and attended Hudson Bay High School, graduating at the top of her class. Deanna met her husband, Ron Larson, at the ripe age of sixteen through their church and they were married in 1960. After having given birth to Tim in Vancouver, Washington, in 1962 and adopting Jill in Boulder, Colorado, in 1967, while Ron received his Ph.D. from the University of Colorado, they moved their family to Erie, Pennsylvania, in 1970 where Ron accepted a teaching position at Penn State Behrend, and where Deanna attended college.

Over the years, Deanna and Ron complemented each other nicely and always worked together, first as the owners and operators of Larson's Custom Quilting, and later as the founders of Larson Texts, an educational publishing company. Together with their children, Tim Larson and Jill Larson Im, they founded Big Ideas Learning.

Deanna served many roles in the company but was always a strong presence on the Board of Directors, serving as Secretary of the

Corporation. She typeset and proofread every first edition from high school through college and read every first edition of kindergarten through eighth grade.

Deanna also founded and managed Norcross Land Management—the company that built and owns the Larson Texts/Big Ideas Learning Erie campus. Her vision for creating a beautiful work environment is an inspiration to all who work there. Notably, she loved the on-campus gardens, footbridge, and wooded nature trails that she helped design.

Deanna was energetic and intellectually curious. She loved to garden, cook international cuisines, connect with friends and family, read books, especially historical fiction, travel the world, and play the piano, which she did for Calvary Covenant Church for twelve years. She also had a passion for genealogy and authored several family history books. Her favorite place to frequent was always the rugged mountains above Clyde Park, where she enjoyed connecting with her close relatives and friends, always treasuring the beauty of Big Sky Country.

Deanna was a wonderful and loving grandmother who was proud of her grandchildren: Caitlin Larson Mattis, Carly Larson, Conrad Im, Hudson Im, Sophia Im, and her two great-grandchildren: Cassie Mattis and Miles Mattis. She is also survived by her children: Timothy Larson (Mary) and Jill Larson Im (Edward) and by her stepbrother Todd Smith (Dee). She was a generous and humble woman who exuded poise,

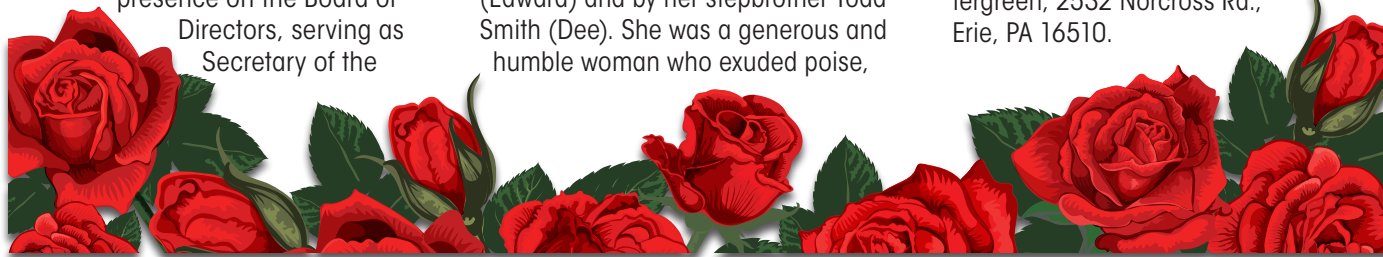


grace, and kindness always. Her quiet strength, resilience, and love formed the foundation of the Larson family and will be sorely missed.

Deanna Larson is preceded in death by her father, Herbert Gilbert, mother, Dorothy (Long) Gilbert Smith, stepfather, Gordon Smith, sister, Janice (Gilbert) McGee, brother-in-law, Dennis McGee, and by her grandson, Timothy Larson II.

She will be laid to rest on Saturday, August 9th, at Wintergreen Gorge Cemetery. A Celebration of Life will be arranged at a later date.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Burton Quinn Scott Cremation & Funeral Services Inc., Wintergreen, 2532 Norcross Rd., Erie, PA 16510.



Park County Community Journal

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Consider a Sponsorship of the Community Journal

The *Park County Community Journal* is seeking help from our followers to continue its mission: promoting positivity in the local community. We do this by publishing stories about the people, organizations, businesses, and events that represent Park County, often times at request, and most importantly, to shine light on what makes this community special.

We promote local businesses and encourage their support; honor non-profit organizations dedicated to philanthropy; celebrate our vibrant arts community by showcasing its contributors and their work; praise the achievements of students and children in sports and education; recognize major developments in municipal and county government; and cover local events to spur participation and advance the concept of community.

Knowledge as power, though a cliché, is undeniably true, and our intention is to inform readers about the community so as to inspire positive change through mutual support and understanding.

The *Journal* currently publishes 2,000 copies weekly for distribution throughout Park County. In response to incoming tourists, this number will rise in the early spring to 2,500 and to 3,000 by summer 2025. Park County depends on tourism to thrive, and the newspaper has a role in sharing information with visitors about what our community has to offer through advertising and editorials

on businesses and events. In addition to compensating staff, this increase in printing is expensive (\$0.45 per copy; total annual printing expenses amounting to roughly \$50,000 contingent upon need), but our goal is to help the community flourish without placing a burden on our readers.

Up until now, the newspaper has been free of charge—a service provided to the community not intended to generate income through our consumers, much like a non-profit organization. Our desire is to continue this tradition via advertising fees, the *Journal's* current business model, and by exploring new avenues for raising money to fund operating expenses without shifting costs to readers. For example, we are currently working alongside non-profit organizations like Prospera and Park Local to consider and develop new strategies for increasing revenue, such as adjusting advertising rates for local businesses through the cool season. However, as we are not technically a non-profit organization, our options are somewhat limited.

We are therefore asking you to please consider the value of our newspaper to this community and to support our cause by making a donation that will be used to extend our outreach and impact to locals and visitors alike. Donations may be made once or on a recurring basis, if possible.



Because we are not a charity organization, your gifts are not tax-deductible. However, any donation, small or large, helps us in our effort to shape this community for the better. Even just two dollars each from a few thousand individuals would be extremely helpful in keeping this newspaper free as we continuously strive to benefit the community.

Thank you for considering a donation to our newspaper. If a gift falls within one of the following sponsorship levels:

**Bronze: \$250 • Silver: \$500  
Gold: \$1000**

Donors will be recognized monthly in the newspaper. Qualifying business donors will be awarded discounted advertising rates during the warm season (June – September.)

Donations can be made using the QR code or mailed to PCCJ, PO Box 1851, Livingston, MT 59047. Thank you for your consideration in helping us to continue our mission!





# OP-ED

by Brad Wilson

## Stewardship Starts with Transparency, Not Just Apologies

Opinion Editorials state the views solely of the author and do not reflect the views of the Community Journal.

In his recent guest column, Sam Byrne, managing partner of CrossHarbor Capital Partners, offered an apology to the Shields Valley community for missteps in water use at Crazy Mountain Ranch and reaffirmed a commitment to stewardship and long-term investment. That acknowledgment is welcome. But it's only the beginning of the conversation Montanans deserve.

When the South Crazy Mountain Land Exchange was first proposed in Fall 2019, the 18,000-acre Crazy Mountain Ranch (CMR), known locally as the Marlboro Ranch, was still owned by Philip Morris USA, operating under its parent company Altria Group. The Forest Service's proposal included a component that would have transferred portions of CMR into public ownership—most notably Rock Lake, which is at the center of the ongoing water saga controversy.

In early 2020, Friends of the Crazy Mountains and its partners met with Tom Glass, a representative of the Yellowstone Club, to discuss the East Crazy Inspiration Divide Land Exchange—a proposal Glass had helped develop. During that meeting, Glass assured the group that the Yellowstone Club, also owned by CrossHarbor Capital Partners, had no further interest in the Crazy Mountains. The club's involvement, he explained,

was limited to advancing the proposal so it could acquire 500 acres of Forest Service land in the Madison Range, adjacent to its existing holdings.

In late 2020, the U.S. Forest Service deferred the CMR component of the South Crazy Mountain Land Exchange, citing public opposition. Conservationists, hunters, and tribal representatives had raised valid concerns: the proposed swap threatened public access, fragmented wildlife corridors, and lacked transparency. On the surface, it looked like a win for public input.

But then came the twist.

Just months later, in June 2021, CrossHarbor Capital Partners—known for transforming Montana's wild landscapes into luxury enclaves—acquired the 18,000-acre CMR property. The timing was uncanny. The deferral removed the ranch from a complex public exchange, and soon after, it was in private hands, poised for development.

This sequence of events raises a troubling question: Was the deferral truly about listening to the public—or was it about clearing the runway for a high-dollar acquisition?

CrossHarbor's footprint in Montana is well established. From the Yellowstone Club to Moonlight Basin, the firm has reshaped vast swaths of land into exclusive retreats. Its

purchase of CMR fits the pattern. But what's less clear is whether the Forest Service's decision to defer the exchange was influenced—directly or indirectly—by CrossHarbor's interest in the property.

If so, it would mark yet another instance where public land decisions are shaped not by democratic process, but by private ambition.

Montanans deserve transparency. They deserve to know whether their voices genuinely influenced the deferral—or whether those voices were a convenient cover for a deal already in motion. The Forest Service owes the public a full account of its decision-making process. And CrossHarbor, if it values its reputation in this state, should be forthright about its role in the timing of the acquisition.

Public lands are not bargaining chips. They are the shared inheritance of all Montanans—ranchers, hikers, hunters, and tribal nations alike. When decisions about those lands are made behind closed doors, trust erodes.

Montanans are not anti-development. They are pro-transparency, pro-access, and deeply protective of the landscapes that define their way of life. Stewardship is not just about investing capital or creating amenities.



It's about earning trust through openness, accountability, and a willingness to engage with the community; not just informing it after decisions are made.

Crazy Mountain Ranch still has the potential to be a model for responsible private ownership in a region where public and private interests often collide. But that will require more than apologies and assurances. It will require action, humility, and a genuine partnership with the people who call Shields Valley home.

*Brad Wilson, of Wilsall, is founder of Friends of the Crazy Mountains. His family has over 100 years of historic use on public lands and the public trail systems in the Crazy Mountains.*

## Bulk Water Sales

from page 1

"There was a feeling after last week's meeting that public input was ignored. That was not the case. Your concerns have not fallen on deaf ears."

"In my opinion, we must stop bulk water sales immediately until a policy is written and approved by the council," exclaimed Davis, mailing his proverbial five theses to the council table—namely, for example, selling exorbitant quantities of potable drinking water purposed for irrigation at rates established 17 years ago without adjustment for inflation—at the expense of straining treatment facilities and nearby water resources, apprehensions placated by Novotny.

"Membrane plants thrive when running," he explained, further elaborating that bulk water is often sold incrementally, as is the case with sales to CMR, who drew an estimated 6,400 gallons during each transaction for transportation in tankers by Bullock Contracting LLC.

Davis also mentioned a new water storage tank slated for construction. In January, Big Timber received 2.6 million dollars in supplemental disaster relief funding through the Economic Development Administration. The city applied for this grant (expected to cover 80% of total costs) to expand water capacity for potential wildfires. As the only seated commissioner who voted against this undertaking, Davis was seemingly perplexed at the audacity of city officials to continue selling bulk water given current limitations and associated risks.

Novotny, however, has continuously reassured the commission and public that bulk water sales to CMR pose no impending threat to the city's water supply.

Rebuttal from council members Justin Ferguson and Leonard Woehler aired on the side of pragmatism, arguing that bulk water sales represent a revenue stream to strengthen the city's water fund—stored in coffers for replacing aging infrastructure and repairing and maintaining the city's water system facilities and equipment, otherwise supported through steadily increasing city usage rates. Woehler reiterated his comments from the previous meeting that replacing dilapidated infrastructure was precedent to repairing city roadways, a chief priority expressed by Big Timber citizens yet costly in light of current funding deficits referenced by the commission.

Whether Davis' comments truly reflected public opinion, furthermore, became a point of contention between council members.

Ferguson, alongside Mayor DeBoer, contended that opinions vocalized during public commentary at the previous city council meeting

did not fully represent prevailing opinion on the matter.

"I do question your thought that a majority of the city is in favor of cutting it [bulk water sales] off," said Ferguson, observing that, "at the meeting a week ago, I would say a majority of the people did not speak. Many were here to gain information. When speaking with several who were in attendance [afterwards] and explaining the facts as I know them, they felt the water should be sold."

Ferguson admitted he initially opposed bulk water sales to CMR due to a widespread misconception that the group had stolen water from their neighbors in Clyde Park but had since reconsidered his position upon receiving clarification regarding the dispute.

"I had to set my feelings aside about the billionaires and ask myself, 'what is going to benefit the citizens?'... and I came to the conclusion that we can make money by selling water," suggesting the city also seek reciprocal assistance from CMR to fund various public works projects, citing an article from the *Billings Gazette* mentioning financial contributions by CMR to fund construction of the new recreational center in Livingston.

Woehler concurred with Ferguson, claiming that public opinion, inflamed on social media platforms through false narratives and errant conjecture, was in all probability subject to bias and contamination, contingent on what information is presented and how (something he emphasized in response to a petition presented during public commentary). This same sentiment, he claimed, created an "intimidating atmosphere" during public commentary, deterring expressed support for bulk water sales.

"This is about who we are selling to," exclaimed Woehler, referring to CMR, explaining that 50,000 gallons equates to 6% of the city's total daily usage—proportionately insignificant and information unknown to the average Big Timber citizen. "Last year we used more water than we use now, even with bulk sales."

DeBoer echoed these statements. "Overwhelmingly, what is the problem with selling bulk water? That we are selling to billionaires for their golf course. No one would bat an eye if this water were being sold to a rancher. This is a tough issue because there is a vocal contingent that does not want to sell [bulk water] no matter what." In his estimates, albeit anecdotal, 80% of residents were in favor of bulk water sales according to recent discussions with constituents.

Commissioner Davis fired back at these hypothetical figures, insisting that, despite his accurate analysis of the problem, Mayor DeBoer's claims were exaggerated, indicated by a show of hands at the previous meeting when residents were asked to volunteer support for or opposition to bulk water sales to CMR—"I am calling your bluff Mr. Mayor," to which DeBoer directly

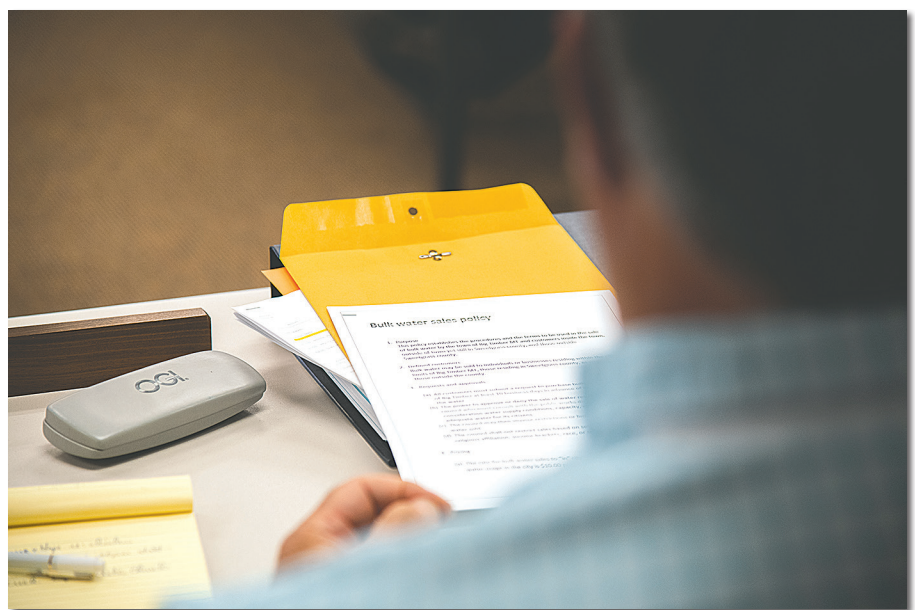


Photo Credit: Jacob Schwarz—schwarzcaptures.com

expressed resentment, "I don't have a dog in this fight! This is a decision for the council."

During public commentary, residents debated the council over sales volume, environmental implications, pricing, contractual obligations (or lack thereof), a formal policy, water system limitations, and public opinion—demonstrated by a petition containing 137 signatures from city and county citizens, organized by Big Timber resident Dulcie Rae Bue-Clavirino, though questioned by Woehler regarding its validity—specifically, whether citizens who declared their support for the petition were aware of how profits from bulk water sales are used to benefit existing infrastructure and the extent to which they impact overall usage.

"You might receive skewed responses if people aren't fully informed," asserted Woehler.

Bue-Clavirino had invoked data from city hall to illustrate how bulk sales of 1.66 million gallons to CMR surpassed the total volume sold over three years between January 2021 and December 2024 (estimated at roughly 1.5 million gallons), and that this amounted (the vast majority of which was sold to CMR) to adding 250 households at 400 gallons daily. The largest transaction to date during the aforementioned period was 500,000 gallons to Triangle Communications, one-third of the total sold to CMR within the past month.

"This is not just another bulk water sale," she exclaimed. "We are trucking 6-months' worth of water for a family of five in a single day."

"There are two and half or three weeks of bulk water sales remaining that will likely generate \$6,000 to \$10,000 [each week]. It's evident that more people would have these sales halted. Do you really want to go against a majority of what people feel [for this money]?" questioned one resident.

Doug Ayers, a Big Timber resident for 30 years with professional experience in the hydrocarbon industry said, "Water is our most valuable resource. Guarding and conserving water should be a real goal. Cities aren't running out of natural gas and electricity. They run out of water. We need to think about what's best long-term... The financial ramifications are also significant. The streets and water lines need fixed. We should have a rate structure that respects the value of this resource. I am for water and also the city making money and repairing streets."

Following public commentary, a motion was made by Davis to approve discontinuation of bulk water sales excluding emergency services, seconded by Ferguson who then opposed this motion alongside Woehler. With approval from Baird, Mayor DeBoer cast the final vote, citing the petition as his reasoning for this decision, though he remained firm that it did not necessarily represent majority opinion.

Nonetheless, the mayor and commissioners reached a consensus: bulk water rates were significantly low, and a policy was essential to address such issues.

The new bulk water sales policy, directed in part by the council's water subcommittee (consisting of Ferguson and Ward 2 representative Kerri Baird), will likely include a tiered pricing system to enhance profitability—potentially accounting for residential status and purchase size, amongst other factors. A mock policy devised and presented by Woehler may serve as inspiration for the final product.

With three weeks remaining in the watering season, CMR is now left to fend for itself after attempting to conscript both Livingston and White Sulphur Springs in its quest for water yet to no avail or further recourse—at least for now.



# "ArtWeek Park County" 1st Annual Celebration

**ARTWEEK**  
**PARK COUNTY**

Introducing a countywide celebration of the arts from the Livingston Depot Center, Danforth Museum of Art, and Livingston Center for Art and Culture to be held September 20th. *ArtWeek Park County* is a partnership designed to bring our community together through art. It celebrates local artists, provides workshops for all ages, and enhances the end of the summer tourism season in beautiful Park County.

*ArtWeek Park County* is a new annual event featuring signature events like: artist lectures, student & adult workshops, and fine art exhibits culminating in a live auction of the region's best art. All artists and art lovers are invited to get involved.

Events may include everything from artist demonstrations, open studios, and workshops to store discounts, or even Andy Warhol soup specials and Picasso martinis. The weeklong event schedule is aimed at strengthening the

community by engaging with the arts and celebrating its creative legacy. A full calendar of events, and other ways for artists and art lovers to participate is available at [ArtWeekPC.com](http://ArtWeekPC.com).

The Livingston Depot Center is showcasing the region's finest art at the live auction held at on Saturday, September 27th. Renowned auctioneers, Black and Associates, will lead this exciting evening with a riveting and fast-paced auction. Doors open at 5 pm. Cocktails and conversation will be served prior to an artfully catered dinner by Food For Thought Catering featuring locally sourced menu items. The live auction event will begin at 7:15 pm. Tickets



Artist reception at the Livingston Center for Art and Culture

are available at [ArtWeekPC.com](http://ArtWeekPC.com).

Visit the Livingston Center for Art and Culture

beginning September 9th to preview all the artwork that will be available in the auction, as well as special artist reception during the final Livingston art walk of the season on September 26th.

*ArtWeek's* development and its debut year are supported through the Park County Fund for the Arts, a program of the Park County Community Foundation and the Park County Arts Council. The Fund for the Arts is made possible by a generous donation from the JAKET Foundation, recognizing *ArtWeek Park County* for its potential to bring substantial positive change and improvements to our community.

*ArtWeek* strives to support existing organizations while spurring innovation in the arts—a lofty but achievable goal! For more information about *ArtWeek Park County*, including how to become a sponsor, visit [HYPERLINK](http://HYPERLINK) [www.artweekpc.com](http://www.artweekpc.com). **See you there!**

## "One Love Livingston" – A Beautiful Collection of World Music

Hosted by The Shane Lalani Center for the Arts, *One Love Livingston* is a music concert promoting world harmony on Saturday, August 30th at 7 pm. This special event seeks to promote understanding and celebrate cultural diversity through music. You don't want to miss this extraordinary opportunity to experience this authentic music played in Montana.

Featuring **Mighty Mystic and the Hard Roots Movement**, as part of their "Walk Tall" summer release tour on VP Records. Originally from Jamaica, Mighty Mystic is one of the most exciting reggae artists performing today, with an authentic sound that honors the music's origins, while adding a hard rock feel with impressive lead guitars, hard-hitting lyrics, and deep bass lines. Internationally known for his

skill and genre blending, this is an opportunity not to be missed!

Also performing will be **Sean Devine and the Stars of Anguilla**. Local singer-songwriter Sean Devine, traveled to Anguilla in the winter 2023, where he met legendary musician Bankie Banx. This encounter led to the creation of his new EP, "Die Happy," recorded at Anguilla Music Academy with Bankie's band. The album features a blend of Montana songwriting and Caribbean rhythms, highlighted by the uplifting single "Grow Up Beautiful" and the title track featuring Jamaican artist Mighty Mystic. Talented musicians Dennis Warrington and Jaiden Fleming, from the recording band, will be joining Devine for this performance.

*One Love Livingston* will also feature local

artist **Foreshadow**. Shadow Devereaux, also known as Foreshadow, is a Salish and Blackfeet hip-hop artist, audio engineer, and advocate for Indigenous youth from the Flathead Indian Reservation. With over a decade of experience, he fuses cultural roots with modern hip-hop to uplift and inspire, blending themes of resilience, struggle, and pride. He won a Native American Music Award in 2022 for "Protect Your People" and contributed a powerful song to the 2024 documentary "Bring Them Home," narrated by Lily Gladstone. In 2025, he released his debut solo album, "Perfect Timing," a bold and introspective body of work marking a major milestone in his career. Beyond the music, Shadow works alongside collaborator Colter Olmstead to teach film and music to youth on

and off the reservation. As Foreshadow, he continues to use his platform to empower his community and amplify Indigenous voices through story-telling and sound.

Food truck Pizza Madre 406 will be slinging homemade Neapolitan-style pizzas all evening, and Two Scoops Saloon will be serving locally made Genuine Ice Cream.

Don't miss this authentic, unique world music event in the heart of Livingston: Purchase your tickets today at [www.theshanecenter.org](http://www.theshanecenter.org) or by calling the box office at (406) 222-1420. The Shane is located at 415 E. Lewis St., Livingston.

*One Love Livingston* is generously supported by Pine Creek Lodge and Key Property Montana.

## Wheatgrass Books Art Walk Events

4TH FRIDAY ART WALK  
AUGUST 22, 2025



**EUGENE CONLON: A RETROSPECTIVE**  
 CURATED BY EUGENIA KAY  
 AUGUST 22 - SEPTEMBER 19, 2025  
 RECEPTION AUGUST 22, 2025 5-8 PM

**Wheatgrass Books Presents: "Eugene Conlon (1925-2001): A Retrospective"**

Wheatgrass Books is honored to present *Eugene Conlon (1925-2001): A Retrospective*, a special exhibition curated by his daughter and Livingston resident, Eugenia Kay. A reception for the exhibit will be held during the 4th Friday Art

Walk on August 22nd from 5 to 8 pm, inviting the public to experience the work of a prolific American watercolorist whose career spanned over five decades.

After graduating from the Massachusetts College of Art in 1950, Eugene Conlon dedicated his life to painting. His work was exhibited in both solo and group shows and represented by distinguished galleries including the Munson Gallery in Chatham, Massachusetts, and Santa Fe, New Mexico. He was a member of the National Academy of Design, the National Watercolor Society, and the Boston Watercolor Society. His paintings reside in private and public collections across the country.

This retrospective features pieces from Eugenia Kay's private collection, offering a rare and intimate glimpse into the legacy of an artist whose fluid, expressive style captured the natural world with quiet intensity. The exhibit will be open until September 19th. Wheatgrass is open daily from 10 am to 5 pm.

**Book Signing with Jim Overstreet**

Wheatgrass presents a book signing with Jim Overstreet during the last Art Walk of the summer on Friday, August 22nd from 5 to 8 pm.

Jim will sign copies of his book **Rodeo in the Blood** series.

Jim Overstreet is a lifelong cowboy and author of *A Montana Rivalry*. Raising horses for most of his life, he earned multiple titles in tie down roping, from youth rodeo to the senior circuit. As an accomplished writer, his work has been published in national magazines including Reader's Digest, Persimmon Hill and numerous equine magazines, including Western Horseman. The American Horse Publications honored him as a winner in their Feature Article category.

Jim grew up on the Sun Ranch, a large cattle and horse ranch in the Madison Valley in southwest Montana with his father, an avid horseman and well-respected cowboy in the area who helped him begin training horses. Jim would later learn from Ray Hunt and Tom Dorrance.

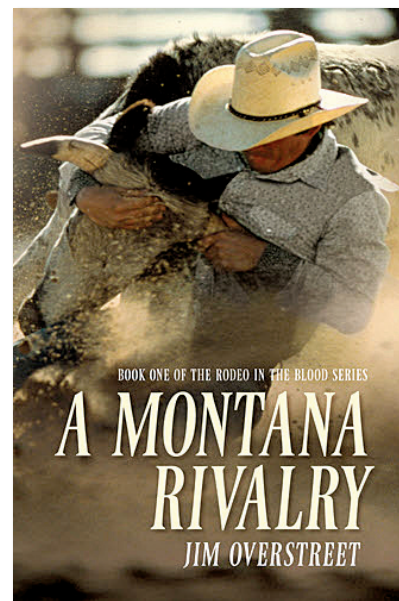
Jim's adult life was filled with roping and rodeos along with raising two daughters with his

wife amongst his many horses in the shadow of Montana's Crazy Mountains.

Jim loves to write, except when he hates it, and although he is old enough to know better, Jim still rides and trains horses. He is passionate about telling stories of the contemporary West that demonstrate the physical toughness, mental determination, and dependence on community inherent to ranching and rodeo. His first book, *A Montana Rivalry*, released by Palmetto Publishing in fall of 2023, is the first book in the *Rodeo in the Blood Series*. Since then, three more have been published: *A Montana Inheritance*, *A Montana Feud*, and *The Canadian Horse*.

Wheatgrass Books is located in Livingston, at 120 N. Main St. **For more information contact**

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August 24<sup>th</sup> (Sun) **KYLE BRENNER Solo Rock & Roll**

August 29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> (Fri-Sat) **TYLER POTTER & LAST MINUTE SURPRISE Classic Country**

August 31<sup>st</sup> (Sun) **BRIAN KASSAY Mix of Folk, Rock & Electronic Elements**

September 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> (Fri-Sat) **QUITE COYOTE Fusion of Rock, Country & Reggae**

September 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> (Fri-Sat) **THE DIRTY SHAME Classic Outlaw Country**

September 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> (Fri-Sat) **TSUNAMI FUNK R&B and Funk**

September 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> (Fri-Sat) **JUSTIN CASE BAND Classic Rock**

October 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> (Fri-Sat) **THE FOSSILS Old School Jam Band**

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# Montana's Flathead Cherries—Ripe and Ready!

by Jill-Ann Ouellette

In the heart of Montana, nestled in the Flathead Valley, grows a natural treasure: the Flathead cherry. These cherries, scientifically known as *Prunus virginiana*, are not your average cherries—they are large, sweet, dark, red gems. What makes these cherries special? They grow in the unique microclimate of fertile soil along the shores of Flathead Lake. In the spring, the combination of lake temperatures prevents early bud break and frost damage. As the growing season moves to summer, the region's long, warm days of abundant sunshine followed by cool nights are ideal for these large, flavorful cherries. The most common varieties are: Lambert, Rainer, Lapin and Sweetheart. These cherries have been a staple in Montana's landscape and culinary scene for centuries. In fact, the Flathead area is nationally known for its cherry orchards. Let's dive into the rich history, harvesting tips, health benefits, and unique preparation methods of these compelling cherries.

## History: A Tale of Time

The history of Flathead cherries is intertwined with that of Montana itself. Native to the region, these cherries were a vital food source for Native American tribes like the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d'Orielle. They would dry the cherries in the sun to preserve them for the long winter months, a practice later adopted by European settlers.

In 1866, the introduction of commercial cherry orchards transformed the Flathead cherry into a significant agricultural product. Today, the Flathead Valley is home to numerous cherry orchards, some practicing regenerative and organic growing techniques, with the cherries serving as a major contributor to the local economy and a beloved symbol of Montana's heritage.

## Growing Season and Harvesting Window

Flathead cherries typically bloom in late April to early May, depending on the weather. The cherries begin to ripen in mid-July and reach their peak around the first week of August. If harvested too early, they have a sour taste. Many people prefer to wait until the first frost, as late as early October—Mother Nature is fickle—when the cherries become sweeter and more palatable. This extended harvesting window allows for a diverse range of culinary applications.

## Health Benefits: Nature's Pharmacy

More than just a tangy treat, Flathead cherries are packed with natural health

benefits. These cherries are a powerhouse of essential nutrients, vitamins, and antioxidants that contribute to overall well-being.

- 1. Bone Health:** Rich in vitamin K, they play a crucial role in bone metabolism, helping to build and maintain strong bones.
- 2. Blood Clotting:** Their Vitamin K also aids in blood clotting, essential for healing wounds and preventing excessive bleeding.
- 3. Cancer Fighting:** The antioxidants in cherries, particularly anthocyanins (indicated by the rich red to purple to black pigments), have been shown to fight cancer and shrink tumors by neutralizing free radicals that can damage cells.
- 4. Immune System Boost:** Flathead cherries improve white blood cell activity, boosting the immune system and helping the body fight off infections and diseases.
- 5. Blood Pressure Regulation:** Studies suggest that the compounds in cherries may help lower high blood pressure.
- 6. Better Sleep:** The anthocyanins in these cherries contain a small amount of melatonin, which helps regulate your sleep cycle.

## Harvesting and Pit Removal Tips

Harvesting Flathead cherries is a simple yet rewarding process. Here are some tips to make the most of your harvest:

- Identification:** Look for shiny, dark-maroon or black cherries with fresh-looking stems. Avoid cherries with signs of damage or discoloration.
- Picking:** Pick cherries by gently twisting them off the stem. Avoid pulling, as this can damage the branch and reduce future yield.
- Pit Removal:** Flathead cherries have a large pit that must be removed before consumption. The easiest method is to use a paring knife. Cut the cherry in half lengthwise, and then twist the halves to separate the pit from the flesh. If you are making a pie or cobbler you may opt to buy a cherry pitter, which are not expensive and readily available online and in most grocery stores.

## Unique Preparation Methods

While Flathead cherries can be eaten raw, their sour taste (when harvested early) lends them perfectly to a variety of culinary applications. This holds true for ripe cherries but would call for less sugar. Here are a few unique ways to

prepare the early-harvest cherries:

- 1. Jam and Jelly:** Cooked down with sugar and pectin, Flathead



cherries make a delicious and nutritious jam or jelly. The natural pectin in the cherries helps the mixture set, creating a perfect spread for toast, biscuits, or scones.

## 2. Cherry Balsamic Glaze:

Reduce balsamic vinegar and sugar, then add pitted Flathead cherries to create a tangy, sweet glaze perfect for meats, vegetables, or even ice cream.

- 3. Cherry Salsa:** Combine pitted and chopped Flathead cherries with diced red onion, jalapeño, cilantro, lime juice, and a touch of sugar for a refreshing salsa that pairs well with chips, tacos, or grilled meats.

- 4. Cherry Compote:** Cook Flathead cherries with a touch of sugar, a cinnamon stick, and a splash of red or port wine for a rich, decadent compote that's perfect for topping oatmeal or pound cake.

- 5. Dried Cherries:** Pit and dry cherries in a food dehydrator or a low-temperature oven for a shelf-stable, nutrient-dense snack that's perfect for hiking, camping, or on-the-go munching.

- 6. Baked goods:** Make into cherry pies, tarts, cobblers, cakes, cookies, and cheesecakes, and even pancakes. They are a great choice in many recipes offering natural sweetness that can reduce the added sugar.

Snacking on these beautiful, dark,



sweet gems when harvested later in the season is perfection. You can find these delights at roadside stands, farmers markets, health food, and grocery stores during the harvest season. Buy extra to freeze for smoothies or baking later in the year.

Montana's Flathead cherries are a testament to the region's rich history, its commitment to sustainable, local agriculture, and its dedication to preserving natural health. With their diverse culinary applications, be sure to indulge in these remarkably delicious cherries—a true celebration of nature's bounty.

**Get them while they last!**

Recipe by  
Carla Williams

## RECIPE CORNER

### Easy Baked Hawaiian Meatballs

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound of lean ground beef
- 1 cup plain breadcrumbs
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh cracked black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 3 cups sweet and sour sauce, (1 batch of my recipe, or store bought sauce)

#### Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Add all ingredients to a large mixing bowl and use your clean hands or a mixing spatula to combine all ingredients.
3. Using a 1 tablespoon scoop to portion, lightly shape the scoops and use your hands to roll them into meatballs.
4. Place meatballs in a 9 x 13 - inch baking dish. Cover with sweet and sour sauce.
5. Bake for 30 minutes, remove from oven, serve and enjoy!

#### Homemade Sweet and Sour Sauce Recipe

- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup water



Photo Credit: persnicketyplates.com

- 6 ounces pineapple juice
- 6 ounces water
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 cups apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup ketchup
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce

#### Instructions:

1. Add 1/4 cup corn starch and 1/4 cup water to a small bowl; whisk until combined and set aside.
2. In a medium saucepan over medium high heat, whisk to combine remaining ingredients.
3. Bring sauce to a boil, cook for one minute, then whisk in cornstarch mixture. Cook until sauce is thick and shiny, about 5 minutes.
4. Remove pan from heat and set aside until ready to serve, or cool and refrigerate for later use.





# -Duke's Pond and Growling Sky Adventure

by Joyce Johnson



**I**, "Duke," of sound paw and stunningly bright mind, big of body, rather handsome, Celtic Black & White Border Collie, have been in my new forever home for seven months now. It's as though I have never been anywhere else, except when I remember visions of past places that visit my eyes; like the one long ago of a great big endless yard with many sheep to manage, but now I live in a really big *doghouse* with my two humans and have a very small yard with nothing much to do but my business in the corner, and take naps under the Lilac tree. The first time I went out the dog door I set my speed for a long run and had to put the brakes on fast before I ran into a tall log wall. Gasp! But, it's okay, my humans are kind, and pet me on demand, call me goofy, and buddy, and darling, and bubba, and take me and the other adoptee, Dixie [the little Jack Russell] for walks and car rides around this good land full of awesome smells.

**Two little white poodle types** sometimes stay during the day. They look like little lambs, but yap a lot instead of "baa-aah," and I need to monitor and herd them along with Dixie because they get under paw. They don't take me seriously. They go belly down, roll away, or go under the furniture or bushes when they see me coming. I need to stick close to and herd my humans too, which keeps me busy inside the doghouse. I like to herd them in the direction of the front door, with great hopes of a walk, and with the great memory of that day last spring when I escaped and chased five deer to Idaho.... almost. It's *The Path of the Border Collie* and I'm sticking to it. It's an easy mission this

time to just keep my senior humans alert, loved, exercised and petting me: a paws down, piece of steak...

My day starts soon as I get HER up to make breakfast for Dixie and me. I rest my head on the bedside, or I give her long slow slurpy lick to wake her. I know it works if I hear her say "eu." I always wolf my food down and appreciate almost everything in the bowl, except the little blobs of coconut oil and yogurt laced with chopped apple that she hides under the food. My breathe is coconuts all day which makes the little dogs frown and smirk.

**My ears go straight up when SHE** bares her teeth and asks if I wanna go to the pond? All I need to hear is "Wanna go?" to make my ears flap up in approval. Pond park comes after breakfast, if I can get the humans away from their big noisy, lit up, flat, windows that they stare at and listen to with mouths gaping half the day. It's nuts. It makes me puff out my cheeks in disdain, but I found out that nothing gets humans to move faster than my cold, wet nose under their hands. Anyway, we all jump in the car and go to the pond, even though it is only a short walk there, but they are ancient humans and tire easily. We wave and bark at neighbors and dogs who are out and about.

**"The Pond"** is a big fenced in water hole with trees and bushes growing big around a path that makes a green tunnel with the sun falling through in spots and on the water. A lot of us local dogs run and chase each other there. SHE does a yodel yell, or blows her whistle or shouts, "Duke come!" and I... usually respond. But I must investigate the

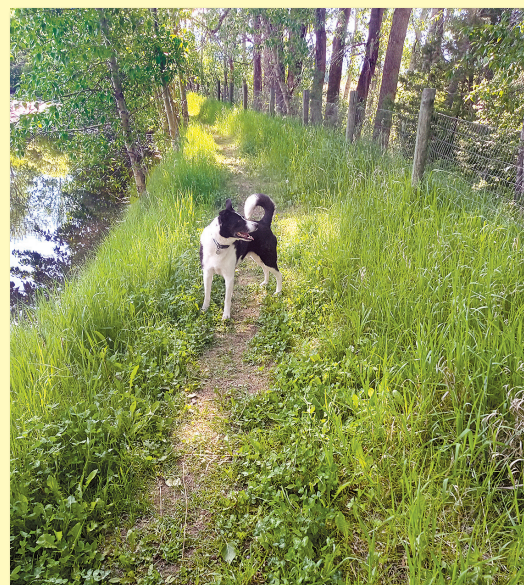
scent of other hoomans and dogs who have visited my pond. It's entertaining and informative to read their scents. [Much more interesting than the hoomans think staring at the big flat noisy light window is.] And it's snake and beetle season which are fun to pounce at, but are hard to herd.

I am very careful not to step on them. They have purpose, just like me.

**SHE is a trickster.** Sometimes when she calls from the other side of the pond, I run full throttle along the tunnel to find her, but She and Dixie are hiding behind a tree. I hear HER howl "ah ha hah!" as I zoom past their hide, but catch their scent and I run back to her like I will push them both in the water so she hugs the tree. I am at work so herd nip her lightly in passing. Then HE, the male human, calls me from the other side of the pond and off I go to check that out. The wind blows my ears back, my great long Border collie tongue flaps happily out of my laughing mouth. I find him and stop for a petting, slurp up some pond water, and flop down under the huge lush old willow bush and rest.

**My only complaint is Growling Sky.** Every day almost around here, just when things get quiet and cool in our doghouse, I hear a deep rumbling and growling in the distance, sometimes twice a day. I don't remember it being so often in all my years of this life. I cannot see or smell an intruder! The rumbling growls gets loud and sometimes feels like underground! And what the howl is it? Sometimes the intruder is like on the roof and suddenly barks and growls so loud it scares me and the dog house to trembling from nose to paw. The other night all went dark for three hours, and my courage and protectiveness with it. She talks about something called "reskew remadee and thunder jacket" which sounds undogly.

**I have to find a safe place.** I leap up



on her bed like a cat and land on her chest and she says, "oooph!" which is perhaps the name of a former pet? So I lick her nose fondly so she'll know it's me. She says "eu." I look at her with wide eyes, still scared. She said, "its ok," and I forget I am not a puppy because she gently pets me and speaks like I am one. I keep nervously moving and jerk my head up as I hear another growling sky thing. After a while I get pushed off for some reason, so I pace and squeeze under the furniture and behind the sofa or wood burner, or lie inside her closet where I am comforted by her familiar scent. I patiently wait for when the trees change color, and more just blue or star-filled sky, and no more growling, and not so all the time hot. Gentle cold white fluff will float down on the land, which feels cool and soft, on my nose, and noisy it is not! I'm happy everyday, because she always says, "I love you, it's okay."

I thank the god of dogs. Love,

Duke

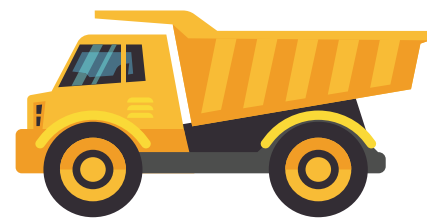


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*By Raphael*

A portrait of a man with a wide-brimmed hat and a light-colored shirt, holding a small object near his face.

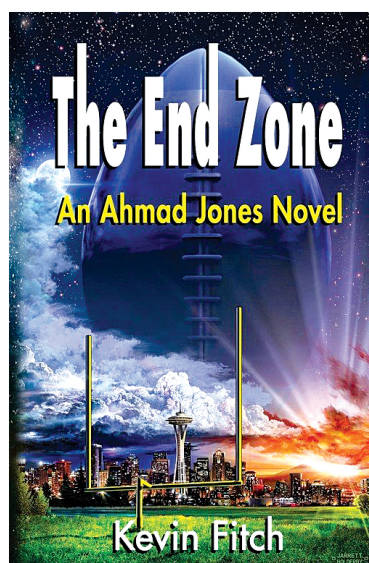
If you watch any football game—high

from outside the grid.

At the end of the 2nd quarter the Seattle Seahawks fell off the edge, maybe into an abyss, or, towards a mirror. Who knows. Beginning of the 3rd, they were still falling—some more... and almost—yet not quite, into oblivion. The Seattle Seahawks were born informally at the start of their first preseason exhibition game. They seemed to have had an inauspicious start, trailing the 49ers 0-24 in the beginning of the 3rd quarter. From the kickoff they were caught cold. They were competing forces of titanic proportions. If the Seahawks were to recover they'd better rise soon before the game clock ran out. They had 11 plus minutes before their last opportunity, to turn that ball into *a great ball*, and gain, by the end of the 3rd, for if they maintained the status quo and acquired no points by the 4th quarter, well, the inertial forces against them would be... too great and would require an avalanche of unconventional skill to push through the resistance and make it back to the edge, at least.

The team had to realign in a different way. You see this after a change in the game plan, for a new quarter, after a down or a tactic or a play, after a new read by the QB or by the defense. American Football as life is a type of short story, with drama, thrills, suspense, heroes and antiheroes—performed for huge segments of the population, between August and February. It was time to approach things

Kevin Raphael Fitch, will hold a book signing for his suspense novel, *The End Zone An Ahmad Jones Novel*, at the Emigrant Market on Saturday, August 30th from 9 am to 1 pm. The book is available on Amazon in softcover format



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# Strange Medicine

by Nurse Jill

We've all heard the tales of old-time medicine from eras that didn't understand how the human body worked or how disease worked. Things like rolling a patient back and forth over a barrel to attempt resuscitation, blood-letting to get rid of disease, and other fairly obvious nonsensical medical approaches have gained notoriety for a good story but not for good treatment.

These infamous tales of medicine gone-by however are not the craziest of the methods that were once used to treat a variety of maladies. For fun, and perhaps to increase our gratitude for current modern-day practices, here are four well-intentioned but ineffective attempts to regain health amongst the ailing.

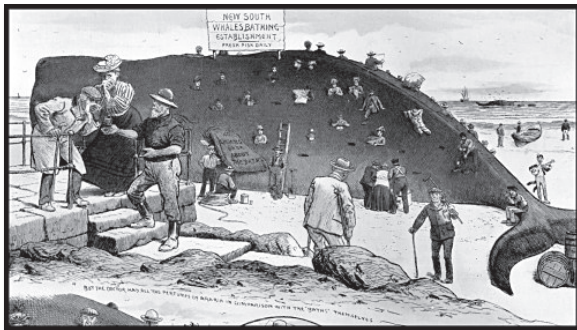
**Tobacco Enemas** - In the 1700s, it was believed that blowing tobacco smoke up someone's rectum would "warm and dry their insides" after drowning. This technique was also believed to stimulate breathing in an unconscious patient and revive them. One of the first documented successes with this method was supposedly (according to a few sources) in 1746 by a man whose wife had nearly drowned and who had been pulled from the water unconscious. A man coming upon the scene suggested a tobacco enema and gave the man his pipe to attempt the procedure. The ember-end of the pipe was inserted, the man blew, and the woman regained consciousness. This miracle cure became the standard for drowning victims and tube-like tools with smoke chambers were hung about

public water ways to provide the means necessary for emergency procedures.

**Dairy Infusions** - In the 1800s, two physicians, Dr. Edwin Hodder and Dr. James Bovell speculated that the molecules of milk fat would convert well into white blood cells. And so, they bought a dairy cow for their hospital. The idea was that if they could bolster the components of a patient's blood then that would in turn bolster the patient leading to recovery. Blood transfusion had long been regarded as a promising cure to many ailments but had yet to be truly successful. And so doctors started looking for a blood substitute that would provide the remedy they longed for through direct infusion. The first patient to receive a 12-ounce dairy infusion was a cholera patient and actually did well. They tried again on a second patient and had the same outcome. The milk was strained through gauze and kept warm for the infusions. Encouraged by early success the doctors transfused five subsequent patients with milk, all of which died. A handful of other doctors attempted to validate this practice with their own patients but the results eventually forced ceasing dairy infusions and cows (or goats) were no longer employed by hospitals.

**Teething Trouble** - In the latter half of the 19th century a common liquid, Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup, was popular among families for one reason—it seemed to ease the pain of teething babies. The company reportedly shipped well over a million bottles annually for

years, even decades. The dose was 1 teaspoon three or four times a day to soothe teething pain in youngsters. It worked well enough to stay popular until around 1906 when the U.S. Food and Drug Administration started requiring companies to list ingredients on their products. Once Mrs. Winslow had to change the ingredients to components approved by the FDA, the syrup lost popularity, probably because the new recipe without the original morphine and alcohol didn't work quite as well. Unfortunately, for many families prior to 1906 the syrup worked too well and



experts speculate thousands of deaths were caused due to unintentional overdose.

**Big Cure for Big Problem** - If you have dealt with joint pain, swelling, and inflammation then you know the lengths you would be willing to go to get some relief. This chronic suffering used to be generally referred to as rheumatism and many struggled with it especially before the modern era of effective surgical and pharmacological options. One man in Australia suffered from rheumatism and went on a drinking binge. His altered

mental faculties found him stumbling into a whale carcass and once he regained his wits, he emerged not only free from his drunkenness but also his rheumatism. This started a new rheumatism treatment and gained popularity not only in Australia but in the US and Europe, too. Many rheumatism sufferers would crawl into a hole carved into a similar whale carcass (courtesy of the whaling industry). It was thought that the warmth and decomposing process of the carcass would envelop the patient in an intense cocoon filled with elements to reverse rheumatism. The procedure reportedly relieved pain for up to 12 months. The patient undergoing the remedy would be given breaks from the slimy healing quarters over the 20-30 hours of treatment, but nobody got a break from the smell—it would follow the patients home and linger so much that friends and family would avoid them.

**Modern learning** - While all these practices seem crazy to the modern world, they were all establish by curious people who were trying to figure out how nature, the body, and disease all work together in order to intervene and alleviate suffering. While the attempts are laughable in hindsight, we should be glad that so many were willing to try new things and leave a legacy of curious research and thinking outside the box to lend progress to our current medical interventions.



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juice, applesauce, milk

Thurs., Aug. 21st - Stuffed  
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# Your Ageless Wellness Column

Garrick Fulmer-Faust, Executive Director, Park County Senior Center

## Polarization Part 3: Two Wings, One Bird – Part 2, The Invisible Divide



In our last column, we explored the metaphor of the left- and right-wing being part of the same bird—and how division, whether in society or in our own bodies, keeps us grounded and vulnerable. Today, we’re going to take that conversation deeper.

There is an invisible line forming—a split that is subtly, but profoundly, separating humanity into two emerging paths.

One path leads toward awakening: introspection, clarity, purpose. The other sinks deeper into denial, dependence, and division.

*Sometimes, people don’t even realize which path they’re walking. They just wake up one day and find themselves leaning in one direction or the other—often shaped by what they consume, who they listen to, and how much they pause to think for themselves.*

This isn’t just affecting individuals. Cities are shifting. Countries are polarizing. Even nature itself appears to be responding differently. These changes mirror the state of our collective consciousness. Science puts labels on these phenomena like “climate change” and “global warming,” and is quick to offer reasons that may be partially true. But what is rarely considered—yet possibly more impactful—is that the consciousness of the people on this planet may be playing a much bigger role in shaping these changes than we realize.

The ancients spoke of this split. The Hopi told of a time when humanity would face two paths. The Mayans foresaw cycles of destruction and renewal. In Hindu tradition, the *Kali Yuga*—the age of darkness—was said to be a time when truth would be treated as lies and lies would be praised as truth.

Sound familiar?  
When a society’s consciousness fragments, it affects everything:

- **How we relate to one another** - kindness gives way to suspicion, and conversation gives way to confrontation.
- **How we make decisions** - fear overrides reason, and reaction replaces reflection.
- **How we steward the earth** - care

turns to exploitation, and short-term gain blinds us to long-term consequences.

Technology, too, has become both a tool and a trap. It can connect us, inform us, and even accelerate awakening. But depending on how it’s used, it can just as easily deepen separation—fostering distraction, fueling arguments, and feeding

us carefully curated illusions.

Here’s the hard truth: the split isn’t random. It’s shaped by individual and collective choices. Every time we react instead of reflecting, every time we take the bait of outrage instead of asking deeper questions, we’re leaning toward one path or the other.

And the same is true in our bodies. As I said in part one, division creates dis-ease; wholeness creates healing. The more we integrate our physical, mental, and emotional selves, the more resilient we become—not

In the human body, most cells work together for the good of the whole. They have specialized roles. They communicate. They stop growing when they should. But cancer cells? They ignore the rules. They grow without regard for the system’s health. They take resources meant for the whole body and demand that the rest of the system not only tolerate them but also allow them to thrive.

Now imagine that same thing happening in society. Some ideas, movements, or behaviors—no matter how loudly they demand inclusion—are not healthy for the whole. And yet, under the banner of “love” or “acceptance,” we’re pressured to integrate them without question. Those who raise concerns are often shamed, silenced, or gaslit into believing they’re the problem.

In the body, if you let cancer grow unchecked because you didn’t want to “exclude” it, the whole system would eventually fail. It’s not about hate; it’s about discernment. The body must protect its integrity to survive. So must a society.



just against illness, but against the pull of a divided world.

If we want to navigate this invisible divide with wisdom, we must:

- Tend to our inner state daily.
- Question the narratives we’re fed.
- Choose conscious connection over reactive conflict.
- Remember that our energy, attention, and intention shape the world more than we’ve been led to believe.

**Two wings. One bird.** The bird cannot fly if the wings are at war. The same is true for humanity—and for you.

### The Cancer Cell Analogy

Here’s a thought: What if some of the loudest, most extreme ideas in our culture are like cancer cells in the body?

### Division, Distraction, and a Weak Immune System

The more energy the body spends fighting internal division, the less energy it has for healing. Chronic inflammation makes us vulnerable. So does constant outrage, fear, and distraction.

In a healthy body, the immune system knows what to welcome and what to reject. In a healthy community, we should do the same—honoring diverse perspectives while refusing to integrate what is toxic to the whole.

The problem is that constant division has weakened our cultural “immune system.” Instead of working together, the body politic attacks itself. And when the focus is always on the extremes, the quiet, steady work of

maintaining real health gets ignored.

### What Wholeness Looks Like

- **In the body:** Cells communicate and cooperate. Each part works for the good of the whole. The immune system keeps harmful invaders in check without attacking healthy tissue.
- **In society:** Differences are respected, but harmful ideologies are not given free rein to damage the whole. People work toward shared goals instead of constant conflict.

### How to Strengthen the “Immune System” of Both Body and Community

- 1. Discern before you integrate.**  
Not every idea—or food, habit, or relationship—is nourishing. Ask, “Does this strengthen the whole or weaken it?”
- 2. Address root causes, not just symptoms.** Whether it’s chronic pain or chronic polarization, treating only the surface issue won’t heal the system.
- 3. Stay connected to the whole picture.** Don’t let fear or outrage pull you into extremes. Zoom out. Look for context.
- 4. Feed what’s healthy.** Movement, good food, honest conversation, and meaningful relationships are nutrients—for both body and community.
- 5. Remove what’s toxic.** Set boundaries. Limit exposure to influences that erode health—physical or social.

Division, whether in the body or in society—creates dis-ease. Wholeness creates health.

If we want to fly as a bird, the wings must work together—and the body must be strong enough to carry them. That starts with discernment, not blind acceptance. With protection, not polarization. With health, not hollow slogans.

### Next Steps:

At The Hub, we focus on building a strong “immune system” for your whole self—body, mind, and spirit. If you’re ready to protect your health and move toward wholeness, we’re here.

Stop by to get a tour of The Hub fitness center at the Park County Senior Center located at 206 S. Main St. in Livingston or call Garrick Fulmer-Faust, CPT, and Executive Director, at 406-333-2107 or email him at [garrick@parkcountyseniorcenter.org](mailto:garrick@parkcountyseniorcenter.org).




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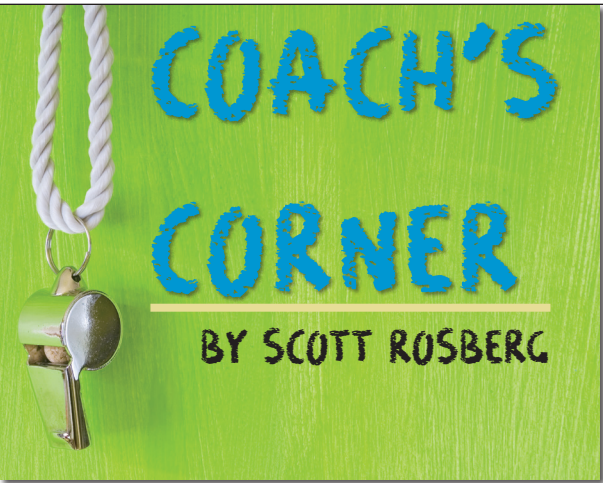




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# NEVER GET BORED WITH THE BASICS



Last week the fall sports teams at Park High and all around the state started their seasons, and SGMS and middle schools around the state will be starting their practices when school starts. The various fall sports that happen outside of the school setting are also getting back into the swing of things, too. This is an exciting time for the coaches, athletes, and parents involved, as everyone has high hopes and expectations for the upcoming competitions.

If you watch any of the teams' practices during their first weeks, you will probably see a lot of work on fundamental skill development. (At least, I HOPE you would see that!) I have written before about the importance of working on fundamental skill development every day. Coaches need to devote time to fundamental skill development every week with their teams and preferably every day. All too often, coaches gloss over these important skill development times in practice, especially as a season goes on.

Some coaches don't even do much in the way of fundamental skill development at all, believing that since they have taught those skills in the past, the players already know how to do them. This is a huge mistake. Slippage occurs from year-to-year, month-to-month, week-to-week, and day-to-day.

While there is no cut-and-dried rule that says how often and how much time coaches should devote to fundamental skills, skill development *HAS* to be consistently incorporated into training regimens to develop the skills of players and teams to perform and succeed at a high level.

## All Year Long

Fundamental skill development must be done throughout the season. Of course, depending on the level, coaches will not have to work on some of the more basic skills nearly as much as other things they need to work on. And when they do work on them, it is often just a quick reminder of how to do those skills, or it's a warm-up that uses those skills to make sure the athletes are still proficient at them. But coaches shouldn't fall into the trap of believing that once athletes have shown proficiency at something, they don't need to continue to work on it and refine it.

Former basketball skills trainer, Alan Stein, Jr., tells a great story of the time he was invited to work as a counselor at the Kobe Bryant Skills Academy for high school and college basketball players. Stein got to watch one of Kobe's legendary individual workouts. Stein was amazed at what he saw.

For the first 30 minutes or so Kobe worked on basic footwork drills without a ball or without dribbling or shooting a ball. He then did ball handling and shooting drills that Stein himself had used when training middle school and high school players.

Afterwards, Stein said to him, "You're the greatest player in the world. Why do you do such basic drills?" Kobe's response, "Why do you think I'm the greatest player in the world?"

He then added, "It's because I never get bored with the basics."

WHOA! What a powerful statement from one of the greatest basketball players to ever play the game: **"I never get bored with the basics."**

Do your players "get bored with the basics?"

Do you?

Do you and your players struggle with working on fundamental skills because you and they believe they have already learned and mastered them, so they don't need them anymore?

Don't fall into that trap!

## The Best are the Best for a Reason

A few years ago, I heard former New England Patriots quarterback Drew Bledsoe talking on the *Beyond the X's & O's* podcast. Bledsoe said that people often asked him why the Patriots were so consistently successful during the Bill Belichick years. He said that one of the things the Patriots did, somewhat surprisingly in the NFL, is that they coached technique from day one of OTAs (Organized Team Activities in the off-season) and then continued to do so throughout the entire season. They did this with everyone, rookies and veterans alike.

"They coach it every single day," Bledsoe said.

This is the greatest dynasty in the history of the NFL, and yet, they worked on the most basic skills and techniques every day of the year. If the best team ever at the highest level of play can focus on fundamentals every day, there is no excuse for coaches at the high school, middle school, and youth levels not to be working on players' fundamental skills and techniques every day.

I'm sure some of you who coach are thinking, "I get it, but we just don't have enough time to work on skills."

I have thought the same way throughout my career. But when I watch our kids scrimmaging in practice and playing in games, I often realize they are not prepared in terms of their individual skills for what they are doing and for the opponents they are facing.

The fact that I can put them in certain spots in an offense or



defense and have them go to those spots at the right time means nothing if, once they are in those spots, they can't perform the necessary skills to succeed. I need to give them the tools to succeed in those spots, not just put them in those spots.

I have often heard coaches say, **"But they should already know how to do that!"**

At the high school, I have heard this statement from coaches, time and time again through the years, and they're right. At the high school level (and to some degree the middle school level), kids should be proficient at a certain level of skill. Athletes need to put in time in the off-season—something I wrote about last month in this column.

Unfortunately, too often, kids don't do those things enough (if they do them at all). They don't devote the necessary time to develop their skills. So, coaches need to make sure they work on them during the season. If it's good enough for the New England Patriots to do every day, it's good enough for you to do every day.

## Focus on What's Important

Coaches, you need to focus on fundamental skill development in every practice, so your athletes start to improve their skills. But work to do so in such a way that the kids **enjoy their skill development**. Set up drills, so they feel success in incremental steps. Offer a variety of ways to work on the skills

they need to be successful in games.

You should also focus on baby steps—small improvements in their skill levels—instead of the scoreboard. Stop focusing on winning games.

Focus on growth—focus on improvement—focus on the things your athletes have control over—effort, attitude, and being great teammates to one another.

Yes, you will still have kids who struggle to focus on those things and who only focus on the scoreboard. There will be other kids in school, parents, and community members who will only focus on the scoreboard, too. You must work to drown them out by constantly preaching the power of individual improvement and development and commitment to team and each other as being "what we're all about."

Even those of you who are having scoreboard success should be focusing more on those things, too. Those things are completely in your/their control; the scoreboard is not.

In fact, if you are having scoreboard success, be very careful.

I have seen players and teams without strong fundamental skills win games because they played against teams with less talent than they had. I have seen coaches fall into the warped notion that everything was fine, that their players didn't need to work on the fundamentals. These players and coaches developed a false sense of security and of their own abilities, and they stopped working on fundamental skills and techniques. Or they worked on their skills, but worked on them in a sloppy fashion, so they created bad habits and skills, thereby hurting their chances for future success.

As they got older and started facing teams with good skills, they couldn't compete with them. Their own skill levels were so far behind the good teams that the little bit of talent that they had did them little to no good.

**No matter what kind of success you are having, don't ever stop preaching about the importance of focusing on skill development and improvement over focusing on the scoreboard!**

## Start Early

You also need to start getting these messages about the importance of skill development to the kids at younger ages. Find ways to attract younger kids to your sport. Create an enjoyable atmosphere for them to learn how to play.

First and foremost, work to instill in them a love of the game. Don't overload them with too much skill development stuff when they are young (Kindergarten through 3rd grade). Just help them learn to love playing.

Once they have that love and passion for the game, start to show them how to get good by teaching them the fundamental skills they will need. Make sure they can have some success within the scope of the drills and playing that you do. Kids play sports because it is fun for them to do so. The most fun is being good at the sport. So help them experience the joy of the sport by getting better at it.

This is also when you can start to instill in them the idea that there is a difference between *playing* their sport and *working* their sport. When they start to enjoy working at their sport that is when the magic will start to happen. Their growth and development will explode!

But again, do not focus on this concept until they have that burning passion and love of the game, or you will turn them off. If you focus on the work too early, the only burning that will happen is they will burn out. Once they have that passion, though, if they put enough time and effort into developing their skills, no matter how old they are, they will get better.

So stay positive, Coach, stay the course, and stay focused on teaching and developing fundamental skills for your athletes. They need that from you to become the best that they can be.



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To check out more materials from Scott, go to his website [SlamDunkSuccess.com](http://SlamDunkSuccess.com). You can email Scott at [scott@slamdunksuccess.com](mailto:scott@slamdunksuccess.com).

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# "Enjoying the Journey"

by Lois Olmstead



We taught our children not to be quitters. We learned it from our parents. We thought it was a trait worthy to be passed on. However, sometimes I can remember when He-Who-Took-Long-Steps and I did not follow that non-quitting lesson.

It is another one of our moving stories. Since there was a pond, we had named our new place, out in the country 10 miles north of Colstrip, appropriately, we thought, *On Golden Pond*. We were moving from a temporary apartment in town, and it had been a busy time.

And it was just one 'ba-zillionth' of a raindrop that pushed us over the edge. We

had moved furniture for three days with the help of friends. Monday He-Who started the well pump to fill the cistern testing it out, while I unpacked boxes.

Tuesday was Independence Day. We were going to independently unload the washer and dryer still in the back of our pickup, into our new house. That morning, I woke up hearing raindrops. Raindrops which passed from pitter-patter to cats and dogs.

We drove from our nearly bare apartment out to On Golden Pond. There was mud everywhere, a sight to which we had grown accustomed. We sat in the truck with windshield wipers singing their whishing song we had heard one too many times in the last three weeks. We looked at each other. I said, "I think now would be a good time to take a vacation!"

He said, "Good idea!" He drove the pickup down to the shop. We got a plank and unloaded the washer and dryer in the shop. We grabbed a few things from the house we had yet to sleep in, and then the apartment to shower and pack.

In short order, we were back in the pickup to drive the 130 miles to our 'other' home. It was in the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming. It was not a new home. It was an older 14 x 60 trailer home we owned with Todd and Lisa. We had many fun times there. This was a good decision.

A few hours later and a few sticks of wood in the outdoor fireplace, a slight-burned but delicious marshmallow, and the sight of a bull moose down in the meadow and we both gave a big sigh. Then we scooted our lawn chairs a little closer to the fire and each other.

I said, "I think this is one of the smarter things we've done," with my speech a bit garbled from the marshmallow in my mouth. "The Bible says, there is a time to laugh and a time to cry, a time to plant and

a time to uproot, or something like that."

"I think you are right," He-Who said, patting my shoulder.

For the next week we roamed the backroads of the Big Horns. Seeing God's wonderful creation, spending fun time together, seeing new sights, having quiet times and lots of conversation too. Eating steaks cooked over the campfire and hot dogs too that were delicious. He-Who did the cooking. We were getting renewed. Maybe for once, we needed the ba-zillionth raindrop—to remind us that sometimes we need to quit for a season!

I don't know which of you readers needed to hear this story. But we learned from this experience a valuable lesson that was repeated many times in the 54 years of our marriage. Sometimes you need to take a break. Or you could call it a recess. How much time needed depends on your situation. An hour or a day can be a huge help. Read Psalm chapter 23. It has a perfect application on this subject for all of us. God Bless You!



## Local Church Services

**American Lutheran Church**  
129 South F Street, Livingston  
Pastor Melissa Johansen  
Sunday worship 9 am, elevator avail.  
406-222-0512 • alclivingston.org

**Church of Christ**  
919 W Park St, Livingston  
Sunday worship 10:30 am  
406-222-2017 • church-of-christ.org

**Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints**  
12 White Lane, Gardiner  
David Gilbert branch President  
Sunday worship 10:00 am  
406-848-7509 • lds.org

**Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints**  
110 West Summit St., Livingston  
Bishop Trevor Strupp  
Sunday worship 10:00 am  
406-222-3570 • lds.org

**Emmaus Lutheran Church**  
801 East Park Street, Livingston  
Reverend Daniel Merz  
emmauslutheranmt@gmail.com  
emmauslutheranmt.org

**Expedition Church**  
27 Merrill Lane, Livingston  
Pastor Darryl Brunson  
Sunday worship 10:00 am  
406-224-1774 • expeditionmt.org

**First Baptist Church**  
Crossing Community Church  
202 East Lewis St., Livingston  
Pastor Bryce Maurer  
Sunday worship 10:45 am  
406-222-1603 • fbclivingston.org

**Gardiner Community Church**  
318 Main Street, Gardiner  
Reverend Jeff Ballard  
Sunday worship 10:15 am  
406-848-4060

**Gardiner Baptist Fellowship**  
802 Scott Street, Gardiner  
Pastor Britton Gray  
Sunday worship 11:00 am  
406-223-4478

**Grace Methodist Church**  
302 South 9th St., Livingston  
Pastor Mari-Emilie Anderson  
Call/visit website for worship times  
406-222-1041  
www.methodistsontheyellowstone.org

**Holbrook United Methodist Church**  
424 Lewis Street, Livingston  
Call/visit website for worship times  
406-222-1041  
www.methodistsontheyellowstone.org

**Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses**  
1505 E Gallatin St., Livingston  
Sunday Public talk and Watchtower 10:00 am  
406-222-2012 • jw.org

**Living Hope Church**  
226 South 3rd St., Livingston  
Senior Pastor Shad Durgan  
Sunday worship 8, 9:30 and 11 am  
406-222-1577 • livinghope.church

**Livingston Bible Church**  
329 North 5th St., Livingston  
Pastor Monte Casebolt  
Sunday worship 10:30 am  
406-222-2714 • livingstonbible.org

**Livingston Christian Center**  
(Assemblies of God)  
1400 Mount Baldy Dr., Livingston  
Pastor Dave Brakke  
Sunday worship 10:00 am  
406-222-3144  
livingstonchristiancenter.com

**Livingston Church Of God**  
101 South O Street, Livingston  
Pastor Ed Parrent  
Sunday worship 10:30 am  
406-220-0620

**Mountain Bible Church**  
18 Pine Meadow Rd., Livingston  
(off Pine Creek Rd and Hwy 89)  
Pastor Brandon Reagor  
Sunday Worship 10:00 am  
406-219-7628 • mtbible.org

**Mount Republic Chapel**  
240 US Hwy 212, Cooke City/Silver Gate  
Reverend Don Taylor  
Sunday worship 9:30 am  
Check the website for seasonal worship times  
406-838-2397  
mtrepublicchapel.org

**Mountain Springs Baptist Church**  
626 North 13th St., Livingston  
Pastor Justin Sutherland  
Sunday worship 11:00 am  
406-222-1240  
mountainspringsbaptist.com

**Paradise Valley Community Church**  
1772 East River Rd., Livingston  
Pastor Andrew Alberda  
Sunday worship 10:30 am  
406-333-4905  
paradisevalleychurch.org

**Pine Creek United Methodist Church**  
2470 East River Rd., Livingston  
Pastor Mari-Emilie Anderson  
Call/visit website for worship times  
406-222-1041  
methodistsontheyellowstone.org

**Redeemer Lutheran Church**  
425 West Lewis St., Livingston  
Sunday worship 11:00 am  
406-222-1175  
www.rclivingston.wordpress.com

**The Summit Lighthouse**  
Contact us for worship service and conference times  
63 Summit Way, Gardiner  
406-848-9200  
SummitLighthouse.org

**Seventh-Day Adventist Church**  
1 Guthrie Lane, Livingston  
Pastor Rene Marquez  
406-222-7598  
livingstonmt.adventistchurch.org

**Shields River Lutheran Church**  
105 Ordway St. South, Wilsall  
Sunday worship 9:00 am  
406-578-2212  
srlcwilsall.wordpress.com

**Shields Valley Bible Church**  
405 Fifth St. West • Clyde Park  
Pastor Glen Helig  
Sunday worship 11:00 am  
406-686-4708

**St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**  
310 West Lewis St., Livingston  
Reverend Kristin Orr  
Sunday worship 10:30 am  
406-222-0222  
saintandrewsepiscopalchurch.org

**St. John's Episcopal Church**  
8 Story Road, Emigrant  
Reverend Kristin Orr  
Sunday worship 8:00 am  
stjohnspv.org

**St. Joseph's Catholic Church**  
910 McLeod St., Big Timber  
Father Garrett Nelson  
Sunday worship 2:00 pm  
406-932-4728

**St. Margaret's Catholic Church**  
206 1st Avenue North, Clyde Park  
Father Garrett Nelson  
Service Saturdays 4:00pm  
406-222-1393  
stmaryscommunity.org

**St Mark's Church Universal And Triumphant**  
130 South D St., Livingston  
Sunday worship 10:15 am  
406-222-2675

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**  
511 South F St., Livingston  
Father Garrett Nelson, Pastor  
Saturday 6:00 pm year-round  
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Sunday at 10:30 am April thru Sept.  
Sunday 8:00 am October to March  
406-222-1393 • stmaryscommunity.org

**St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
1116 W Geyser St., Livingston  
Pastor Paul Stern  
Sunday worship 10:15 am  
406-222-3372 • stpaulslivingston.org

**St. William's Catholic Church**  
705 West Scott St., Gardiner  
Father Garrett Nelson  
Sunday worship 8:00 am April-Sept  
Sunday 11:00am October to March  
406-222-1393 • stmaryscommunity.org

**Valley Shepard Church of the Nazarene**  
Services are presently online.  
Please call for instructions to view a service.  
Reverend Christie American Horse  
Livingston • 406-223-1072

**Wilsall Community Church**  
112 Liquin Hill Rd., Wilsall  
(west of Hwy 89 North; take Clark St to Liquin)  
Pastor Stephen Fanning  
Sunday worship 10:45 am  
406-578-2004 • wilsallcchurch.com

**United Methodist Grace Church**  
302 South 9th St., Livingston  
Pastor Mari-Emilie Anderson  
Sunday worship 5:00 pm  
406-222-1041  
www.methodistsontheyellowstone.org

**1 Corinthians 13:12** - For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

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# Mark Your Calendars

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## Mondays - Weekly

**WEEKLY PINOCHLE** at the Park County Senior Center, 206 S. Main St. Mon. & Wed. evenings at 6:30 & Tues. at 1 pm. Free for members, \$2 per afternoon game for non-members.

## Tuesdays - Weekly

**WEEKLY PINOCHLE** at the Park County Senior Center, 206 S. Main St., Livingston. On Tuesdays at 1 pm. Free for members, \$2 per afternoon game for non-members.

**WEEKLY MEDITATION** at the Park County Senior Center, 206 S. Main St., Lvg. Every Tuesday at 1 pm. Free to everyone.

**WEEKLY PINOCHLE** at the Shields Valley Senior Center in Wilsall, 202 Elliot Street, every Tuesday at 1:30 pm.

**CAREER ASSISTANCE** - Livingston Chamber of Commerce and Job Services of Bozeman are providing on-site career & employment services once a week in Livingston, at the Chamber. Workforce consultants will be available from 9 am to 3 pm at 303 East Park St. Contact Leslie at the Livingston Chamber (406) 222-0850 or Ellen at Job Service Bozeman (406) 582-9237 for more info.

## Wednesdays - Weekly

**FAMILY KARAOKE NIGHT** - 49er Diner at 404 E. Park Street is hosting Family Karaoke night from 6-8 pm. More info, 406-222-8204.

**WEEKLY PINOCHLE** at the Park County Senior Center, 206 S. Main St., Livingston at 6:30 pm. Free for members, \$2 per afternoon game for non-members.

## Thursdays - Monthly

**DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP** - Livingston HealthCare (LHC) is offering a free adult diabetes support group, for Type 1 or Type 2, on the first Thursdays of each month in the LHC Conference rooms, 320 Alpenglowl Lane, at 5:30 pm.

## August 15-16 - 2025 FORGET ME KNOT FEST -

Community Benefit Music & Arts Festival in Cooke City. For more information and to purchase tickets online visit [www.ForgetMeKnotFest.org](http://www.ForgetMeKnotFest.org).

## August 16 - GRILLIN' & CHILLIN -

St. Andrews Church, at the corner of Third and Lewis Streets, is hosting their annual "Grillin' and Chillin" event, free to the public, from 4 to 7 pm. The music will be the local Bluegrass, crowd pleasing, Benson's Landing String Band. Bring your own lawn chair or enjoy seating on the grass.

## August 16, 23, 30 - EMIGRANT PEOPLE'S MARKET

located at 8 Story Road, Emigrant, on the lawn of St. John's Church, Saturdays 9 - 1 pm. June -October, weather permitting. Locally created goods, local honey, jams and eggs, eclectic curated items. New vendor inquiry please email [emigrantpeoplesmarket@gmail.com](mailto:emigrantpeoplesmarket@gmail.com) for information.

## August 16-17 - CALAMITY'S CLASSIC RODEO -

Gates open 5:30 pm on Saturday for the 7 pm rodeo, and at 3:30 pm on Sunday for the 5 pm rodeo at the Park County Fairgrounds, 46 View Vista Drive. Mutton busting each night before the rodeo starts. For tickets, visit Calamity's website (<https://calamitysrroughstockclassicrodeo.com>), the Livingston Area Chamber of Commerce, Murdoch's (all locations), and The Spur Line. For information, call 406-220-6214 or email [info@calamitysrdeo.com](mailto:info@calamitysrdeo.com). Also, check them out on Facebook and Instagram.

## August 19 - CASTING FOR RECOVERY -

Fundraising event at Sage Lodge in Pray beginning at 5:30 pm. Casting for Recovery will host the Fly Fishing Film Tour free of charge and designed specifically for women at any stage of breast cancer treatment or recovery. For more information, to make a contribution, or to sponsor the event, please contact them by email at [tiffany.greene@castingforrecovery.com](mailto:tiffany.greene@castingforrecovery.com) or call (413) 672-1297.

## August 22 - ART WALK -

Downtown Livingston Art Walk, galleries stay open late, offer light appetizers, socializing, and a lot of great art from 5:30 to 8 pm.

Calendar of Events runs every week. To place your event on the calendar please email the information to [community@pccjournal.com](mailto:community@pccjournal.com) or drop off your information at the PCCJ office at 108 N. Main Street.

Cost is \$8/week for up to 50 words, 51-100 words is \$10/week, maximum word count is 100 words please. Deadline is Monday's at 5:30 pm for the following issue that will hit the streets on the following Friday.

## August 23 - ANNUAL SPOTLIGHT GALA -

The Shane Lalani Center for the Arts invites you to their annual Gala with an evening of dinner, dancing and community celebration starting at 5:30 pm in the beautiful Blake Pavilion at 415 E. Lewis. Reserve your seats today by calling The Shane Center box office at (406) 222-1420. Tickets are \$125 per individual or \$675 for a table of six. Please RSVP by August 13th as tickets are limited and expected to sell out quickly.

## August 23 - DEMOLITION DERBY -

1st Annual Beartooth Brawl demolition derby is happening in Livingston at the Park County Fairgrounds, 46 View Vista Drive from 5 to 9 pm. Watch derby drivers battle it out...for over \$25,000 in prize money. Raffle car winner gets to drive in the main event to compete for that \$8000 payout. There will also be lawnmower races, power wheels derby, and calcutta on main event cars. Gates open at 3 pm, action starts at 5 pm. Food and drink vendors will be on site.

## August 23 & 24 - 49TH ANNUAL OLD SETTLER DAYS

Taking place in Clyde Park. This year's theme is Trains, Trucks & Teams. Enjoy the following: Fireman's breakfast, coffee bar, vendors, raffle, pie auction, silent auction, Ranch Run, cornhole competition, parade, car show, Sarrazin's BBQ and live music on Saturday. On Sunday, they begin with the rubber ducky race and community church service followed by the potluck beginning at noon, where the grand marshalls will be honored.

## August 26 & 28 - MASTER & MINGLE -

Opportunity for business owners to connect, learn and grow sponsored by Park Local and MSU Extension. This months workshop will be on balance sheets. Designed with flexibility in mind, each month will feature two identical sessions—this month one is at 6 pm on August 26th and another at 7 am on August 28th—to accommodate varying schedules. Interested participants can sign up through the MSU Extension office and Park Local Development Corporation by emailing [park@montana.edu](mailto:park@montana.edu) or by calling (406) 222-4156.




# NOW SHOWING

## SHOWTIMES

**FREAKIER FRIDAY**  
Friday, August 15th -  
Thursday, August 21st  
4:30 pm and 7:15 pm

**THE BAD GUYS 2**  
Friday, August 15th -  
Thursday, August 21st  
4:15 pm and 7 pm

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Livingston, MT  
406-222-0111  
[livingstonmovies.com](http://livingstonmovies.com)



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# BREAK time

# CROSSWORD

Puzzle #412

## Montana Fun Facts!

At an elevation of 7,651 feet above sea level, the tiny community of Cooke City near Yellowstone National Park is **the highest in the state**. Montana's highest elevation is the top of Granite Peak near Yellowstone, at 12,799 feet. The **lowest point** in the state is where the Kootenai River exits the northwest corner of the state at 1,800 feet.

Montana ranks **second in the nation for collisions with animals**, averaging 17,000 yearly in a state with just over 800,000 licensed drivers. The only state where motorists are more likely to strike an animal is West Virginia. The animal most frequently involved is a deer. November is the peak month.

### ACROSS

- 1. Bias
- 5. Sash for a kimono
- 8. Rainbow's shape
- 11. Get ready
- 15. Edible root
- 16. Pull along
- 17. Round vegetable
- 18. Lounge
- 19. Dark, to Donne
- 20. Sickly
- 21. Pick up the \_\_\_\_
- 22. To boot
- 23. Doze, with "off"
- 24. Unaccompanied flight
- 25. Cook's garnish
- 27. Overweight
- 29. Makeshift bed
- 32. Pina colada liquor
- 33. Larry, Curly, and Moe
- 35. Instruction
- 39. Going astray
- 41. Growing out
- 42. Hill dweller

- 44. React to a glare
- 45. Trade for cash
- 46. Gathering
- 48. Boar's tooth
- 49. Large, flightless bird
- 52. Skid
- 53. Prairie tale?
- 55. Formerly, formerly
- 56. Blame
- 58. Every
- 59. Theater
- 61. Imprison
- 62. Paragraph part
- 64. Electric sign
- 65. Forever and a day
- 66. Joint
- 68. Dye for wood
- 72. Nose part
- 76. Dec. 25
- 78. Paid player
- 79. Assist in mischief
- 80. Sharp turn

### DOWN

- 82. Dress finely
- 83. Grain husk
- 84. Hockey score
- 85. Squeeze
- 86. Unmatched
- 87. Habitual course
- 88. Drought-ridden
- 89. Once called
- 90. Went in front
- 91. Dill

### DOWN

- 1. Office writer, for short
- 2. Barbecue choice
- 3. Undermine
- 4. Took first prize
- 5. Meat stew
- 6. Stocky pooch
- 7. Inuit abode
- 8. Capable
- 9. Harvest crops
- 10. Nightclub
- 11. Blood part
- 12. Biscuit

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10		11	12	13	14
15					16				17				18			
19					20				21				22			
23				24						25		26				
27			28			29		30	31		32					
			33		34			35		36				37	38	
	39	40						41						42		43
44						45					46	47				
48					49	50				51		52				
53				54		55				56	57					
58				59	60					61						
	62		63							64						
			65				66	67			68		69	70	71	
72	73	74				75			76		77			78		
79					80		81		82				83			
84					85				86				87			
88					89				90				91			

- 13. Further
- 14. Scheme
- 24. Finch
- 26. It has a foot
- 28. Baseball call
- 30. Navigators
- 31. Illuminated naturally
- 34. "\_\_\_\_ the Woods"
- 36. Powdery mineral
- 37. Suspender
- 38. Register
- 39. Measures up to
- 40. Steal, as livestock
- 43. Category
- 44. Athenian portico
- 45. Hit
- 47. Mountain-climber's coup
- 50. Beheld
- 51. Hounds' quarry
- 54. Engine part
- 57. Irritable
- 60. Resident
- 61. Windflower
- 63. Stinging plant
- 67. Praise
- 69. Chef's smock
- 70. Vexed
- 71. Work for nine
- 72. Bugs
- 73. Double reed
- 74. Broil
- 75. Admire
- 77. Venerable
- 81. Command to oxen
- 83. Two-piece piece

# Sudoku

Puzzle #147

								6
2	8	6					7	4
1		5	6	4	8			
		7		9			1	4
	5	4	7		1		3	
6	1	2						7
				3	7		9	2
7		8					6	3
	9				6		7	5


Sudoku - #146

## SOLUTIONS

Crossword - #411

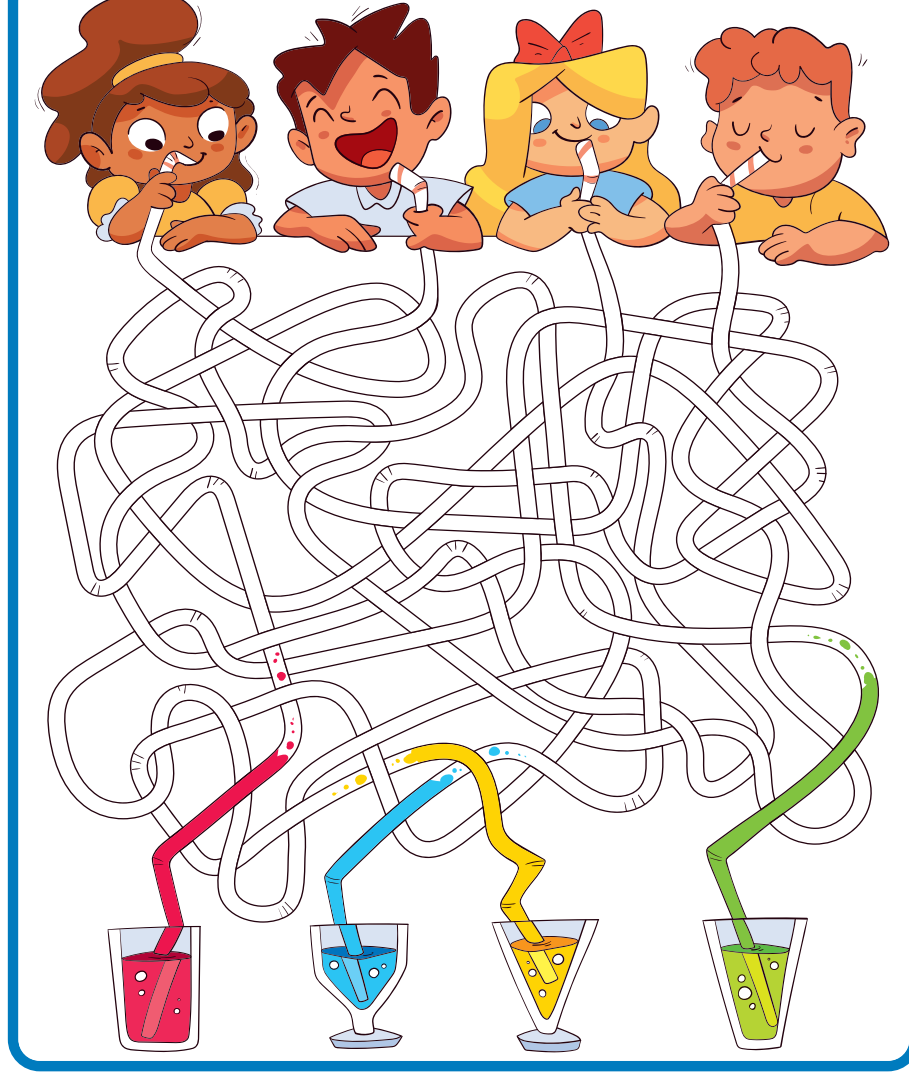
9	4	8	7	5	2	3	6	1
3	6	2	8	1	9	4	5	7
7	1	5	3	4	6	8	2	9
5	8	7	2	9	3	1	4	6
6	3	4	5	8	1	7	9	2
1	2	9	6	7	4	5	8	3
4	9	3	1	6	8	2	7	5
8	7	1	9	2	5	6	3	4
2	5	6	4	3	7	9	1	8

S	H	E	D	W	A	R	D	R	A	N	A	G	O
T	I	R	E	A	L	E	E	A	D	E	L	A	D
E	A	R	N	H	I	V	E	T	R	E	M	B	L
E	T	A	S	O	B	E	R	T	I	D	E		
R	U	T	L	O	I	N	O	A	F	M	I	S	T
S	A	F	E	G	A	U	N	T	O	N	T	O	
B	O	O	K	I	E	D	I	T		D	I	M	E
M	O	R	N	L	A	C	T	O	S	E	I	T	E
A	D	I	T	O	R	Z	O	L	E	A	V	E	N
D	I	G		A	N	T	E	N	N	A			
A	C	I	D	S	C	R	E	W	I	N	F	O	
M	E	N	U	W	A	S	A	L	P	S	E	R	E
A	U	S	T	E	R	E	A	D	O	R	E	L	A
S	K	I	E	V	E	A	L	A	S	A	N	O	N
K	E	N	P	E	R	H	E	L	M	N	E	R	D



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# CLASSIFIEDS

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M&S Cooper CSS Grand Touring Tires 225/60 R17. Like new, \$250 for set of four. Call 406-223-4444.

## HELP WANTED

**St. Mary's Catholic School** is hiring a full-time **Preschool Teacher** with benefits for the 2025-26 school year. Please contact Melissa Beitel at (406) 222-3303 or mbeitel@stmaryscatholicsschool.net

**Shields Valley School District** is now accepting applications for **two High-Needs Paraeducator** positions, beginning August 18th, 2025.

**Position Overview:**  
Are you passionate about making a meaningful difference in the lives of students? Shields Valley School District is looking for dedicated, compassionate individuals who are excited to support students with diverse academic and behavioral needs. In this rewarding role, you'll go beyond traditional paraeducator duties by providing focused, one-on-one support that truly impacts a student's daily success. Comprehensive training will be provided to ensure you feel confident and equipped to meet the unique needs of each student you work with. This is a wonderful opportunity to grow professionally while making a lasting difference!

(Schedule: (as outlined in the board-adopted academic calendar)

- Up to 9 hours per day, Monday through Thursday
- Occasional Fridays

**Starting Wage:** (Includes single health insurance)

- Applicant with a HS Diploma or equivalent: \$15.36
- Applicant with an Associate's Degree or equivalent: \$16.41
- Applicant with a Bachelor's Degree or higher: \$17.47

Effective: August 18, 2025  
Closing Date: until filled  
For applications, please contact Danny Johnston at djohnston@shieldsvalleyschools.org or 406-578-2535. Access the Classified Application Packet at www.shieldsvalleyschools.com.  
Shields Valley School District is an equal opportunity employer. Job-specific training will be required as a condition of continued employment.

### The Gardiner Food Pantry needs volunteers!

We are looking to add two drivers for our Meals4U program. This program delivers healthy meals to our community seniors. If you can use your lunch hour one day, every two weeks to help us deliver, please contact Kathy at (404) 664-6624. We can't do this program without the help of our wonderful volunteers!

**Key Insurance in Livingston** is looking to hire a **Licensed Insurance Agent** to our team. We are dedicated to providing individuals, families, businesses and their employees with the very best in supplemental benefits. Working hand-in-hand with our customers, our dedicated sales force provides personal face-to-face service that is almost unheard of in today's business world. We are committed to providing our clients with the right protection, customized to their needs. We offer \$55K to start depending on qualifications. Please contact Alice at 406-222-0944 to schedule an interview or email resume to [alice@montanainurance.net](mailto:alice@montanainurance.net).

**Come Join Our Kenyon Noble Team!**  
Kenyon Noble Lumber & Hardware's Livingston location is currently accepting applications & hiring for **Warehouse Associates** and **Delivery Drivers**. No experience necessary—we will train! Offering competitive wages and great benefits packages. For more information and to see the complete job listing visit us at [kenyonnoble.com/jobs](http://kenyonnoble.com/jobs). You can also apply online!



**Einstein's Learning Center** is accepting applications for **substitute teacher, part-time assistant teacher, full-time lead teacher and part-time support staff**. We are not just coworkers; we are friends and family. We laugh together, cry together, and have fun together! To apply, please fill out application and state paperwork that is provided on our website at: <https://einsteinlearningcenter.com/> employment. We look forward to speaking with you!



### Airport Facilities and Maintenance Technician in Park County

**Position Overview:** Technician is responsible for maintaining the **Mission Field Airport's** runways, taxiways, facilities, and equipment. This position involves seasonal duties with more hours required during the summer months compared to winter. **Essential Duties and Responsibilities:** Facilities & grounds maintenance is made up of runway and taxiway maintenance, light and equipment maintenance, building maintenance, general terminal maintenance, as well as security monitoring.

Please apply online at [jobs.parkcounty.org](http://jobs.parkcounty.org).

### Library Board of Trustees – Volunteer Opening

The Livingston Park County Public Library is seeking a dedicated volunteer to join its Board of Trustees. The Library's mission is to enrich the community by providing access to information, content, and collaborative spaces consistent with people's needs. **How to Apply:** Interested individuals are encouraged to submit an application to the City Clerk. *Help us continue to build a strong, vibrant Library for our community.*

### Motor Vehicle / Tax Clerk

Park County is looking for a full-time Motor Vehicle/Tax Clerk to assist the public with motor vehicle registrations, title transfers, and tax payments. Please apply online at [jobs.parkcounty.org](http://jobs.parkcounty.org).

### Park County Road Department is looking for an Operating Engineer full-time. Apply now!

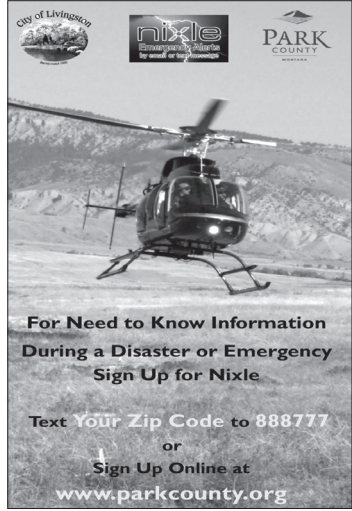
Position is responsible for the operation and maintenance of county roads and bridges. Works along with the other team members on projects and the Shop Mechanic to assist in the repair and maintenance of the vehicle/equipment fleet. Position is subject to the DOT federal drug testing requirements for a Commercial Vehicle License including a two-year clean testing history. You must have a valid license to operate equipment. If necessary, Park County will facilitate driver to obtain Commercial Vehicle Driver's License. Please apply online at [jobs.parkcounty.org](http://jobs.parkcounty.org).

### Detention Officer

**Detention Officer -- Are You Trustworthy, Self-Motivated and Punctual?** The Park County Sheriff's Office is looking for two new full time team members interested in a career in a law enforcement capacity with our Detention Center. Take pride in performing excellent public service to your community thru providing inmate care. Be formally trained in integral aspects of your field such as PPCT-pressure point control tactics, tactical handcuffing and CIT- Crisis Intervention Training. Shifts are bid by seniority, as follows: 7am-3pm, 3pm -11pm, 11pm-7am. Benefit package includes Sheriff's Retirement System; 3 vacation weeks, 12 sick days, holidays, Health and Life insurance, AFLAC, discounted local merchants/vendors, etc. Become part of the Park County Detention Staff and serve the community with compassion and caring in the capacity of a Detention Officer. Click on the Job Description for qualifications and additional information. To apply please download the application package, print it out and submit with your updated resume and cover letter by mail to:

Park County Human Resources  
414 E. Callender St.  
Livingston, MT 59047

Applications and signatures **MUST** be originals for consideration. **NO ELECTRONIC, FAXED or EMAILED** applications will be accepted.



## How to Place your Classified Ad!

We have three classified ad packages to choose from, your ad will be displayed for 7 days, will also be added to the Park County Community Journal website.

1-40 words \$10 • 41-50 words \$12 • 51-70 words \$15

To place your ad go online at [www.pccjournal.com](http://www.pccjournal.com) or email [community@pccjournal.com](mailto:community@pccjournal.com) and someone will call you back for payment.

If you need more space, please call Steph at 406-220-0919 or email Steph at [community@pccjournal.com](mailto:community@pccjournal.com) for more information on placing a larger classified ad.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

Emigrant People's Market, located at 8 Story Road in Emigrant on the lawn of St. John's Church. Every Saturday from 9 am to 1 pm June through October, weather permitting. Locally created goods, local honey, jams and eggs, eclectic curated items. New vendor inquiry please email [emigrantpeoplesmarket@gmail.com](mailto:emigrantpeoplesmarket@gmail.com) for information.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Clerk & Recorder Fee Increase Starts October 1st

On May 8th, House Bill 192, increasing County Clerk and Recorder fees for recording documents, was signed into law.

Effective October 1st, the fee for recording the first page of a document will increase from \$8.00 per page to \$20.00 for the first page and \$10.00 for each subsequent page. The additional cost for recording a document which does not meet the standard requirements of 7-4-2636 will remain at \$10.00 per document.

Additionally, beginning July 1, 2027, these fees will be subject to biennial adjustments based upon an inflation factor determined by the consumer price index.

This adjustment will bolster the Records Preservation Fund, the County Land Information Account and the Montana Geospatial Information Account, which are crucial for maintaining the integrity and accessibility of public records.

If you have questions regarding this change, please contact your local Clerk and Recorder's office.



## RUMMAGE SALE

# 6 FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD RUMMAGE SALE AT 118 SUCE CREEK ROAD SUNDAY, AUGUST 24TH

GATES OPEN AT 10:30 AM UNTIL 5 PM • PARKING AVAILABLE  
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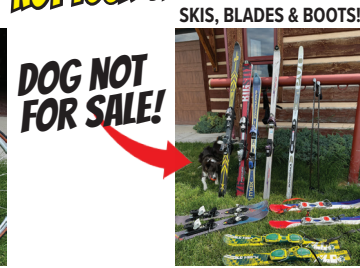
**NOT YOUR ORDINARY CRAP!**



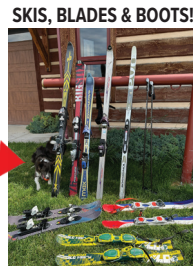
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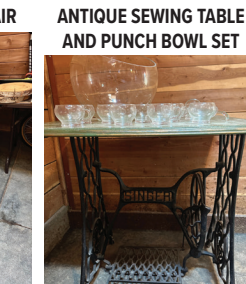
**DOG NOT FOR SALE!**



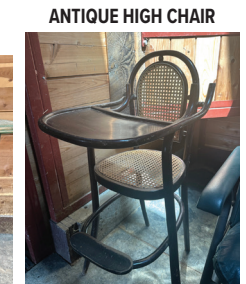
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# Governor Gianforte Signs Executive Order To Strengthen Montana's Workforce

## Launches 406 JOBS Initiative

Park County Dugout - August 12, 2025  
TheParkCountyDugout.substack.com  
By: Jeff Schlapp

HELENA, Mont. – On Monday, Governor Greg Gianforte launched 406 JOBS, an initiative led by the Montana Department of Labor & Industry's (DLI) State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB), to meet national education and workforce development goals established by President Donald J. Trump.

In April, President Trump issued two executive orders instructing federal agencies to implement workforce development initiatives to prepare Americans for skilled trade jobs and to advance artificial intelligence (AI) in education. The 406 JOBS framework aligns with federal policy and modernizes Montana's workforce system.

"406 JOBS will work across the public and private sector to promote career, college, military, and entrepreneurship pathways for Montanans to strengthen our workforce and prepare the next generation," Gov. Gianforte said. "We're following President Trump's lead to Make America Skilled Again and opening the door to greater opportunities for all Montanans to reach their full, outstanding potential."

Signing Executive Order 5-2025, Gov. Gianforte designated SWIB to implement the 406 JOBS initiative as the unifying framework for the state workforce system.

406 JOBS stands for Four Pathways to Employment, Zero Barriers to Work, and Six High Demand Sectors. Those sectors include health care, construction, hospitality and recreation, advanced manufacturing and computing, education and child care, and financial and professional services.

Earlier this year, President Donald J. Trump issued Executive Order 14278 to "Make America Skilled Again," by fully equipping workers and streamlining workforce development programs. Last week, The U.S. Department of Labor announced the availability of \$30 million in grants with awards available up to \$8 million for state workforce agencies to address critical workforce needs.

The governor today held a press conference at the Boeing facility in Helena with DLI Commissioner Sarah Swanson, SWIB Board Member and Executive Director of the Montana Photonics & Quantum Alliance Jason Yager, and Boeing Helena Director Kevin Poulin to introduce the new initiative.

"406 JOBS is designed to ensure that every Montanan has a plan for a career and a pathway to achieve it. We need to grow our labor force and tear down barriers to employment. Just last week, DLI released a new report, showing that more than 100,000 working age Montanans are not employed and not seeking work. Through 406 JOBS, we have an opportunity to reconnect people from all parts of the state to meaningful work," Commissioner Swanson said.

"Montana is ideally situated to transform our workforce and drive continued economic growth in the state. We are hearing almost daily from companies in the technology and advanced manufacturing sectors looking to come to Montana," Yager said. "SWIB is dedicated to reforming our workforce system to be ready for those opportunities, to prepare people for the future, and to bridge the labor gaps in high-demand sectors across the state."

"Boeing is deeply invested in Montana," Poulin said. "Workforce initiatives like 406 JOBS will have a wide-reaching impact beyond just one company or site. We know that the partnerships between industry, government, and community groups are essential to building a strong and capable workplace."

The order also directs DLI to expand AI training opportunities, support educators in including AI-readiness in career programs in the K-12 system, use AI tools to support job seekers, and use public-private partnerships to accelerate AI technology adoption.



Governor Gianforte announces 406 JOBS at Boeing's Helena facility.

In partnership with the Montana Legislature, Gov. Gianforte this year signed into law a number of reforms to modernize Montana's state workforce and education systems.

Signing into law House Bill 449, House Bill 656, and House Bill 823, the governor overhauled outdated structures and strengthened access to training resources across state programs to ensure Montana students receive education and training that prepare them well for in-demand careers.

"Montana's workforce and education partners anticipated the direction of federal policy and took early, decisive action to align our systems and better serve students, job-seekers, and employers. We are leading with a bold vision of zero barriers to employment in the state of Montana," Commissioner Swanson said of the reforms.

Increasing access to education and workforce training is a top priority for Gov. Gianforte. In his first year in office, the governor increased apprenticeship opportunities by changing the journeyman-to-apprentice ratio from 2:1 to 1:2. Now, one journeyman can supervise two apprentices.

This rule change has led to a record number of apprentices working in Montana. In 2024, more than 680 Montana businesses offered apprenticeships to train workers resulting in over 3,150 Montanans enrolled in active apprenticeships, a 25% increase over the five years prior. Building on that success, Gov. Gianforte signed House Bill 336 into law this year which allows apprenticeship as a pathway to occupational licensing for more than 30 professions in Montana.

In July, Gov. Gianforte launched the state's first registered teacher apprenticeship program to get more highly skilled and highly qualified teachers into Montana classrooms. This year, the governor secured a historic \$100 million to raise teacher pay, with a focus on educators who are just starting their careers.

In his first week in office, Gov. Gianforte introduced the TEACH Act, or Tomorrow's Educators Are Coming Home Act, to provide incentives to school districts to increase starting teacher pay. In its first year, the TEACH Act helped nearly 500 teachers begin their careers in Montana. In 2023, the governor increased funding for the program by 40 percent.

Strengthening Montana's workforce and expanding opportunities for students through career and technical education (CTE) are also top priorities for the governor. This fall, under the newly enacted STARS Act, DLI will establish a statewide database of industry recognized credentials that high school students can earn for credit. Schools will receive incentive payments based on the number of students attaining industry recognized credentials or dual enrollment credits.

According to data from 2023, a record number of Montana high school students received college credit in a CTE program. Data released by Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education revealed that over 3,300 high school students received college credit for CTE in 2023, an increase of more than 600 students from 2022.

As designated in the new executive order, SWIB is expected to deliver a implementation plan in 90 days to examine existing agency workforce initiatives and establish annual reporting mechanisms.

For more photos and great articles, check out TheParkCountyDugout.substack.com.



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Deb Kelly | 406-220-0801



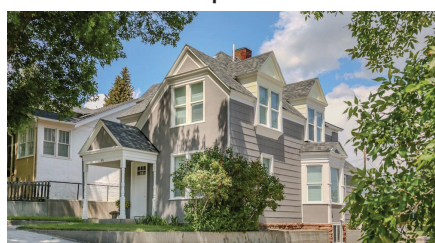
**1007 E Geyser Street**  
2 beds 2 baths | 1,584 sq ft  
#402047 | \$649,000  
Julie Kennedy | 406-223-7753



**305 Lathrop Street W**  
2 beds 2 baths | 996 sq ft  
#399947 | \$429,000  
Jessie Sarrazin | 406-223-5881



**1296 US Hwy 10 W**  
Commercial Sale | 10,160 sq ft  
#397843 | \$2,500,000  
Ernie Meador | 406-220-0231



**416 N 3rd Street**  
4 beds 2 baths | 2,074 sq ft  
#403314 | \$559,000  
Deb Kelly | 406-220-0801



**OPEN HOUSE**

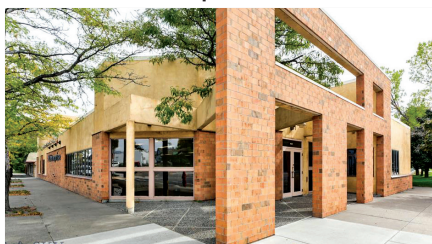
Sunday, Aug 17, 1 - 3 pm

**2616 Meriwether Drive S**  
3 beds 2 baths | 1,614 sq ft  
#404513 | \$570,000  
Swanson Team | 406-220-2045

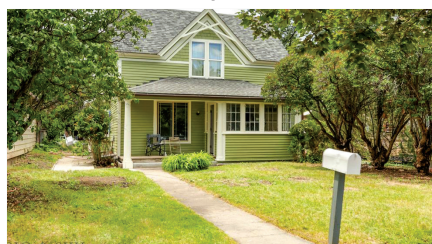


**NEW PRICE**

**9 Grizzly Meadow Road**  
4 beds 3 baths | 20+ acres  
#400644 | \$2,425,000  
Tom Gierhan | 406-220-0229



**401 S Main Street**  
Commercial Sale | 10,375 sq ft  
#384182 | \$2,200,000  
Ernie Meador | 406-220-0231



**326 S 5th Street**  
3 beds 1 bath | 1,879 sq ft  
#403239 | \$500,000  
Julie Kennedy | 406-223-7753



**518 W Lewis Street**  
4 beds 2.5 baths | 4,398 sq ft  
#403584 | \$1,275,000  
Julie Kennedy | 406-223-7753



**1115 Ridgeview Trail**  
3 beds 2.5 baths | 1,758 sq ft  
#399280 | \$585,000  
Baylor & Carolina Carter | 406-223-7903

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## 529 Education Savings Plans: More flexible Than You think

Planning for your child's education can feel overwhelming, but a 529 education savings plan offers a powerful way to build a financial foundation for their educational future.

One in four parents currently invests in a 529 plan, according to a 2025 research study by Edward Jones and Morning Consult. Perhaps it's because of the tax benefits—earnings are generally tax-free if the money is used for qualified educational expenses. Or perhaps it's because of their flexibility.

**Types of education.** While most people know 529 plans can help cover college and university tuition, these versatile accounts

can also pay tuition for vocational and trade schools, making them suitable for students pursuing careers in skilled trades like plumbing, electrical work or culinary arts. Additionally, some apprenticeship programs qualify for these funds. And even K-12 tuition expenses are covered, up to \$10,000 per year for private, public and religious elementary and secondary schools.

**Beyond tuition.** Withdrawals from a 529 plan can move beyond tuition and cover the cost of room and board for students enrolled at least half-time. They can help pay for books, computers and qualified educational supplies.

And a big surprise for some: A 529 plan can help with student loan repayment up to \$10,000 per beneficiary.

**Who can contribute?** Fortunately, 529 plans welcome contributions from anyone—parents, grandparents, other family and friends. Contributions are treated as gifts to the beneficiary, so most contributors will want to stay within the annual nontaxable gifting limit (which for 2025 is \$19,000 for individuals or \$38,000 for married couples filing jointly).

Interestingly, one in five parents would prefer for their child to receive 529 contributions as gifts from loved ones, making these accounts perfect for birthdays, holidays and other special occasions.

**Multiple children.** If you have multiple children, you have options in how you structure your 529 savings. You can maintain separate accounts for each child or use one account for all your children.

**Unused funds.** You may be concerned about what happens if your child doesn't use all the money. Fortunately, these accounts offer numerous penalty-free options. You can easily change the beneficiary to another qualifying family member, including siblings, nieces, nephews, grandchildren or even yourself as the account owner.

You can also roll funds to another family member's existing 529 plan. If your child receives a scholarship, you can withdraw up to the scholarship amount without penalty (though you'll pay income tax on a portion of the money). The IRS allows an option to roll up to \$35,000 into a Roth IRA for the beneficiary

if certain requirements are met. You should consult with your tax advisor on this 529/Roth IRA rollover issue.

**State options.** It's important to note that 529 plans vary from state to state, and you're not limited to your home state's plan. However, it's smart to examine your home state's offerings first, as many provide special incentives like tax breaks for residents.

When comparing plans, consider factors such as tax benefits, fees, investment options and ease of use. A good financial advisor can help you navigate these choices and identify the plan that makes the most sense for your family's specific situation and goals.

529 education savings plans offer flexibility and tax advantages that help make them an excellent tool for education planning. With their expanded uses and multiple options for unused funds, they can help provide families with both security and adaptability in preparing for their children's educational futures.

Investments in 529 plans will fluctuate with changes in market conditions and may be worth more or less than the original investment when redeemed.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.*

Edward Jones, member SIPC

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