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Wednesday, January 4, 2017

Volume 42 • Number 47

Motivational Speaker, Entertainer, Humorist, Storyteller, Philosopher Chad Prather to Entertain at 2017 MonDak Ag Days

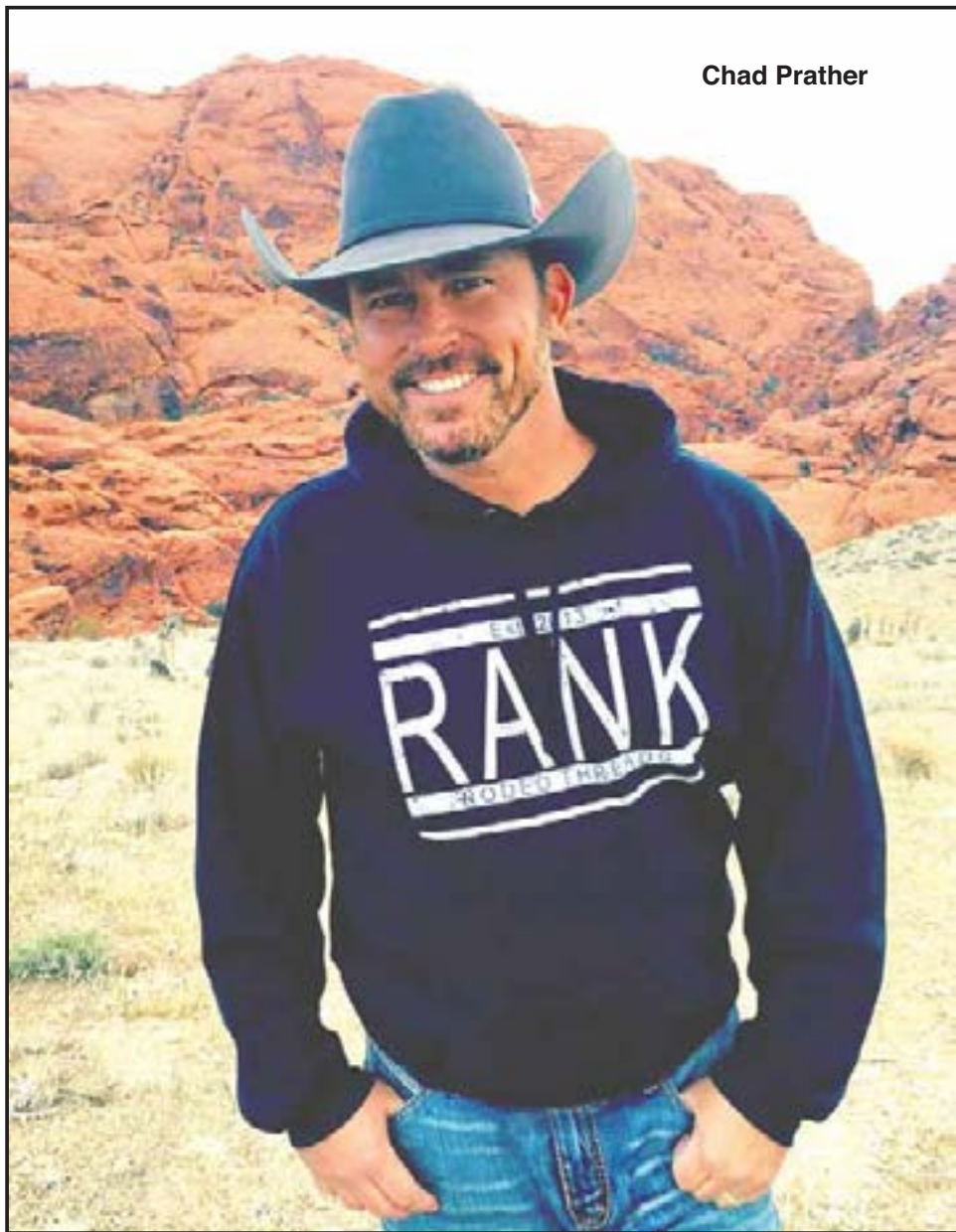
Richland County Ag Days has provisionally confirmed that Chad Prather will provide the entertainment for the banquet on Thursday, March 2, 2017.

Prather's website, watch-chad.com, provided the following information.

Chad Prather is a student of living life to the fullest. Never one to shy away from adventure or a new experience he faces the world with a smile. Chad is an adopted Texan that calls the Fort Worth (not Dallas!) area home. Although he grew up in Augusta, GA he migrated to Texas in 2003. Through life's many winding roads he has managed to keep his positive attitude and tries his absolute best to bring out the best in those he meets. Chad is an entertainer. A storyteller. Whether he uses music, comedy, motivational speaking, or any combination of the three he feels that everyone has a story that needs to be told.

A story that matters.

Through his social media humor videos, he is considered to be one of America's fastest growing public personalities. His wife, Jade, is still rolling her eyes. A sought after public entertainer and motivational speaker, Chad uses his life experiences as an athlete, a husband, a father, and a traveler to coach and encourage others on their journey. He is also the host of Ride Television Network's "It's My Backyard" as well as making numerous other TV and radio appearances.



Chad Prather

Balcer Brothers are the New Owners of The Depot Restaurant

By Meagan Dotson

Kraig and Brett Balcer are the new owners of The Depot family restaurant. Brett Balcer was leaving the oilfield and the brothers, both Sidney natives, had been talking about getting into the restaurant business for a while, having spent their summers helping out with a family owned restaurant in Glendive, MT. They knew the previous owners of The Depot, and knew that there was an opportunity for them to purchase the business, which became a sure thing in the spring of 2016.

"We got a good package, especially with the building having been recently remodeled," commented Kraig Balcer.

The two have spent much of their time since in the restaurant, learning the former owners' routines to make a smooth transition.

The eatery offers pizza, soups, burgers, and appetizers. A couple of their most popular menu items include their delicious pinecone appetizers and their hot cheese pizza.

They have plans to add delivery drivers and offer delivery service to businesses over the lunch hour, and would like to introduce a weekend brunch menu.

"We're adding new items and weekly specials, but the menu is going to stay the same for the most part. We're still going to be 'The Depot'," they added. "We've gotten a good response from the community; everyone is pretty excited, and we have a lot of support from our family and friends."

The Depot is located at 2302 S Central Ave in Sidney, and they can be reached at 406-433-4650. They are open Monday – Thursday from 10:30am to 9:30pm, Friday and Saturday from 10:30am to 10:30pm, and Sundays from 10:30am to 9:00pm.

2016 MT TeenVax Challenge Winner Announced

Richland County Health Department is announcing our county winner in the 2016 MT TeenVax Challenge! The Montana Immunization Program and RCHD are very pleased with the response to this first challenge. Statewide, there were 319 entries in 44 counties. Winners were selected randomly. Out of the 31 entries in Richland County, Parker Syth was the lucky name drawn to receive a \$50 Amazon Gift Card. Congratulations!

The MT TeenVax Challenge is a multi-year campaign to provide education, resources, and information about Tdap, meningococcal, HPV, and influenza vaccines for providers, parents, and teens. These vaccines are routinely administered at age 11-12 years with catch up for those 13 and older. To qualify for this challenge, youth must have received one dose of Tdap, MCV4 and HPV.

The MT TeenVax Challenge is in partnership with the Montana Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Montana Academy of Family Physicians and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana Care Van program.

The 2017 MT TeenVax Challenge will open for entries in June 2017 and last throughout the fall. Watch for more information or follow us on Facebook. Please contact the Richland County Health Department at 406-433-2207 with any questions or for further information on immunizations and clinic times.



Frances, Sam and winner Parker Syth with Kathy Helmuth, RN.

Montana Department of Transportation Proposes Resurfacing Project on Secondary Highway 327 Through Bainville

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) would like to notify the public and seek comments on a proposal to resurface about 0.65 miles of Secondary Highway 327 (Clinton Street and 5th Avenue), through the town of Bainville. The project begins at the intersection with U.S. Highway 2 at reference post 0.0 and extends south for 0.65 miles, ending on 5th Avenue approximately 0.1 miles east of the intersection of Clinton Street and 5th Avenue at reference post 0.65.

Proposed work includes a mill and overlay of the existing plant mix surfacing, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) sidewalk ramp enhancements at three intersections along the two-block segment between Rhea Avenue and Clark Avenue, and finishing with a seal and cover (chip seal), upgraded pavement marking and signage. The purpose of the project is to preserve and extend the life of the pavement, provide a safer, smoother roadway and reduce maintenance costs. No new right-of-way or utility relocations will be needed.

The project is tentatively scheduled for construction in 2018, depending on completion of all project development activities and availability of funding. This project will be tied with the Bainville - South project that will reconstruct the gravel portion of Secondary Highway 327 to the North Dakota border.

For more information, please contact Glendive District Administrator Shane Mintz at (406) 345-8212 or Project Design Engineer Steve Heidner at (406) 3458247. Members of the public may submit written comments to the Montana Department of Transportation Glendive office at P.O. Box 890, Glendive, MT 59330-0890, or online at: www.mdt.mt.gov/mdt/comment_form.shtml

Please note that your comments are for project UPN 9160000. Alternative accessible formats of this information will be provided upon request by contacting the Office of Civil Rights, P.O. Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620; (406) 444-9229; fax (406) 444-7243, or e-mail to aflesch@mt.gov. Those using a TTY may call (800) 335-7592 or through the Montana Relay Service at 711.

Students Sought for Mayor for a Day Essay Contest

Each spring, the North Dakota League of Cities sponsors a statewide Mayor for a Day essay contest for third and seventh grade students. The contest encourages young people to think about public service and future community leadership. Essays must address why the student feels their community is great and what they would do to improve their city if they were mayor for a day. Mayor for a Day Essay contest winners receive a \$150 cash prize, have their essays featured in CITYScan, participate in an award presentation at the North Dakota Capitol on March 3, 2017. For more information visit www.ndlc.org/essay or contact Carissa at 701-223-3518 or carissa@ndlc.org.

ARC Prepares for One Millionth Visitor

The Williston Area Recreation Center (WARC) is just days away from reaching our 1,000,000th visitor! Since our March 2014 opening, almost 1,000,000 people have passed by the front desk at the WARC to use facilities, participate in recreational programs, and attend events.

We are excited to announce a special promotion to commemorate this milestone. The 1,000,000th visitor to the WARC will receive a free one-year membership to the ARC! We encourage all members and non-members to come to the ARC this week for their chance to win!

The Williston Parks & Recreation District and WARC Staff want to thank the community of Williston and all our patrons for their outstanding support! To follow our countdown to 1,000,000 find us on Facebook at "Williston Parks and Recreation District" or visit us online at willistonparks.com.

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STATISTICS

LAKE WATER LEVEL REPORT

Sakakawea

Current Elevation.....1840.0
Last Year's Elev.1838.4
One Year Ago1840.0
Release For Day (C.F.S.)16,000

SIDNEY WEATHER DATA
Source: MSU Eastern Agricultural Research Center

Date	High	Low	Precip.
Dec. 19	36	22	0.00
Dec. 20	44	23	0.00
Dec. 21	40	22	0.00
Dec. 22	32	17	0.00
Dec. 23	33	10	0.00
Dec. 24	20	7	0.00
Dec. 25	10	4	0.34
Dec. 26	13	-8	0.17
Dec. 27	34	-5	0.00
Dec. 28	34	-24	0.00
Total YTD Precipitation			15.20

USDA Provides New Cost Share Opportunities for Organic Producers and Handlers

Organic Producers and Handlers May Apply for Certification Cost Share Reimbursements; Expanded Eligibility for Transition and State Certification Cost

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced that starting March 20, 2017, organic producers and handlers will be able to visit over 2,100 USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices to apply for federal reimbursement to assist with the cost of receiving and maintaining organic or transitional certification.

“USDA reimburses organic producers up to 75 percent of the cost of organic certification, but only about half of the nation’s organic operations currently participate in the program,” said FSA Administrator Val Dolcini. “Starting March 20, USDA will provide a uniform, streamlined process for organic producers and handlers to apply for organic cost share assistance either by mail or in person at USDA offices located in almost every rural county in the country.”

USDA is making changes to increase participation in the National Organic Certification Cost Share Program (NOCOSP) and the Agricultural Management Assistance Organic Certification Cost Share Program, and at the same time provide more opportunities for organic producers to access other USDA programs, such as disaster protection and loans for farms, facilities and marketing. Producers can also access information on nonfederal agricultural resources, and get referrals to local experts, including organic agriculture, through USDA’s Bridges to Opportunity service at the local FSA office.

Historically, many state departments of agriculture have obtained grants to disburse reimbursements to those producers and handlers qualifying for cost share assistance. FSA will continue to partner with states to administer the programs. For states that want to continue to directly administer the programs, applications will be due Feb. 17, 2017.

“The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and the National Organic Program look forward to this exciting opportunity to leverage the Farm Service Agency’s rural footprint to reach more organic producers and handlers,” said AMS Administrator Elanor Starmer. “At the same time it is important to recognize and continue the valuable partnerships with states that remain at the core of the program.”

Eligible producers include any certified producers or handlers who have paid organic or transitional certification fees to a USDA-accredited certifying agent. Application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement/ arrangement requirements, travel/per diem for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage are all eligible for a cost share reimbursement from USDA.

Once certified, producers and handlers are eligible to receive reimbursement for up to 75 percent of certification costs each year up to a maximum of \$750 per certification scope—crops, livestock, wild crops and handling. Today’s announcement also adds transitional certification and state organic program fees as additional scopes.

To learn more about organic certification cost share, please visit www.fsa.usda.gov/organic or contact a local FSA office by visiting <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA is committed to helping organic agriculture grow and thrive. USDA strongly supports the organic sector through a wide variety of programs, including conservation grants, organic crop insurance, certification cost-share, organic market news, and simplified microloans. Under the Obama administration, USDA has signed five major organic trade arrangements and has helped organic stakeholders access programs that support conservation, provide access to loans and grants, fund organic research and education and mitigate pest emergencies. To learn more about USDA support for organic agriculture, visit our updated organic portal at www.usda.gov/organic.

NFL Play Off Books Now Available

Submitted by Laura Schieber

The Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture’s Sports and Rec Committee announced that NFL Play Off Books are now available at the Chamber Office & Reynolds Market.

Winners receive \$50 for play-off games, \$75 for NFC & AFC championship games and a “Staycation” package for the Superbowl. The “Staycation” package includes a one night stay at Best Western Golden Prairie Inn or Richland Inn & Suites and a gift card to the Tap House. Winners are determined by the score at the end of the game.

Proceeds from NFL books are used to fund basketball tournaments in Sidney. Sidney will be hosting the District 2C Combined Boys & Girls Basketball Tournament February 13-18, 2017.

The NFL books make fantastic stocking stuffers and normally sell out quickly. Stop in and pick your game book up today, while we have them!



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EVENTS

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RICHLAND COUNTY
Events in Sidney unless otherwise listed. MT Zone.

Wed., Jan. 4
6 p.m. - Free Community Meal - Everyone welcome. Pella Lutheran Church, 418 West Main.
6:30 p.m. - Fairview Yoga - Yoga classes for adults only. \$5 per class, all levels welcome. Props needed, yoga mat, comfortable clothing, a smile. Fairview High School Cafeteria. There is also a 6:30 p.m. class on Jan. 9 for high school students and older. For more information contact Kayla Fox, 209-263-1336 or Tammi Eldridge Warren, 406-480-9273.

Thurs., Jan. 5
12-1 p.m. - Sidney Kiwanis Club Meeting - Elks Lodge, 123 3rd St. SW.
4-9 p.m. - Sidney Eagles Boys Basketball vs. Glendive - Sidney High School, 1012 4th Avenue South East, Sidney, MT. 433-2330.

Fri., Jan. 6
4-9 p.m. - Sidney Eagles Girls Basketball vs. Glendive - Sidney High School, 1012 4th Avenue South East, Sidney, MT. 433-2330.

Sun., Jan. 8
12-3:30 p.m. - Lutefisk and Meatball Dinner - \$15 for adults; \$5 for 12 and under. First Lutheran Church, Savage, MT.
2-5 p.m. - Bingo - Sidney Moose Lodge.

Mon., Jan. 9
12-1 p.m. - Sidney Lions Club Meeting - Elks Lodge, 123 3rd St. SW.

Thurs., Jan. 12
5-8 p.m. - Sidney Wrestling vs. Dickinson - Sidney High School, 1012 4th Avenue South East, Sidney, MT. 433-2330.

Fri., Jan. 13
6 p.m. - Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce & Agriculture Annual Awards Banquet at the Sidney Country Club. Call 433-1916 for more information.

Sat., Jan. 14
4-9 p.m. - Sidney Eagles Girls Basketball vs. Laurel - Sidney High School, 1012 4th Avenue South East, Sidney, MT. 433-2330.

Tues., Jan. 17
9 a.m. - 11 a.m. - MOPS - Mothers of 0-5 years old can come and connect, laugh, cry and embrace the journey of motherhood. Breakfast and childcare provided. Sidney Lutheran Brethren Church, 1100 Madison Lane, Sidney, MT. For more info contact Rachel Dasinger, 406-480-0924, sidneymops@hotmail.com.
1 p.m. - Leadership Skills; 6 p.m. Bridging Generational Differences - Jeff Kaufman brings his experience and insights on how to supervise, manage and understand today’s workforce. \$35 one session; \$50 both sessions. Tickets are available from Job Service Sidney or one of the following JSEC members, Kelly Reisig, Cheryl Van Every, Leann Pelvit, Jana Lung, Kent Simonis or Heather VanGelder. Contact Job Service Sidney 433-1204 for more information. MSU Eastern Ag Research Center, 1499 N. Central Ave., Sidney, MT.

Wed., Jan. 18
5 - 10 p.m. - Community Pint Night- Meadowlark Public House. \$1 for every pint sold will go to support a community organization.

Thurs., Jan. 19
11:30 a.m. - Richland Red Hatters Lunch Meeting - Rod Iron. RSVP by Jan. 17 call Slyvia, 798-3882 or Margaret, 488-4613.

Fri., Jan. 27
7 p.m. - Benefit Coyote Tournament Registration for Bryton Brien - Registration and mandatory rules meeting at the V.F.W. Sidney, MT, followed by Calcutta. 5 p.m. on Jan. 28 first check in; 7 p.m., Jan. 29 second check in. Two or three man team, \$300; early entry \$250. For more information contact Brett Finnicum, 406-480-0787 or Gary Brien, 406-973-2971.

Sat., Jan. 28
6 p.m. - Silent Auction & Dinner Benefit for Bryton Brien - Tickets: \$50 a couple, \$30 single. Tables, call for information. Richland County Event Center. For tickets or more information contact Kayla, 406-488-7888 or Diane, 406-488-3637.

McKENZIE COUNTY
Events in Watford City unless otherwise listed. CT Zone

Fri., Jan. 27
5 p.m. - Cowgirls ‘n Conservation - Step back in time with old fashioned desserts, ladies reflecting on the past, door prizes and comfort foods. 5 p.m., Social and craft show; 6 p.m. dinner. RSVP with your \$30 registration fee to MCSCD at 701-842-3628 ext. 3 by Jan. 10 to be entered in the grand prize drawing. Rough Rider Center, Watford City, ND.

WILLIAMS COUNTY
Events in Williston unless otherwise listed. CT Zone.

Sat., Jan. 7
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. - Scrapbooking - Participants should bring their own materials and lunch. Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretive Center. 701-572-9034.

Sun., Jan. 8
2-7 p.m. - Jump N Fun Family Fun Day - Come for a day of bouncing and games. \$5 for wristbands, concessions available. New Armory, Williston, ND.

Sat., Jan. 14
9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Historic Sewing Club - A group initiated by Fort Union to do historic period sewing. A presentation with instructions and information will be from 10 a.m.-noon and sewing will ensue from 1-3:30 p.m. Participants should bring their own materials and lunch. Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretive Center. 701-572-9034.

Sun., Jan. 15
3 p.m. - Jore’s House of Musik Fiddler’s Concert - Free admission. Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretive Center. 701-572-9034.

Tues., Jan. 17
7 p.m. - Williston Camera Club - The club meets to learn, educate and improve photography. Any age, new and old members welcome at all times. James Memorial Art Center, 621 1st Ave., Williston, ND.

Thurs., Jan. 19
7 p.m. - Fort Buford History Book Club - Join history buffs in a discussion of this month’s selected book, “The Bloody Bozeman,” by Dorothy M. Johnson. Free refreshments. Please call in advance, 701.572.9034. Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretive Center.

Fri., Jan. 20
9 a.m.-4 p.m. - Confluence Quilters Monthly Meeting - All experience levels invited and instruction provided. Bring your own lunch and unfinished projects. This event continues on Jan. 21. Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretive Center. 701-572-9034.

6-10 p.m. - Williston Chamber Annual Banquet Journey to “Paris” Enjoy an evening of entertainment, awards and networking. Grand Williston Hotel and Conference Center. Call the chamber to reserve dinner tickets, 701-577-6000.

DAWSON COUNTY
Events in Glendive unless otherwise listed. MT Zone

Fri., Jan. 6
3-6 p.m. - Gallery Open House - Honoring Helen Beres for her years of service to The Gallery and the community. 109 N. Merrill Ave., Glendive, MT. 406-377-6508.

Sun., Jan. 8
1-2:30 p.m. - Gallery Open House - Featuring photographer and artist Earl Jensen. 109 N. Merrill Ave., Glendive, MT. 406-377-6508.

6:30 p.m. - What The Devil? - The DCHS Drama Club and Speech, Drama and Debate team will be having a skit and improv night as a fundraiser. Admission is a free will donation. DCHS Auditorium, Glendive, MT.

Wed., Jan. 18
12-1 p.m. - Lunch N Learn - The importance of fitness as we age. Join Missy Miller as she discusses issues of falls and risks, strength and balance exercises, and ways to be safe at home and in public places. Tea and coffee will be provided, bring your own lunch. Glendive Public Library Community Room - For more information glendivefriends@thelibrary@gmail.com or <http://tinyurl.com/prgkapr>.

Block Management Staff Shares Tips with Hunters

With the big game season recently concluded, Block Management Program Administrative Assistant Bea Sturtz sits at her desk, busily counting thousands of hunter permission slips. The slips are turned in by landowners participating in the program that opens 2,290,000 acres in southeastern Montana to hunting. Slips will keep filtering in until after spring turkey season, when Sturtz will have a final tally.

Last year, nearly 45,000 hunters accessed Block Management Areas in Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region 7, spending a total of 78,826 hunter days in the field. From early numbers, Sturtz thinks this year could be even better.

"It was a good season," she said. "It was busier for sure than last year, and we saw more hunters overall. I think hunters were finding game; the numbers are definitely up."

Most hunters were after mule deer, which are rebounding well from recent lows. And although it's a younger age class of deer right now, hunters reportedly were happy with their opportunities.

Block Management is heavily used by residents and non-residents, but Sturtz still encounters misconceptions about how it works. With another general season in the books, she offered some suggestions that may help hunters better utilize the program.

Access not about big bucks

Sturtz said the most common misconception is the type of information that she can provide to hunters who call or visit the regional headquarters in Miles City.

"They assume that because we're with Fish, Wildlife & Parks, we're going to know where the big ones [bucks] are, but it has nothing to do with that. We're just here to help people find access to private lands, and I think that gets lost," she said.

Sturtz's assistant, Cori Enders, added, "They want to know where all the animals are, and the big ones, and the biggest populations of animals, by species."

Hunters choose where to go

Some hunters say they will go wherever the staff sends them, Sturtz said, "but it's up to the hunter to decide where they're going to hunt because it's such a big area."

The staff may ask people where they want to base their hunt, how far they are willing to travel and how much they want to walk, which can make a difference. And they do call landowners throughout the season to ask what type of game they're seeing, in part to direct hunters toward better opportunities and to disperse people.

"Antelope populations are doing better in the southeast corner," Sturtz cited an example. "But then they [landowners] get overwhelmed, so I try to find a different area for them [hunters] to go."

Big parcels not always better

Hunters tend to want large parcels of land to hunt, but sometimes landowners limit access within those BMAs. Also, hunters may be overlooking opportunities elsewhere.

"They need to know not to avoid those smaller areas, because sometimes they can be a hidden gem," Sturtz said.

Permission isn't automatic

Access programs can vary from state to state, and Sturtz cautions hunters that access here is not automatic. "You still have to make that step to get permission," she said.

Some hunters think they can get permission just by calling FWP, but the agency only provides them contact information for landowners. There are two ways to gain permission to hunt: Type 1 BMAs allow a hunter to sign in at a box on site, and Type 2 BMAs require permission from the landowner or a representative. Even then, access is not a guarantee if the landowner is booked on a particular day or has certain stipulations.

Have a backup plan

"A lot of BMAs book up pretty quickly, like the Powder River and Ekalaka areas where there aren't a lot of BMAs, because game numbers are doing well over there," she said. "They should always have a backup plan. If this one isn't going to be open for that day, they should maybe look at another one, and I'll give them the option to pull a different [contact] number."

Remember common courtesy

Hunters are asked not to book more than one BMA per day. Sturtz also reminds them to call and cancel a reservation if they fill their tag or change plans, so the landowner doesn't have to turn other people away. Another tip is to call only at the time designated by the landowner, and to remember time zone differences. Even if hunters use the same unit year after year, they should still check to see if contact numbers, times or restrictions have changed.

It's about relationships

Landowners tell staff that they appreciate hunters who don't take access for granted, are grateful for the opportunity and take the time to build a relationship with them, even if it's mostly by phone. Some think they get a better group of hunters through the program because they have to call first. Besides the fee the



Bea Sturtz



Travis Muscha

state pays landowners per hunter per day, they also get help with signage, maps and permission slips.

In some cases, landowners and hunters form bonds that last for years, Sturtz said. "The program has been around a long time now. You're looking at 30 years of history that they may have established with a family."

Do your homework

Region 7's Block Management Program offers hunters a lot of opportunities, "but it's still just one tool for access, and hunters have to do their homework," Sturtz said.

"You can still use public land, and you can still knock on a door," she added.

One thing hunters can do to prepare is order the Block Management Access Guide in advance, which is available in print and online in mid-August. The guide lists participating landowners in 13 southeastern counties, along with what types of game their land typically supports. Sturtz said the Hunt Planner on FWP's website (<http://fwp.mt.gov>) is also a good tool. The Hunt Planner combines updated maps with hunting regulations and statistics. Maps are available online beginning Aug. 15 but are removed in January.

As long as hunters have realistic expectations about what the program can do and are willing to put in the time, Sturtz is confident that they can have a very satisfying experience.

"I've heard comments from hunters from other states who really like this program and wish they had it in their state," she said.

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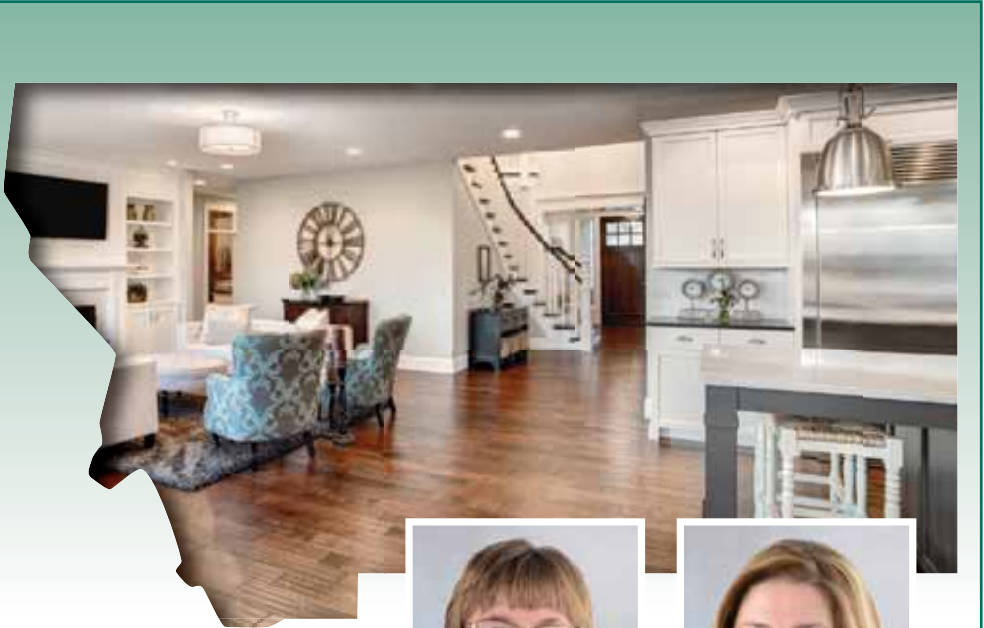


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ND Commerce awards Grant for WSC Workforce Training Programs

By ND Commerce

The North Dakota Department of Commerce announced workforce enhancement grants for Williston State College (WSC) totaling \$230,000. Workforce enhancement grants enable two-year colleges to apply for funds to help create or enhance training programs that address workforce needs of North Dakota's private-sector employers. Projects require a dollar-for-dollar match of all state money with private funds.

WSC received this grant to develop a "Safe P" training program and a "Well Sharp" training program. The Safe P training includes safety training for lease operators and pumpers to include dump, back pressure and stuffing box processes. The Well Sharp training will train employees at a drilling site on how to recognize, prevent and address well blow-out situations. WSC secured matching funds totaling \$230,763 for the programs.

"Companies continue to train current and future employees for high-demand positions for their industry," Dea-nette Piesik, CEO of TrainND, a division of Williston State College. "Both programs allow individuals to upgrade their

skills and knowledge to maintain well sites."

Grant funding may be used for curriculum development, equipment, recruiting participants, and training and certifying instructors. Funds may not be used to supplant funding for current operations.

"The workforce enhancement grants help increase the capacity of our higher education institutions like WSC to provide a consistent stream of qualified workers educated right here in North Dakota," said Wayde Sick, Workforce Development Director at the North Dakota Department of Commerce. "The partnership of industry, education, and state and local governments is needed to meet the developing workforce needs of North Dakota."

The Workforce Enhancement Council reviews all proposals and provides funding recommendations to the commissioner of the North Dakota Department of Commerce. The council consists of the private-sector membership of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council, the state director of the Department of Career & Technical Education, and the division director of the Workforce Development Di-

vision of the North Dakota Department of Commerce, who serves as the chair.

The North Dakota Department of Commerce works to improve the quality of life for North Dakota citizens by leading efforts to attract, retain and expand wealth. Commerce serves businesses and communities statewide through committed people and partners who offer valuable programs and dynamic services.



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MSU Extension Employees and Supporters Win Awards for Excellence and Service

By MSU News Service

Montana State University Extension agents, staff and supporters from across Montana recently received awards during Extension's annual conference at MSU in Bozeman.

Laurie Lauth, MSU Extension agent in Big Horn County, received the 2016 Silver Buffalo Award in recognition of 37 years of exceptional service. The award, given by Montana's Joint Council of Extension Professionals, is MSU Extension's highest honor. Lauth has directly reached more than 800 participants through food preservation education. The Big Horn County commissioners, in their letter of recommendation, lauded her as an outstanding mentor, professional, teacher and colleague, calling her food safety work essential to the county.

Elin Kittelmann, MSU Extension agent in Fallon-Carter Counties, received the

Anne Wiprud Memorial Award, which recognizes an MSU Extension professional with fewer than 10 years of experience for outstanding achievement. Kittelmann has organized presentations in her counties by numerous national experts, including Temple Grandin, Curt Pate and Dr. Robert Mortimer. When producers brought concerns over water quality to her attention, she worked with local veterinarians, staff at Fort Keogh and other groups to respond. Her efforts culminated in the publishing of educational materials and funding to manufacture inexpensive water testing devices for producers.

The Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana and the Business, Estates, Trusts, Tax and Real Property section of the State Bar of Montana, also known as BETTR, won the JCEP Arrowhead Award, which recognizes a community partner, for their support of MSU Extension estate planning and financial education programs. The School of Law has provided countless hours reviewing MontGuides and curriculum, providing pro bono work and helping to ensure that MSU Extension financial education information is accurate and easy to understand. BETTR has provided 30 years of support beginning with the creation of the public service committee to review documents for accuracy and make suggestions for improvement. Members of BETTR have been involved in the review of 39 estate planning MontGuides that are widely used by the general public.

The Montana chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, a national fraternity of Extension educators, presented the Montana ESP Early-Career Award (less than 10 years) to Cascade County Extension agent Rose Malisani. In addition to regular duties, Malisani provided leadership to the Symbol of Excellence swine carcass evaluation program and the 2015 and 2016 state 4-H horse show.

The Montana ESP Distinguished Service Award went to Bobbie Roos, Daniels County. As the only agent in her county, Roos has developed a comprehensive Extension program that includes agriculture, horticulture, 4-H, family and consumer sciences and community development.

The Montana ESP Visionary Leadership Award went to Jane Wolery of Teton County in recognition of accomplishments leading Extension in a new direction. Wolery brought the eParenting program, which empowers parents to use digital media as a powerful and positive tool in supporting their parenting role, to Montana. In addition, Wolery recently achieved full professorship at MSU.

The Montana ESP Friend of Extension award for outstanding public service and support to state Extension programs went to Montana State Senator Taylor Brown. In his role as legislator, broadcaster, rancher and alum, Brown has been a staunch supporter of Extension, the College of Agriculture and MSU in general. Brown is a founding member of Resource Education and Agricultural Leadership Montana and continues to serve on its board. As a senator, he was instrumental in the legislature restoring funding for two Extension specialist positions, supporting the Schutter Diagnostic Laboratory and providing base funding for the Local Government Center.

The Montana ESP Team Award went to the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences recognized Jane Wolery with Communications Awards for written press release, first place state and region and internet education, first place state and second place region. Wendy Wedum, Pondera County, and Alice Burchak, Toole County, earned Communication Team Award, first place state and region. Jona McNamee, Cascade County, and Sandy Bailey, family and human development specialist and program leader, earned the Early Childhood/Childcare Training award. Lisa Terry earned first place in the state and region for photography and best newsletter with Ashley House, Stillwater County.

The Powerful Tools for Caregiving team, including Laurie Lauth, Wendy Wedum, Denise Seilstad, from Fergus County; Nori Pearce, from Lake County; Tara Andrews, Jennifer Anderson, from Rosebud-Treasure Counties; Jane Wolery, Roubie Younkin, from Valley County; Jackie Rumph, from Yellowstone County; Katrin Finch, from Hill County; Bobbie Roos, Jona McNamee, Debbie Albin and Sandy Bailey, won second place in the Western region for Community Partnership.

The Montana Association of County Agricultural Agents awarded the Distinguished Service Award to George Haynes, Extension specialist in Agricultural Economics and Economics. Haynes provides education in farm policy and financial management for agricultural borrowers. The Achievement Award went to Tracy Mosley of Park County. Mosley focuses her programming on range management, invasive species and forages. Members of the Montana Association of Community Development Extension Professionals were recognized for the following awards: Western Region Team Award for Excellence in Community Development work, Leadership 49, Katie Weaver, Tracy Mosley and Mary Anne Keyes all of Park County; and Western Region Team Award for Excellence in Community Development work, Community Foundation of Northern Rosebud County, Jennifer Anderson.

For more information, contact Jodie DeLay at (406) 994-2502 or jdelay@montana.edu.

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