

DILLON TRIBUNE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2004 • VOLUME 123, NUMBER 50

MAKING HEADLINES SINCE 1881 • DILLON, MONTANA • 75 CENTS

IN BRIEF

Charges filed in area ranch vandalism case

By Elaine Spicer

An area ranch has been vandalized and charges of criminal mischief and obstructing a peace officer have been filed against two female juveniles, according to Beaverhead County Sheriff Bill Briggs.

Briggs said that on November 13, his office received a complaint of trespass and vandalism in regards to damages which occurred on ranch property east of Dillon in the Sweetwater area. The owner of the property had discovered most of the windows broken out of a house, along with other damage typical of random vandalism.

The property owner was able to assist the Sheriff's Office in recovering personal items left at the scene by the vandals, which led officers to identify the two suspects. The following investigation resulted in two juvenile females being cited on several counts of criminal mischief.

The office is pursuing restitution to the landowner for a substantial amount of damage to the ranch buildings, with damage estimates exceeding \$750, said Briggs.

Holi-Daze decoration signup ends today

The annual Christmas Holi-Daze decoration contest, sponsored by the Dillon Garden Club, closes registration today, December 15.

Actual judging will be Friday and Saturday. There are three divisions this year including residential, neighborhood and business, institutions and organizations. Businesses, institutions and organizations have two categories, outdoor and window. To enter the contest call 660-2884 and leave a message by December 15.

BCHS concert tonight

The Choral department at Beaverhead County High School will present a winter concert Wednesday, December 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the high school auditorium.

All choral groups will participate in the concert that will include music of the holiday season. The public is invited to attend.

Great Harvest says thanks to community

Once again, the Great Harvest Bread Company will celebrate the holiday season by saying "thank you".

As a holiday gift to the Dillon community, and to show appreciation for the community's support of its 2004 Bake Days, Great Harvest Franchising will open its Dillon bakery on Friday, December 17. Great Harvest staff will be giving away free loaves of bread (one loaf per family, please) from 10:00 a.m. until all the bread has been given away. Since the fall of 2001, Great Harvest has been hosting Bake Days to benefit local non-profit organizations. Over \$15,000 was raised in 2004 to benefit the Beaverhead Valley Artist Cooperative, Guardian Ad Litem, Beaverhead County High School scholarships, Pioneer Youth Home, Dillon Elementary Educational Foundation, and the YMCA.

Visitors to the bakery will have their choice of Honey Whole Wheat, Old-Fashioned White, Cinnamon Chip, Nine Grain, and Cranberry Orange breads. Bread varieties will be given away on a first-come, first-served basis.

The bakery is located at 25 East Glendale Street, next to the Dilmart, in Dillon.

Correction...

In last week's paper it was incorrectly reported that Dillon City Councilman H. S. Turner had voted against the Montana Street South improvements. In fact he had voted for the improvements. The negative vote actually was cast by Councilman Mike Klakken.

The Tribune regrets the error.

INSIDE

AFTER HOURS	B-3
ALMANAC NEWS OF RECORD	A-10
CLASSIFIED	B-5
LIFESTYLE	A-5
LIVING AREA FEATURE	B-1
OBITUARIES	A-10
RUBY VALLEY	B-4
SPORTS	A-15



Patty White of Helena gets good response from Dillon Middle School students during a recent talk she made there concerning relationships among young people.

Counselor works on twin themes of meth use, getting along in local schools

By John Barrows

When Patty White talks, kids listen. And teachers. And parents. White is an independent counselor, with a long background at Carroll College, and over the years she has developed an expertise in dealing with a hot of student-related problems.

Today the two biggest are relationships, and combatting bullying, and the ever-present scourge of methamphetamine.

Last week White worked with students in Parkview Elementary and Dillon Middle School about working with each other, and avoiding putdowns.

Citing a number of influences, in-

cluding violent video games that give a false sense of appropriate behavior among younger children, White worked to talk, virtually one on one during groups sessions, with the students.

Her talk centered on how language can hurt and how the students can help to overcome that hurt.

That night White spoke with teacher at Beaverhead County High School, outlining some of the facts of increasing methamphetamine use among teens and how to recognize signs of use in students. Additional work on the subject is planned, BCHS Superintendent Fred Choulnard said.

Judge files suit against city, mayor

By John Barrows

City Judge Virginia Compton and Dillon Mayor Marty Malesich are in complete agreement.

To disagree. Both called Friday's filing of a lawsuit by Compton against the Mayor and the City of Dillon a way to solve what has become a major difference in the way they look at how a city employee, Sam Yetter, should be handled.

Compton filed a petition for Writ of Mandamus or Prohibition and asked for summary judgement to make Malesich and the city stop what she calls interference with her elected office as city judge.

Filed in District Court, Compton alleges that Malesich, as Mayor, has interfered with the way she is directing Yetter, who Compton says, is a full-time Clerk of Court.

Malesich, on the other hand, in an interview this week, maintains that the employee is classified as a clerical assistant, that there is no such office as

Clerk of Court for the city, and that by the budget set by the City Council, Yetter should work only half-time for the court. While he has no disagreement, he said, with Compton directing the work of Yetter during the time she works with the court, he emphasized he feels she remains a city employee subject to the policies of the city.

The council confirmed her half-time status during the budget process this summer, he said, when Compton's request to put Yetter full time with the court, and increase the judge's position to full time, was not approved in the budget.

Compton, in her suit, maintains that October 4, under her direction and control, Yetter attended the Montana Courts of Limited Jurisdiction Clerks Conference in Bozeman.

Compton, as city judge, said she approved Yetter's hours at the convention, the time she spent at the conference and time off upon her return.

Malesich objected and in a counsel-

ing session required verification of her time at the conference. On Oct. 27, despite notification by Compton that she felt he was in violation of state law, Malesich required Yetter to be charged with 20 hours of annual leave, instead of regular pay.

Through a grievance procedure with the Dillon City Employees Association, that was reduced to 12 hours.

In her suit, Compton requests the court order a show cause hearing why the city and the mayor don't have to comply with the state law, and asks the court to issue a Writ of Prohibition to keep Malesich and the city from interfering with the administration of her court. She also maintains the mayor lacks the authority to supervise, control or direct the employee. She asks for a declaratory judgement on the issue and that her court costs be paid by the city.

The city, Malesich said, is preparing answers to the suit and it is expected they will be sent to the court sometime next week.

Barretts employees choose to remain non-union

Employees at Barretts Minerals Plants, of Minerals Technology, Inc., voted in a National Labor Relations Board election December 2 to decide whether they would be represented by the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers.

The petition for the election was made in October to the NLRB, who conducted the secret election.

Employees voted, 41-15, not to be represented by the union.

The results of the election are unofficial until formal certification is made by the NLRB.

"We are pleased that the work force has chose to work directly with MTI, and not through a third party, Rocky Smith, Barretts Minerals Plant Manager said Tuesday. "We believe the employees have made the best decision for their future, for our business and our customers. We sincerely appreciate the participation of our employees in the election process."

Ag conference highlights farm, ranch issues

Concerns about food safety and human health are prompting consumers to question how their food is raised.

The University of Montana-Western's Fourth Annual Ag Conference and Expo, January 6-7, 2005 features several speakers who promote food safety through sustainable agricultural practices.

Jo Robinson, Jim Garrish and Courtney White will talk about how local sustainable practices enhances health benefits for people, livestock and the land.

Sustainability and increasing profits are the key themes of this year's ag conference and expo.

The conference features five general sessions, six breakout sessions and a vendor expo that is open to the public.

Jo Robinson, best selling author, will be the keynote speaker at the conference. Robinson is the featured speaker at the event's banquet and will also conduct workshops.

Robinson has written several books on the benefits of

pasture-raised animals: Pasture Perfect and Why Grassfed is Best. Pasture raised beef has many of the health benefits of wild game and studies show that animals raising animals on pasture is good for the animals, the environment, farm families and consumers.

Robinson is a New York Times best-selling writer and she regularly talks to ranchers and sustainable agricultural groups about the benefits of raising pasture fed animals.

Pasture raised beef has many of the health benefits of wild game and studies show that animals raising animals on pasture is good for the animals, the environment, farm families and consumers.

Over 30 speakers will cover topics ranging from drought to sustainability to increasing profits to estate planning. Conference meals feature Montana food products.

For conference information visit "http://www.umwestern.edu" on the Internet or contact the UM-Western School of Outreach at 683-7537.

Sheriff forecasts changes in office

Promises details of changes soon

By Elaine Spicer

Within the next few weeks, Sheriff Bill Briggs says, some "structural changes" will be implemented within the ranks of the sworn officers of the Beaverhead County Sheriff's Office. Briggs notes the changes are a result of more than a year of study and planning on his part.



BILL BRIGGS

Though Briggs declined to acknowledge the exact nature of the changes he is planning, he stressed that the restructuring "will be an effort to enhance and prepare our office for the future and in no way will it reflect any discredit upon any officer involved." He added that he will announce the specifics of the changes at what he described as "the appropriate time".

"Every year, on average, the demand that is placed on the Sheriff's Office for services becomes greater," said Briggs. "There comes a point when you must respond to that demand and make changes in the way you are doing things to become more effective. That time has come for us."

"I consider myself a proactive thinker and I keep an eye on the horizon. I would like to think that the dike around the house should be built when we see the water beginning to rise, not after it has filled the basement."

Briggs noted he feels that if the Sheriff's Office is to remain effective in the coming years, "we must make some changes and redirect the assets, talent and training that we have currently in our roster at the tide coming in. As much as we might want to continue to operate at the same level as we did in 1980, I believe we must face the fact that we live in a different time."

See BRIGGS on page A-3

No call up yet for Guard unit

Although there has been local speculation about whether or not the local National Guard unit is being called up for active duty, as of Tuesday there has to date been no mobilization order.

Major Scott Smith, Public Affairs Officer of the Montana Army National Guard in Helena, said late Tuesday that there has not been a mobilization order cut for the local guard unit, although nearly one-third of the guard, both army and air branches, have been activated and are on federal active duty. The Dillon unit, is Detachment 2 of the 3669th Maintenance Company, and is trained in equipment maintenance.

A total of more than 1,100 men and women are currently on active duty, many of them as part of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, Smith said.

Smith noted that a unit would first be put on alert, which notifies it may be subject to call up. The final stage would be actual mobilization, which sets a date for activation.

The local unit, he said, has not received neither an alert nor an actual mobilization order.

He did not discount, however, that either could occur in the future.