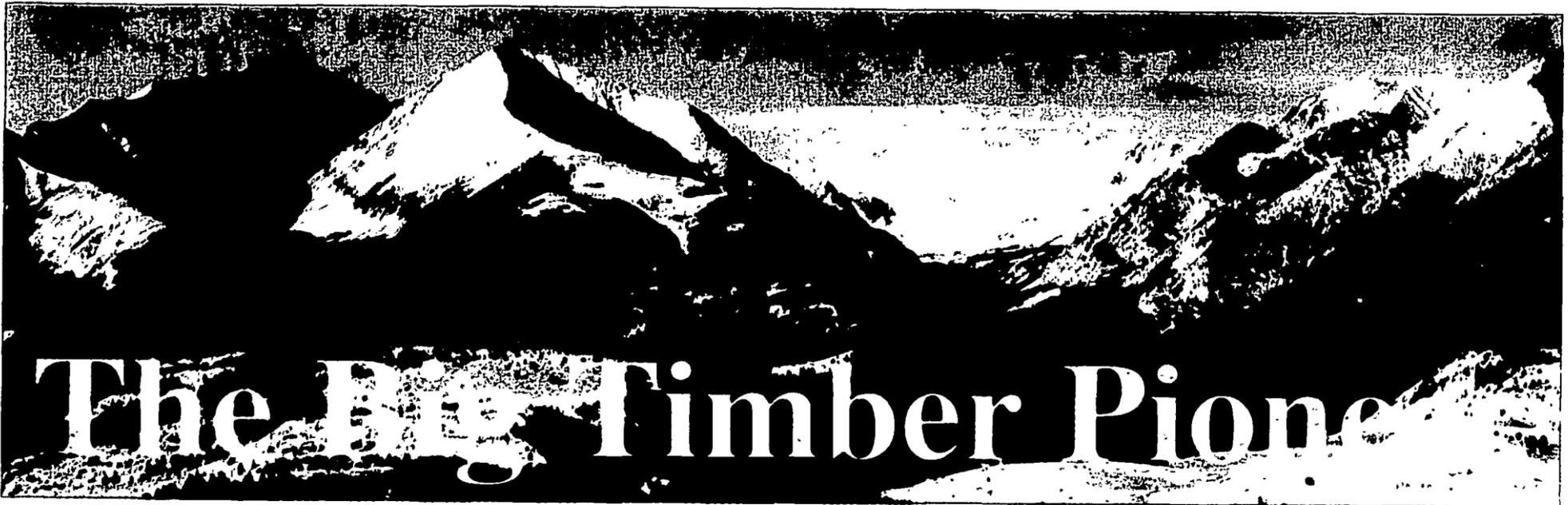


2004 HAPPY NEW YEAR !!!



Serving Big Timber & Sweet Grass County, Montana

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2003 filled with news to remember



Trudging forward to 2004

Charles Oberly Photo

The war in Iraq was by far the most significant news occurrence of 2003. As we followed events happening half a world away we also took note of things going on in our own community.

We hope you enjoy the following account of 2003 News to Remember.

— The Pioneer Staff

JANUARY

January 3-9

Elizabeth Ulmen, a graduate of SGHS, was selected Eastern Washington University's Teacher of the Month for November. Legislative issues were published in the *Pioneer*. The Sweet Grass County Local Emergency Planning Committee began pre-disaster planning and created a subcommittee to create and write a plan.

January 10-16

The Deputy Chairman of MMC Norilsk Nickel met with the Sweet Grass County Commissioners to discuss the effects of the Russian mining company taking over the majority interest in Stillwater Mining Company. Jonathan Lee Hansen was charged in District Court with two offenses - tampering with records or information, a felony, and theft of identity, a misdemeanor. Russell Hope was hospitalized in Billings following an accident involving horses at his ranch.

Big Timber's Friends of the Library received an anonymous donation of stock valued at approximately \$2,500. According to state Senator John Esp, the final plan for redistricting should be approved by April or May and would be in effect for the 2004 election. January 8 marked the 50th anniversary of the donation of six Charles M. Russell

paintings to the Montana State Historical Society by the late Colonel Wallis Huidekoper.

January 17-23

The Big Timber City Council spent over an hour talking about sewer rates for city residents, then decided to further research commercial rates and the impact of each business on the city's sewer system. The Third Annual Montana Cowboy Poetry Wintercamp was being held at the American Legion. The Federal Trade Commission requested additional information from Stillwater Mining Company and MMC Norilsk Nickel as part of its routine investigation of mergers and acquisitions.

A brief biography of Big Timber philanthropist Colonel Wallis Huidekoper was published. The body of Donald A. Jennings, 50, was discovered on the west edge of Big Timber. The sound of an explod-

ing semi-truck tire brought many residents on the northeastern edge of Big Timber out of their homes. The first in a series of monthly articles on Lewis and Clark, put together by the SGHS A.P. English class, related Thomas Jefferson's proposal of exploration to Congress.

January 24-30

The America Reads Program, coordinated by Big Brother Big Sister of Big Timber, offered grade school students a new opportunity to have fun while learning. Sweet Grass County Commissioners completed their review of the updated County Growth Policy and submitted their proposed revisions to the Planning Board. The Big Timber FFA Crops team placed first and the Sales and Service team finished fifth at the KMON contest held in Great Falls. Kevin and Teresa Niehenke were the new owners of Sunrise Espresso.

January 31-February 6

Because of a spill resulting from an accident involving a pickup truck driven by Robert Bamter and a semi-truck carrying liquid fertilizer, the interstate around Big Timber was closed for approximately five hours. Snow in the mountains, as of January 28, was a little more than half of normal for this time of year. The Farm Bureau organization designated February 6 as Food Check-Out Day.

A feature article on Sacajawea was reprinted from the December 24, 1936 issue of the *Pioneer*. The Big Timber FFA Mechanics team won first place at Lewistown Mechanics contest, with Fritz Baird and Kevin Langhus taking first and second individually. A safety training session was held for Sweet Grass County Courthouse employees. A 29-year old man was allegedly shot in the leg by a second person, and an investigation was ongoing.

FEBRUARY

February 7-13

The Carnegie Public Library Board of Trustees and the Library Renovation and Expansion Committee invited the community to view the schematic design for an

addition to the library and give their comments on the plans. Cuts in the Montana State Library's budget by the 2003 Legislative session could seriously affect the Big Timber Carnegie Library.

The Reed Point chapter of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) planned several activities to promote their organization during National FCCLA week. The U.S. Forest Service Rural Community Assistance program approved two of three grants applied for in Sweet Grass County—\$20,000 towards a multipurpose building at the fairgrounds and \$20,000 towards a new bathhouse at the city pool.

February 14-20

Linda Larson won first place in the *Pioneer's* photo contest with a picture taken by her grandmother in 1927 of Linda's uncle, George Center, and his friends Corrine, Misty Mack and Nichole Plaggemeyer attended the Montana 4-H Citizenship Seminar held in Helena. The Big Timber FFA Floriculture team of Megan Dawe, Nichole Plaggemeyer, Karin Langhus and Susan Bolstad placed third in the State Career Development Event in Deer Lodge.

A log cabin built in 1902, which had been purchased from Beulah Lorster and her son Gene, was renovated by Gary and Donna Harkness. When Dale Wood took a friend bow hunting in the Crazy Mountains last September, he didn't realize a mountain lion would make it a Friday the 13th to remember. Eric Svenson was selected to represent Reed Point High School at the Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Seminar in Missoula. Leah Plaggemeyer, a senior at the University of Montana-Western, was once again a member of the Women's Basketball team.

February 21-27

A Stillwater Mining Company employee was reported missing when he failed to return home; later someone contacted the Sweet Grass Sheriff's Office to report they had spoken to the man's mother, who

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