

A Year To Remember

Saturday nights, supplied the usual chills and spills for spectators. One participant in the bullriding event was Robert Webb, a Big Timber resident. In addition to the ever popular sheep riding competition for young cowboys and cowgirls, the rodeo featured a new event, wild cow riding. Those in attendance enjoyed the spectacle of the three man teams so much it is expected this event will continue in future rodeos.

Owen Bokma and James Devenny announced they would each be seeking to fill the mayoral opening resulting from Tom Hanel's resignation. Kathy Bainter and Josh Patton exchanged vows before the new bride left to attend the U.S. Air Force boot camp. The groom is also in the military.

The Pioneer printed an editorial from a Romanian newspaper entitled "Ode to America". The author wrote with awe of the patriotism and unity shown by Americans following the bombing of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

July 11-17

The Douglas Fir trees planted in front of the Carnegie Library in 1920 were felled due to being diseased and stressed. The trees had served as a memorial to Carl Anderson, Jacob Thompson, Will Aubrey Webb, Eugene Wood, Arne Lende, Ernest Stephens, Gilman Wallaker, Orla Hart Dasch, Lloyd Baldwin, and Oscar Solberg. These Sweet Grass County men gave their life in the fight for freedom during World War I. A new memorial, using wood from the felled trees, is planned for the future.

Ten Paraguayan students and their chaperone visited Big Timber as guests of the First Congregational Church. The group visited Yellowstone National Park, Camp Mimanagish and were the guests of honor at a farewell barbecue.

The Big Timber Blue 12 and under team won the 2003 Livingston Baseball Association Girls Babe Ruth Minors Fast Pitch Softball Tournament held in Livingston. Another Big Timber Team, the Thunderbolts, took second place honors from another Minor League Tournament held in Livingston. Young Charlie Mack received a trophy for Most Valuable Offense from the event.

July 18-24

The Yellowstone River Boat Float drifted into town Friday as part of the 40th anniversary celebration of the event. Although quieter than expected, the between 30 and 40 participants who arrived in Big Timber were entertained with music and food during their stay. Sweet Grass County residents were alarmed by media reports that indicated property taxes were expected to climb by 29.6 percent. The First Congregational Church in Big

Timber and its minister, Larry Pray, were featured in a new book, *The Indispensable Guide for Smaller Churches*.

The U.S. Forest Service announced new fire restrictions limiting the use of campfires and charcoal fires to developed recreational sites in the Gallatin National Forest. The Board of Directors of the Pioneer Medical Center announced the Boulder Meadows Facility would also be offering independent living arrangements in addition to the assisted living services already offered.

Amber Overstreet qualified to compete in the National High School Rodeo Finals held in Farmington, New Mexico. Michael O'Connell, son of John and Kerry O'Connell, was preparing for a trip to Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama. The young man won the trip in the Hometown IGA Essay Contest with an essay entitled, "How Space Exploration Can Benefit Big Timber".

July 25-31

The Big Timber City Council, expected to appoint an acting mayor to serve until a successor was elected to fill the vacancy, announced it would probably be a few more weeks before they would take action. The FFA Alumni held a carnival featuring rides, food and games in the parking lot of the Sweet Grass High School. Attendance was smaller than expected due to extremely high temperatures the area had been experiencing.

The Big Timber Major Boys baseball team won the Livingston League Baseball Tournament. Brandon Arltan, Josh Graham, and Dana Peterson were tapped for the All-Tourney Team. The Big Timber 12 and Under All Star Team brought home third place honors from the Magic City ASA Fastpitch Tournament held in Billings.

AUGUST

August 1-7

A full page in the Pioneer was needed to publish a list of outstanding warrants issued by Sweet Grass County Justice Court and the City Court of Big Timber. Riley McKenney and Geoff Andras were winners in the Montana Junior Hereford Association annual summer show held in conjunction with the Montana Junior Beef Expo.

A schedule of events was printed for the upcoming Sweet Grass County Fair. Two new events were announced, a "Kiss the Pig Contest" to benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters of Sweet Grass County, and a greased pig contest sponsored by the Otter Creek 4-H Club. The Pioneer printed a poem written by Alexandra Amonette entitled "Ode to Leafy Spurge".

August 8-14

The Sweet Grass County Pool Foundation announced they had



Nelson Oberholtzer was one of many who came to assist ranchers replace fences in October after the Hobbie Diamond Fire.

acquired five acres adjacent to the SGHS as a site for a planned indoor pool. Sweet Grass County's first confirmed case of West Nile Virus in horses was announced by local veterinarian Jim Felton. Jose Torres, a retired firefighter from Riverside, California passed through Big Timber with his mules on a cross country trip to raise funds for the American Lung Association.

Members of the Big Timber City Council appointed native son Doug Lowry to serve as temporary mayor until the position is filled in January. The annual Society of Gabriel meeting was held by the Berg family. This year marked the 50th (or is it 53rd?) anniversary of the event.

Nathan Prach, 19 year-old son of Dana and Cheri Prach, rescued an Indiana woman from her burning car following an accident on Highway 191 North.

August 15-21

Sweet Grass County Fair festivities were interrupted Friday, August 8 by the announcement that lightning had ignited a fire on the Hobbie Diamond Ranch, northeast of Greycliff. By Thursday, August 14, the fire had consumed 34,000

acres and caused the evacuation of some residents in the area. Volunteer firefighters from Big Timber, Melville, McLeod, and Reed Point were first on the scene and were later joined by the Park County Rural Fire Department and on Sunday, August 10, by a special Type 3 Team of firefighters from the Northern Rockies Incident Management Team. Three fires were also being fought up the Boulder by a Southwest Area Incident Management Incident Team. Over 150 people, mostly from the church camps, were evacuated and spent the night in the Civic Center. On Tuesday, August 12, a Type 2 team was brought in to fight the Hobbie Fire, which was continuing to burn and threaten 70 homes and 140 outbuildings. Two major electricity lines were damaged by the fire, causing some power outages and overloads that resulted in power surges in many locations in the area.

On a lighter note, the Pioneer printed names of event winners from the Sweet Grass County Fair. The new greased pig contest proved to be a real crowd pleaser. The Seventh

Fairway of the Overland Golf Course was the setting for the marriage of Renae Stene and Jay VanDaveer. Golf carts were used to ferry wedding guests from the site to the reception in the Stene front yard.

Information from Sherry Bjorndal, Sweet Grass County Special Election Administrator, announced a special mail ballot election would be held for the mill levy to support the Pioneer Medical Center. The levy, if approved, will mean those with homes of \$100,000 will be paying \$85 more a year in property taxes and raise \$334,750 for the fund. Stillwater Mining Company announced Stephen A. Lang had been appointed as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the operation.

August 22-28

High temperatures and gusty winds caused a rekindling of the Hobbie Fire, believed to be contained. The Type 2 firefighting team had already packed up and headed for their next assignment.

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Happy New Year!
from the staff at
Ace Hardware

**We thank you for
your patronage and
support in 2003.**

**Mike & Elaine
Chulyak**

**Happy Holidays and
Best Wishes for the New Year**
Wheelsmith Fabrications, Inc.



Dave Christensen was very happy with the Painted Mountain Corn grown on Yellowstone Avenue.

**Ring
In The New...**

Wishing you a year
of happiness and
good cheer.

**DALLAS ROOTS
C.P.A.**

HAPPY
new year

**BEST WISHES
FOR A JOYOUS AND
PEACEFUL NEW YEAR**

May this be the year of which we've dreamed

**We will CLOSE at 2 pm on December 31
and will remain CLOSED New Year's Day**

FROSTY FREEZ