

Sweet Grass viewpoint

* A page of opinions. Features may or may not reflect the editorial position of The Pioneer

PIONEER VIEWPOINT

Fire hall remodeling questions need answers

The issue of remodeling the existing Big Timber fire station deserves serious consideration and review by city and county officials.

Basically, we support the plan to update facilities to house the Big Timber fire department. Watching volunteers navigate narrow doors, low ceilings, and otherwise inadequate space, we see the need for improving facilities. The sooner the better.

However, we think the project should be thoroughly reviewed so that the decision arrived at will be one which will have long-term benefits for the community.

We recognize the advantage of the central location for the fire station (in fact we personally like being able to walk across the street to get information about fires.)

However, those involved in the project need to stand back and take a good objective look at the structure to determine whether remodeling or construction of a new facility is in the best interest.

Several weeks ago when the matter was first discussed by the council, there was general agreement work would be done in two parts—remodeling the back area first, and later doing work in the front. Now, officials appear interested in concentrating their efforts primarily on the back part of the building.

We agree with their priorities, but we question whether it's fair to compare the cost of partial remodeling (the back) with the cost of a new structure. We think if there is a serious need for both aspects of the

project, costs should be determined for all the work, and then compared to the pricetag of land and a new building.

THERE ARE many advantages of remodeling the existing building... and there are some strong ones for a new building.

We are not sure what's the right way to go, but we do think all aspects of the project should be investigated as closely as possible.

As the community continues to grow and as requirements for fire and emergency equipment become more sophisticated, there's bound to be a need for more space.

Can the existing building be modified to serve the needs of the department for the next 30 to 40 years, or will officials have to modify programs and plans to fit the structural limitations of the building?

Can the cost of remodeling the existing structure be justified compared to the price of a new building?

Should a new building be built, what will become of the existing building?

ANSWERS to these questions won't be easy to come by. But we think they need to be reviewed to come up with the best over-all plan for the community. A lot has been said about "long-range" planning and the development of master plans for the area.

The proposal to provide additional space for the fire department is another good example where such an objective study would come in handy.

How about overtime and hazard pay for ranchers!



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Larry Lowary.....Publisher

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HERE & THERE

By LARRY LOWARY

The 1974-75 basketball season's over, and if the snow ever melts (for good), SGHS athletes will trade their jerseys for sweatsuits and the gym for the athletic field as they begin the track season.

But last week's excitement won't be forgotten very quickly. For fans and players it was a combination of unbelievably exciting times, disappointing moments, but most of all, a lot of good, wholesome fun.

We know the players and Coach Randy Morrison would have like to have gotten further than they did, but it didn't turn out that way.

What we think is important is the outstanding sportsmanship and determination exhibited by a group of high school students—students from Sweet Grass High School. They fought hard. That's something that will be remembered for a long time.

LAST WEEK we mentioned diesel-powered cars and the fact that Spike VanCleve's new Peugeot is the first of its kind in the county.

Not so says a friend of Pat and "Wick" Widdicombe. They've been enjoying their Mercedes Benz since last summer the neighbor reports.

Anyone else? We're not trying to exclude others... we've just passed along the information we had.

WE DOUBT whether the Montana Highway Department got the idea from our suggestion—although we did mention it—but new signs warning motorists about the highway between Grey Cliff and Springdale are now up.

Although they don't note occasionally rough road conditions, they do tell motorists that they'll be traveling on "temporary Interstate 90" for the next 23 miles.

Here's hoping out-of-area drivers take heed, and adjust their driving habits.

LAST WEEK'S fatal auto accident—which quadrupled the 1974 county highway fatality total—was the third multiple-death crash in the same area within an 18 month period.

In October, 1974, six young people died on the road after a near head-on two vehicle accident, and last month two North Dakota men died in a semi-van collision. Last week, a car and a semi were involved in an accident.

We're not sure if the signs help...but we think they're certainly worth their investment—just to make motorists

aware they're entering a potentially dangerous stretch of road.

IF YOU'VE been wondering about the appearance of The Pioneer the past few weeks, here's an explanation: The long-discussed "newsprint shortage" has caught up with us.

Although our printer (The Livingston Enterprise) has an ample supply of paper, some of it (and from the looks of the paper the past few weeks, it seems most of it) is a lower grade. Translated into looks, that means a "yellow" paper.

We don't like it—and neither do the printers who have all sorts of press problems running the stuff—but it appears for the time being we're going to have to grit our teeth and bear with it.

SPEAKING about things we'd just as soon avoid, here's a public apology to Terry Blair, son of Mr. and Mrs. Don Blair for an error in last week's paper. The basketball supplement failed to include statistical information on Blair's season as a SGHS Herder.

We inadvertently overlooked his 180 points, and 69 rebounds in writing the story.

READER OPINIONS

TO THE EDITOR:

We want to take this opportunity to thank Randy Morrison for getting the ball rolling and getting the games broadcast over TV so the local fans, who could not attend the games in Billings at the state tournament, could keep up

with the action.

We also want to thank Mac Clark for making the broadcast possible. It's just too bad we couldn't have gotten this going for all the games so everyone could have enjoyed them.

This just goes to show we

can do a lot more on a local basis, rather than depending on our out-of-town stations.

Thanks again for a job well done.

Sincerely,
JERRY AND JAN HAUGE
And all the gang at the Conoco

DUSTING OFF THE OLD ONES

Everyone in the county dancing

SEVENTY YEARS AGO
MARCH 16, 1905

"THERE WAS an interesting debate in the high school last Friday afternoon, the question being 'Laws are More Beneficial to Society than Medicine'. Earl Lamb and Grade Pound handled the affirmative and Eddie Adam and Pearl Long the negative side. The scholars were the judges and by a vote of 22 to 7 they awarded the honors to the affirmative. Besides the debate, the scholars and visitors also enjoyed several choice musical selections on the phonograph."

W.T. PRATHER had recently added two thoroughbred yearling Hereford bulls from the Welcome stock and four yearling heifers from the Benepe stock to his herd...he is a believer in 'blood' and is determined to have it in his herds."

MEANWHILE, SAM Thurman of McLeod had received from Missouri that week, seven head of registered Poll Angus yearling bulls.

"H.J. SANDSNESS, one of the prosperous ranchers of Melville, is in the city today making final proof on his homestead before C.N. Skillman."

"THE HOMESEEEKERS excursions have started again and west bound trains on Thursday and Friday are crowded with passengers."

THE BIG TIMBER Band was advertising its upcoming Grand Concert. "Proceeds to be used to purchase new music and instruments for the band. Everybody who appreciates the free open air



WHAT'S LEFT AFTER THE Big Timber fire March 13, 1908.

concerts given by the band should purchase a ticket to the entertainment, and thus encourage future free open air concerts."

FIFTY YEARS AGO
MARCH 12, 1925

WHETHER IT WAS the rites of spring, or a remedy for cabin fever, everybody was dancing in the county that week. The Goosey Orchestra furnished music at the dance at Crag Eyrie, the alumni of Sweet Grass County High would have Johnston's orchestra of Livingston, and dances were also scheduled at Grey Cliff, the Voges School and Gibson Hall.

"ANDREW WISLAND, a Grey Cliff rancher, who recently opened a soft drink parlor in this city and Miss Guri Bilstad of Grey Cliff

were married last evening in the Lutheran Church."

"MRS. W.C. Officer of Hunters Springs has sold the store and building in which the postoffice is located, to George McCann, manager of the springs properties. The store has been operated by Mrs. Officer for many years, since way back when C. B. Mendenhall ran the old and original hotel at that place."

FROM THE school notes of the high school, it was reported that the track season was beginning. "Harry Dugro is trying for the mile and Raymond Lyon will again run for high hurdles. As it is traditional for Sweet Grass to win the mile, we are expecting much of Harry, and as Raymond has had a year's experience at the hurdles, we expect a lot from him, too."

FUNERAL services were held that week for George Hoffman, Melville, who died suddenly of heart failure. He was 60 years of age, and had come to Melville from Illinois ten years earlier.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO
MARCH 16, 1950

OVER \$800 had been collected for tuberculosis seals, and the money had been forwarded to Helena. Co-chairmen of the event were Mrs. Scott Hoskinson and Mrs. Charles Schuler.

MRS. JOHN Madill and children had returned from California to again make their home in the county. The Madills had purchased the old Rapstad ranch on Big Timber Creek.

THEY SAID

- Every life is many days, day after day, we walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-love. But always meeting ourselves. James Joyce
- I am a man of peace. God knows how I love peace; but I hope I shall never be such a coward as to mistake oppression for peace. Keesoth
- Freedom of conscience, of education, of speech, of assembly are among the very fundamentals of democracy and all of them would be nullified should freedom of the press ever be successfully challenged. F.D.R. I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work. Edison
- Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never happen. Lowell
- Every man has three characters—that which he exhibits, that which he has, and that which he thinks he has. Alphonse Karr
- We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us by what we have already done. Longfellow
- Adam and Eve had many advantages, but the principal one was that they occupied toothings. Mark Twain