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Southwest Montana Retired Educators Announce 2025 Volunteer of the Year Mel Rice

Southwest Montana Retired Educators are proud to announce that Mel Rice has been chosen as our 2025 Volunteer of the Year. Mel has been an active volunteer in our community for many years.

Mel taught Industrial Arts at Beaverhead County High School for 28 years where he coached boys' basketball, track and served as a negotiator, union president, student service activity groups, and taught a couple of adult education wood working classes.

Mel retired from the Beaverhead Search and Rescue the spring of 2025 after 40 years of service. Over the years, as a part of this group, he served as Vice Commander, Treasurer, Public Relations Officer, Search Manager, and Property Manager. He volunteered countless hours on searches, trainings, updating and improving the Search and Rescue building and grounds.

He has been a member of the First Presbyterian Church in Dillon for 52 years and is currently the Property Elder, giving numerous hours to maintenance, facility updates and improvements. This year is his fifth, three-year, term served. He has been an active member of the Chancel Choir and currently volunteers to fill in as speaker, leader of services, and scripture reader.

During the winter, Mel plows and shovels snow at the church and for many elderly folks whenever needed.

He has donated his time running the game clock for the men's and women's basketball games at UM Western for several years.

He helped with the Dillon Jaycee Park's new playground construction and helps with its maintenance.

He volunteers to help with the annual Thanksgiving Community Dinner.

In past years, he has donated time taking various hunters out to harvest elk during special hunts.

He has umpired Little League and Babe Ruth baseball, coached Little League and judged at the local county fair. His most recent volunteering is driving the bus for the Bus Brigade in Dillon.

We are very lucky to have Mel as a member of our group and our community. We his many, many hours of service to our community and are most proud to award him the 2025 Volunteer of the Year.

"MEN, DO YOUR DUTY!" WEATHER PERMITTING:

The 162nd anniversary of the capture and hanging of Sheriff Plummer and his cohorts Stinson and Ray by the Vigilance Committee will be reenacted at 2pm Saturday, January 10th in Bannack State Park.

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Eight Bulldogs Named to CSC Academic All-District Football Team

The College Sports Communicators (CSC) Academic All-District Football Team was announced Tuesday, with eight Montana Western football players earning the honor.

The CSC Academic All-America program recognizes the nation's top student-athletes for their combined achievements on the field and in the classroom. Honorees are selected across four divisions: NCAA Division I, NCAA Division II, NCAA Division III, and NAIA.

To qualify for nomination, student-athletes must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher and be a starter or key reserve on their respective team.

2025-26 CSC Academic All-District Football Team
Jace Fitzgerald - LB (Dillon, Mont., R-SR) *
Connor Dunlea - DB (Malin, Ore., R-FR) *
Eli Nourse - WR (Dillon, Mont., JR) *
Jonathan Kirkley - WR (Dillon, Mont., SR) *
Michael Palandri - QB (Maple Valley, Wash., R-SR) *
Matthew Heer - TE (Tekoa, Wash., SR)
Layne Cooney - OL (Missoula, Mont., SR)
Jacob Westberry - LS (Hamilton, Mont., R-SO) *

* Advanced to CSC Academic All-America ballot.

Dillon Rifle & Pistol Club

Annual meeting will be Wednesday, January 14th at 7:30 PM at the 4H building at the Fairgrounds. Bring keys to exchange.

Senior Citizen Center

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National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

Established in 2015, National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day is commemorated annually on January 9th. It is a day to thank police officers for all the work they do to protect the community.

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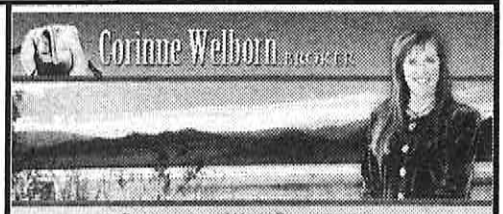
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Programs/Group Exercise
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Adventures in After School Program
This program starts September 3rd and gives participants a more in depth programming while giving parents flexibility to fit work schedules. Children will ride the bus to the Y, have a snack, and then be involved in the camp offered for that week. You may sign up for a week or the month, it's up to you. Children in K-5th grade are eligible to join. Camp will end at 5:30pm each day. Camps will be offered all school year long with the exception of school holidays. Full and half day programs will be offered on school's out days for an additional charge. A separate registration is required.

AFTER SCHOOL REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!
First in the After School Series (Jan. 12th-Jan. 16th is "Winter Wonderland." This week we be spent outside and doing crafts related to snow.

Winter Swim Lessons
Winter swim lesson #1 starts January 12th. Spots are limited, sign up soon!

YMCA Swim Team
Join our team from 4:30-5:30pm every Tuesday and Thursday starting September 16th and ending November 20th.

Mens Basketball League
Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 6:00am-7:00am. Members free and all others $8.00/day.

Women on Weights
New year. New routine. New you! Starts January 12th with classes on Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:30pm with class at 5:30pm on and Fridays.

SWMTF-YMCA 20TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY/MEMBER APPRECIATION
Come join us on Jan. 9th for a free lunch from 11:00am-1:00pm. Free gifts and prizes for members and no joining fees for non-members.

YMCA Online Registration
Online registration for programs available now. Please visit www.swmtf-ymca.org
YMCA's have long been at the forefront of serving their communities and making a positive difference in the lives of everyone who participates. Please consider a gift today.
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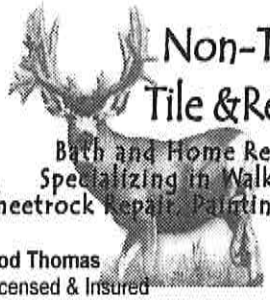
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Montana Department of Commerce Allocates Planning Grants to Eight Montana Communities

Over $300,000 of grant funding to support planning Montana towns, cities and counties

The Montana Department of Commerce announced today that eight Montana towns, cities and counties will share more than $300,000 of grant funding to help plan significant community development projects. The funding is through Commerce's Community Development Block Grant Planning Grant Program.

"Commerce's planning grants help Montana communities produce future growth plans, studies and training to advance crucial infrastructure and community development projects while creating and retaining good paying jobs for local workers," said Commerce Director Marta Bertoglio.

The CDBG Planning Grant Program is designed to help communities plan by supporting the implementation of growth policies, capital improvement plans, subdivision and zoning regulations, downtown plans, housing plans and preliminary architectural and engineering reports.

The following communities will receive CDBG Planning Grant funding:

- Custer County will receive $23,250 to complete a preliminary architecture report for Miles City Public Library.
- The City of Fort Benton will receive $32,000 to complete a zoning code update.
- The City of Havre will receive $50,000 to complete a stormwater preliminary engineering report.
- Lewis and Clark County will receive $50,000 to complete a preliminary architecture report for an emergency operations center in Lincoln.
- Missoula County will receive $26,250 to complete a preliminary architectural report for Seeley Lake Elementary School.
- The City of Plentywood will receive $45,000 to complete a growth policy.
- Powell County will receive $50,000 to complete a growth policy update.
- Wibaux County will receive $30,000 to complete a growth policy and capital improvement plan.

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In 2024, the Town of Superior received $39,500 of CDBG Planning Grant funding to complete a preliminary architectural report for its swimming pool. Brogan Keenen, vice president of Superior's Pool in the Park Committee, said, "Once the pool is in operation, we'll be able to offer water aerobics and therapy, swim lessons and the Rec Club can teach people how to paddleboard. The fire departments may want to train on water rescues. People will see that it's a safe and fun place for families."

Eligible applicants for CDBG Planning Grants include Montana counties, cities and towns. Local governments may apply on behalf of special purpose districts, unincorporated areas or on behalf of non-profit organizations like human resource development councils, area agencies on aging, domestic violence shelters, Boys and Girls Clubs, food banks, hospitals, nursing homes or similar non-profit agencies. Counties may also apply on behalf of tribal utility authorities.

For more information about CDBG Planning Grants, visit commmerce.mt.gov.

Dillon Little Guy Wrestling is now open for sign-ups

Calling all young athletes, ages 4-12 for boys and 4-14 for girls! Dillon Little Guy Wrestling is now open for sign-ups! Learn strength, discipline, confidence, and teamwork in a fun and supportive environment. No experience needed-just bring your energy and willingness to learn! Join Dillon Little Guy Wrestling and be part of a tradition that builds champions on and off the mat. Sign up today at the website. More information on the website and Dillon little guy wrestling facebook page.

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Veteran's Corner Update #342
By Mike Lawson

I just learned about the National Veterans Golden Age Games that are held in a different city in the US every year. The VA started this in 1985, being inspired by programs that promote healthy aging, fitness and recreation. It was created to focus on a mission to encourage physical activity through competitive sports for positive outcomes, better health and wellness. It's the only multi-sport competition in the world designed to improve the quality of life for all older Veterans, including those with a wide range of abilities. The VA with it's "Fitness for life" focus, showcases the National Golden Age Games for the rehabilitation value that sports, fitness and wellness provides in the lives of Veterans ages 55 and older. The Veterans in this category, who want to participate, must be in the VA healthcare system. It was surprising to see the breakdown of what it's about. There are 21 medaled sports events, eight age categories and three divisions: ambulatory, visually impaired, and wheelchair. The NVGAG Sports are: Air Pistol, Archery, Badminton, Basketball, Billiards, Boccia, Bowling, Cornhole, Cycling, Disc Golf, Golf, Horseshoes, Pickleball, Powerlifting, Power Walk, Shuffleboard, Swimming, Table Tennis, Track and Field. The age categories are: 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80-84, 85-89, 90 and up. I had no idea anything like this was out there. The Montana VA is supporting these games to get these older Veterans into this program. Hopefully to compete at this national event every year. It's good for the body, mind, self esteem and there's something for everyone if they want to be involved. For more information, two good contacts are: Director: Brittany Hook- Golden Age games@Va.gov , Media: Damian Mcgee - damian.mcgee@VA.gov .

Recently I received a call from a former wife of a Veteran who had died. They have two disabled daughters who live in another state and can't travel. They would like to have their father cremated and his ashes sent to them so they can bury him in a local cemetery. They are on a limited income and can not afford to pay these expenses. This Veteran is in the VA Healthcare system and was receiving a disability pension. My advice was to get together with a certified Veteran's Representive or call the VA benefits hotline: 800-827-1000. I will continue to work with her on this. The important thing to start is having the Veteran's DD-214 and than make that visit or call.

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Secretary Christi Jacobsen highlights pro-business climate at 2026 Montana Chamber of Commerce Business Days at the Capitol

Montana Secretary of State Christi Jacobsen was honored to be a keynote speaker during the 2026 Montana Chamber of Commerce Business Days at the Capitol.

Secretary Jacobsen's remarks highlighted another record year of new business registrations across the state, marking the fifth consecutive year of record-breaking growth under her leadership. Thousands of new Montana entrepreneurs once again chose to register their businesses through the Secretary of State's Office in 2025, continuing a trend of robust business expansion and a thriving economy.

"The record number of new business registrations speaks to the strength, innovation, and hard work of Montanans," said Secretary Jacobsen. "It's inspiring to see Montana businesses continue to grow year after year, and our office remains committed to providing the best customer service to help them succeed."

Secretary Jacobsen also highlighted increased efficiencies in the Secretary of State's Office under her leadership, including faster processing times and a modernized online filing system. She also discussed her decision to support Montana's business community by cutting registration fees in half for new Montana businesses, eliminating unnecessary fees, and removing bureaucratic hurdles to allow businesses to focus on growing and serving their communities.

"Montana's business future is every bit as bright as the people who are building it, and I'm excited about the partnership we've built between my office and the business community," said Secretary Jacobsen. "That partnership is how we keep Montana a place where businesses, and the people behind them, can thrive, grow, and lead."

Business Days at the Capitol brings together business leaders, legislators, and state officials to discuss key issues impacting Montana's economy and communities. The event is hosted by the Montana Chamber of Commerce and serves as one of the premier gatherings of Montana's business community each year.

For more information about the Secretary of State's Office and resources for Montana businesses, visit sosmt.gov/business.

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MONTANA WESTERN NAMES STUDENTS TO DEAN'S LIST

The University of Montana Western named 524 students to the 2025 fall semester Dean's List.

To achieve this honor, students must be enrolled full-time or for 12 semester credits and carry a minimum 3.33 grade point average. An asterisk after a name indicates a student received Dean's List high honors.

Dillon: Ben Austiguy*, Haylee Brown*, Kyle Conway*, Phoenix Eck, Kyler Engellant, Stephanie Feurer, Jace Fitzgerald, Yuliana Flores, Samuel Frank, Joyana Gillentine, Taylor Handlos, Eden Kindberg*, Jonathan Kirkley, Tyler Lagunas, Carsten Lemelin*, Taylor Lovaas*, Nicolas Macdonald, Eli Nourse, Josie Robbins, Kathryn Rondeau, Elijah Sherwood, Charlotte Walters*, Taylor Williams, McKenzie Worley.

Divide: Luke Garrison

Glen: Rhiannon Murdoch Kalsta

Lima: Elisa Roden

Twin Bridges: Ellen Humbert, Molly Humbert, Amanda Millhouse, Kyle Pancost, Delilah Puckett

Beaverhead County Mental Health Local Advisory Counsel

County Treasurer's Office
Corner of Washington St. & Center St.
Thursday, January 8, 2026, Noon to 2:00 p.m.

Backcountry 101
Thursday, January 8th from 5:30pm-7:00pm

Please join us at Patagonia for Backcountry 101. If you are interested in backcountry skiing and boarding, come join us. Matt from Beaverhead Bikes will be here sharing stories, talking about proper gear and avalanche safety. Light refreshments will be served.

BEAVERHEAD COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Thursday, January 8, 2026
Commissioners Room, County Courthouse 1:00 PM

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COUNCIL OPENING

Replacement needed for the vacancy on the City of Dillon City Council for the First and Fourth Wards

First Ward of the City of Dillon is that portion of the city:

Beginning at the intersection of the City limits and the southeastern end of Cornell Street.

First Course proceeds northwest along the City limits and then along Cornell Street to its intersection with Dakota Street;

Thence Second course extends northeast along Dakota Street to its intersection with Center street;

Thence Third course extends east along Center Street to its intersection with Spruce Street;

Thence Fourth course extends north on Spruce Street to its intersection with Vigilante Drive;

Thence Fifth course extends east along Vigilante Drive, extended, to the eastern limits of the city including the area of Vigilante park.

Fourth Ward of the City of Dillon is that portion of the city:

Beginning at the intersection of Cornell street and Nelson street;

Thence First course extends northwesterly along Cornell Street to its intersection with Dakota Street;

Thence Second course extends northeast along Dakota Street to its intersection with Glendale Street;

Thence Third course extends northwest along Glendale Street to its intersection with the Union Pacific railroad tracks;

Thence southwesterly along the railroad tracks to their intersection with the City limits.

Every resident of the City of Dillon, who is 18 years of age or older, a citizen of the state of Montana, is eligible to hold the office of council member for the ward in which he/she resides. Please submit a brief letter of interest to: City of Dillon, 125 N. Idaho St, Dillon, MT 59725, these positions will be filled January 21, 2026.
1/5, 8, 12, 15 BILL



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With extra gratitude to our behind the scenes elves: Judy Tash, Brayden Hankinson, Hanna McParland, Brittany Allhands, Trey Hankinson, Janice Rule, Tracy & David Roberts, Dale Wilson & Cody Hankinson

Sincerely,
Gail Kuntz & Rachel Hankinson
1/6-12PD

Dillonite Advertiser

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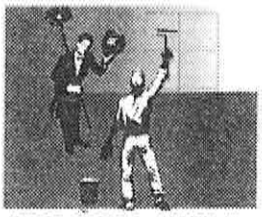
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11/17- WC BILL

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