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Mental Health Musings...

In honor of September being National Suicide Prevention Month, your friends at Beaverhead County Public Health offer the following in a series of articles on mental health. Please see today's insert for more information regarding the use of the numbers 988 & 911.

National Suicide Prevention Month is an effort of the International Association for Suicide Prevention and the World Health Organization. This month-long awareness campaign is dedicated to raising awareness about suicide, reducing stigma surrounding mental health concerns, and promoting resources for prevention and support. The observance aligns with 988 Day (observed on September 8 to raise awareness of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, a 24/7 national mental-health support line) and World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10 (to raise global awareness and encourage action on suicide prevention). The timing of this awareness campaign is significant because suicide risk among young people often increases as the school year begins, making September a critical period for outreach (nami.org).

What is suicide? Suicide is when people harm themselves with the goal of ending their life, and they die as a result. A suicide attempt is when people harm themselves with the goal of ending their life, but they do not die. Avoid using terms such as "committing suicide," "successful suicide," or "failed suicide" when referring to suicide and suicide attempts, as these terms often carry negative meanings.

Who is at risk for suicide? People of all ages, sexes, and ethnicities can be at risk for suicide.

The main risk factors for suicide are:

A history of suicide attempts

Depression, other mental disorders, or substance use disorder

Chronic pain

Family history of a mental disorder or substance use

Family history of suicide

Exposure to family violence, including physical or sexual abuse

Presence of guns or other firearms in the home

Having recently been released from prison or jail

Exposure, either directly or indirectly, to others' suicidal behavior, such as that of family members, peers, or celebrities

Most people who have risk factors for suicide will not attempt suicide, and it is difficult to tell who will act on suicidal thoughts. Although risk factors for suicide are important to keep in mind, someone who is showing warning signs of suicide may be at higher risk for danger and need immediate attention. Stressful life events (such as the loss of a loved one, legal troubles, or financial difficulties) and interpersonal stressors (such as shame, harassment, bullying, discrimination, or relationship troubles) may contribute to suicide risk, especially when they occur along with suicide risk factors.

This information provided in cooperation with the Beaverhead County Public Health Bridging Connections Program. Contact Elaine at (406)683-4771 for more information about local mental health initiatives. To access a list of local mental and behavioral health providers, visit <https://beaverheadcountymt.gov/public-health-2/>

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For more information on this week's topic, check out the following on the National Institute of Mental Health website: Frequently Asked Questions About Suicide - National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

If you or someone you know is in crisis:



Call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org. The Lifeline provides free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States.

Call 911 in life-threatening situations or if you need immediate assistance and support.

(See today's insert for more info!)

**Connecting Education, Workforce & Community
Hello from Montana Western School of Outreach!**

As we kick off another school year, all of us at Montana Western School of Outreach are eager to build on our work throughout southwest Montana. From dual enrollment pathways for high schoolers to hands-on workforce training, our goal is simple: open doors for students, educators, and local businesses alike.

Community is at the heart of our work. We remain dedicated to offering flexible continuing education, professional development, and lifelong learning tailored to our area's evolving needs. Whatever your learning goals are this year, we are here to help you reach them.

Here's to a year of meaningful connections, new opportunities, and strong community partnerships!

The School of Outreach Team

City Council Meeting

Wednesday, September 16th

7:00 PM

City Council Chambers

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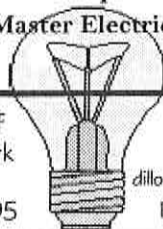
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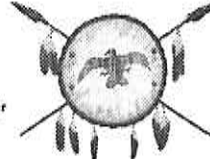
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Beaverhead Buckaroos September Meeting

Our roll call question to start off the meeting was "What was your favorite part of fair?" We had a fair discussion after roll call and we talked about advice for next fair and what we liked and disliked. We talked about record books and what they needed. And we ended our meeting at 5:45. We thank all the people in our community who supported the Beaverhead Buckaroos this year.

Beaverhead Little League Families

We will be holding our Annual Membership Meeting, and we would love to see more of our families get involved in helping shape the future of our Little League program! Date: October 7, 2026

Time: 5:30 pm at Ray Lynch Park - Concession stand 2nd floor

During the meeting, we will: Hold elections for three Board positions that are up for nominations. Review our Constitution and Bylaws and discuss any proposed updates.

Discuss adding three At-Large, non-voting Board positions to give more parents and community members an opportunity to get involved, learn how the Board operates, help with projects and committees. Discuss plans and priorities for the upcoming season.

You do not have to be interested in serving on the Board to attend. All Little League families are encouraged to come, ask questions, share ideas, and learn more about what goes into running our program.

Our league is only as strong as the families and volunteers who support it, and we would really like to expand participation and bring some new voices and ideas to the table.

If you are interested in being nominated for one of the open Board positions or would like to learn more about one of the proposed At-Large positions, please reach out to us. We hope to see you there!

Beaverhead Little League Board

Wise River Fire District #5 Meeting

Wise River Fire Hall, 64795 MT Hwy 43, Wise River, MT

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th, 2026 7:00 PM

Grace United Methodist Church

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Bicyclist Dies Following Single-Bicycle Crash in Madison County

Jeremy Crawford, Southwestern Montana News

One person died following a single-bicycle crash in Madison County on Sunday evening, September 6, according to information released by the Madison County Sheriff's Office.

At approximately 5:30 p.m., the Madison County Communications Center received a report of a bicycle crash involving critical injuries.

Authorities said the incident is believed to have involved only the bicyclist, with no other people or vehicles involved.

The Madison County Sheriff's Office, Madison Valley Ambulance and Life Flight responded to the scene.

Emergency responders and witnesses attempted lifesaving measures, but those efforts were unsuccessful. The Madison County Sheriff/Coroner's Office is investigating the cause and manner of death. Authorities said no additional information will be released until the bicyclist's family has been notified.

Man Found Dead in Water at Renova Hot Springs Near Whitehall

Jeremy Crawford, Southwestern Montana News

The Madison County Sheriff's Office is investigating after a man was found dead in the water at Renova Hot Springs earlier this month. According to information released by the Madison County Sheriff's Office, the Madison County Communications Center received a report at approximately 8:50 a.m. on September 1 of a deceased male in the water at Renova Hot Springs.

Renova Hot Springs is located along the Jefferson River approximately 11 miles south of Whitehall in Madison County.

Madison County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to the area. Upon arrival, responders located the deceased man, who authorities identified as David Crowley.

Investigation Remains Ongoing. The Madison County Sheriff's Office continues to investigate the circumstances surrounding Crowley's death. Authorities have not released information regarding the cause or circumstances of his death at this time.

The Sheriff's Office said additional information will be released as appropriate once the investigation is complete.

Southwestern Montana News will provide information if it becomes available for these two stories.

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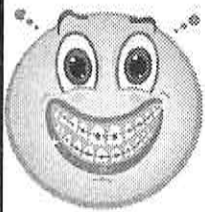
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Rotary Speaker

Rotary Club Luncheon will be Wednesday, September 16th at 12 Noon at Barrett Hospital Foundation Conference Room, 90 MT Hwy 91 S. in Dillon!

Rotarian Mary Ann Nicholas will be our hostess, and her featured speaker will be Cory Birkenbuel who will be presenting about Maverick Mountain and the plans to get the ski hill back open ASAP after the damage from the Sand Creek fire. There have been fundraisers already and more are planned. Please join us and ALL ROTARIANS are encouraged to attend.

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First Market Conduct Review of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana in More Than a Decade

State Auditor James Brown initiated the first market conduct review of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT) in more than a decade. The review will evaluate the company's compliance with applicable state laws and regulations.

Astonishingly, although BCBSMT is the largest health insurance company in Montana, the last market conduct review of the company by the Auditor's office was finalized all the way back in February 2014. That review covered BCBSMT's activities from July 2006 through December 2010.

The Auditor's Office will continue its work over the coming months. In Montana, market conduct examination reports are public records. The reports are posted by the Auditor's office at csimt.gov/insurance/market-conduct.

The opening of a market conduct review does not mean that the Auditor's Office has determined any violation of law or regulation by BCBSMT. The review serves as an audit of company practices to ensure a fair and competitive insurance marketplace.

In keeping with Auditor Brown's goal to protect Montana insurance consumers, the agency also recently performed mental health parity examinations of health insurance providers in Montana, including BCBSMT. Once statutory timeframes for review and response are met, these examination reports will be available on the agency website, csimt.gov.

"My agency is tasked with protecting Montana consumers in the insurance space. These market conduct reviews are a critical part of ensuring that insurance companies are treating Montanans well and engaging in fair market practices," Auditor Brown added.

Montanans can ask questions about their insurance coverage and/or file a complaint with the agency's Insurance Consumer Service Bureau by calling 406-444-2040. Further resources and information about the work of the Auditor's office is available online on the aforementioned agency website.

LIBRARY UPCOMING EVENTS

September 16, 2026: Books & Babies start up again!

10 a.m. at the library

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Prairie Bible Church pg 7

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Montana Western's Kassidy Bremner Takes Women's All-Around Title at Trapper Stampede

The Montana Western men's and women's rodeo teams wrapped up action at the season-opening Trapper Stampede Saturday night.

Western's Kassidy Bremner earned the women's all-around title with 120 points won. UMW won two events in the long go, one in the short go, and one in the average.

LONG GO RESULTS: Bareback Riding: Quaide Skjonsberg (68.5) and Quentin Personeni (63) took second and third in the long go bareback, respectively. Breakaway Roping: Three Bulldogs placed in the long go breakaway, led by Kenzie Reber with a 2.9-second run. Bremner was close behind at 3.0, followed by Laura Haight at 3.1. Saddle Bronc: Cade Costello earned a 73.5 in the saddle bronc to lead after the long go. Randon Boyce (70.5) and Denten Skjonsberg (58) placed second and fifth, respectively.

Steer Wrestling: Luke Garrison laid down a 9.6-second run to place fifth in the steer wrestling. Goat Tying: Tynell McInenly turned in a 7.7-second effort to sit fourth after one go in the goat tying. Barrel Racing: Bremner's 17.56-second ride put her first in the barrels. Haight (17.74) and Teely Bott (17.8) placed fifth and sixth. Bull Riding: James Boggus III earned an 83.5 to sit in second after the first round of bull riding.

SHORT GO RESULTS: Bareback Riding: Quaide Skjonsberg registered a 75.5 and Personeni a 72 to remain in second and third in the bareback.

Breakaway Roping: Reber's 3.4-second run put her first in the breakaway while Kelsi Costello placed third with a 4.6. Goat Tying: McInenly took the sixth spot in the goat tying with an 8.4. Barrel Racing: Haight clocked a 17.63 in her second run of barrels, finishing fourth in the round while Bott's 17.68 earned her sixth.

AVERAGE RESULTS: Bareback Riding: Quaide Skjonsberg and Personeni were two of three riders to post two clean rides, finishing second and third with a 144 and 135, respectively.

Breakaway Roping: Bremner placed first in the average with a 6.3 two-run time. Costello placed fourth with and 8.0 after two while Bremner (3.0/1) and Haight (3.1/1) took fifth and sixth.

Saddle Bronc: Costello (73.5), Boyce (70.5), and Denten Skjonsberg (58) each posted one good ride to take third, fourth, and fifth, respectively.

Bull Riding: Boggus III's 83.5 single-ride score was good for a third-place finish in the average. Steer Wrestling: Garrison finished sixth with a one-run time of 9.6. Goat Tying: McInenly tied for sixth after posting a 16.1 over two rounds.

Barrel Racing: Haight (35.37) and Bott (35.48) finished fourth and fifth in the average, respectively.



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Montana Western Falls to Montana Tech 34-7

Montana Western football were clipped by #5 Montana Tech 34-7 Saturday afternoon in Bulldog Stadium.

The Bulldogs tallied 287 yards of total offense (220 passing, 67 rushing) and scored one touchdown and had 14 first downs. Kaden LaPlaunt threw for 196 yards (11-21) and one touchdown, including a long of 75 yards. Sam Wulff registered three completions on seven attempts for 24 yards.

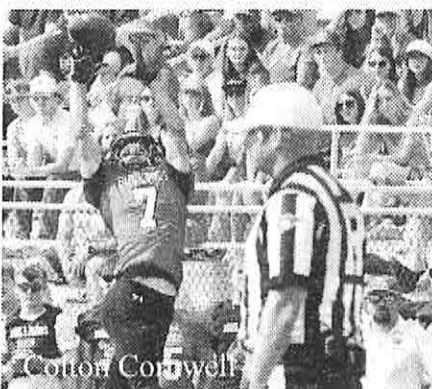
Eli Nourse had his second 100-yard receiving game of the season, posting 114 yards on five receptions. He scored the lone touchdown of the game for Western on the 75-yard pass from LaPlaunt.

Seth Shook (72 yards) and Colton Cornwell (29) caught five and three receptions apiece.

Wulff led the Bulldogs with 19 rush yards, followed by Jakob Humphrey (18), Aidan Lammers (16), and Kaden LaPlaunt (14).

On the defensive side: Tyson Hirrlinger, Connor Dunlea, Bodie Smith, and Canyon Sargent shared the team-lead in total tackles with seven each. Hirrlinger, Dunlea, and Smith each registered five solo efforts.

Manuel Variz IV earned one tackle-for-loss for three yards,



one touchback.

Cornwell led all returners with 76 yards, including a long of 43 on five returns. Brody Munson posted one return for 32 yards.

Romeo Simpson led the team with two pass breakups, and both Sargent and Tyler Schoen recorded a QB hurry.

On special teams Maclain Burckley recorded three punts for 128 yards (42.7 yards per punt) with three inside the 20, one touchback, and a long of 48. He also had two kickoffs for 127 yards (63.5 yards per kick) with

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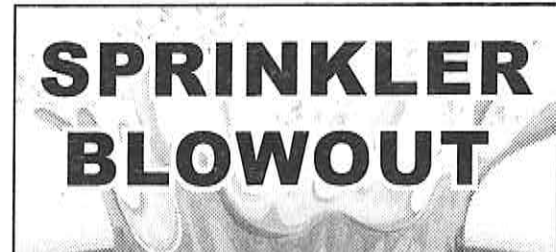


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988

A Resource for Behavioral Health Crises

911

A Response System for Medical, Fire, or Police Emergencies

DESCRIPTION

The 988 Lifeline connects people with counselors who are trained to provide emotional support, crisis de-escalation, and local resources, without relying on law enforcement or emergency medical intervention unless necessary.

911 is the primary contact for medical emergencies, fire, crimes in progress, or other situations requiring immediate physical intervention. Although 911 is highly effective for emergencies involving physical harm, it is not specialized to manage behavioral health crises.

KEY FEATURES



Skilled, Caring Support 24/7:

988 counselors are trained to provide emotional and mental health support and crisis intervention.



Minimal Law Enforcement

Intervention: Most crises are managed without involving law enforcement, reducing the likelihood of escalated responses.



Connection to Local Resources:

People are referred to local mental health and/or substance use treatment services for follow-up care, ensuring continuity of support.



Immediate Intervention for Physical

Danger: 911 dispatches police, fire, or EMS to address urgent threats to life or safety.



Law Enforcement Involvement:

Law enforcement officers are typically dispatched in crises involving potential violence or criminal activity.

Summary: Both 988 and 911 provide critical support but focus on different crisis types. 988 specializes in behavioral health crises and offers crisis counseling and emotional de-escalation; 911 addresses physical dangers needing police, fire, or EMS. Understanding the distinction is essential to ensuring the appropriate response and care.

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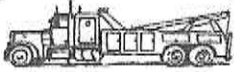
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