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Val R. Neeley

Val R. Neeley passed away in Dillon on Thursday, September 24, 2026, at the age of 93. She was born in October 1932, in Chicago, Illinois to parents Raymond & Erma. She was raised, along with her sister Vonnie, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. She loved school and learning became a lifelong adventure for her. She married her high school sweetheart, Harry Neeley in August 1954. They were together for 67 years, with him passing away peacefully on their anniversary in 2021. His calling into the Episcopal priesthood introduced them into a lifetime of special service to his churches and their broader communities. They were also introduced to the west and fell in love with the beauty of the mountains.

Val was an avid reader and an accomplished writer, having been a published author several times. It was especially important to her to be a good communicator and proficient memory keeper as the written word was her specialty. Her lifelong struggle with hearing loss made meaningful communication very significant for her, as the fear of isolation made her work even more diligently to understand and relate. She was able to finish her college education later in life, after raising her family. She then worked in several different senior care facilities. Compassion for people and the gift of service made her a valuable employee and significant resource in other people's lives – a characteristic that embodied who she was until her passing. Getting to finally walk through her college graduation ceremony in her 80's was one of the most thrilling accomplishments of her life – even though it was hard for her to hear them call her name!

In her own words, she says she has been blessed by God's provision in all her endeavors and that family was her prime treasure. She considered it a great privilege to serve in the various churches, ministries and projects that they were called to. Both her and Harry were especially pleased to have been part of the Beaverhead Community Wood Bank and the Dillon JC Park restoration.

Val was preceded in death by her parents Ray & Erma, sister Vonnie, husband Harry and granddaughter Amy. She is survived by her three children, David (Pam) Neeley of Butte, Robin (Greg) Winden of Ennis and Erin (Nolan) Lake of Dillon. She is also survived by six grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

Val's family would also like to extend special gratitude to some of the people who helped care for her in her final years: the amazing staff at Renaissance Assisted Living, Dr. Doug Creger and Dr. John Creger (and staff), Linda Mooney, Sharon Morehouse, Katherine Hatch, Dr. Karen Weed, Dr. Sandra McIntyre, and Dr. Rachael Heuer. People who gave her rides, visited, entertained and fed her, and just generally blessed her with their presence – many, many thanks to you all! Relationships were the most important thing of all to her and the gift of your time was priceless!

Memorials can be given to the Friends of Jaycee Park or the Beaverhead Community Wood Bank, or to the donors' charity of choice. A memorial service for Val will be held on Friday, October 23, 2026 at St. James Episcopal Church in Dillon, MT at 2:00 in the afternoon.

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Nancy Kay Dunham Death Notice

July 7, 1958 ~ September 19, 2026

Nancy Kay Dunham, 68, of Columbia Falls, passed away
Saturday, September 19, 2026 at Pioneer Care & Rehab.She was born on July 7, 1958, in Kalispel, MT to Harley
& Leona (Dumontier) Dunham.**Mental Health Musings****Honoring World Mental Health Day on October 10**First observed in 1992, World Mental Health Day was launched
by the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), a global
organization active in over 150 countries, to increase mental health
awareness and combat stigma through education and advocacy.
The day provides an opportunity for mental health professionals,
policymakers, and communities to engage in meaningful discussions
about mental health challenges, showcase ongoing initiatives, and
strengthen efforts to improve access to mental health care worldwide.The green ribbon is recognized internationally as the symbol
of mental health awareness and is often worn to show support for
individuals experiencing mental health challenges and to help
reduce stigma. Green was chosen because it symbolizes hope,
strength, support, and well-being.In focusing on our mental health, let's practice
affirmations! This means repeating a believable, value-aligned
statement. Research indicates that affirmations can have small
but significant positive effects on well-being, self-perception,
and resilience, with benefits that can be both immediate
and long-lasting, according to the American Psychological
Association. For best results, affirmations should reflect our
personal values and reflect a change in our core beliefs about
ourselves and/or our lives. Below are a few examples.

Choose one and practice it daily:

- "I am capable of handling challenges and learning from them. I value my strengths and I can use them to face challenges."

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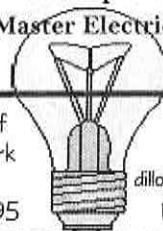
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Please see today's insert regarding a FREE Mental Health First Aid training coming to Dillon in November!

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.

For more information on this week's topic, visit *The Science Of Affirmations: The Brain's Response To Positive Thinking*.

• "I am learning to treat myself with the same compassion I would offer a friend. My mistakes are growth opportunities, not proof of inadequacy."

• "My feelings are valid information. I can experience difficult emotions without being defined by them."

A common evidence-based recommendation is to practice affirmations once or twice daily for a few minutes, rather than repeating them constantly.

For example:

• Morning: Read or say 1 to 3 affirmations and reflect on evidence that supports them.

• During stress: Use an affirmation when you notice negative self-talk.

• Evening: Review one example from the day that supports the affirmation.

Quality matters more than quantity. Research suggests that spending 2 to 5 minutes thoughtfully reflecting on a personally meaningful affirmation can be more effective than mechanically repeating it dozens of times.

Some of this information provided by the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), an international, multi-professional, non-governmental organization, including citizen volunteers and former patients. It was founded in 1948 in the same era as the United Nations (UN) and the World Health Organization.

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call 911. For quick mental and behavioral health support, contact 988 via text or phone. If interested in seeking regular support from a trained local provider, check out the providers' list on the Beaverhead County Public Health webpage at <https://beaverheadcountymt.gov/public-health-2/> and scroll down to the "Helpful Links" list, then click on Beaverhead County Mental and Behavioral Provider Resource Guide.

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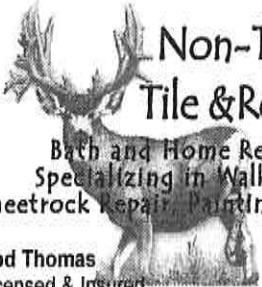
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Black Bear Spotted Near University of Montana Western Campus in Dillon

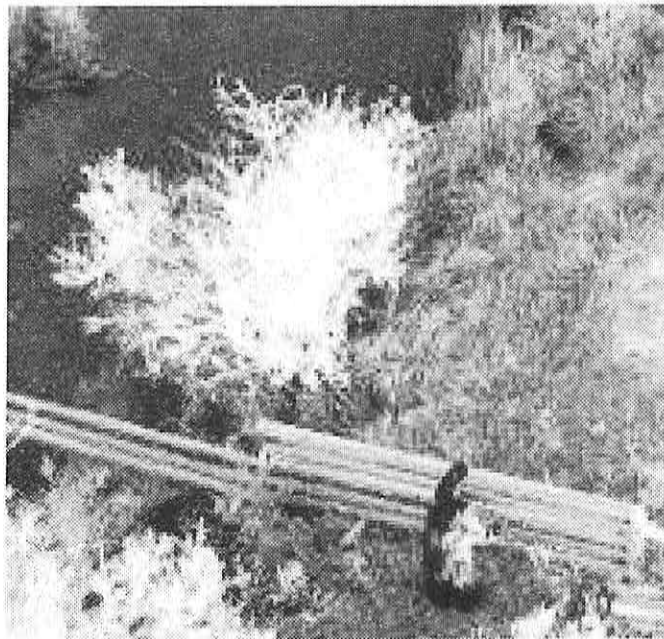
Jeremy Crawford, Southwestern Montana News

Police and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks are monitoring a black bear spotted Tuesday morning near the end of South Dakota Street, close to the University of Montana Western campus.

The bear was reported in the area Tuesday morning, prompting a response from local law enforcement and FWP. Officials have been using a **drone to help track and monitor the bear's location**. According to initial reports from the scene, the bear is believed to be **sleeping in a grove of willows**.

Officials may be preparing bear traps in an effort to safely capture the animal and remove it from the area. That plan remains preliminary as authorities continue monitoring the situation.

Public Asked to Avoid the Area: Residents, students and others are being asked to avoid the area around the end of South Dakota Street and give police and FWP personnel room to work.



Anyone who encounters the bear should keep their distance and should not approach or attempt to photograph the animal at close range. This is a developing situation. Southwestern Montana News will update this story as information becomes available.



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TOP OF THE HILL pg 5

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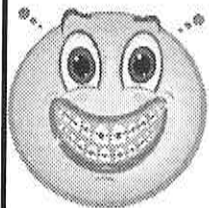
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Beaverhead County Mental Health Local Advisory Counsel

Commissioners Meeting Room
County Courthouse – 2 S. Pacific
Thursday, October 8, 2026, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Regular City Council Meeting

Wednesday, October 7
7:00 PM
City Council Chambers

Dillon Public Library programs:

October 4-10 2026

Banned Book Week

Let Books Be. Protect the Freedom to Read
Wednesday 10/7/2026: Books & Babies 10 a.m.

At Dillon Public Library Theme: Imagination

Dillon Public Library will be CLOSED

October 10-12 for Columbus Day
and for Indigenous Peoples Day

Friday October 30, at 11 AM

Cybersecurity for Citizens - Computer Class
FREE Class for the community

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Montana Events Foundation is hosting the 9th Annual Run The Boo- 5k & Kids Race.

Saturday October 31st, at Beaverhead Brewing Company.

Run The Boo is a Halloween themed race. Costumes
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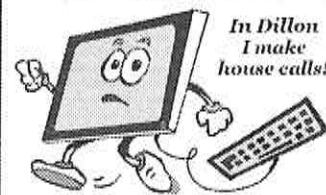
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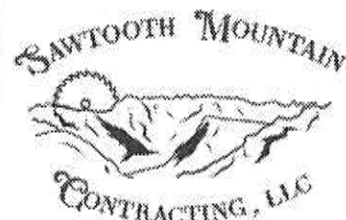
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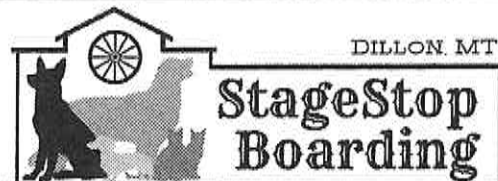
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Programs/Group Exercise

Stop by the "Y" TODAY and check out our group exercise programs and aquatic activities. Body Blitz (T,TH - 5:45am), Biker Blast (M,F - 5:45am), Yoga Strength (T,TH - 7:00am), Yoga (M,W,F - 12:10pm), Senior Fit (M,W,F - 9:00am), Rapid Burn (M,W - 8:30am), Interval Strength (T,TH - 8:30am), Strength & Conditioning (M,W-5:30pm), Ride to Rhythm (T,TH - 5:30pm), Chair Yoga (M,W - 10:00am), Restorative Yoga (T,TH-9:30am), Pilates (M,W-5:45am)

Adventures in After School Program

This program starts in September 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 (Oct. 12th-Oct. 14th) is "Scarecrow Week" Children will be creating scarecrow crafts and learning about scarecrow origins. October 15th & 16th are schools out days, enroll your child today.

YMCA Swim Lessons

Fall swim lesson #1 starts September 14th. Spots are limited, sign up soon!

YMCA Swim Team

Join our team starting September 15th from 4:45-5:45pm every Tuesday and Thursday.

Rookie Sports Camp

Introduce your child to sports and enhance their skills. Starts October 7th for ages 3-5.

Mens Basketball League

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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.

Strong Family Campaign

Exercise your heart in more ways than one. Give and join!

The purpose of this campaign is to generate funds to support programs, activities, scholarships and services for all members of our community regardless of age or ability to pay. Please help us reach our 2026 campaign goal.

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Prairie Bible Church pg 7

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Montana Western Names Matt Raffety as Chief of Staff and Director of Communications

The University of Montana Western has named Matt Raffety as its Chief of Staff and Director of Communications, effective beginning October 6, 2026. The combined role will support the Chancellor's Office and oversee accreditation, institutional research, marketing, and communications, while leading the establishment and ongoing coordination of the university's first Staff Senate.

The position brings together responsibilities that connect institutional strategic planning, data, and communication. Working closely with campus leadership, faculty, and staff, the Chief of Staff and Director of Communications will help coordinate university priorities and support informed decision-making. Once established, the Staff Senate will bring forward ideas and feedback through strengthened communication with university leadership.

"This role brings together several areas that are essential to supporting our students, faculty, and staff and moving Montana Western forward," said Montana Western Chancellor, Dr. Estee Aiken. "We're pleased to welcome Matt to this combined position and look forward to the collaboration it will encourage across campus. Establishing a formalized Staff Senate will create a new communication conduit that is currently missing from our shared governance structure."

Raffety has served as Montana Western's Director of Communications since 2018.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve Montana Western in this combined role and to work alongside colleagues who care so deeply about our students and this university," said Raffety. "I'm especially excited to help create a Staff Senate that reflects the experience and ideas of employees across campus. There is so much we can accomplish when people are heard, informed, and connected to our shared goals."



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Health Minute

Ghee:

For thousands of years, Ayurvedic medicine has treasured ghee as one of the most healing foods in the kitchen. It's often called "liquid gold." This clarified butter is rich, nutty, and deeply nourishing. It's a versatile, nutrient-dense fat that carries the fat-soluble vitamins A, E, and K, along with butyrate, a short-chain fatty acid that helps feed good bacteria and encourage a healthy gut.

In Ayurveda, ghee is valued for bringing balance to the body. It's traditionally used as a carrier for herbs and spices, helping their benefits travel deeper into the tissues, and it has long been part of cleansing and detox practices that help the body release what it no longer needs.

Ghee earns its spot by the stove. It has a higher smoke point (around 450 degrees) which makes it ideal for sautéing and roasting. Because the milk solids are removed, ghee contains only trace amounts of lactose and casein, so many people who are sensitive to dairy can enjoy it comfortably. Anyone with a true milk allergy should still steer clear.

Ghee is easy to make at home. Gently simmer unsalted butter (ideally grass-fed and organic) for 20-30 minutes, until the foam settles and the milk solids turn golden at the bottom of the pan. Then strain it through a fine-mesh sieve lined with a coffee filter or cheesecloth, and watch the golden magic happen. With the water and milk solids gone, ghee is shelf-stable, so you can keep it on the counter for a few months. Use a clean, dry spoon, and spread it generously.

If you don't have the time or energy to make a batch, we've got you covered. Come down to the Mighty Oak and grab a jar! Soon we'll also carry turmeric-infused ghee. Turmeric's active anti-inflammatory compound is curcumin—which is best absorbed with fat so the pairing gives you quite the boost!

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Written by Amber Barone BSN, RN Holistic Nurse & Founder of Mighty Oak Mercantile

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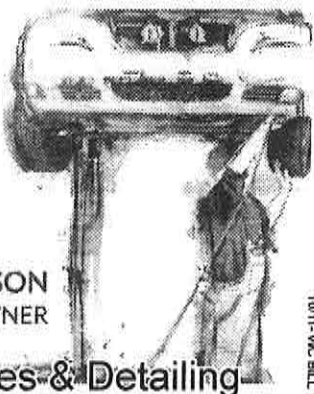
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- Help ensure adequate supplies, equipment, and staffing are available for daily operations.

QUALIFICATIONS

No prior healthcare cleaning experience required — comprehensive training is provided for EVS Technicians and Laundry Attendants!

- Strong attention to detail and commitment to cleanliness and safety.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Good communication skills and ability to follow instructions.
- Flexible, reliable, and dedicated with a strong work ethic.
- Supervisor: Previous supervisory, EVS, housekeeping, or floor-care experience preferred.

BENEFITS

- Employee Assistance Program
- Comprehensive benefits package for full-time employees, including:
 - Vacation, sick leave, and paid holidays
 - Medical, dental, and vision insurance
 - Short- and long-term disability coverage
 - Company-provided life insurance
 - 401(k) retirement savings plan
 - And much more!

APPLY TODAY!

If you have a strong work ethic and take pride in maintaining clean and safe environments, we want to hear from you!

Apply online: Oneforefront.com/careers

Questions? Contact Human Resources at 406-655-5482 or Cassie.Hamblen@oneforefront.com

9/21-10/20 BILL P

PIERCE'S SPRINKLER BLOWOUTS

Call us today to get on the schedule for fall sprinkler blow out

Thanks, Bill & Deb Pierce
(406) 660-4010 leave message if no answer.

9/2-10/31 BILL

Isaac's Lawn Care

With over 10 years in the business locally.

Tree Removal Small Scale Landscaping Gravel & Dirt Work

Call for estimates
406-660-2170



4/15-10/14 BILL

APPLIANCE REPAIR

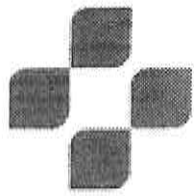


Plus: Handyman work, drywall, light fixtures, installation, remodeling

CALL TYSON VAN DYCK
801-874-8142

RIDGELINE
RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

9/17-10/31 BILL P



Mental Health FIRST AID

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

What should you do when someone shows signs of a mental health challenge? How can you ensure you have the skills to help?

Mental Health First Aid gives you the ability to recognize when someone is facing mental health or substance use challenges *and* the confidence to be their first source of support!

FREE training for the public!

Saturday, November 14, 8-4

Lunch provided!*

Beaverhead Co. Fairgrounds 4H Bldg

***Please RSVP by 11/2**

Must attend full session for certification.

**For more information, contact Elaine at (406) 683-4771 or
espicer@beaverheadcountymt.gov**



**Register with
QR code!**



Beaverhead County Study Commission

PUBLIC FORUM

Tuesday, October 20th

7 p.m.

Beaverhead County Courthouse Commissioners Room

Beaverhead County Comparison of Specific Government Form Duties

CHARACTERISTIC	PRESENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT	PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT	EVALUATIVE COMMENTS
FORM OF GOVERNMENT	COMMISSION FORM Merges legislative, administrative and executive functions in commission	CHARTER-COMMISSION Charter is a local constitution and describes a commission form of government.	Commission form is written into the Charter. Basic change is that county gains self-governing powers and flexibility to respond to the citizens' concerns.
POWERS	GENERAL GOVERNMENT POWERS State Law defines what government may do and specifically how it shall do it. Very limited local power to pass ordinances.	SELF-GOVERNMENT POWERS County government shall exercise any power which the state does not deny. Local government gains more ordinance-making authority. Brings the power of government back local vs. at the State level.	Self-government powers bring to the county the power to act in its own best interest, and flexibility in shaping government structure.
FLEXIBILITY TO ADDRESS CITIZENS' CONCERNS	Limited form of government to address citizens' concerns with regards to ordinances, etc.	Self-Governing Power form of Government.	Commissioners will have more power to: • Provide services not permitted by the legislature. • Lawfully acquire and operate utilities (gas, electric) within and outside of boundaries of the county. (solar farm?) • Greater authority to dispose of public lands. • Authority to provide more ordinances that address citizens' concerns.

There are no changes to the following: Governing Body size, Election, Term Presiding Officer, Duties, Other Elected Officials, Chief Administrative Officer, Appointment Powers, Budget Preparation, or Service Delivery.

A SELF-GOVERNMENT CHARTER IS A LOCAL GOVERNMENT EQUIVALENT OF A STATE OR NATIONAL CONSTITUTION. IT PUTS THE POWER INTO THE HANDS OF THE VOTERS ON THE LOCAL LEVEL.

Ballot on the Alternative form of Local Government

Instructions to voters: Place an "X" in the boxes which express your preferences. Make sure to read your ballot! Some ballots choices may be switched!

[] For adoption of the commission form of government with a self-government charter proposed for Beaverhead County proposed by the Beaverhead County Local Government Study Commission.

[] For the existing commission form of government.

Dillonite Advertiser

Published by Womack's Printing Place, dillonads@womacksprinting.com 126 N. Montana, Dillon, MT 406-683-4903
Available on the web from: www.dillonite.com **Ad & Insert deadline 3 pm Monday - Friday**

Beaverhead County High School is looking for positive, team- oriented and hard-working individuals to fill a number of different positions.

If you are interested or have questions, please email
Superintendent Josh Patterson at jpatterson@
bchsmmt.com or call 406-683-2361.

Application materials and additional information
can be found on our high school website at www.bchsmmt.com > District > Position Openings

• Custodians

- o B.W. Lodge gym custodian: full-time
- o ASIT and Main building custodian: part-time or full-time

- Activity & Substitute Bus Drivers
- Paraprofessional

9/21-10/20 BILL



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- And so much more!!

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at 406-231-2304

Call or Text Amanda
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8/21-9/20 BILL P

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10/1-31 PD



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THE FIRST AND THIRD WEDNESDAY

October 7 & 21

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