

City of Colstrip

June 2009

Mayor's Message



- Mayor John Williams
- B.J. Ellison
- Susan Hert
- Rick Harbin
- Dan Becker

City Offices open
9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
Monday thru Friday,
except on Holidays

Court is in Session:
Tuesdays and Thursdays
10:00 a.m.

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Colstrip will be celebrating its 35th Annual Colstrip Days this year on June 26th, 27th, and 28th. It's hard to believe this will be the 35th year. I can't remember who came up with the idea of having a Colstrip Days celebration but I can remember the discussion on when it should be held. It was decided that it should be separate from the July 4th holiday both to have its own identity as a town celebration and to have it before July 4th.

This year the celebration will have the very patriotic theme of Red, White, and Blue and Trevor Johnson has been named the Honorary Grand Marshal.

All of our Colstrip Days celebrations are very special and this year's will be no exception with our theme and the naming of Trevor. I anticipate we will have a strong military presence in our community during Colstrip Days. I also understand the wheels are in motion to have a military fly over during the ceremony. Hopefully, this will all come about.

Our Arbor Day celebration was also special this year with it occurring at both the Pine Butte Elementary School and the Frank Brattin Middle School. Your city has been recognized once again receiving the Arbor Day Tree City USA Award and the Arbor Day Growth Award.

Our Tree Board's theme was Plant Trees and my message to the students was that planting trees does make a difference, it's something that we all can do. So parents and grand parents, plant a tree to commemorate the birth of a child or grandchild, it's something you can share into the future.

There is a lot of activity going on outside city hall with our landscaping efforts in progress. We are taking advantage of the \$6,700 Arbor Day Award given last year in our efforts to beautify your city hall.

The Orchard Lift Station failure on March 5th couldn't have happened at a worse time. Extremely cold and terrible weather conditions impacted our temporary operations on a station that serves approximately 140 households.

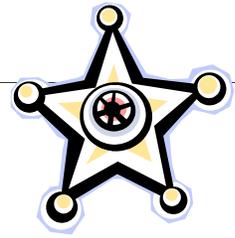
We are in the process of repair and have entered into a contract with JEM Construction. The lift station components have been ordered and installation should begin on May 26th with completion to occur within 30 days. The total cost of the project will be \$247,978. The city has identified this project as "shovel ready" entitling it for some economic stimulus funding. This funding is available through HB-645 Disbursement to Local and County Government. Ten million dollars is being awarded to cities and towns.

Colstrip's share of the allocation of this bill is \$46,334. This allocation is based on the \$5,000 direct allocation (to all cities and towns) plus \$21,568 (15-70-101 MCA mileage of street calculation) plus \$20,295 (population allocation) for a total of \$46,334. The \$529 difference is administrative cost to the Department of Commerce. The counties are also receiving ten million dollars. Rosebud County will be receiving \$180,817. For comparison larger cities, such as Billings, will be receiving \$1,650,475.



Police Department

Larry Reinlasoder, Police Chief



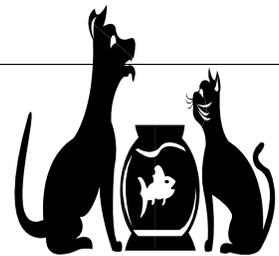
Mark Twain once wrote, "Anyone worth his salt would go to war to defend his home, but I have never met one willing to lay down his life for his boarding house." One of the goals of the Colstrip Police Department has been the encouragement of citizens involvement to keep our community safe. The police and citizens have restarted the Colstrip Crime Stoppers program. Crime Stoppers has its own phone number (748-3050) and a separate phone, which means calls are not recorded and phone numbers are not traced. There is no caller ID. When we say that "All Callers Will Remain Anonymous" that is exactly what we mean. People with information about a crime are urged to call Crime Stoppers, if they are not comfortable in meeting in person with the police. Of course, it is always better if people get involved as witnesses and give the information to the police but we can investigate incidents using anonymous tips. Crime Stoppers can be used to report drug activity, illegal alcohol parties, information on thefts and burglaries, any crime information can be taken over the Crime Stoppers number. You should be prepared to give specific and detailed information. The more information you can give means that it is easier for the police to act without actually being the witness to the incident themselves. If you call Crime Stoppers be prepared to give detailed information to the call taker, who will give you a code number for future reference. You can call back and give more information or follow up on what action was taken on your tip using the number you are given. You never have to give your name. If the case you are calling about is successfully cleared by police you will be eligible for a cash reward of up to \$1000. Remember Crime Stoppers can be reached at 748-3050.

We need more volunteers to step forward and be willing to be involved with the police to protect our children and the community as a whole. I would ask our community to consider that neighborhood watch programs and the community oriented policing philosophy are what today's Homeland Security Program is built around. Community policing is actually the forerunner of homeland security. Colstrip has the distinction of being vitally important to the entire Northwestern United States as far as electricity production is concerned. We do not question the need to secure that resource. At the same time we should realize that being involved in neighborhood watch programs not only assists in the security of the power plants, it also ensures the safety of our neighborhoods. We need to practice homeland security as a way to secure our property and our neighbors property so that we continue to enjoy the great quality of life that we have in Colstrip. However, Neighborhood Watch, McGruff Safe Homes, and Crime Stoppers reporting are all dependent on citizens willing to be involved. Please call 748-2211 for more information or visit the CPD on the web at www.colstrippolice.com.

Animal Control

I know that I can't say this loud enough, long enough or frequently enough but spay and neuter your pets.

When I was at Help for Homeless Pets Shelter in Billings last week there were three adult Labs there. The breed has been the number one registered breed with the AKC for about the last 15 years and finally it to has been over bred. The Labs have a good chance of finding a home whereas the mutts/mixed-breeds/unknown heritage have a good chance of their life ending in a shelter. Just because you have an AKC registered dog doesn't mean you have to breed it.



Any dog that is bred should be tested for diseases known to the breed. Tests are not free and that's why you will get what you pay for with a quality pup. Any responsible breeder who wants to charge you a sound price for a pup will be happy to show you the test results of both sire and dam to prove they are physically sound as well. Breeding Chihuahuas and say, Boston terriers just puts those in the mutts categories-and that doesn't mean you will get the best characteristics of both breeds.

Cats fare even more poorly at a shelter. There simply aren't enough people to give them homes. For each person born in the United States each day there are seven (7) puppies and kittens born. Approximately 61% of the dogs that enter shelters are killed and 75% of all cats who enter the shelter are killed nationwide. You alone can help these numbers by having your pets spayed or neutered.

Animal Control cont. page 4

Public Works Department

John Bleth, Public Works Supervisor



The Public Works Department has several new upcoming projects which will affect a lot of our residents.

If you have looked at the City of Colstrip website home page or driven across the ramps on Willow Avenue you know what our next project will be. We have a contractor who has ordered the new lift station package to replace the one that failed. The old lift station was 37 years in service and scheduled to be replaced next year, however; it did not make it. Once construction starts about June 1st Willow Avenue will be closed 1.5 to 2 days for trenching the new main over to the new location in the fire department training center. We could have bored under the street, however; the city will save over \$23,000 by trenching. The main reason for moving the lift station is to have it located on city property rather than private property. The project should be complete within 30 days once the project begins.

Our next project has been scheduled since late last fall. This involves street and curb replacement in the Sweetgrass Subdivision area. The project will be split into two phases because of the total cost. This year the city will replace streets on Mustang Court, Appaloosa Court, Cheyenne Drive, and Antelope Drive. Next year all remaining streets will be completed. There will be a public open house for your comments before construction begins. All of these residents who will be directly affected on these streets just mentioned are encouraged to attend this meeting. A letter will be sent out to all of these residents a week in advance in order to have time to make arrangements to attend. If you cannot make the meeting you can stop by city hall and ask me questions or voice concerns after the meeting. Our engineering firm and the contractor will be at the meeting to answer any questions you may have. The meeting will be scheduled in early June. All driveways will be changed to a flat approach off the street instead of your current roll over curb. The city will install a five foot apron approach and extend to the property line with either asphalt or concrete whichever you currently have. If you would like to replace your remaining driveways you can work directly with the contractor on what you would like.

Building, Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement

Jan Morgan



Once again we have a wet spring in Colstrip. While I know the moisture is a welcome relief to many, to me it is a reminder that the grass will need to be mowed more frequently than I personally enjoy. Sometimes it is difficult to keep the grass or weeds under the four inch (4") height as stipulated in code but remember it is the property owner's responsibility and letters will be going out to owners found in violation of this code.

I have noticed recently that several lots in town have started to accumulate an assortment of trailers, junk vehicles, and debris. These accumulations as well as RV's, boats, trailers, snowmobiles, and anything else that lays around gathering weeds underneath it instead of being properly put away or stored are unsightly and infringe upon the rights and valuations of neighboring property owners. Letters will be going out to those property owners found in violation to remind them of the city codes that prohibit such accumulations.

Please be aware that RV's and other recreational vehicles are not to be stored on public streets but on off street parking spaces. Those spaces by code must be located on the same lot as the dwelling and may not be located in any front yard except in the driveway.



The city receives many complaints concerning the above violations every year. Many more go unreported because people do not wish to complain or cause other people problems. Be considerate of your neighbors. Code compliance is simply a part of living in a community. Call if you have any questions or concerns. My office hours vary but you can usually reach me Monday through Thursday in the afternoons.

Schoolhouse History and Art

Lu Shomate, Director



With spring just around the corner, we are finalizing our summer programs for young children, teens, and adults. Our fused glass jewelry has been a great hit this past school year; we know it will be a great success this summer along with our other programs. Watch for our flyers and posters that will be placed around town to see if there is a class you'd be interested in. As always, the classes are free to members, supplies if necessary can be purchased at SHAC. Be sure to register early to reserve your spot at the table.

Would you like to have a nice place to enjoy your lunch? Our peaceful patio is just the place for you and your friends! You'll especially enjoy viewing the bricks placed in memory of or in honor of loved ones. Bricks can be purchased for \$50 and inscribed with your sentiment for any occasion, such as newly married couples, graduates, or in memory of those passed. If you want a special gift that can be enjoyed for a long time, these bricks can do that for those special people in your life.

Stop in and check out our Gallery exhibits. If you have visitors this summer, be sure and stop in and show them what Colstrip has to offer. We will be hosting the Traveling Art Show, American History Prints, and Molly Murphy Art this summer. Our gift shop has interesting unique gifts and we have Colstrip postcards. Wallace McRae's new book, "Stick Horses and Other Stories of Ranch Life" is in stock, along with many other Montana made gifts.

Our annual meeting will be June 17th, if you would like to join us for that board meeting please join us at 6:00 p.m. Our board works diligently to ensure the opportunity for cultural events and art education and to encourage and preserve the culture and history of Colstrip and the surrounding area. We look forward to your visit.

Our 14th annual Golf Tournament will be Saturday, August 1st with a Calcutta on Friday at the 19th Hole located at the Super Stop. This event has gotten bigger and bigger every year. We have a \$500 payout in our Long Putt contest. The Calcutta payouts are impressive, making the tournament more popular these last few years. If you are a golfer be sure to contact Glen at Ponderosa Butte to reserve a spot for your team.

As always, we would like to thank our members and the businesses that support the Schoolhouse. Without you none of this would be possible. Good Job!!

Animal Control cont.

Before you add a pet to your family Colstrip Bicentennial Library has a wonderful book entitled "The Right Dog for You" by Daniel Tortola which will give you a lot of the details about the dogs habits and personality and try www.medsonline.org and type in the dog's breed health disorders. Similar sources are available for cats as well.

Our area is going to struggle greatly with ticks this year due to our large and healthy deer population. We have already killed one with the engorged body the size of a dime and had another on a family dog that frequents the lake area.

The ONLY flea/tick/mosquito remedy I have found is K9 Advantix. This is the only product on the market that I have found that kills mosquitoes as well as fleas and ticks. I would recommend applying to your animal outside if possible. I found K9 Advantix at www.petedge.com.

Prevention is a lot cheaper than the cure. (Hint - spay and neuter too.)

Bicentennial Library



The summer reading program starts June 8th and will run through July 11th. Our party will be July 14th. I have some fun news to report along the lines of the summer reading program, we will have some great creative things we will do this year. On June 18th we will visit SHAC and make our very own stepping stones. On June 25th we will watch some plays put on by the middle school and high school drama and debate team. On July 9th we will see Dale Kison demonstrate wood turning. We have a fun music event in the works and I will keep you posted as to what that is.

Cheryl Smith is looking for more volunteers to help with the book sale. Please contact the library at 748-3040 if you are interested in volunteering for this fun event. Last year we had as much fun as our shoppers. Hours for the sale will be from 7-8 p.m. on Friday, June 26th and 11 a.m.—3 p.m. on Saturday, June 27th. We could use some extra hands to help with set up on June 25th.

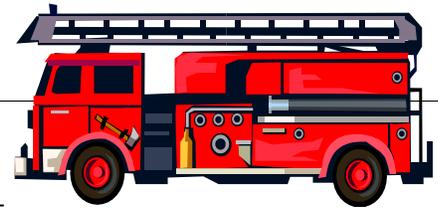
We are participating in the Montana Library 2 Go project, we went live May 4th. What this means to you is that you can now download audio books from the state library and listen to them from your PC or MP3 player or ipod. We will be happy to help you with this new program. If you have your own computer you may download audio books at home, just go to Bicentennial Library's homepage at <http://bicentennial.library.googlepages.com> and click on the Montana Library 2 Go link. The directions are posted and fairly easy to follow, however; if you are having trouble please don't hesitate to call the library at 748-3040 and we will do our best to help you.

The July 19th Book Talk books will be "The Knitting Circle" by Ann Hood starting at 7:00 p.m. Everyone interested in this book is welcome to attend. The September 15th book will be a Montana book. If you have a suggestion for that book, please contact the library at 748-3040.

The staff at Bicentennial Library of Colstrip looks forward to serving you over the summer months.

Volunteer Fire Department

Fire Chief Ryan Reid



This time of year I get many questions on burn permits. Hopefully, I can clear those up in this column.

According to the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Inter-agency Burn Permit Center starting May 1st and through June 30th open burning will require a burn permit. The key word doesn't include the backyard fireplaces that are enclosed.

All a burn permit entails is a call to the city police dispatch at 748-2211. The dispatcher will take your information and check weather conditions. They will then call me and notify me of the burn. It costs nothing but a few minutes of your time and is more of a courtesy call so we are aware of fires that are going on. The Colstrip Police Department is open 24 hours a day.

When someone calls in a smoke or a fire, the Colstrip Volunteer Fire Department responds with everything we have to control the fire quickly. We will respond to a reported smoke call just the same as a fire. It makes more sense to us to send everything we have in case it is a house fire than to send someone to check it out. What that means is that if you have a burn that is not called in you may have 20 firemen and 8 trucks there to help you on your burn whether it is at 2:00 p.m. or 4:30 a.m.

I hope you can see the danger of responding to false alarms. A controlled burn that is responded to is like calling wolf and puts volunteer firemen in danger. The second leading cause of injury to firemen is traffic accidents. So please, make a two minute call even when using your backyard fireplaces just as a courtesy so we don't respond to a controlled fire.

The Colstrip Days fireworks show will be done automatically. For safety reasons we are moving to a system that fires the fireworks rather than hand lighting. This mean the show will be a little shorter but should be much better.

Thank you and we hope we don't see you at your house.

Community Care Task Force



A determined group called the Colstrip Community Care Task Force (CCCTF) has been meeting to evaluate and determine the possibility of an elderly care facility in Colstrip. “Looks like elderly care facilities could be a growth industry in eastern Montana,” noted Jim Atchison of Southeastern Montana Development (SEMDC), a regional non-profit economic development group based in Colstrip. “Rosebud County alone is projected to see over a 170% increase in the 65 + age group in the next 20 years. That’s over 2,200 senior citizens living within Rosebud County. Right now estimates are about 1,000 seniors in the county. The need is coming, how do we respond and prepare for it,” Atchison added.

A community survey was completed in 2007. Results showed that 90% thought there was “some or high demand” for an elderly care facility. Over 73% stated that they would financially support such a facility if it were built. “It’s been very frustrating,” stated Robert Shy Jr., who chairs the CCCTF. “Here we have a tremendous and growing need in this town, a supportive public and no place to build it. It’s a shame.”

The following is a recap of the major events to date:

- 2006 / 2007 - CEDS Plan Identifies Housings Needs in Region
- February 2007 - SEMDC Hosts “Housing Summit”
- March 2007 – Colstrip Mayor Invites Public Participation and Creates the CCCTF
- Mid - 2007 – Colstrip Survey Conducted
- Fall 2007 - General Evaluation and Research Occurs
- Early 2008 - Grant to SEMDC from MT BSEDTF
- Spring 2008 - Feasibility Study is Conducted and Completed
- April / May 2008 - SEMDC Writes and Submits Coal Board Grant
- June 2008 - MT Coal Board Awards \$120,000 for Colstrip Elderly Care Project
- July / August 2008 - Preliminary Architectural Report (P.A.R.) Effort Begins
- August 2008 - Possible Locations / Site Evaluations Become Challenge
- October 2008 - Possible Locations / Sites become unavailable
- January 2009 - Preliminary Architectural Report (P.A.R.) is put on hold
- February 2009 - Present: Additional site being evaluated

Several possible sites to locate the future Colstrip “Continuing Care Retirement Community” have recently become unavailable. The Feasibility Study determined that the project would need between 6-8 acres to house the three phase project including a new Senior Citizen Center. The CCCTF continues to evaluate sites and will work with property owners if sites become available for this community project.

The CCCTF is partnering with numerous groups like the City of Colstrip, Rosebud County, SEMDC, Colstrip Senior Citizen Club and the State of MT to help leverage time, effort and money. CCCTF members include Robert Shy Jr., Robin Shahan, Don Tapp, Tom Crippen, John Williams, BJ Ellison, Jim Atchison, John Poole, Kelly Vajtasa, Les Mahon, Rick Harbin, Dan Watson and Lloyd Gange. The CCCTF meets at noon on the second and fourth Tuesday at the Colstrip City Hall. The public is always welcome to attend and additional information is available by contacting SEMDC at 748-2990.

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PRSRT STD
PERMIT NO. 9
COLSTRIP, MT

ECRWS

Box Holder

Colstrip, MT 59323

Celebrating 10 years