

City of Colstrip

April 2015

Mayor's Message



- Mayor Rose Hanser
- Tom Jankowski
- Lawretta Miller
- John Williams
- Greg Koczur

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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Celebrating 16 Years



Happy Spring to everyone!

If wind is a prerequisite for the season, we have had plenty. I am praying for moisture as I am sure many of you are. It just seems so very dry and warm for this time of year. Normally we don't think, Fire Season, this early in the year, but our neighbors in the outlying areas have already had many acres burned.

As we prepare for the upcoming projects in our wastewater (sewer) system this year, we also plan to have more information available on our website. Be sure to check it out at www.cityofcolstrip.com There will be pictures when possible and weekly updates on the progress we are making.

Our Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and some of the mains are decades old. Engineers had recommended the upgrades we are undertaking this summer, nearly eight years ago. The City Public Works Department employees have done a great job of taking care of the wastewater facility and system, minimizing costs and prolonging its life. Thank you all for the conscientious, hard work guys!

We are in great position to receive a Coal Board Grant- June 12, 2015. In our presentation last fall, the Coal Board favorably received our request, though they did not have the funds at that time. We have asked for \$500,000 to aid us in this venture. They were willing to award that amount when funds became available; which will be in June of this year. The City has allocated \$500,000 to this project and we will be applying for State Revolving Loan Fund finances to help complete the project. Interest rates are low at this time and we should be ready to go by mid-summer.

Congratulations to all the area graduates and their parents this Spring of 2015. Work hard, plan well and give thanks daily for your many blessings. May you be blessed as you move into this next life adventure!

Mayor Rose Hanser



Public Works Department

Bryan Swan, Public Works Director



It looks like another winter has come and gone. The Public Works Department was prepared for another winter like we had last year but it never materialized. This winter the department put down 200 tons of sand and 35 tons of deicer. This is about 40% less than we used last year.

A mild winter is a good thing for the department but probably not a good thing for the farmers because so far it is shaping up to be a dry year. We could have another bad fire season if we don't get more moisture soon. We are already under a fire weather warning. The following weather data was reported this winter by our National Weather Service reporting station at the Water Treatment Plant.

	Avg Hi	Avg Low	Precip	Snow
Oct	64.5	38.5	.46	0
Nov	40.0	18.9	.92	8.6
Dec	38.3	19.2	.45	7.5
Jan	38.6	16.7	.65	9.6
Feb	39.2	16	.83	9
Mar	52.8	26.4	.15	T

The City has a construction project finishing up at the Water Treatment Plant. It is a DEQ mandated project that involves the rehabilitation of an old clarifier building. It will be used to treat the dirty water generated by the Water Treatment Plant during the filter cleaning (backwash) process before it is pumped back to the lake. The water will be returned to the lake cleaner than the water that is taken out. We expect the new clarifier to be in service by the middle of April.

As one project is finishing another will begin. The Sewage Lift Station Improvement Project will begin April 8th. These lift stations have far exceeded their designed lifespan and were identified by our engineering firm (KLJ) as deficiencies in our wastewater collection system. This is documented in our recently completed Preliminary Engineering Report (PER). The possible failure of the lift stations is being addressed now before a serious failure can occur. The Cherry Street Lift Station which is adjacent to the South Field Ball Park is being replaced and the Plum Court and Laramie Lift Stations are being rehabilitated. The work should be completed later this spring or early summer.

There is also an unplanned construction project expected to begin soon. Due to some sewer issues that are occurring in the Alder Court neighborhood it was discovered that a section of sewer main that runs underneath the railroad tracks was beginning to fail. It is not known when this main was originally put in but was probably part of the original town site circa the 1930s or 40s. The cost of replacing this main will be higher than a normal main due the expense of boring underneath the railroad tracks but this project needs to be done now to insure the health and safety of our citizens in that area.

We are just finishing up an engineering study of a storm drain problem on Castle Rock Drive. Depending on the findings of the study rehabilitation of the storm drain may be done this year.

With all the repairs being done on our water and wastewater system we do not have any street projects scheduled for this year. We plan on keeping our Dura-patch machine out repairing the pot holes as much as possible. Citizens are encouraged to report any potholes that might get overlooked. There are reports of cars that are not slowing down when the crews are out working on the streets. This puts them at serious risk. Please slow down to 15 mph or less when the men working signs are posted. We will have our Police Department issue tickets to those few who refuse to follow these simple rules.

We also plan on keeping our street sweeper busy. I have noticed quite a few vehicles and trailers parked on the city streets that rarely if ever get moved. In order for the streets to be properly cleaned and maintained all vehicles need to be removed. I would like to thank all our residents for their cooperation when the Public Works Department performs these duties

Bicentennial Library

Mary Kay Bullard, Director



The Friends of Bicentennial Library tried something new: The 1st Annual Friends of the Library Spring Craft Bazaar was Saturday March 28th at Isabel Bills Learning Center. This should prove to be a wonderful fundraising and community service activity as before registration even closed they had made enough money to fund one of the scholarships that they give out each year to graduating seniors. Not only do they offer Bicentennial Library support they also support Colstrip's youth with a scholarship sometimes two for each year's graduating class. This group is truly a class act and deserves our gratitude and support.

1,344. That is the number of patrons that used Bicentennial Library in February, the shortest month of the year. It is really wonderful that more and more people are starting to take advantage of their library system. The most popular programming was the talent show with 202 people attending, followed by Sweet Treats with 87 people attending that event. As of March 23rd, Bicentennial Library had 1050 visitors. The most successful program is Saturday Morning Movie with 48 patrons followed by an adult version of Piece of Pete's Pizza held in the senior's center, with 27 people.

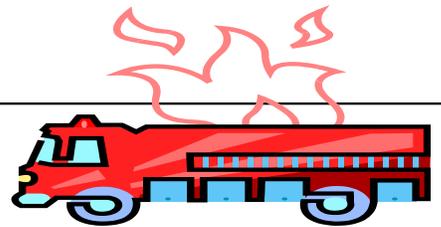
Bicentennial Library will have the Crumpled Paper's Readers and Writers group. In our March sessions we had a very shy writer and reader share some of her writing about her family. She was excellent! The theme for that session was more about family; another one of our more outgoing members shared a wonderful story about his dad. We practiced some interesting writing prompts including, describe yourself in a poem that is not true. If you have not stopped in on a session of our readers and writers group, you are missing out. We have a lot of fun. Remember, you don't have to bring something to read, if you don't want to. Our April sessions will be April 2nd and 16th at 5:30pm.

What do you know about the EBSCO data bases that we get through the state library? I found out recently that we can help you study for EMT exams, if you are so interested. Log onto our webpage and enjoy your discovery. Along the same lines, your library staff is pretty versatile: We can proctor tests, Jill can and has gotten people text books for summer classes for free. We have and are able to help patrons set up new devices. If you need to send a fax, we do that for a small fee of a dollar a page, unless its 1(800) number then we don't charge you. We helped people through this difficult tax season and we will continue to point people in the right direction when they have government related questions.

Bicentennial Library enjoys serving you and wishes to thank you for your continuing support, patronage and ideas.

Colstrip Volunteer Fire Department

Ryan Reid, Fire Chief



As I write this newsletter, spring is in the air. With spring and summer come wildland fire season. Last year's grass is still tall and the new grass has not grown enough to slow the spread of wildfire. Please be careful with fire as wildfire in spring wind can spread rapidly. I get statewide reports and spring fire is common. Also, please give the Fire Department a fighting chance to protect your property in case of fire. Leave a defensible space between your home and building and combustible grasses or bushes. If you have any question on this, please contact the Fire Department.

Your Fire Department has 27 Volunteer men and women that are training hard to be ready to respond and help. You, as homeowners, have done a great job this winter in making sure there are no fires. Thank you for your diligence in being careful with fire. I commend the Fire Prevention crew that goes to the schools and gives presentations. Their work is paying off.

It is always a good idea to check your smoke alarm batteries when the time changes. Smoke Alarms save lives.

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Schoolhouse History and Art Center

Lu Shomate, Director



The Schoolhouse is looking forward to all that Spring has to offer. We are already planning our Summer Program for the kids and adults. If you are looking for something positive and fun to do this summer please check out this exciting program with Tammy Venne, our Education Director. Classes are limited so you might want to sign up early. The flyers will soon be posted around town, or you can stop by and pick one up. The classes will begin Wednesday, June 10th.

In the month of April we will have in our Gallery "Bill Neumiller and his Nature's Art". If you don't know Bill, you will be thoroughly impressed with his talent. Bill has many facets to his Art; I can't wait to see it all hanging and displayed in our Gallery. Some of what we can expect would be Photography, Rocks, and his rustic art displays of prairie growth. Mark your calendar to come to the Schoolhouse to see Artist, Bill Neumiller, in April.

May will be an exciting month for us. Our fourth SHAC Scholarship Award will be presented. The artwork of all the applicants will be displayed in our Gallery. Board Members have worked extremely hard to encourage and assist continuing education for a creative minded CHS Senior. There will be a reception on Thursday, May 21st to honor all of the students that participated. Please join us in saluting all of our candidates.

In June we will host the 36th annual juried Southeastern Montana Traveling Art Show. This multi faceted exhibit represents professional and amateur artworks from across Montana and adjoining states. In the past some of our local artists have been, Scott Egan, Giesla Schneider, and Sharon Dinstel just to name a few. Of course, this will be the show we will have displayed for the Colstrip Days Festivities. Colstrip Days will be Friday, June 26th through Sunday, June 28th.

If you've driven by SHAC lately you've probably noticed our new look, especially in the back. There are benches for you to sit on donated by the CHS classes of 1960-1969, while you view the flower garden of bricks displayed in honor of people you have selected. If you haven't seen the rearranging of the bricks you will be impressed when you do. The story behind those bricks is Obert and Signe Rye, long time residents of Colstrip, loved their garden and Rosebud County with a passion. Signe always brought fresh flowers to church during the growing season. The Rye gardens were an envy to this community. Upon their passing, the Board of Directors of the Schoolhouse at that time recognized a beautiful garden area would complement our historic building in honor of the Rye's. To commemorate Signe, our garden consists of blooms of bricks that continue to flower every time a brick is purchased. If you would like to walk through our garden and see the many blooms we have placed there, please do so. If you have someone special you would like to remember as part of our treasured history let us know so we can send you an application for purchase of a brick.

SHAC will continue to bring positive choices to our community. The Board and staff are able to provide these services because of the generosity of the City of Colstrip, Montana Arts Council, our loyal members, and local businesses. Thank you for partnering with us! Through education we have been able to reach our youngest and our oldest community members. Each year our goal is to make our good better and our better best. We invite you to enjoy the opportunities at the Schoolhouse; you will always be a treasure to us!

Colstrip Volunteer Fire Department cont.

I would like to recognize the members of the Colstrip Fire Board. Many of the members have been on the board for years prior to Colstrip becoming a city. They do a great job of guiding and overseeing the Fire Department. Please thank them for their volunteer time. Chair Mike Myers, Ed Hatten, Greg Koczur, Rusty Batie, and Jackson Craig.

Be Careful with fire and have a safe spring and summer.