

City of Colstrip

August 2015

Mayor's Message



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

Council meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month unless rescheduled for a holiday.

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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Summer is nearly over: the grain fields have been harvested; a few areas have another cutting of hay; the fair has come and gone; and school is starting soon. I would say it has been a quiet summer but the few dramatic thunder/lightning storms we have had were far from quiet. The City's Water Treatment Plant took a hit on the electrical system. Our Public Works employees spent many extra hours to repair the damage. They continued to operate the system manually for several days until replacement parts could be installed. Thanks to their great efforts, there were no interruption in water service or flows.

THANK YOU, PUBLIC WORKS SUPERVISOR AND STAFF!



Please drive carefully in school zones, as our children will be starting school soon.

Speaking of water, the City recently had an ISO rating done which is part of a Public Protection Classification. The Fire Department, the Police Department Emergency Dispatch and the Public Works Department all worked together to provide the information to complete this study. ISO's Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS) lists a large number of items a community should have to fight fires effectively and assigns credit points for each item. Using those credit points and various formulas, ISO calculates a total score on a scale of 0 to 105.5. To receive certain Public Protection Classification (PPC™) ratings, a community must meet minimum criteria. After a community meets those criteria, the PPC depends on the community's score on the 100-point scale. Much like the A,B,C grades we are familiar with from school, 90-100=1; 80-90=2; 70-80=3; 60-70=4 on down to level 1. Again, the City has an excellent rating of 4. Very impressive for a small community.

GREAT JOB and THANK YOU, first to the FIRE CHIEF & VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, with Police Department and Public Works support.

The City Council, I and the Clerk/Treasurer have been working away at the budget for 2015-2016. Our budget year runs from July 1st, of each year to June 30th, of the following year. By the time you see this newsletter, the proposed budget should be available for public review, along with our capital improvement plan. Unlike many of the small communities in Montana, budgeting is less stressful for us, due to our large tax base. This allows the citizens of Colstrip many amenities that others do not have; a Police Department, snow plowing, street sweeping, sidewalks and more. I for one, am very thankful for being able to live in a safe, clean, well-maintained community.

This time of year, when many of our young people head back to school at home, at college or at the public schools, reminds me of the old patriotic songs that I learned as a child: My Country Tis of Thee, America the Beautiful, God Bless America, and the Star Spangled Banner. Even though it was not the Fourth of July, we sang them in school quite often; they were considered part of our education.

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Mayor's Message cont.

So as our families gear up for school, or work at home or outside the home, I would like to remember Irving Berlin's, God Bless America:

*God Bless America,
Land that I love,
Stand beside her and guide her
Thru the night with a light from above;*

*From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans white with foam,
God bless America,
My home, sweet home.
God bless America,
My home, sweet home.*

Mayor Rose Hanser

Public Works Department

Bryan Swan, Public Works Director



The Sewage Lift Station Improvement Project was completed this spring by Dick Anderson Construction and the whole project went very well. The Cherry Street Lift Station was replaced. The new building housing the controls can be seen adjacent to the Southfield Ball Park. The Plum Court and Laramie Lift Stations were refurbished with new piping, pumps, wet well covers, and controls.

We have the Alder Court Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project still in the works. This project will involve replacement of a main trunk line that is probably 60 or more years old and was part of Colstrip's original townsite. This line is in such bad shape it has contributed to a recent backup in the area. What makes repair of this main more difficult, than most, is that it requires boring under the railroad track. We hope to begin this project soon.

The City Council has recently given approval for the engineering firm of Kadrmaz, Lee and Jackson to begin design on the WasteWater Treatment Plant Upgrade - Phase 1. This project will be the first of a two phase project to repair our aging sewer plant and bring it up to standards. Although it has been well maintained it hasn't seen any major repairs in over 35 years and is worn out. We will make repairs now before a major failure of the plant can occur. We hope to begin construction next spring. With the repair of the Lift Stations, replacement of the Alder Court main and upgrades to the WasteWater Treatment Plant, this will put our sewage system in good shape.

On the clean water side of things an evaluation has been completed by KLI on the Zone 3 Water Tank located in the Castle Rock area. Due to its poor condition and the fact it isn't located at the proper elevation the conclusion was that it should be replaced. We are planning to begin design of the new tank this year and begin construction next year.

We are also working on a few other smaller projects in the water system at this time. The first is a study to determine the City's alternatives to remedy the pressure surge problem that occurs in our water distribution system whenever the high service pumps start or stop at the water plant. The surging puts undue stress on our water mains resulting in increased water breaks and damage to other equipment connected to the system. It also makes our system vulnerable to contamination due to the negative pressure that is on the opposite end of the pressure surge. The second study is of the water in our distribution system and to give the City alternatives for helping us improve water quality and to meet new regulations. The third is the combining of the Zone 1 and Zone 2 pressure zones and the elimination of the two Zone 1 water tanks located near the old MPC cabin. Colstrip's Water System was originally designed for a population much larger than we have now and this excess capacity leads to degradation of water quality and an increase in taste and odor problems. We hope to have this change in place later this year.

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Police Department

Cory Hert, Police Chief



The Colstrip Police Department hopes that all of you are having an enjoyable safe fun filled summer and that you enjoy the remaining weeks while they last!

The schools will be open again shortly and we ask that all of you are mindful of the young ones heading off to school; please be careful in the mornings and afternoons as our children are walking, biking and driving to and from our three schools and also pay attention to the reduced speed limits in those areas.

We have had a fairly quiet and uneventful past few months for the most part and we credit most of that to all of our community members for taking an active role in the community and doing their part to keep Colstrip safe and enjoyable for all of us. Our officers and dispatchers understand the importance of working hand in hand with our community members each and every day whether it is to resolve neighborhood disputes, solve criminal and suspicious activities or simply socializing with each other. We are more than happy to assist whenever and however needed and we thank you for the opportunity to be involved.

We hope to take a more active role in the area of drug enforcement in the upcoming months, we are fortunate to be partnered with the Eastern Montana Drug Task Force. This partnership has led to the arrest of two drug dealers within our community over the last few months and we don't plan to stop there. If you have any information that could be helpful involving these types of activities please let us know and we will make every effort to ensure these individuals are prosecuted appropriately.

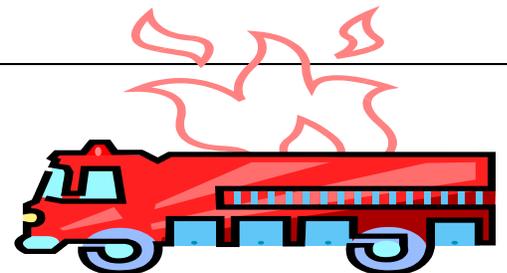
We are getting an increased number of calls on our local pests, the skunks and other animals are back so please try and keep your pet food inside as they will attract these animals. The police department does have several traps that can be checked out if you are experiencing issues in this area.

We would like to welcome our three newest members of the department; Monty McNearney comes to us from Washington State, he served over 20 years as a peace officer there and is a welcomed addition to our department. Steven Williams comes to us from Scobey, MT where he was the Undersheriff for Daniels County for the past year, he is also a welcomed addition to our department. Elizabeth DeSelms is our new 911 Emergency Dispatcher, she is doing a great job for us as well and is a great asset to the department.

Again, we hope you enjoy the rest of your summer days, be safe and please let us know if we can be of assistance in any way.

Colstrip Volunteer Fire Department

Rob Pontius, Fire Chief



There are some changes happening at the Colstrip Fire Department. Ryan Reid is preparing to retire from the Department. He has served the fire department for nineteen years. He was Fire Chief for eleven of those years. He has chosen to step down as Chief. This will allow him to advise the new Chief, Robert Pontius, during his last year on the Department. If you see Ryan around town, thank him for his years of service. Dade Allison is the new Assistant Fire Chief.

It is very dry, and fire conditions are extreme. If you plan on open burning, you must call 748-2211 to obtain a burn permit. The only exception to this rule is fire pits with spark catching lids. If your fire pit does not have a spark catcher, you have to have a burn permit to use it. To qualify for a burn permit, you must have a water supply (preferably a garden hose) at the burn, and it must be supervised by an adult until it is out and cold.

Bicentennial Library

Mary Kay Bullard, Director

Bicentennial Library had a very successful Summer Reading Program. I want to take a moment to thank the Super Librarians who worked so hard to make this year's program go well. Mindy Kohn planned all the activities, recruited donors, put together and hosted all programs, and chose all the cool prizes. Rachel Grafton worked on all the data bases tirelessly, kept up on records, and hand wrote all the book prize certificates as well as helped out at every afternoon activity. Jill Hanson is responsible for the cool packets and the books selected for kids. She also worked every afternoon activity and helped out with all the little and big extras. Autumn Stewart was our, whatever you need girl. Whatever we needed Autumn did a wonderful job anticipating those needs and helping out with what we needed done.



Autumn also ran a very successful movie in the park series. July 16th she showed Never Ending Story with 45 people attending. On July 30th she showed Sound of Music and 33 people attended. On August 13th she showed Jurassic Park. This was a fun summer treat that Autumn put together for our patrons and we are so glad that she did. Autumn will continue with Saturday movies even though the summer movie series has concluded.

It is with mixed feelings that we announce the resignation of Mindy Kohn, after August 6th. In her time with us, she has brought an exuberant energy and excitement to the children's program, coming up with topics and activities that were fun and entertaining for the children. Mindy demonstrated a friendly and approachable nature causing the children she interacted with to look forward to Story Time. Mindy's outlook will be missed by the other staff. We know that she will be missed by many of our patrons as well. Autumn will be continuing on with Story Time, so expect that to continue with a focus on reading and crafts. Please help us to encourage Autumn in sharing her style as she takes Story Time forward.

Bicentennial Library had 18,064 patrons this past fiscal year. We circulated 28,876 items and had 1,110 children attend our children's programming. We want to thank you for showing us how important we are to you by how consistently you use Bicentennial Library. It is our pleasure to have so many people enjoy the services we provide.

Bicentennial Library and Rosebud County are undertaking a pretty big behind the scenes project called a Strategic Plan. We are grateful to the members of our community who have decided to engage in this process with us. Representing Bicentennial Library will be Wendy Dennehy, Lu Schomate and Bill Neumiller. Representing Forsyth will be Mayor Dennis Kaptizke, Ginger Roll and from Treasure County Robin Weinmiester and Glenda Skillin-Robison. Our first meeting was August 26th in Forsyth. This is something new and exciting, so we are all pumped to see what our collective heads can come up with.

That should wrap it up for this newsletter. Thank you for your continuing use and support of Bicentennial Library.

Schoolhouse History and Art Center

Lu Shomate, Director

We are gearing up for the Fall season at the Schoolhouse. We hope to bring our Community some new and exciting advanced art classes. These classes would be led by our own Taylor Rowley. Taylor will be kicking off a new program called "The Art Attack". Watch for more news for this exciting opportunity as she works out an art schedule. We have also learned that many of you like to paint on canvas as a group and have gone all the way to Billings for this creative experience.

We are lining up an artist or two so we can offer this fun opportunity right here at the Schoolhouse. Once we have committed artists we will put together a registration so you can sign up right here at home to express yourself with paint and canvas.

Currently in our Gallery through the month of August we have Sharon Pahl Borla and Dixie Wilson. Both of these artists are local photographers. This show is amazing and has some award winning pieces for you to enjoy. Our September Gallery Show will be the



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Schoolhouse History and Art Center cont.

“Art of War” Exhibition. This is art work created by United States military veterans. As part of the Art War Project, artists who have suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder are featured in this show. These artists use art as an outlet for coping with their disorder. We hope you will be able to view this art work, this show will be up through mid-October.

We will begin reserving space for our 37th Annual Arts and Craft Fair. Mark your calendars for the 6th & 7th of November. If you are interested and you are not on our mailing list, contact us soon, these spaces fill up quickly. This is the Christmas kick-off. It’s hard to believe it will be right around the corner soon.

Have you checked out the back garden at the Schoolhouse lately? What a beautiful space for our brick garden. Signe’s Garden looks beautiful after her recent facelift. The bricks are in two different colors now, it’s so much easier to read the inscriptions. If you want to honor or remember a special occasion, why not purchase a brick for all time. Come walk down memory lane and read all the names and occasions celebrated in the cool evenings this Fall season.

Our gift shop continues to bring local artistry to our community. If you haven’t had an opportunity to visit, stop in to see what we are all about and support your local artists. We regularly go to market, so we have the latest and greatest at prices you can afford. If you are a local artist and would like to have a place to sell your artwork, stop in and talk to our Gift Shop committee, we would love to share our shop with you.

Don’t forget to check out our website www.colstripshac.org. Thank you Evan Stewart for all your help!! If you have suggestions for our website, please let us know. Your comments are appreciated.

As always, the Board and Staff at SHAC thank you for your patronage, your contribution through volunteering, your financial support through membership, your kind words when you stop in and your partnership in making Colstrip a wonderful community. Because of you and your participation, we can offer wonderful educational programs, speakers, share our history, and offer Gallery Shows to our communities for many years to come. And remember we are ADA Accessible too! Thank You Colstrip!!

Public Works Department cont.

The Water Plant was damaged on the afternoon of July 10th when an intense electrical storm came through Colstrip. The lightning damaged the control system requiring overtime to trouble shoot the problem and quickly devise a temporary control system. The plant operators rose to the challenge getting the plant back in operation in less than 24 hours. Parts were acquired and repairs made allowing the plant to be put back in normal operation in about 2 weeks.

Due to the mosquito problem we were experiencing earlier this summer we replaced our 15 year old fogger that was no longer doing the job. We purchased a new fogger with about 3 times more output than the old one. The fogger seems to be doing a much better job. We have seen a serious reduction in mosquitos since we began using it in mid-July.

The department has done a good job this summer patching holes and filling cracks in the streets. The Duro-Patcher purchased last year has proven to be a good investment and will definitely help some of our older streets. C&C Sealcoating has also been filling cracks in some of our newer streets. We don’t have any major street projects planned for this year but next year we are planning to repave Willow Avenue and then Homestead and Main a couple years later.

Planning, Building, Zoning & Code Official

Denise Sisson

The Montana State University Extension office has a free publication called "Montana Noxious Weeds". One can call the office at: 406-994-3273 to order this colorful and informative booklet. We do have a few copies of this booklet at the City of Colstrip office.

Today I would like to share a bit about Spotted Knapweed. This noxious weed blooms profusely in late summer and is common here in Colstrip. It has a "pinkish-purple flower" and has a good size taproot. It causes the soil to "sour" and can be a trial to get rid of. The beginning of September through October is the best time to spray for this invasive weed.

