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P. 4: OPINION: AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HASN'T COME



P. 7: PANTHER GIRLS, BOYS WIN SEASON'S FIRST TRACK MEET

THE MONITOR

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2026

Federal changes hit home

Forest Service and BLM reorg as fire season looms

By DAVID LEPESKA
Editor

The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, which oversee more than half a million acres of Jefferson County, are undergoing organizational restructuring as wildfire and recreation seasons begin.

The BLM last week unveiled its new Wildland Fire Service (WFS), uniting the Interior Department's previous six firefighting units in line with President Donald Trump's June 2025 executive order to consolidate the federal government's firefighting efforts.

"The Interior Department is committed to a holistic approach to addressing the

nation's wildfire crisis by balancing the effective wildfire response with pro-active efforts to reduce wildfire risk," Aaron Thompson, head of the Northern Rockies for the WFS, told *The Monitor*.

"The Fire Service will work in close collaboration with Interior's land management agencies to ensure fuels treatment, wildfire preservation strategies and post-fire recovery efforts continue to be fully in line with public land management goals," he added.

When Thompson and other WFS officials updated Montana's Environmental Quality Council on the new agency last week, several legislators questioned the

Continued on Page 3

New USFS logging unit aims to support timber economy

By DAVID LEPESKA
Editor

The U.S. Forest Service plans to create a logging unit across regional national forests, seeking to boost economic stability by committing to process timber only via local businesses.

The new Sustained Yield Unit – a concept created by 1944 federal law – would include 22 Montana counties and all of Helena-Lewis & Clark and Beaverhead-Deerlodge national forests, as well as most of Custer Gallatin.

Some 925,000 acres of harvest area, described in the draft plan as "timber emphasis lands," would include a broad crescent of BDNF in the Boulder

Mountains, stretching from Elk Park to Montana City. The USFS says the unit's creation is meant to align with President Donald Trump's March 2025 Executive Order to expand timber production.

Yet the draft plan (available on the USFS website) outlines no additional harvesting or any change to existing forest management plans. Under the plan, 75% percent of the area's target timber harvest, or an estimated 35 million annual board feet, would go to some two dozen timber-related businesses within the unit footprint.

In Jefferson County, Clancy's Marks

Continued on Page 5



Egg-citing times



Kids and their parents waited anxiously at the start line as Buck Herron gave final instructions for Jefferson City's annual Easter egg hunt on Saturday. Then, they were off! Prizes awaited at T'ings Tavern, which hosted the event. (Roger Reynolds/The Monitor)

New JHS track gets first test, honoring grad

By PIPER HEATH
Reporter

The wind whipped across Jefferson High's new all-weather track Friday afternoon, sending athletes reaching for sweatpants and jackets between events. Less than ideal conditions for a track meet, but for the Panthers, it was still a day worth celebrating.

On April 3, the Avery Stiles Memorial Invite honored the former Panther track star who passed away last August at age 23. The meet marked Jefferson High's first home meet in at least two decades – though longtime assistant track coach Mike Charlton said the last meet he recalled Jefferson hosting was in the 1980s – and the first competition on the school's newly completed track.

Stiles, a 2020 JHS graduate, was a state track champion who also earned a football scholarship to Montana Technical University in Butte.

"It's pretty cool to not only celebrate having our first track meet, but being able to dedicate it to him," said Cody Ottman, an assistant coach who handles sprints



4-H veterans aim to nurture happy pigs

By ELIZA DUBOSE
Reporter

Kicking off their fifth and fourth years of 4-H animal raising, Blake and Wyatt Nordlinder, 15 and 13 years old, respectively, welcomed four squealing piglets into their lives last month – two future show pigs and two buddy pigs for companionship.

"Pigs are very social creatures," Wyatt said as the boys danced around the scurrying piglets in a shed behind their Boulder Valley home. Wyatt added that the show pigs, about 4 months old, need their slightly younger buddies for "emotional support".

Spring has arrived, which means 4-H season has begun in southwest Montana. Of all the programs run by Boulder Outlaws 4-H, the local chapter of the national youth agricultural initiative, none has broader appeal than raising animals for the Jefferson County Fair.

"Our fair is a giant community event," said Outlaws president Maylea Dawson. "It brings people not just from within the community, but from out of the community."

Participation within the 300-member Jefferson-Madison counties 4-H has steadily increased in recent years, with Outlaws offering about 20 locally raised animals for sale at last year's fair.

"Everything really leads up to the fair," said Blake. "I'm

excited to see how well they can perform, what the judges think of them...I'd like to see the reward of all the hard work."

This is Blake's third year raising a pig, and Wyatt's second, but both have already won county fair grand champion with their hogs, in showmanship and market competitions.

After the Nordlinder boys shake hay onto the shed floor, the piglets root through their new bedding, grunting happily. The pig enclosure occupies about half of the shed, with the rest of the space dedicated to hay bales and feed pails. A wood plank covers an opening that will lead to an outdoor enclosure once the weather warms enough for the pigs to roam outside.

The boys bought the show pigs at Townsend's Braaten Show Pigs in early March, and their buddies a couple weeks later. At Braaten, buyers browse the previously priced animals and find their preferred choices. Braaten then picks names out of a hat to determine buyers' order for choosing their animal. The Nordlinder boys, who spent \$500 for their pigs, most of it saved up from last year's fair, felt confident they'd come away as winners.

Using knowledge from their 4-H course on judging swine, they looked for the perfect 'Coke bottle' shape judges seek: broad shoulders, narrow and deep stomach, and large hocks.



Continued on Page 7

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OUR MISSION: The Monitor serves the people of Jefferson County, Montana, reflecting their reality, informing their ambitions, and helping them navigate their shared future. It endeavors to provide authoritative, fact-based reporting that surfaces and explains issues at the heart of our community — exploring both urgent challenges and the responses to those challenges. It will hold power to account by demanding transparency, investigating wrongdoing, and revealing how what's broken could be fixed. The Monitor fairly represents a diverse range of perspective, not beholden to one path or another or to any politicians, political parties, or special interests.

A FRIENDLY TAX REMINDER

SECOND-HALF 2025 REAL ESTATE TAXES & FIRST-HALF MOBILE HOME TAXES ARE DUE JUNE 1.

Payments made in person must be made in the Treasurer's Office on or before 5:00 p.m. on June 1, 2026 for any taxes due to avoid penalty and interest.
Payments made by mail must be postmarked by the due date listed above to avoid return for penalty and interest.

To review your bill or make a payment on-line log on to www.jeffersoncounty-mt.gov/treasurer. Additional fees may apply for processing credit card payments. Paid receipts will be mailed only if a self-addressed stamped envelope is included.

THANK YOU!

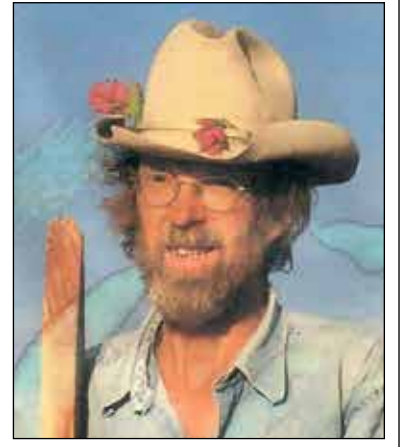
Terri Kunz, Jefferson County Treasurer
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MEMORIALS

Celebrating the life of Dean Grenz

November 21, 1945 - March 17, 2026

SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2026, 1 PM
Catholic Fellowship Hall, Boulder
Pot luck to follow



Public Meetings

COUNTY COMMISSION

Apr. 14, 2026 - Volunteer Hall, County Fairgrounds
zoom.com/join, Meeting ID 671-828-8589

- 9:30 Claims approval
 - 10:00 Discussion of Whitehall Transportation
 - 10:30 Meeting with various department heads
 - 11:30 Recess for lunch. **Re-convene at 1:30 p.m.**
- Pledge of Allegiance; Minutes; Reports; Correspondence; Calendar review; Commission reports; Opportunity for public comment
- Items for Commissioners action or review:**
- Time-specific:**
- 1:45 Chris Edgington - Montana Trout Unlimited - update on the Lower Boulder - Shaw Dam and Riparian Restoration and possible request to sponsor a DNRC grant
- Non-time-specific:**
- Appoint election judges and designate polling places
 - Proclamation - Recognizing Greater Helena Gives Day
- Website: <http://jeffersoncounty-mt.gov>

Jefferson County Tax Increment Financing Industrial District (TIFID) Advisory Board

Thursday, April 16, 9:30 a.m.
 Join in person at Clerk & Recorder's Conference Room in Boulder or on Zoom: Phone 1-253-215-8782 or zoom.com/join. Meeting ID 671 828 8589

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Public Comments
3. Review minutes
4. Budget review: Sunlight TIFID Finance and RMD Report
5. Reports: JLDC; Sunlight TIFID; Barrick update
6. Old business:
 - a. Update Regarding Selling the County Owned Warehouse Building in Sunlight Business Park - Commercial Market Analysis
 - b. Update on Sunlight Business Park Water and Wastewater Status
 - c. Update on Possible New Warehouse Building
 - d. Update on Sunlight Business Park Bylaws
 - e. Continue Discussion on Implementation of Revolving Loan Program for Sunlight Business Park
7. New business: Discuss Sunlight TIFID Annual Work Plan for 2026-2027
8. Other Items of Discussion
9. Next Meeting - Proposing Thursday, July 16, 2026

BOULDER CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

Monday, April 20, 5:30 p.m. - City Hall
 By Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3147501763>

- Call to order; Pledge of Allegiance; Roll Call**
- Approval of Minutes & Agenda; Requests of city officials for absences exceeding 10 days or participation by telecommunications; Communication for Public Record; Constituent issues - reports from the Mayor and Council members.**
- Consent Agenda to include:** Reports from Mayor; Ambulance; Fire; Public Works; City Court/Sheriff; City Attorney; City Clerk
- Correspondence**
- Committee Reports:** Planning Board; Chamber of Commerce
- Old Business:**
1. Discussion and Possible Determination on Reimbursing McCauley Ranches LLP for the Replacement of a Culvert at the Intersection of East 4th Avenue Muskrat Lane
 2. Discussion and Possible Determination on Signing a Revised Contract with Centron Services for Ambulance Collections
- New Business**
1. Public Hearing- Rate Increase
 2. Discussion and Possible Determination on Adopting Resolution 2026-04 Increasing Rates and Charges for the City of Boulder's Drinking Water System and Wastewater System
 3. Discussion and Possible Determination on Adopting Resolution 2026-05 Relating to the issuance by the City of Boulder of its \$3,638,000 water system Revenue Bonds (DNRC Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Program), Consisting of a \$1,819,000 Subordinate Lien Taxable Series 2026A Bond and a \$1,819,000 Series 2026B Bond; Authorizing the Issuance and Fixing the Terms and Conditions Thereof
 4. Discussion and Possible Determination on Approval of Pay App #10 for Phase 1, Schedule A Improvements, Water System Updates from Karnath Contracting
 5. Discussion and Possible Determination on Approval of Pay App #2 for Phase 2, Water System Updates from Bullock Contracting
 6. Public Hearing: Wastewater PER
 7. Discussion and determination on Council to award Water System Improvements -Schedule B per Morrison-Maierle's Recommendation to Award
 8. Public Hearing: First Reading of Ordinance 2026-01, Establishing procedures and requirements relating to construction, deployment and maintenance of cable networks within the rights-of-way of the City of Boulder
 9. Discussion and Possible Determination on Passing the First Reading of Ordinance 2026-01
 10. Discussion and Possible Determination Adopting Resolution 2026-06 Annexing Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch into the City Limits of Boulder
 11. Discussion and Possible Determination on Setting a Schedule for the 2026/2027 Budgeting Season
 12. Discussion and Possible Determination on Revising Call-out Fees for the Public Works Department
 13. Public Hearing: Vacating the Alley between 506 West Leslie and 303 North Wickes
 14. Discussion and Possible Determination on Adopting Resolution 2026-01 Vacating the Alley between 506 West Leslie and 303 North Wickes
 15. Discussion and Possible Determination on Adopting Resolution 2026-07 Authorizing Submission of Montana Coal Endowment Program Application
- Unscheduled Matters; Open Public Comment; Authorization to pay bills**
- Council Agenda suggestions for next meeting to be held on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.**

WHO TO CONTACT IN GOVERNMENT

All listings are accurate as of time of publication

FEDERAL	STATE	JEFFERSON COUNTY (cont.)	CITY OF BOULDER
U.S. Senator Steve Daines (202) 224-2651; (406) 443-3189 Tim Sheehy (202) 224-2644; (406) 441-1069 U.S. Representative Troy Downing (202) 225-3211; (406) 502-1435 Helena-Lewis & Clark National Forest Supervisor's Office: (406) 449-5201 Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest Supervisor's Office: (406) 683-3900 U.S. Bureau of Land Management Western Montana District Office (406) 533-7600	State Senator Becky Beard, SD-38 becky.beard@legmt.gov (406) 479-3048 State Representative Mark Reinschmidt, HD-75 mark.reinschmidt@legmt.gov JEFFERSON COUNTY County Commission Dan Hagerty dhagerty@jeffersoncounty-mt.gov (406) 225-4025. Cell: (406) 565-3162 Cory Kirsch ckirsch@jeffersoncounty-mt.gov (406) 225-4028. Cell: 949-3346	County Commission Craig Doolittle cdoolittle@jeffersoncounty-mt.gov (406) 225-4026; Cell: (406) 949-8187 Clerk & Recorder Ginger Kunz gkunz@jeffersoncounty-mt.gov (406) 225-4020 Treasurer Terri Kunz tkunz@jeffersoncounty-mt.gov (406) 225-4100 Sheriff Tom Grimsrud tgrimsrud@jeffersoncounty-mt.gov (406) 225-4075	Mayor: Rusty Giulio rsgulio@hotmail.com City Council Drew Dawson, president ddawson@cityofbouldermt.com Tim Graff tgraff@bresnan.net Patricia Lewis radon.gal@gmail.com Bear Taylor mtnomad2015@gmail.com City administrator Brian Bullock cityadministrator@cityofbouldermt.com (406) 225-3381

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BOULDER

Water work hits gas line, spurs evacuations

By PIPER HEATH
Reporter

A contractor working on Boulder's water system struck a natural gas line behind the senior center just off Main Street early Thursday, prompting the evacuation of nearby buildings until the line had been repaired a few hours later.

Following the contractor's 911 call at 11:19 a.m., Boulder-Bull Mountain Volunteer Fire Chief Mike Hecht arrived at 11:30 a.m. and found a six-by-eight-foot hole in the ground behind the senior center. "We did have gas spewing out of the pipe, natural gas," he said.

Hecht and his team evacuated four buildings in the area — the senior center, The Hair Depot, Montana Mountain Patches and a nearby residence. About 12 people were evacuated, according to Doug Dodge, Jefferson County fire warden and disaster and emergency services coordinator.

Hecht said the evacuation was necessary because natural gas that collects in an enclosed space can ignite from something as simple as a light switch or a furnace. "It collects in an area, and then you have that ignition probability," he said.

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office and an ambulance also responded. Third Street between Main Street and South Washington was closed for about an hour. A portion of an alley near the scene was also blocked.

"We just are conservative and make sure that folks are safe," Dodge said.

NorthWestern Energy arrived around noon and had repaired the line by mid-afternoon. Fire department personnel wearing air packs assisted NWE in clamping the line to stop the flow of gas, allowing evacuees to return by 1 p.m. NWE said the gas line had been struck and damaged by the contractor's machinery. No injuries were reported.



Dodge said the line struck was a feeder line, one that branches off the main supply line, and not the main line itself. According to City Administrator Brian Bullock, the line served the See N' Save thrift store.

Mayor Rusty Guilio said the contractor from Karnath Contracting in Cardwell was working on Phase 1 of the city's water system improvement project, at Well 2 adjacent to the senior center.

The city is installing a chlorine analyzer at the wellhouse and regulations require that

water passing through a chlorine analyzer drain to a sewer system. To meet that requirement, the contractor was installing a water line from the wellhouse to connect to the main sewer line, which required digging, installing piping and backfilling.

"All those gas lines, they have to be marked when they're digging," Guilio said. "This shouldn't happen, but sometimes it does."

Work on connecting the sewer system to the wellhouse will continue as planned, according to Bullock.

AROUND THE COUNTY

Three planning entities combined

Jefferson County has combined three planning entities into a single board.

At its Mar. 11 meeting, the County Commission voted to merge the Planning Board, Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment into a new Consolidated Land Use Board.

The functions of the three boards historically have overlapped: A planning board is meant generally to plan for a community's future; a zoning commission recommends changes to zoning regulations, and a board of adjustment is empowered to make certain exceptions to those regulations.

In practice, said Commissioner Cory Kirsch, the Zoning Commission and the Board of Adjustments have met only infrequently, and neither currently has any members. The merger, the County Commission reasoned, will make it easier to fill board seats.

The Commission appointed all the current Planning Board members — Chair Arica Klapan, Christina Binkowski, Diane Fitzgerald, Ryan Werner, Mike Ferriter, Roy Mulvaney and Susan Pullman — to serve on the Land Use Board, which was set to meet for the first time on Apr. 8..

Correction

An April 1 *Monitor* article about Boulder's recent data center event ("Public discussion highlights worrying data center demands") misspelled the name of an attendee who provided comment. She is Tammy Burk.

Federal agency reorg as fire season looms

Continued from Page 1

logic of the overhaul, particularly given last year's staffing cuts within the Interior Department.

"Frankly, everyone has a lot of serious questions about this new Wildland Fire Service," said Sen. Willis Curdy of Missoula, who worked as a wildland firefighter for nearly 40 years.

He had "spent a lot of time and energy removing the kinks and improving the efficiency and movement and use of wildland firefighting resources," Curdy added. "I want some real pinpoint examples of how this new system is actually going to be beneficial."

The WFS unifies wildfire programs previously managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the BLM, the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Office of Aviation Services, and the Office of Wildland Fire in an effort to reduce role duplication and streamline communications, fire response and resource

distribution.

"This unification is being implemented in deliberate phases to ensure continuity of operations and readiness for wildfire activity in 2026," said Thompson, adding that the department's firefighting capabilities remain fully in place, even as the WFS continues local hiring. "We're looking right now at staffing out the geographic area firefighting organizations."

As of early April, the hiring website USAJOBS listed 25 available wildland firefighter positions within the WFS and USFS. Yet this additional staffing is set to arrive amid broader cuts and concerns about employee morale at the Interior Department.

Last Thursday, the Interior Department announced another round of employee buyouts and early retirement offers, following the loss of about 20% of its workforce last year. The White House's proposed budget for fiscal 2027, released last Friday,

includes a nearly 13% funding cut for the Interior Department.

"2026 is shaping up to be one of the driest and most dangerous years for Western communities," Aaron Weiss, the Center for Western Priorities' deputy director, said in a statement. "This budget tells the people who do that work and live in the West that things are only going to get worse."

Since national forests come under the purview of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jefferson County and greater East Helena wildfires are often fought by USFS firefighters, in addition to state and local units. Yet with a combined 160,000 acres of BLM land, Jefferson and Lewis & Clark counties are likely to see WFS firefighters battling blazes in the coming months.

Thompson said the WFS is working to further align its wildland firefighting with the USFS through shared procurement, predictive services and research, and modern wildfire IT systems. At last week's EQC meeting,

Troy Heithecker, regional USFS forester for the Rocky Mountains region of the, noted that a feasibility study was underway to assess the possibility of moving USFS firefighting into the WFS.

For its part, the Forest Service last week announced a structural overhaul intended to bring key decision-makers closer to the forests and communities they serve. Most notable are the shifting of USFS headquarters from Washington, D.C. to Salt Lake City and the shutting of seven regional offices, which will be replaced by 15 state offices.

For Montana, the overhaul will mean the shutting down of Missoula's Northern Region office and the Rocky Mountain Research Campus in Bozeman and the opening of a new state office in Helena. A USDA press release, which provided no timeline for completion, said the restructuring aims to save taxpayer dollars and make the USFS more "nimble, efficient [and] effective."

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CROSSWORD: *Insects*

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Ira ____ of NPR
- Mr. Turkey
- Gives the boot
- Between octet and decet
- Ginger one
- Spherical bacteria
- Popular ursine meme star
- Public health org.
- Mountaineer's tool (2 words)
- *Fly larva
- *World's noisiest insect
- Comic book shriek
- Like some excuses
- Food safety org.
- Man Ray's genre
- Temporarily, legally speaking (2 words)
- Like unpleasant awakening
- 4th down kick
- Quarter-round molding
- Computer operating system
- Metal bar
- Mine passage
- Antonym of exhume
- Expert
- Strip of wood
- Throws
- It will
- Concurrence word

- Silo contents
- Romanian money
- *Bee's bounty
- *Boll weevil, e.g.
- Aquarium scum
- *Lightning bug trap?
- Brandish
- Part of a flower
- Bonanza find
- Courtroom excuse
- Whiskey grain, pl.
- Coniferous tree
- #52 Across, pl.

DOWN

- Econ. measure
- Good earth
- Wintour of "Vogue" fame
- Marsh plant
- Not impromptu
- Diplomat's asset
- Antediluvian
- Hajj destination
- Cocaine plant
- Got an A
- March Madness org.
- *Number of legs on an insect
- Famous Roman orator
- Giraffe's striped-legged cousin
- Mischief-maker
- Opposite of energetic
- * ____ fly, first living crea-

- ture sent to space
 - "I don't know," casually
 - #43 Across, pl.
 - * ____ beetle, world's strongest insect
 - *Shape of a ladybug or carpet beetle
 - Not tomorrow, not yesterday
 - Like basketball's final eight
 - *Lepidoptera members, not butterflies
 - Demi Moore and Bruce Willis, e.g.
 - Reason for suit
 - Tutu fabric
 - Duran Duran's 1984 hit, with The
 - "Monkey ____, monkey do"
 - Wiggle room
 - "Have a great time!"
 - Useful
 - Performance with acts
 - Lecherous look
 - "Betcha Can't Eat Just One" brand
 - Tea or beer
 - Hawaiian flower garlands
 - Major European river
 - Acronym, abbr.
 - "Roses ____ red"
 - Bad-mouth, slangily
- For crossword puzzle solution, see page 5

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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OPINION

An idea whose time has not come

By MIKE KORN

As you probably know by now, Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins last June announced plans to repeal the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule, which bars road-building and development from tens of millions of acres of national forest.

Rollins explained that rescinding the rule would “remove prohibitions on road construction, reconstruction, and timber harvest on nearly 59 million acres of the National Forest System, allowing for fire prevention and responsible timber production.”

A call for public comment followed in August, and, despite its short 21-day window, garnered more than 223,000 individual responses, with 90% to 99% opposed, depending whose count one uses. A draft environmental impact statement expected soon will again be subject to public comment, and few expect different results this time around.

The Roadless Rule is rooted in the 1960’s, when the U.S. Forest Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, began to shift its mission from growing trees, overseeing land and fighting fires to a broader approach aimed at multiple use, from commercial activity to wildlife and resource protection, recreation and more.

Public comments on the original 2001 proposal totaled more than 1 million and the USFS held some 600 public meetings, including 34 in Montana. Yet the administration now proposing revocation has yet to schedule a single public meeting on the matter.

Might that be because a 2018 Pew poll showed 75% support nationwide for roadless areas, or because two previous attempts at rescission failed? (The first within days of its January 2001 passage, when President George W. Bush took office and pushed to delay it, the second three years later, when the administration proposed a permitting process for roadless areas.)

Bringing the issue home, in Jefferson County, more than 147,000 acres are designated as inventoried roadless areas (IRAs). And as forest boundaries rarely align with county borders, these areas cross into Lewis & Clark, Powell, Silver Bow and Broadwater counties.

One of the largest, and most popular, of these roadless areas sits in the Elkhorn Mountains. Within the Elkhorn Wildlife Management Unit (EWMU), encompassing 175,000 acres and stretching into Broadwater County, 75,000 acres are roadless.

First proposed as a wilderness area in the late 1970s, the EWMU is the result of a compromise that created the national forest system’s first and only wildlife management unit. The EWMU has grown exponentially in popularity and support, providing extraordinary recreation (the Hunting District 380 elk permit is the state’s most applied-for permit), university research opportunities and school natural education classes.

One of the first restoration projects of westslope cutthroat trout occurred in the EWMU and its success has helped keep Montana’s state fish from being listed as

threatened. The EWMU has numerous historic resources, including archeological sites among the oldest in North America.

The EWMU also provides spectacular backcountry experiences, all within the roadless area and reasonably close to sizable population centers. Add in commercial activities such as grazing and limited mining, and the EWMU has succeeded through cooperative efforts between federal and state agencies, assisted by public input and support.

A related concern that has been largely absent from recent roadless discussions is the USFS’ intention, announced in September, to repeal the Travel Management Rule, which requires all national forests to “identify a transportation system that is environmentally and financially sustainable while meeting public needs.”

Some forests have been able to comply with this rule and make clear determinations regarding which



Photo by Colin Lloyd/Unsplash

motorized vehicles are able to use which routes and paths and at which times. The maps many of us use to navigate our national forests have been shaped by this rule. Yet these maps are now largely out of date, like that of the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest (BDNF), which includes sizable portions of Jefferson County.

Most of BDNF has lacked travel planning for some 40 years. The Forest Service and BDNF supervisors have made several attempts over the years, most notably in 2005, but those efforts have always been interrupted or fallen short.

Supervisors and the public know travel management is no overnight project, yet they are willing to invest the time and sweat to do it. Instituting a comprehensive BDNF travel plan is supported across the board by motorized and non-motorized users, grazing permittees,

special use permittees, county agencies, and residents within and beyond Jefferson County.

Yet last year saw Forest Service staff reductions and budget cuts, mixed messaging from Washington, DC, and then a proposal to revoke Travel Management, which would undoubtedly compound the impact of Roadless Rule rescission.

Thousands of miles of existing national forest roads that are already in serious disrepair, preventing access and reducing public safety. Some roadless areas are home to headwaters for nearby towns’ water supply, and new roadbuilding, combined with the existing sub-par roads, would likely imperil water quality at the tap.

Repealing the Roadless Rule would pose major risks to the EWMU and to roadless areas across Jefferson County, Montana and the nation – and still many questions remain unanswered. How will IRAs be managed once protections are removed? What of the Roadless Rule’s many invaluable exceptions, which detail how to address fire, water quality, and environmental concerns? And if no areas of our national forests are designated roadless, and our national forests lack travel management plans, will the result be a vehicular and commercial free for all?

Roadless Rule rescission also ignores the conclusion of study after study: that more roads means more wildfires. Forest Service researchers and numerous scientists have found that four out of five wildfires are human-caused, with most ignitions occurring near roads. If the objective is protecting our forests long-term, allowing more roads seems the wrong path.

Far better than wholesale and reckless repeal would be a thoughtful and comprehensive review. Circumstances have shifted over the past quarter-century due to years of drought, bouts of insect infestation, aging and evolving forests, a changing climate and a spike in users and uses.

Consider that Colorado and Idaho would be exempt from rescission because they have in recent decades devised and implemented their own in-state roadless rules. Through considerable hard work, countless public meetings and lengthy discussions over several years, these two states were able to accommodate a range of uses and maintain basic conservation values.

It’s not too late for Montana to begin down a similar path. That, however, is dependent on how the Forest Service’s new “reorganization” (see article on page TK) impacts its mission, scope of work and on the ground presence. That, and the degree to which the public is able to participate, should give us a roadmap to helping the Forest Service better manage our public resources.

The Roadless Rule and Travel Management need to stay in place, however we get there.

Retired after 30 years with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, including as Helena Area Coordinator, Mike Korn lives in Montana City and is vice-chair of the Elkhorn Working Group.

Those attack ads on rural health? Politics at its worst

By TAYLOR BROWN

Depending on where you live, you may have seen ads attacking conservative legislators for voting to protect rural health care. Let’s be clear about two things.

First, these ads are from D.C.-based, dark-money groups that are trying to mislead us and meddle in our local elections. Second, the legislators being targeted actually support President Trump, Governor Gianforte, and their efforts to protect rural health care and our communities.

These attacks are politics at its worst. When the bill to protect rural health care came before the Legislature in 2025, these groups were nowhere to be found. Now, they’re attacking the legislators who stood up for our small-town hospitals.

These are the same groups that opposed the property tax reforms that cut taxes for 80% of Montana homeowners. Why? Because these DC-based groups want a Californian with a vacation home to pay the same property tax as a Montana family who owns and lives in their home.

Now, they oppose protecting rural health care. With a headquarters 2,000 miles away, our little hospitals don’t matter to them. They don’t understand our core values, or how we take care of our neighbors.

Here, we help each other, so our communities are stronger. In Montana, our rural hospitals not only save lives but also are the largest employers in many of our counties. If their doors close, our neighbors lose their jobs, and our seniors lose their care. It is a conservative priority to keep these institutions strong, but don’t just take my word for it.

President Trump and Governor Gianforte understand this, providing a new way forward. President Trump’s “Make America Healthy Again” initiative is transformative, focusing on being proactive about our health, rather than just waiting to treat a disease. This is a common-sense approach that helps prevent disease and keep health care costs lower, and every conservative can get behind that.

One of the biggest wins for Montana

has been President Trump’s Rural Health Transformation Program. The Trump administration awarded Montana a historic \$233 million to help modernize our rural health care system. President Trump is investing in a stronger, more resilient rural health care system – with improved technology, better telehealth, and more providers to treat patients in our small towns.

President Trump’s leadership matches the bold vision we see here from Governor Gianforte, who’s led the way in making sure our health programs work for Montanans. When the governor protected rural health care in his 2025 budget and then signed the bill into law, he didn’t just sign a blank check. Instead, he and conservative legislators insisted on work requirements and personal responsibility. Conservatives believe that, for those who are able, work provides dignity. By focusing on a hand-up rather than a hand-out, we make sure the safety net is there for those who truly need it.

What Montana has done to protect rural health care and promote the dignity

of work was a central part of President Trump’s “One Big Beautiful Bill Act.” Our Senators Daines and Sheehy and Congressmen Downing and Zinke, all voted for it last year.

In 2025, 33 Republican state legislators stood with President Trump and Governor Gianforte to protect rural health care. They’re strong conservative leaders who understand and care about our rural communities, unlike special interest groups from D.C.

If you see wildly deceiving ads from dark money groups attacking your local conservative Republicans, don’t fall for their manufactured outrage. Instead, thank the 33 conservative Republican state legislators who are protecting our communities, our rural health care, and our way of life.

Taylor Brown is a long-time Montana broadcaster and rancher. A Republican, Brown represented parts of Yellowstone, Treasure, Rosebud, and Custer counties in the Montana Senate from 2009 to 2016.

THE MONITOR

SERVING THE FUTURE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY

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Letters policy: The Monitor welcomes views from our readers. Letters to the editor should be timely, respectful and factual. Letters accepted for publication may be edited for clarity and length. Submissions must include the writer’s full name and community for publication, as well as an email address and phone number. Letters can be emailed to david@boulder-monitor.com, mailed to P.O. Box 66, Boulder, MT 59632, or dropped off at 104 W. Centennial in Boulder.

OUTDOORS

New USFS logging unit aims to support timber economy

Continued from Page 1

Lumber and Marks-Miller Post & Pole are included, along with Montana Mobile Cabins in Whitehall. In Lewis & Clark, Lincoln's L&L Sawmill and Bouma Post Yard, some 60 miles north of Helena, made the list.

Speaking for the Governor's Office at the Forest Service's April 1 Helena event on the plan, Amanda Kaster, director of Montana's Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, expressed the state's strong support.

"The proposed state sustained yield unit represents a forward-looking approach, one that builds stability for forest industry jobs and helps ensure that timber harvested from Montana forests continues to support Montana communities," she said.

The businesses listed in the plan would still need to competitively bid for Forest Service timber; inclusion only assures they would be considered for timber contracts. Steve Marks, head of Marks Lumber, and Gary Marks, president of Marks-Miller Post & Pole, spoke jointly to *The Monitor* on Monday.

Gary viewed the plan's promise to timber businesses as largely meaningless because transport beyond the yield unit would be too costly. "No one in their right mind would haul it outside of that area, it's too far," he said, adding that he expected little change to his firm's Forest Service output.

The draft plan estimates that the unit would directly support 192 jobs per year over the next decade, plus an additional 225 jobs via economic ripple effects. But the Marks saw the yield unit's harvest plan as inadequately ambitious.

A single tree produces about 50 board feet, they explained, while the Forest Service is promising 35 million board feet across nearly a million acres. "There's not enough output for that amount of land," said Gary. "That 35 million, that's about 35 board feet per acre, which isn't even equivalent to one tree per acre."

Without adequate annual sales, timber firms are unable to make longer-term spending plans. At the April 1 hearing, Craig Kidwell, regional timber contracting officer for the USFS, highlighted the closures of many Montana timber businesses in recent decades, which he said, "significantly harmed the rural communities those facilities

were located in."

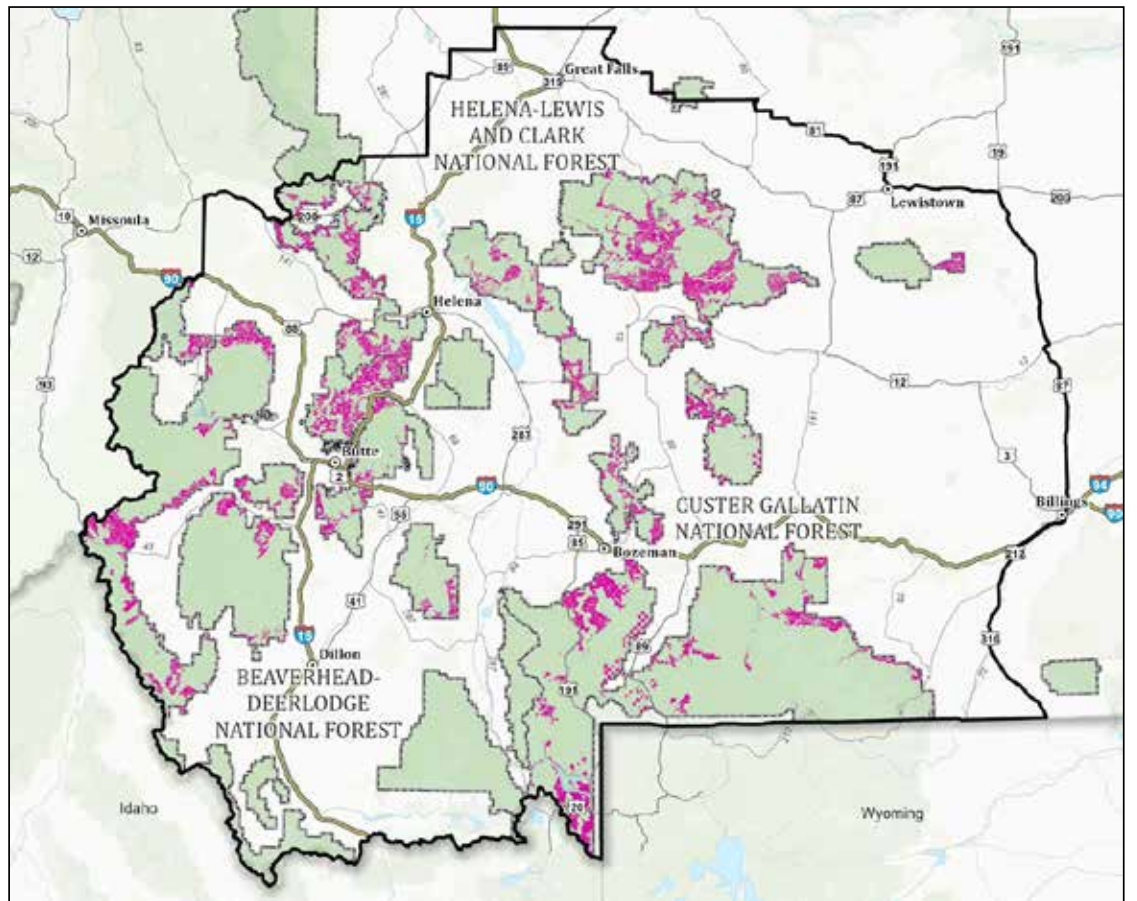
Steve Marks cited the early 2024 closure of Missoula's Roseburg Forest Products, which manufactured particle board, plywood and more. "That was a huge hit," he said. "Instead of hauling that stuff 100 miles we now have to haul 350 or more miles, and given the price of fuels in the last month, it's crippling – and not just for our business."

Continuing forest mortality due to Douglas Fir bark beetle, Spruce budworm, and mountain pine beetle infestations is a major problem, Marks added. And at the April 1 meeting, Nick Horn, outreach forester with Sun Mountain Lumber in Deer Lodge, pointed out another concern: the plan lacks a commitment to backfill timber sales lost to litigation objections and delays.

Just in the past month, two lawsuits, one near Whitefish related to lynx habitat, another in the Sapphire Mountains linked to grizzly habitat, have halted Montana logging projects. Given these concerns, the Marks recommended a broader, more comprehensive treatment and harvest plan that would provide up to 150 million annual board feet.

"We've got to have more volume to keep our infrastructure intact," said Steve. "If we lose that infrastructure, the Forest Service has lost the tools it sorely needs to treat the acres that they so dearly need to take care of."

One way to increase volume would be for the Forest Service to add yield unit areas the plan



A map of the proposed Montana Tri-Forest Federal Sustained-Yield Unit, outlined in black, shows national forest areas in green and "timber emphasis land" in pink. (Courtesy U.S. Forest Service)

identifies as "may be suitable for timber production" and lands near the Continental Divide and other trails to the list of harvest areas. Chiara Cipriano, HLCNF public affairs officer, said these areas could be considered for timber removal following evaluation.

"While most of the expected timber volume will come from the timber emphasis lands already shown on the map," she said, "harvest from these other areas remains possible if it

meets all project-level and forest plan requirements and management considerations."

Barb Cestero, Montana director at the Wilderness Society, feared that given the Forest Service's recent staff cuts, a potential over-emphasis on logging could be problematic.

"The economic well-being of today's public lands communities stem from much more than timber, including outdoor recreation, agriculture, wildlife, clean water, and the simple connection

to nature," she said in Helena. "Without additional capacity for the agency to do timber projects, resources and staff could be diverted from these other programs with negative impacts on overall stewardship of the three national forests."

The Forest Service is accepting written comment on its yield unit plan through April 10 at SM.TriForestSYU@usda.gov, or mail to HLCNF, c/o Sharon Scott, at 2880 Skyway Drive Helena, MT 59602.

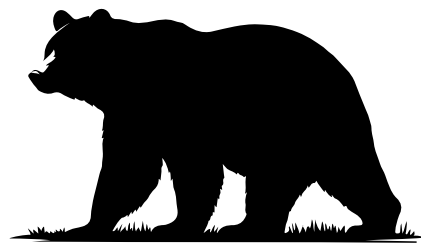
CROSSWORD ANSWERS

See puzzle on page 3

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SAVVY SENIOR

Low-cost smartphone plans for budget-minded seniors

Dear Savvy Senior,

What are the absolute lowest-cost smartphone plans for seniors who mainly talk and text but need a little cellular data for email and occasional use? I'm currently paying \$40 a month and hoping to cut that down.

—Looking to Save



Jim Miller

Dear Looking,

You're asking a smart question. Many seniors pay far more for smartphone service than they actually use. If most of your phone activity is calls, texts, email, and

light web browsing, there's usually no need to spend \$40 or more a month. The good news: plenty of low-cost carriers now cater to light users who want reliable service without the extra cost.

The cheapest plans today mostly come from mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs) – smaller carriers that lease coverage from major networks like T-Mobile, Verizon, and AT&T. Because they don't run their own towers, MVNOs can offer basic service for a

fraction of the cost of major carriers, while still providing nationwide coverage. Here are some of the best options available now.

Cheapest Wireless Plans

According to Consumer Reports, Mint Mobile is a top value among low-cost smartphone plans. For \$15 per month, you get unlimited talk and text plus 5 gigabytes (GB) of data. The catch: you

If most of your phone activity is calls, texts, email, and light web browsing, there's usually no need to spend \$40 or more a month.

pay for a full year upfront – \$180 plus taxes – but for seniors comfortable paying annually, it's a smart way to lock in savings. Mint runs on T-Mobile's network and works with most unlocked phones.

If you want a similar plan without the upfront commitment, T-Mobile Connect is worth a look. For about \$15 per month, you get the same 5 GB of data and unlimited talk and text, with no contract and the flexibility to switch plans month to month. It's an easy, low-commitment option on the same reliable T-Mobile

network.

For seniors who barely use their phone, Ultra Mobile's PayGo plan is the absolute cheapest option right now. At just \$3 per month plus fees, it includes 100 minutes, 100 texts, and 100 MB of data, with extra usage costing only a few cents per minute, text, or MB. It's ideal for anyone who mainly needs a phone for emergencies, and it also runs on T-Mobile's reliable network.

Tello is another flexible option, with plans starting at \$8 per month for 300 minutes, unlimited texts, and 2 GB of data. You can easily add more minutes or data in small, inexpensive increments, making it ideal for seniors who want control over their costs.

Finally, US Mobile offers a plan starting at \$10 per month (paid annually) for unlimited talk and text plus 4 GB of data. Simple, affordable, and straightforward, it's a solid choice for seniors who want coverage without extra bells and whistles.

Lifeline Program

If your budget is especially tight, be sure to check into the federal Lifeline Assistance Program. Lifeline provides a \$9.25 monthly discount on phone or internet service.

You may qualify if you receive benefits such as Medicaid, SNAP (food stamps), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), public housing assistance, or Veterans Pension. You may also qualify based on income alone if your household income is below 135 percent of the federal poverty level – currently \$21,546 for one person or \$29,214 for two.

To learn more or apply, visit lifeline-support.org. If approved, you can choose from participating providers in your area, and in some cases even apply the discount to service you already have, if your provider participates.

Before switching plans, make sure your phone is unlocked and compatible with the new carrier's network. A quick compatibility check on the provider's website can help ensure a smooth transition and keep your savings on track.

Send your questions or comments to questions@savvysenior.org, or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.

CLASSIFIEDS

Find a job. Rent an apartment. Sell your car. Classified advertising gets it done.

Ads in this section cost \$10 for the first 15 words, then 10 cents per word. Advertising must be received by 5 p.m. Friday to appear in the following week's paper. All must be prepaid unless otherwise arranged prior to advertising. Accounts which require billing will be charged an additional \$2 per billing. The **Monitor** reserves the right to edit or reject any ads. **To place ads:** Go to <https://www.boulder-monitor.com/place-an-ad/> Or email ads@boulder-monitor.com; call (406) 225-3821; or deliver to the **Monitor's** office at 104 W. Centennial.

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THE MONITOR

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The Jefferson County Solid Waste Department is seeking seasonal/on-call site attendants to cover shifts at the various collection sites for the summer seasons. These positions will assist the public with solid waste, screen for hazardous waste, writes invoices for charges and record data. Must be able to perform manual labor and lift a maximum of 75 pounds routinely. Must be able to work in adverse weather and available for call-outs. Starting salary is \$19.98/hour. County applications are available from Solid Waste District at 406-225-4159

or Kellie Doherty, HR, PO Box H, Boulder, MT 59632 or call (406) 225-4010, or visit our web-site for on-line application at www.jeffersoncountymt.gov. Incomplete applications materials will not be processed. Jefferson County may use the following factors to determine whether an applicant meets the qualifications for this position: review of application materials, past work performance, reference checks and structured oral interview. Jefferson County is an equal opportunity employer.

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AUCTIONS, SALES

ESTATE SALE
Saturday, April 11 & Sunday, April 12, 9 am-4 pm both days. 310 E. 3rd Ave, Boulder. Help clear out the house and the garage. Donations only. All proceeds will go to the Boulder-Bull Mountain Volunteer Fire Departments and the Boulder Carousel in honor of Les and Shirley Vossler.

LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE JUSTICE COURT, STATE OF MONTANA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF JEFFERSON
Ridgeline Rentals and Adventures LLC, Plaintiff, v. Matt Greenwood, Defendant. Cause No. CV-465-2025-0000229-CO Hon. Steve Andersen
ORDER FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION
State of Montana sends greetings to Matt Greenwood.

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the Complaint in this action which is filed in the Office of the Clerk of this Court, and to file your answer and serve a copy thereof upon Plaintiff's attorney within twenty (20) days after the service of this Summons, exclusive of the day of service, and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the Complaint. This action is brought for the purpose of recovering damages related to your rental of a UTV from Plaintiff.

Reference is made to the Complaint on file in the office of the clerk and the above-entitled Court for full particulars.

WITNESS my hand and seal of said Court, this 4th day of March, 2026.
Ryan A. Ballard
Vicevich Law
3738 Harrison Ave.
Butte, MT 59701
Telephone: (406) 782-1111
ryan@vicevichlaw.com
State Bar of Montana No. 14510
Attorney for Plaintiff

Legal 26-032 Published in **The Monitor** March 25 and April 1 & 8, 2026 MNAXLP

NOTICE OF ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION

Notice is hereby given by the undersigned Clerk of Clancy School District No. 1, Jefferson County, State of Montana that the Annual School Election will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2026, by mail ballot. Ballots may be returned to the following locations, at the following times:

Location Prior to Election Day: Clancy School Main Office, 18 Clancy Creek Rd, Clancy 59634 and Hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm
Location on Election Day: Clancy School Main Office, 18 Clancy Creek Rd, Clancy 59634 and Hours: 8:00 am to 8:00 pm

Electors will consider the following issues at the election:
• Two (2) Trustee(s) to be elected for a three (3) year term.
A qualified registered elector who

LEGAL NOTICES

will be absent from the district during the time the election is being conducted may: a) vote in person in the election administrator's office as soon as the ballots are available and until noon the day before the ballots are scheduled to be mailed; b) make a written request, signed by the applicant and addressed to the election administrator, that the ballot be mailed to an address other than the address that appears on the registration card. The district clerk/election administrator's office is located at:
18 Clancy Creek Rd, Clancy 59634
If you miss this regular registration deadline (30 days prior to the election), you may still register for the election by showing up at the county election office by noon on the day before election day. The late registration certificate may be exchanged for a ballot at the school election administrator's office until the close of polls on election day. The county election office is located at:
102 S. Monroe St., Boulder 59632
A late registrant may obtain a ballot on election day at the following location:
18 Clancy Creek Rd, Clancy 59634
DATED this 26th day of March, 2026
District Clerk: Jennifer Milton

Legal 26-035 Published in **The Monitor** April 1, 8 & 15, 2026 MNAXLP

Patricia Klanke
Montana State Bar No. 13182
Drake Law Firm, P.C.
27 Neill Ave, Ste. 200
Helena, MT 59601
Telephone: (406) 495-8080
patricia@drakemt.com
Attorney for Petitioner
MONTANA FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT, JEFFERSON COUNTY
In re: the marriage of Lisa Caldwell, Petitioner, and Timothy Caldwell, Re-

spondent. Cause No. DR-22-2026-0017.
SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION
NOTICE TO: Respondent Timothy Caldwell.

You are named in a petition for dissolution of marriage. Unless you respond in 21 days, the court may decide against you without you being heard and give Petitioner everything asked for in the petition. You must submit your written response within 21 calendar days. The 21-day period starts the day after the last date of publication of this notice. If the final day falls on a weekend or court holiday, you may file your response on the next business day.
You must file your written response with the Clerk of the Fifth Judicial District Court, P.O. Box H, Boulder, MT 59632, and serve a copy of your answer on the Petitioner.

Dated this 30th day of March, 2026.
(Seal)
/s/ Kathy Stein, Deputy Clerk of Court

Legal 26-040 Published in **The Monitor** April 8, 15 & 22, 2026 MNAXLP

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of County Commissioners, Jefferson County, Montana, will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, April 21st at 1:45 p.m. at the Volunteer Hall at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds. The hearing will be held concerning the Commission's intent to sign a contract to purchase the Boulder Health Clinic building. Any person may attend the hearing noticed herein and may comment on the proposed purchase. A final decision will be made at the May 5 Commission meeting.

Legal 26-041 Published in **The Monitor** April 8 & 15, 2026 MNAXLP

AUDIT PUBLICATION STATEMENT

An audit of the affairs of Jefferson County has been conducted by Strom & Associates, PC. The audit covered the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025. Section 2-7-521, MCA, requires the publication of the following summary of significant findings.

Summary of Significant Findings
The audit report for Jefferson County for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, contains an Independent Auditor's Report on the County's basic financial statements. The report issued for the fiscal year ended 2025 contains unmodified opinion(s).

The audit report also contains several other auditors' reports. The following is a listing of the reports and a summary of the findings included in each. This is only a summary and is not intended to be used as an audit report.

1. Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards. This report contains the following findings:
• 2025-001 Interfund Transfers

2. Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program and Report on Internal Control Over Compliance Required by Uniform Guidance. This report contains no findings.

3. Report on Prior Audit Report Recommendations. This report summarizes the findings from the prior audit report (and management letter, if applicable), and the status of those findings.

Public Inspection of Audit Report
The complete audit report is on file in its entirety and is open to public inspection at the County in the Clerk and Recorder's Office.

Legal 26-042 Published in **The Monitor** April 8, 2026 MNAXLP

STATEWIDE ADVERTISING

EXTENSION AGENT – Agriculture, Natural Resources and Horticulture in Richland County, Sidney, MT. Full time. Exciting job with lots of autonomy! Will develop, implement and evaluate Extension programming in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Horticulture. Complete information and to apply: www.montana.edu/extension/careers. Equal Opportunity Employer, Veterans/Disabled

HEAD HOUSEKEEPER, Northern Montana. Head Housekeeper needed for large private ranch estate in Teton County, Montana. Oversee cleaning operations, laundry, seasonal staff. \$35-\$37.50/hour, benefits, housing provided. Apply at www.mahlermatch.com.

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SPORTS

Panther boys, girls win first meet; Tennis opens



John Quigley, left, christened the new "Stiles Pit," named after former JHS champion Avery Stiles, by winning the high jump. McKinleigh Doherty, right, soared 18'9.75" in the long jump, easily a personal best, to take first in that event. (John Smith/The Monitor)

What a day it was at Jefferson High on Apr. 3 as the Panthers christened their new track with the Avery Stiles Memorial Invite to open the 2026 track and field season. It was chilly and blustery and very, very warm, all at once.

SPORTS PLUS



Dan Sturdevant

Jefferson's boys and girls both celebrated their first home meet in decades by taking first place. The boys scored 130.33 team points, besting Manhattan, 111.5, and Three Forks, 73.

Amid the strong overall results were some impressive individual performances. Johnny Quigley took the high jump with 6'7" — besting last year's state championship mark of 6'6" and nearly equaling the JHS school record of 6'9" set by Stiles himself. Quigley also won the long jump with 21'3", another State-worthy mark.

And in the girls' long jump, sophomore McKinleigh Doherty soared 18'9.75", eclipsing her previous personal best by nearly two feet and last year's State best by a foot. Doherty also won the 100-meter dash in 12.70 seconds, another personal best.

The Panthers' other results hinted at a promising season for this young squad. In the boys 100, freshman Xavier Wetzel

took 2nd in 11.87, with Zeke Dove 3rd, 11.92, Tyler Frydenlund 5th, 12.00, Caleb Morris 6th, 12.02, and Camden Redfield 10th, 12.17. Wetzel also placed 2nd in the 200 at 23.68, with Redfield 6th, 25.45, and Dylan Conner 8th, 26.58. Colin Gallagher finished 6th in the 400, 1:00.82.

McKenon Boyd won the 800 in 2:08.12, with teammates Bridger Harris 3rd, 2:14.87. In the 1600, Pierce Ward was 6th, 5:22.29, and Blake Nordlinder 10th, 5:47.33. And Calvin Gillmore took 2nd in the 3200, in 12:31.16.

The Panther boys won both their relays. Richard, Dove, Morris and Frydenlund took the 4x100 in 44.68, a strong early-season time. And Quigley, Colten Thornock, Colin Gallagher and Harris won the 4x400 in 3:45.85.

In the field events, Andrew Rodriguez finished 11th in the shot put with a throw of 34'4". Logan Frydenlund was 4th in the discus at 112'6.5". And in the javelin, Tyler Frydenlund placed 5th, at 135'7", Logan Frydenlund 6th, 132'11", and Tyzer Zody 8th, 122'8".

Thornock placed 2nd to Quigley in the high jump at 6'2", with Tyler Frydenlund 3rd, 6', Wetzel 4th, 5'10", Spencer Bolles 7th, 5'8", and Cobe Burnett 9th, 5'6". Thornock was 6th in the long jump, 19'8", Wetzel 7th, 19'6.75", Tyler Frydenlund 9th, 19', and Redfield 10th, 18'11.5". Cooper Mikesell won the pole vault at 13', with Wyatt Mosher 4th at 9'.

For the Lady Panthers, Ryleigh Doherty raced to 3rd in the 100, 13.12, with Allie Muffick 5th, 13.90, and Kinsley Talley 12th, 14.50. Josie Oxarart placed 2nd in the 100 hurdles, 18.21, with Emma Good

4th, 20.83, Marlee Sarchet 7th, 21.99, and Madelyn Zawacki 10th, 32.64. Jefferson's Oxarart, Allie Muffick, and Ryleigh and McKinleigh Doherty took the 4x100 relay easily in 51.04.

Not unexpectedly, the runners from last fall's championship cross country team put in a fine performance in the distance events: Peyton Stearns won the 400 in 1:05.24, with her teammate Juliet Bell 2nd, 1:09.82. Ava Carey won the 800 in 2:43.91, with Bell again 2nd in 2:44.66. Stearns took 3rd in the 1600, 5:46.02, while Carey was 5th, 5:58.28, and Dawson 6th, 5:59.59. And Willow Runde finished 6th in the 3200, 16:21.27.

The Panthers swept the top five spots in the shot put, with Allie Muffick winning at 34'9", followed by London Ostby, 33'1", Brianna Layng, 31'4", Josie Oxarart, 30'6", and Quinn Michaud, 30'1". Katie Maus was 9th, 27'3". Ostby won the discus with a throw of 108'11"; Maus was 4th, 88'3.5", Layng 7th, 78', and Michaud 9th, 74'1.5". And in the javelin, it was once again all Jefferson: Muffick threw 129'8" for the win, with Layng 2nd, 99', Oxarart 3rd, 96'9", and Genna Strozewski 4th, 83'7". Zawacki was 7th, 74'9", and Michaud 9th, 71'2".

Ryleigh Doherty placed 2nd behind McKinleigh in the long jump at 15'6.5"; Parker Layng was 3rd, 14'6.75", Kinsley Talley 4th, 14'6.25", Serene Fox 7th, 13'4.75", and Olivia Dean 9th, 12'10". Ryleigh Doherty also won the high jump at 4'6", with Addison Rieder 3rd, 4'2", and Fox 5th, 4'2". Parker Layng was 2nd in the triple jump, 29'1.5".

A terrific start to the spring.

Tennis aces

Meanwhile, the Panther tennis teams opened their season Thursday in Great Falls. The boys' doubles team of Izaak Luhrsen and Hunter Heintz lost to John/Kelton of Fort Benton 4-8, and Austin Lachney and Hudson Hill lost to Fort Benton's Brooks/Cooper, 1-8, Hudson Hill lost to Brooks of Chester-Joplin-Inverness, 1-8, and Austin Lachney defeated Everett of CJI, 8-0.

The girls number-one player, Bailee Silvonon, defeated Trinity of CJI 8-0, and Paetyn Templet of Fort Benton 6-0. Teagan Silvonon beat a CJI player, 6-0, and lost to Jacey Brunette of Townsend 4-6. Evelyn Hansen defeated Ali Good of Fort Benton 6-1 and Chloe Flynn of Townsend 6-3.

In doubles, Evelyn Hansen and Caia Dellwo lost to Tori/Reese of CJI 5-8; Lainey Wilson and Avery Wade defeated Rylee/Mariah of CJI, 8-5, and Kailyn/Grace of Fort Benton 6-1. And Wade and Dellwo lost to Elizabeth/Cora of Fort Benton 2-6.

The tennis teams have a packed week ahead. They'll take on Superior and Loyola on Thursday in Missoula, then travel to Belgrade Friday to face Three Forks, Townsend Granite and Red Lodge.

Jefferson's golf squad was scheduled to play at Cottonwood on Tuesday, then at the Old Baldy Invite in Townsend on Friday. The Panthers will host the JHS Invitational at Green Meadow Country Club in Helena on Apr. 13.

The track and field team will be in Hamilton on Saturday. Jefferson will host a meet on Apr. 24, and volunteers are needed; contact Sarah Layng at sarah.layng@jhs.k12.mt.us if you can help.

JHS hosts first meet on new track, honors grad Stiles

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Assistant coach Mike Ottman, who handles long jump, triple jump and high jump and has coached at JHS since 2014, described Stiles as level-headed, joyful and relentlessly driven.

"Always smiled," he said. "Everything he did was 110%."

Mike was with Stiles at the 2019 state meet when Stiles won the long jump title with a distance of 22 feet and 3 inches, on his final attempt of the day.

"That's just the type of competitor he was," Mike said. "It took him to his last jump. That speaks to his drive, not just in sports, but in life."

As the afternoon wore on and the wind settled some, the sun pushed through the clouds, warming athletes and attendees. Sophomore McKinleigh Doherty, in her second year of track at JHS, posted an impressive long jump of 18 feet, 9 and three quarter inches.

"I'm very proud of myself," she said, preparing for her next event.

Junior Ryleigh Doherty said having a home meet changed the feel of the day entirely. "[It's] just nice not to have to sit on a bus for four-plus hours," she said.

That was a common refrain. With the old cinder track, Jefferson could not host meets because the surface did not meet all-weather requirements. For relay work, the Panthers sometimes had to drive to East Helena to practice at Vigilante Stadium.

The old track also ran 400 yards rather than the required 400 meters, lanes had to be chalked by hand and the long jump runway was a repurposed conveyor belt. When the weather turned, practice was moved inside, with athletes running sprints through the school hallways.

Now the school has marked lanes, a proper runway and a surface that holds up through rain and snow. Athletes are finally able to wear spikes and train with blocks.

The new track was funded through a 2021 bond issue that raised more than \$14 million for a Jefferson High building expansion. Roughly \$1.5 million in remaining bond funds went toward resurfacing the track, regrading and reseeding the football field, relocating the long jump pits, installing a javelin pit and making other stadium improvements.

The project was completed



Family members of Avery Stiles, who was honored at Jefferson High's first meet on its new track. From left: Avery's father Eric Stiles, sister Hailee Stiles, cousin Sienna Engstedt, grandmother Eileen Valdez, and stepmother Danielle Young. (John Smith/The Monitor)

during football season last fall, with cross country the first team to train on it.

Jefferson's track program has grown considerably since Mike Ottman arrived in 2014 with eight boys and six girls. More than 70 athletes turned out for the team this spring, the most in several years, according to Layng. Many of them had never

seen Stiles compete, but they ran in his memory anyway.

As the sun held steady over the track, Mike Ottman paused when asked what it felt like to be coaching at a memorial meet for Stiles. The girls long jump event had just finished, and for a fleeting moment, the wind settled.

He talked about the kind of person Avery was, and what it

meant to coach someone who showed up every day ready to work, who never had a bad attitude, who made everyone around him better. Then the words slowed.

"I'm getting choked up," he said. "It's just a day to remember Avery, everything he accomplished. Just thoughts, good thoughts."

COUNTY

Sheriff candidate bucks traditional campaign trail

By PIPER HEATH
Reporter

Former oil worker Tom Voigt is running for Jefferson County Sheriff with no law enforcement experience and little interest in campaigning.

The 72-year-old Voigt, of High Ore Road west of Boulder, is one of three candidates in the

race, alongside incumbent Tom Grimsrud of Jefferson City and David Kosola of Clancy. The latter two are both career law enforcement officers with active campaign Facebook pages who have posted roadside political signs around the county.

The Monitor was unable to find any social media accounts or other campaign activity for

Voigt, who lacks a website. Stopping by The Monitor's office, he declined to provide a phone number, allow a photograph or detail his platform in an interview.

Voigt said he is running because he is fed up with the "good old boy network" ineffectively running the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office.

Among his grievances: when someone shot at his home and stole the chip key to his truck, the Sheriff's Office did nothing about it.

"I'm going to give them a run for their money," he said. "I'm the people's choice."

When asked about his path to victory, Voigt suggested that securing older voters was key

to winning the race. He said he spent his career in the oil industry and appears to be retired, but declined to provide additional biographical detail.

For voters interested in tracking him down, Voigt said he comes into Boulder on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for tai chi classes at the library.

4-H veterans aim to nurture happy, tasty pigs

Continued from Page 1

They also sought straight backs, even when the pig is looking up, and a strong, broad stance.

Blake ended up with his second-choice pig but wished he'd seen his brother's pig first. One month in, Wyatt's show pig had the ideal 'Coke bottle' shape. Blake thought his pig looked good, with a nice straight back, but not as shapely as he would have liked.

You can't raise your way out of an unshapely pig, he explained, but you can raise a well-behaved animal that shines in showmanship – an evaluation of how well animals respond to owners' handling. Looking after the pigs is hard work and requires coordination.

When Blake went with the Jefferson High band to Disney World last month, Wyatt took on the added responsibility. "You have to be there for each other," said the younger brother.

Part of the value of participating in 4-H is learning cooperation and a host of life skills. The boys appreciated that their mother, Kassie Nordlinder, who oversees Boulder Elementary's after-school programs, encouraged them to "try it for one year," Blake recalled.

"I really liked 4-H," he added. "You get to do some of the community service projects and all the fun events we do. And the fair is always the most fun."



Wyatt (left) and Blake Nordlinder groom the four piglets they're raising this year. (Eliza DuBose/The Monitor)

Kassie views 4-H as a great educational tool, even for kids not planning to go into agriculture. "You learn the value of hard work because it's a lot of work to raise an animal," she said. "It's only six months, depending on your animal, eight months, but it's hard."

Just then, a curious piglet

stood on its hind legs to peer over the gate and the boys giggled as the other pigs rummaged around the sty, spurred by sudden bursts of energy. Then they flopped agreeably on their sides to be groomed with a thick horsehair brush.

Experienced 4-H animal raisers, the boys are aware of their

limited time with the animals. Blake tends to keep his charges at arm's length, while Wyatt's happy to go all-in.

"Why not have fun with the time you have with them?" he said, pointing out that many 4-H animal raisers get attached before the big sale at the county fair. "There's always at least

five people crying." As hard as the goodbyes are, the boys know giving the animals a good life is also about creating the best product. Stressed or sad pigs make for chewy meat.

"If they're fat and happy," Blake said, "then the meat's gonna taste a lot better."

COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

The Elkhorn Community Foundation is accepting grant applications for projects to benefit citizens within the Jefferson High School district. Applicants must be a 501(c)(3) organization, an exempt government agency, or sponsored by an exempt government agency.

Applications are due May 1. Application form and guidelines are available online at <http://MontanaCommunityFoundation.org> or <http://ElkhornCommunityFoundation.org>. Or contact Peg at (406) 461-6252. Email completed applications to erika.morris@elkhornpharmacy.net. Or mail 3 copies to:

Elkhorn Community Foundation
PO Box 224, Boulder, MT 59632

JEFFERSON HIGH SCHEDULE

Thursday, April 9
Tennis @Missoula Loyola

Friday, April 10
Golf @Old Baldy Invite, Townsend

Tennis vs. Three Forks & Granite @Manhattan

Softball @Laurel


Saturday, April 11
Track & Field @Hamilton invite

Softball vs. Hardin

Monday, April 13
JHS Golf Invitational, Green Meadow Country Club

Thursday, April 16
Golf @Gardiner Invitational, Livingston

Friday, April 17
Track & Field @Gallatin Valley Invite, Belgrade



NATURAL STREAMBED AND LAND PRESERVATION ACT

The Jefferson Valley Conservation District (District) would like to advise you of the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act (310 Law) regarding the use of the emergency provisions of the law. The law defines an emergency as an unforeseen event, normal high water or normal low water due to drought do not count as unforeseen if they happen every year. If work is being completed in this fashion every year, it is a predictable event and it does not constitute an unforeseen event. If emergency action is taken to safeguard life or property during an emergency event, and that action is near a perennial stream, the conservation district must be notified of the emergency within 15 days of the action being initiated. Failure to notify the conservation district of an emergency action constitutes a violation of the 310 law.

If a project does meet the definition of an emergency, and action is taken under those provisions and the board approves the action as an emergency, they can still require modifications to the work that was done through the emergency provisions of the law. Modifications generally include cleanup work such as sandbag removal after high water, or removal of diversion items after drought, remediating the site to previous resource conditions.

Regular permitting can take 30-60 days to obtain and, in some cases, can take longer if additional information is required by the District or the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Additionally, other permits may be required.

If you are planning on doing work on, in or near a stream this field season, please submit the paperwork to the district in an appropriate amount of time so that the process can be completed as intended by the law. To obtain the permit application please call Kris at 406-287-7875, contact the office at jvmh57@outlook.com or go to the DNRC website and look up conservation districts.

Tom Carey, Chair, Jefferson Valley Conservation District

Boulder Stories Spotlight Night

WHEN: Thursday, April 23
WHERE: Catholic Center Boulder
TIME: 6:00 to 8:00 pm

INTERFAITH STORY NIGHT

Potluck Dinner
Chicken provided
Bring a dish to share

Drawing Church Communities Together

Each table will be part of a group interview

Join us to share your journey, what you love about Boulder, your hopes and concerns, and your ideas for making positive change.

PURPOSE:
Community Heart & Soul will use the community's ideas and their love for Boulder to create a plan that will reflect the hope for Boulder's future.

A project of:  

Contact Rochelle Hesford at (406) 225-3164

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