



YELLOWSTONE COUNTY INSIDER

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Bitterroot
Montana State Flower

Board of County Commissioners

John Ostlund
Chair

James Reno
Member

Robyn Driscoll
Member

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Commissioner Corner



December is here already. Have you gotten started on your Christmas shopping? I hope everyone will take time to spend with their family and friends and remember what the Christmas season is about.

Metra is gearing up for the Chase Hawks Rodeo on December 17th. This is one of the best cowboy gatherings of the year. Tickets are still available.

We will be bidding Jim Reno farewell. Jim has served 18 years as County Commissioner. Thanks Commissioner Reno for your dedication to public service. Jim has been involved in many projects including the reconstruction of the Rimrock Arena after the tornado, veterans cemetery and has taken a special interest in Riverside Cemetery where we inter the homeless and indigent citizens. Riverside Cemetery because of Jim's involvement has a new appearance and is something to be proud of. Thanks Jim.

Denis Pitman will be starting his first term as County Commissioner on January 1st. Newly elected officials will be sworn in on December 27th. The Swearing in Ceremony will be held in Board Room (403-A) at 10:00 am. The newly elected officials are encouraged to ask family and friends to attend. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

January brings a new legislative session. We will be following a number of bills. Finding a way to speed up the DOR settlements on centrally assessed property will be a focus as well as funding for the remodel of our courthouse for one or two new District Court judges.

We also want to thank Vicki Archer for her 30 years of valuable service to Yellowstone County, with 13 years of that time in the Commissioner's office. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

Thanks to all of our great employees who serve our citizens so well.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

John Ostlund - Chairman
Board of County Commissioners

ExpressCare at Albertson's

Sponsored by Billings Clinic, ExpressCare offers patients quick access in convenient locations to primary care for minor medical issues. Benefits of ExpressCare include: (ExpressCare is not equipped for emergency care.)

- * E-scheduling through your mobile device, online or at the location;
- * Easy parking at convenient locations (Albertson's);
- * Decreased waiting times;
- * The Yellowstone County Health plan is an accepted insurance!

Types of services offered and costs:

Bladder infections - \$69	Sore Throat - \$69	Wart Removal - \$69
Colds / Respiratory illness - \$69	Rashes - \$69	Ear wax removal - \$69
Sinus infections / sinus pain - \$69	Ear infections - \$69	Pink eye - \$69

Testing: Flu screen - \$25; Pregnancy test - \$7; Rapid Strep screen - \$25

Vaccinations: Hepatitis B - \$45; Tetanus (TD) - \$25; Tetanus (TDAP) - \$40

Access online scheduling or for a list of all services go to: www.billingsclinic.com/expresscare



New Employees



- Clarke Hardt**
Facilities
- Jessica Oe**
- Richard Randall**
- Eric Fahrner**
- Tania Bear Don't Walk**
YCDF
- James Dahl**
- Harrison Gillen**
- Shane Gibbs**
- Spencer Wyse**
Sheriff's Office
- Lynn Miller**
- Cody Reitz**
MetraPark

- Piper Federico**
Motor Vehicle
- Lisa Ereth**
Justice Court

Recognition of Service



40 Years of Service

Randy Pardis
MetraPark
12/01/1976

30 Years of Service

Vicki Archer
BOCC
12/15/1986

25 Years of Service

Mary Matteson
YCDF - 12/23/1991



Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

As seasons change and sunlight hours shorten, our biological clocks can get out of step with our daily schedules.

If you notice a pattern of mild depression during the late fall and winter, you may have a case of the winter blues. But if you have more than just mild problems, you could be suffering from "seasonal affective disorder", or SAD.

The trigger...SAD is caused by a biochemical imbalance from lack of sunlight in the winter, and it affects half a million people each year. Some of the symptoms of SAD include:

- Feelings of depression
- Changes in appetite and sleeping patterns
- Craving for sugary and/or starchy foods
- Symptoms that go away in spring or summer



If you suspect you may have SADs, see your doctor. Many people respond to light therapy. Research has also proven by taking an hour-long, brisk walk in winter sunlight is as helpful as 2 ½ hours under artificial light!!!



SUNSHINE NEWS

The Sunshine Committee would like to thank each and every employee for their support throughout 2016. If not for all of you, we would not be able to have fun employee events.

May your Christmas and every day ahead sparkle with happiness and new surprises!

Departure of Service

Vicki Archer
BOCC
12/15/1986 - 12/31/2016

Rick Helm
County Attorney
10/7/1996 - 12/31/2016

James Reno
Commissioner
1/1/1999 - 12/31/2016

Kristie Boelter
Clerk of District Court
1/1/2013 - 12/31/2016
Thank you for all your years of service to Yellowstone County!



25th ANNUAL Craft & Bake Sale

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!
The Craft & Bake Sale will be December 8 & 9, 2016.

Come check out all the goodies and crafts. Be sure to bring your Christmas gift list.



The Yellowstone County Courthouse will be closed on December 26, 2016 in observance of Christmas Day.



Remember the Courthouse will also be closed on January 2, 2017 in observance of New Year's Day.

History of the Christmas Tree Tradition

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, "The use of evergreen trees, wreaths, and garlands to symbolize eternal life was a custom of the ancient Egyptians, Chinese, and Hebrews. Tree worship was common among the pagan Europeans and survived their conversion to Christianity in the Scandinavian customs of decorating the house and barn with evergreens at the New Year to scare away the devil and of setting up a tree for the birds during Christmastime."

Although the tradition of decorating the home with evergreens was long established, the custom of decorating an entire small tree was unknown in Britain until some two centuries ago. Queen Victoria as a child was familiar with it and a tree was placed in her room every Christmas. In her journal for Christmas Eve 1832, the delighted 13-year-old princess wrote, "After dinner... we then went into the drawing-room near the dining-room... There were two large round tables on which were placed two trees hung with lights and sugar ornaments. All the presents being placed round the trees..."

Several cities in the United States with German connections lay claim to that country's first Christmas tree: Windsor Locks, Connecticut, claims that a Hessian soldier put up a Christmas tree in 1777 while imprisoned at the Noden-Reed House, while the "First Christmas Tree in America" is also claimed by Easton, Pennsylvania, where German settlers are said to have erected a Christmas tree in 1816.

"In all of America there was no more important medium in spreading the idea of the Christmas tree than the Godey's Lady's Book" during the 1860's. Images of Christmas trees were printed in the book and by the 1870s, putting up a Christmas tree had become common in households throughout America.



Excerpts from Wikipedia & Encyclopedia Britannica

Debit Card Available for FLEX Spending, Limited Scope and HSA



New in 2017 with your EBMS FLEX benefits will be the option to have a debit card. Previously only those individuals with an HSA (Health Savings Account) could have the debit card to pay for out of pocket medical expenses, but with the transition to EBMS as our Third-Party-Administrator (TPA) there are new options available.

Now you can elect to have the MasterCard debit card for your FLEX spending account, for your Dependent care account and for your Limited Scope account. Packets will be mailed out to individuals participating in these programs. You can select the debit card option and you will receive your new card from Avidia.

The HSA accounts will also transition to Avidia beginning January 1, 2017. You will have the option to keep your Health Equity account or roll it over to the new provider, Avidia.

Come to the EBMS meetings to learn more about the options available to you with your FLEX/HSA accounts.

Watch your home mail boxes for more information.

Work Comp Claim FREE - Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following departments for being accident free and having no worker's compensation claims filed for **NOVEMBER**.

Auditor, Clerk & Recorder, District Court, Emergency & General Services, Elections, Extension, Facilities, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Junk Vehicle, Justice Court, Motor Vehicle, Road & Bridge, Treasurer, Weed, and Youth Services.



Shoveling Snow 101



Snow is great—if you’re a snowman! But then again snowmen don’t have to shovel when Jack Frost and Mother Nature conspire to drop a big heavy drift of snow on your driveway. How you tackle that mound of winter may leave you with a lengthy injury, severe muscle strain, frostbite, or a heart attack. Here is the cold scoop on snow shoveling safety...

1. Prevent a Back Injury

Shoveling a driveway full of wet, heavy snow is extremely physically demanding, particularly if you’re not regularly active as it is. That’s why it’s vital to approach the chore of shoveling yourself out as a workout or a strenuous work task. Shoveling can be hazardous and those with bad backs risk strains, pulls, and misalignments, so do yourself a favor and take it slow, ask for assistance, invest in a snow blower, or wear a back brace and take frequent breaks if you have a history of back issues.

2. Stretch and Warm Up

A body full of tight inactive muscles and a cold winter’s day can almost guarantee a muscle pull.

3. Dress Warmly

A pair of thermal underwear under your pants is a wise idea, and an upper layer that wicks away perspiration from the skin’s surface will prevent frostbite or a chill.

4. Lift With Your Legs

Remember, even if you have a strong back, the cold temperatures will increase the risk of a muscle pull. So push with your shovel, don’t lift, and if you do have to scoop and toss snow onto a pile, use your legs and not your back to support the heavy load. Also, twisting away suddenly from the direction your facing to toss snow over your shoulder. Be safe this winter.

TIME for Job Safety



Think ahead - Plan the job in advance. Spot potential hazards and know how to avoid them.

Inspect your equipment - Check for malfunctions or electrical problems. Make sure your gear fits right.

Maintain a tidy workspace - Dispose of any waste, clean up spills and remove tripping hazards.

Evaluate your work - Think about any mistakes and how you could do the job better and more efficiently next time.

Best advice - Always stay focused on the task at hand.



Step Carefully - Don't Slip on the Ice!

A “White Christmas” may be nice, but the snow can hide hazards such as ice!

Please use caution this winter season when out and about, as we hustle to work or to finish last minute shopping. Be sure to wear proper footwear. High heels may look nice, but aren’t practical in the snow. One slip and you may be saying “Oh shoot, to the doctor I must go”.

FLEX Reminder...

Be sure to submit any 2016 FLEX claims by March 31, 2017

for reimbursement of 2016 qualified FLEX and Limited Scope expenses. Remember...Up to \$500 can rollover this year for 2017. Any roll-over funds would not be deposited or eligible to use until April 2017.

2016 FLEX claims should be sent to EBMS. Forms are available in Human Resources or on the HR Intranet site.



REMINDER ... MPEA Courthouse Members

Be sure to get vacation time scheduled for 2017 as per your union contract.

GET READY FOR 2017...

Have you moved in 2016 ??
Gotten married in 2016 ??
Be sure to update your information with Human Resources.

W-2's will be sent out in January.

