



"Where the Kid got his name"

The County Newspaper of Bill Hibbard



Continuing the Crook County news since 1884

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# 2003 in review

By Jeff Moberg

**January 9** - The Sundance City Council began the new year with a fierce battle over the vacant council seat created when former member Lenz assumed his duties as a County Commissioner. Amid heated discussion and disagreement, Council members Brooks and Roberts ardently pushed to immediately fill the vacancy with the candidate of their choosing. As the dust settled, the council found themselves deadlocked on the appointment, assuring that the position would remain unfilled for another month. Confrontations and "political brawling" continued to dominate the meeting as members eventually voted to accept all city appointments with the exception of the City Engineer which was left vacant for 30 days.

**January 16** - "It was truly a community event and the people in this community should be proud," were the words used by Joyce Speidel who described the outcome of the benefit held for Roni Schonenbach. According to Speidel, over 265 people attended the event which was held to assist Roni's family with medical expenses incurred as the result of an accidental gunshot injury.

**January 23** - Three potential County Commissioner candidates have been chosen to fill the vacancy left by Mark Semlek following his election to the Crook County State Representative position. The Republican central Committee chose Rosalie Brimmer, Harold "Stormy" Burch and Bob Cummings from a field of thirteen interested candidates. The three names will be forwarded to the County Commissioners for a final selection.

**February 6** - In a much tighter controlled City Council meeting, members eventually voted for Norma Peterson to fill the vacant council position, ending a month-long battle amongst City officials. The standing issue of who would fill the position of City Engineer was also eventually decided during the meeting. After addressing concerns over future conflict of interest possibilities, Bearlodge Engineering was again appointed as the City Engineer.

**February 13** - Sundance residents bid farewell to longtime resident and police officer Tim Hardin with a going away party held at City Hall.

**February 20** - CCMSD Board chairman Doug Tracy announced that Larry Potter has been offered the position of Hospital Administrator for the county facility. A starting date had not yet been established but the board anticipates Potter to start within the next thirty days.

**February 27** - Amid below zero temps, a hearty group of snowmobilers gathered in the Bearlodge to participate in the seventh annual poker run held by the Bearlodge Snowmobile Club. Despite the frigid temperatures, the event drew ninety-seven riders of all ages.

**March 6** - During a seemingly benign attempt to offer assistance to a vehicle in the Conoco parking lot, Sundance Police officers ended up arresting two individuals for a variety of charges. David Anthony and his passenger Marcella Atencio were both charged with felony drug possession and Anthony was charged with two additional felony charges of receiving stolen property and identity theft after a quick investigation confirmed the car the two were riding in had been stolen.

**March 20** - According to a report from the Crook County Sheriff's Office, a 43 year male inmate committed suicide while incarcerated in the local facility. The Wyoming Department of Criminal Investigation has been contacted to further investigate the incident.

Longtime Sundance resident Betty White has been chosen as the 2002 "Outstanding Citizen" award handed out by the Sundance Chamber of Commerce. The presentation will be made as the Chamber's spring banquet to be held on Thursday evening.

**March 27** - Patriotic songs, poetry and speeches are just some of what's on tap as a rally to support our men and women in uniform is planned for this Saturday in Sundance.

**April 3** - For the first time ever, the SHS Show Choir brought home a medal and the coveted "Spirit of Performance" award from the University of Wyoming Centennial Singer's invitational. The festival draws top choir groups from Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska and Colorado.

**April 17** - A Thursday morning fire destroyed the log home of State Representative Mark Semlek and his family. The blaze, thought to have been ignited by burning trash and recently applied chemical wood preservative, completely destroyed the house and its contents.

**April 24** - The firing of Crook County Road and Bridge Superintendent Elvin Rush touched off an explosion of angry residents calling for a reversal of the County Commissioner's decision.

The "We Care Campaign" fundraiser received a major boost as it was announced that the Sundance State Bank had made a \$100,000 donation to the drive.

**May 1** - Following careful consideration by the Wyoming Environmental Quality Council, Pete Lein and Sons' request for a permit revision affecting the Sundance Quarry was granted. The decision was rendered following a lively public meeting held in Sundance on Monday. Emphasizing his desire to maintain a positive working relationship with the city of Sundance, Pete Lein agreed to work with the Mayor to develop a mutually agreeable solution to any lingering issues of concern posed by the quarry.

**May 8** - Sundance third grade teacher Tammy Needham was honored by the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference in Los Angeles on April 28. Needham, who was one of two honorees from Wyoming, received a \$25,000 award for her teaching efforts.

On the heels of the strongly disputed Elvin Rush firing, local residents gathered at an informal meeting held Monday night in Sundance in hopes of having their concerns regarding the issue answered. As the only attending representative of the County Commission, Steve Lenz addressed the concerns of the crowd throughout the meeting.

**May 22** - Devils Tower resident Cherie Zube was selected as the new Crook County Emergency Management Coordinator at the May County Commissioners meeting. Zube began work on May 12.

**June 12** - At around 8:45 Sunday morning, Sundance resident Buck Bock discovered a fire in the Hair Boutique in downtown Sundance. Emergency crews quickly descended on the catastrophe. Despite the efforts of the more than sixty firefighters and emergency personnel who battled the blaze, the quickly advancing flames eventually destroyed two businesses, one office and an apartment while smoke and water damaged adjacent businesses. Fire departments from Gillette, Newcastle, Moorcroft and Hulett all assisted the Sundance crew and kept the fire from destroying other structures.

**June 26** - In an attempt to gather information and solicit input from residents, local officials will hold an informational meeting concerning recent developments in the proposed sale of the 30,000 plus acre Homestake property sale. A third party buyer is currently interested in the possibility of holding the land until the Forest Service may be able to assume ownership of the tract.

**July 3** - Following three months of renovation, setup and training, Sundance newest business - Wild West Video and Espresso is set to open. Owners, Doug and Kelly Carter have not set a specific date for the opening but note that "when the paper comes down from the windows," they will open the doors.

**July 10** - University of Wyoming President Philip Dubois visited Sundance on Tuesday to meet with the Sundance Chamber of Commerce. Dubois offered a glimpse into the future direction of the University, particularly as it pertains to the athletics program.

**July 24** - As of Friday evening, at least 27 different lightning caused wildfires were burning in Crook County. The area holding the dubious distinction of having the largest current blaze is the Douglas Road area near Coal Divide. The 700 acre blaze employed as many as 43 firefighters from the region at its peak.

**July 31** - Mardi Gras Crook County Style is this year's theme as the 76th annual Crook County Fair gets underway. As usual, fair goers will be treated to a wealth of good times. Fishing derbies, karaoke, and concerts are planned to augment the normal fair events throughout the week.

**August 7** - Amy Davis, 20 and Todd Buckman, 21 were both involved in a high speed rollover which took their lives early Sunday morning. According to WHP Officer Don Dorcas, the victims were wearing their seatbelts but the momentum of the accident ripped the belts from the car.

Roger and Tina Croell awoke Friday morning to find a bull moose roaming near their residence east of Sundance. The moose remained in the vicinity throughout the day before wandering further east.

**August 14** - Citing increased time demands and frustration over salary issues, Crook County Coroner Mike Frolander announced his resignation from the position of Coroner effective August 15.

**August 21** - Without actually reaching a final accord, Crook County Commissioners and Coroner Mike Frolander met in a special session aimed at avoiding Frolander's resignation. The parties were able to gain a better understanding of each's position moving them one step closer to resolving the situation. The Commissioners passed a motion to not accept Frolander's resignation and decided to consider the issue further at the next regular meeting.

**August 28** - In an editorial published by the Times, Wyoming State Treasurer Cynthia Lummis aggressively responded to a separate editorial published in the Aug 21 Sundance Times. The Times editorial brought into question the thought process of the State Treasurer Office decision to award a large investment contract to a questionable company. Levelling unfounded accusations, Lummis lashed out at the Governor's Office and the Times and defended her office's desire to invest state funds as sound economic policy while sidestepping the actual questions raised by the original editorial.



Snowmobilers are hitting the trails in the Bearlodge following the weekend snowfall. Bearlodge Snowmobile Club officials hope to begin grooming the trail system as early as next week if the snow continues to fall. In preparation for the upcoming season, the club's warming hut was moved to it's regular location on Tuesday.

## Winter storm brings joy, misery

By Jeff Moberg

Skiers, snowboarders, snowmobilers and other winter enthusiasts could be heard rejoicing throughout the area as they saw mother nature putting her gifts under the trees - and on top of them. After a very mild stretch of unseasonably mild weather, snow returned to the region in a fury. Wind whipped drifts topped four feet in many places with rumors of the six to eight foot variety high in the Bearlodge. Other areas in the Black Hills were pounded even harder. A "conservative" estimate of 24 inches was reported near Buckhorn. Terry Peak and Deer Mountain each reported 12 to 16 inches of new snow from the storm. Reported local amounts varied from 6 inches to 18 inches but given the amount of drifting, accurate measurements were difficult to access.

The ferocious storm didn't do much for travel however. Local emergency crews stayed busy most of the weekend responding to wrecks and stuck vehicles around the area. Wyoming Highway Patrol-

man Will Zilka reported one fatality resulting from a single vehicle accident in Weston County on Sunday. According to Zilka, 87 year old Newcastle resident William Finn lost control of his 2001 Ford F150 while traveling westbound on Highway 450. Finn's pickup crossed the roadway and rolled two times. Finn, who was not wearing a seatbelt, died at Weston County Memorial Hospital a short time later.

Dawn Edwards, 24 of Gillette was also involved in a rollover accident at mile marker 198 on I-90 at approximately 11 a.m Sunday. Edwards, whose vehicle rolled one and one quarter times was uninjured in the accident.

Zilka noted that his department would be stepping up patrols over the coming weekend to try to maintain a safe holiday season and remove impaired drivers from the road. "We want everybody sober and buckled up," noted Zilka. "That's the combination to keep everybody in one piece."



The city crews have had a busy few days after a major winter storm crashed into the city over the weekend. With twelve plus inches of snow and high winds caused drifting and encased the city with a deep blanket of snow. Crews were out early cleaning the roadways and streets making local travel easy.

## Cattle herd designated "Brucellosis Infected"

The US Department of Agriculture has formally designated a Sublette County cattle herd as "brucellosis infected," Wyoming State Veterinarian Dr. Jim Logan announced late this Monday afternoon. The designation from the federal Animal Plant Health Inspection Service affects the cattle herd which was detected with brucellosis earlier this month.

According to Logan, Monday's designation sets in motion a timeline of events which must be met in order for the state to retain its brucellosis free status. Those events include the branding and tagging of cattle with positive serologic test results,

the depopulation of all sexually intact cattle in the herd, the testing of all contact herds, and the tracing of all cattle which have left the herd.

"I am confident that we can expect to meet all criteria within the required time period," Dr. Logan said, "meeting the criteria will help retain our beef marketability with other states."

Governor Dave Freudenthal said that the designation "comes as no surprise, and is an appropriate response to the situation." He noted the State of Wyoming "is committed to isolating brucellosis and maintaining our state's brucellosis free status."

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