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Inside This Issue:

Celebrating A Win-Win At Intake

See Page 2



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Lower Yellowstone Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Held July 26



From left: Mike Thabault, Retired Assistant Regional Director Mountain Prairie Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Colonel Mark Himes, Omaha District Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Eileen Rice, Program Administrator, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks Fisheries; Steve Small, Assistant Regional Director Ecological Services Mountain Prairie Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Matt Rosendale, U.S. Representative; Tanya Trujillo, Assistant Secretary for Water and Science, Department of the Interior; Camille Calimlim Touton, Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation; Brent Esplin, Missouri Basin Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation; Col. Geoff Van Epps, Northwestern Division Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; David Ponganis, Retired Senior Executive Service Member.

A Lower Yellowstone Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held July 26 at Joe's Island on the south side of Yellowstone River, across from the Intake Fish Screens.

Approximately 100 dignitaries and local residents from Montana and North Dakota attended plus proclamations were read from others. The ceremony was led by Kayla Eckert Uptmor, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, followed by Tanya Trujillo, Asst. Secretary of Water and Science, Dept. of the Interior; Camille Calimlim Touton, Bureau of Reclamation commissioner; Col. Geoff Van Epps, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Northwest Division Commander; and Steve Small, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Ecological Services Mountain-Prairie Region assistant regional director.

"The Corps of Engineers is a joint lead agency as was directed by Congress in 2007 for the Intake Dam Modification Project as was Sec. 3109 of the Water Resource Development Act of 2007. The act authorized the Corp to use funding from the Missouri River Recovery Program.

It was also the 120th anniversary of the Bureau of Reclamation," states Eckert-Uptmor.

As one of the Reclamation's first five original projects, the Lower Yellowstone Project was authorized in 1904 as a single purpose irrigation project. The Project irrigates about 58,000 acres on more than 400 farms in Eastern Montana and

Western North Dakota. In addition to recognizing the completion of the bypass channel, Reclamation is also celebrating 12 years of dedicated service to the American people and managing water in the West.

The Project is operated and maintained by the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation District Board of Control under contract with Reclamation.

Since the pallid sturgeon was listed as endangered in 1990, Reclamation has partnered with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine Project effects on the species.

Through monitoring efforts, two primary issues were identified, 1) entrainment into the Lower Yellowstone Main Canal and 2) lack of passage success over Intake Diversion Dam. By providing passage at Intake Diversion Dam, approximately 165 river miles of potential spawning and larval drift habitat would become accessible in the Yellowstone River.

In 2013, due to significant design concerns with the rock ramp, Reclamation and USACE conducted a replanning effort to examine new and previously considered fish passage alternatives.

Following this effort, Reclamation and the USACE identified a bypass channel

(Continued on page 6)

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Seed Paintings, A Source Of Community & Pride



2021 Richland County Fair 1st Place on backdrop and on booth, hanging in Farm & Home. (Photo submitted)

By Jaymi Mozeak

One of the most memorable things about the Richland County Fair and Rodeo is the beautiful and elaborate seed paintings or artistic backgrounds. Short of seeing them at the fair and, occasionally, in the odd business many do not know much about them.

The backgrounds are just a piece of an entry into the Agriculture, Community, and Horticulture department. It is the Community Booth Exhibits class. Participants are to decorate their community's booth. According to the 2022 fair book, the booths will be judged on the quality, number, and arraignment of the entered products. The material on the backgrounds must be 100% plant and natural resources grown or produced locally. Rocks, coal twigs, tree bark, and more are also acceptable. Everything must have its natural color. Nothing may be dyed. There are only four communities in the competition this year: Crane/Sidney, Fairview, Ridgelawn, and Savage. Winners can get anywhere from \$20 to \$100. Local businesses have even approached the community members after

the fair to purchase the backgrounds.

The residents of Ridgelawn were the winners of the Class III Community Booth Exhibits last year. The winning background, three boards depicting the progress of farming in 100 years, made of beans, seeds, pine cones, and sticks, represented over 300 hours of more than 12 different people contributing their patience and skill. It has been purchased by Farm and Home on the corner of Main St. and 9th Ave. SE for use in their decorating. The ladies working on the Ridgelawn booth exhibit allowed me to talk with them about the backgrounds. The ladies were proud to tell me that one of their past year's backgrounds now resides at a grocery store in Bozeman, another at Helena Chemical, one at the MonDak Heritage Center, and another at South 40. Margaret Bradley said, "I do it because it has been a tradition of the fair all my life." The ladies of Ridgelawn began their current entry back in September and are swiftly on their way to the completion of another masterpiece.



Ruth Iversen and Marlys Dynneson working on the 2021 seed picture. (Photo submitted)



Upper row from left, Paula Bostrom, Alida Dore, Shirley Iversen and Marlys Dynneson; lower row, Margaret Bradley and Ruth Iversen. Not pictured is Loretta Dowse, Marilyn Schmitt, Yvonne Gebhardt, Renee Troudt, and Stacy Fischer. These are the people that make up the Ridgelawn Community team this year.

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Additional Detections Of Avian Influenza Confirmed In Montana

Submitted by Andy Fjeseth

Helena, MT – On Monday, July 24, the Montana Department of Livestock (MDOL) announced confirmation of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in a Flathead County backyard poultry flock. This is the 10th HPAI affected Montana flock linked to a 2022 wave of HPAI infections in the United States traced to seasonal migrations of wild birds. Nationally, nearly 400 poultry flocks have been diagnosed with HPAI.

“With over 2 months since our last case of HPAI in the state, we had hoped that avian influenza was behind us,” said Marty Zaluski, Montana state veterinarian. “Unfortunately, the risk seems to persist, and poultry owners should continue to practice enhanced biosecurity measures.”

The primary complaint noticed for all of Montana’s HPAI affected flocks has been sudden and significant death loss of domestic poultry and waterfowl. A pond on or near the HPAI affected flock has been a common feature.

Sick birds can exhibit numerous signs such as swollen eyes, discolored comb and legs, significant drop in egg production or water and feed consumption, or sudden death. Samples from these flocks are submitted to the Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (MVDL) and tested for the presence of avian influenza. The department encourages all poultry producers to immediately report sudden onset of illness or high death loss in domestic poultry to their veterinarian or the department at 406-444-2976. If you find sick or dead wild birds that have died from unknown causes, please contact your local FWP Warden, Biologist or Regional office, or call the FWP wildlife veterinarian 406-577-7880.

Infected flocks are placed under quarantine and are required to depopulate all remaining birds on the premises to prevent further disease spread. Flock owners are eligible to receive indemnity on birds from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Depopulation of the flock is expected to begin this week.

Avian influenza is an infectious viral disease of birds that can cause high mortality rates in domestic flocks. Migratory waterfowl are the primary source for avian influenza (AI). Wild birds can be infected and appear healthy but shed virus in the feces, saliva, and respiratory secretions. Domestic poultry become infected through direct contact with infected wild birds, or through contact with contaminated objects, equipment, or the environment.

The Montana Department of Livestock is conducting an epidemiological investigation and will be identifying other poultry producers in the area to conduct disease surveillance and to provide educational resources.

The Department continues to encourage poultry producers to implement the following biosecurity measures to protect flocks:

- Prevent contact between wild or migratory birds and domestic poultry, including access by wild birds to feed and water sources.
- House birds indoors to the extent possible to limit exposure to wild or migratory birds.
- Limit visitor access to areas where birds are housed.
- Use dedicated clothing and protective footwear when caring for domestic poultry.
- Immediately isolate sick animals and contact your veterinarian or MDOL.

While HPAI is considered a potentially zoonotic disease, CDC continues to consider the risk to people from wild birds, backyard flocks, and commercial poultry to be low.

Existing safeguards to keep food safe and wholesome are sufficient to protect people, and the food supply in the United States is one of the safest in the world. As a reminder, the US Department of Agriculture recommends cooking poultry to

165 degrees Fahrenheit.

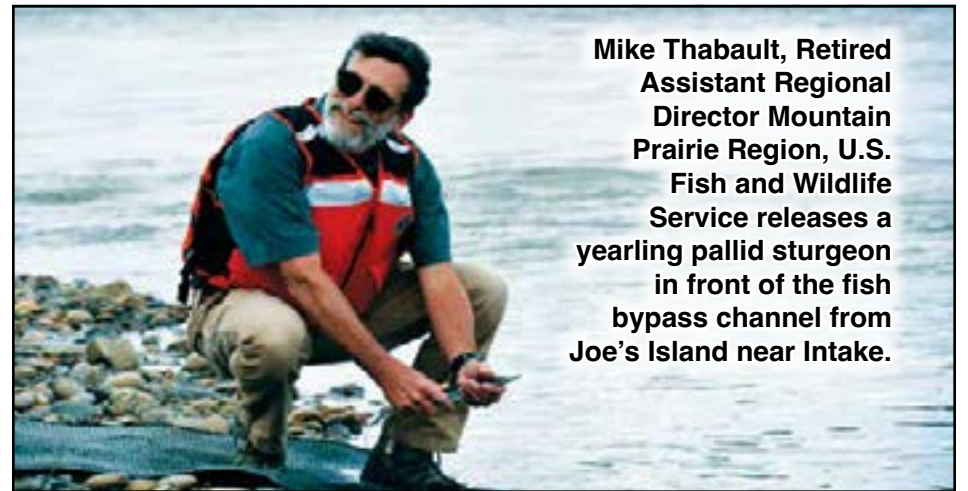
The mission of the Montana Department of Livestock is to control and eradicate animal diseases, prevent the transmission of animal diseases to humans, and to protect the livestock industry from theft and predatory animals. For more information on the Montana Department of Livestock, visit www.liv.mt.gov.

For more information on biosecurity, please visit the USDA website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/defend-the-flock-program/df-resources/df-resources>.

For more information on national cases of HPAI, please visit the USDA website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/2022-hpai>.

For information on human health concerns and HPAI, please visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-flu-summary.htm>.

Lower Yellowstone Ribbon Cutting...



Mike Thabault, Retired Assistant Regional Director Mountain Prairie Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service releases a yearling pallid sturgeon in front of the fish bypass channel from Joe's Island near Intake.

(Continued from page 2)

for detailed analysis. A Supplemental Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact selecting the bypass channel for implementation were completed in April 2015.

In 2016, USACE and Reclamation completed the Lower Yellowstone Intake Diversion Dam Fish Passage Project Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision. In the Record of Decision USACE and Reclamation selected the Bypass Channel Alternative for implementation. The Bypass Channel Alternative includes the construction of an 11,150 ft. long bypass channel for pallid sturgeon fish passage, a replacement weir structure for water deliveries to the Lower Yellowstone Project and an Adaptive Management and Monitoring Plan.

Construction on the bypass channel and replacement weir was started in June 2019. The south half of the replacement weir was completed in 2020, and the north half was finished in 2021. The bypass channel was completed and operational April 9, 2022.

The first pallid sturgeon successfully navigated the bypass channel in May. As of last week approximately two dozen fish have passed through the bypass channel.

To end the ceremony local dignitaries joined in by releasing 10 juvenile, one-year-old pallid sturgeon into the Yellowstone River.

Richland Co. Fair & Rodeo This Week

By Jaymi Mozeak

The Richland County Fair and Rodeo is not too far away. All the rip-roaring fun that Richland County has been waiting for all year long will be Aug. 3–6 and it is right around the bend.

Chase Rice is doing the Saturday night concert with special guest, Casey Donahew. According to www.iheart.com, Chase Rice grew up in North Carolina listening to Garth Brooks and other singers who reshuffled and updated country music into something more in line with pop in the 1990s. Rice first came into the public's eye in 2010, when he was a contestant on the TV show "Survivor": Nicaragua. He eventually finished second and started releasing albums and singles once he left the show. In 2019, Rice appeared as a guest on the reality show "The Bachelor", playing a private concert for bachelor Peter Weber and his date, Victoria Fuller, whom Rice had previously dated. The drama-laden episode aired in Jan. 2020, just as the singer released his next album.

According to his website, www.caseydonahew.com. Casey is a favorite on the local Texas music scene. He has 21 #1 singles and is a nationally hot touring act who consistently sells out venues all across the country. Chase Rice and Casey Donahew will be playing the main concert on Saturday, Aug. 6, at 7 p.m. Early bird tickets are \$60 for reserved seats and

\$55 for general seating. The week of the fair, prices go up to \$65 for reserved seats and \$60 for general seating.

The PRCA rodeo will be presented by Brockman Rodeo, LLC, a locally owned stock company, both nights. According to the fair book they have been providing the livestock for Richland County's Rodeo since 2009. Thursday will be Heroes Night and sponsored by Kraken Resources. Friday is Tough Enough to Wear Pink night and sponsored by Mid-Rivers Communications, Duane and Sherry Mitchell, Sidney Health Center Cancer Care, White Claw, and Prairie Electric. Early bird tickets are \$15 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. The week of the fair adult tickets go

up to \$17.

North Star Amusements will be the carnival this year again. They originate in Bridger, MT and travel throughout Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota during the spring and summer. In the fall and winter, they go to Arizona. They are offering prepaid wristbands for unlimited rides per day for \$25 each while supplies last.

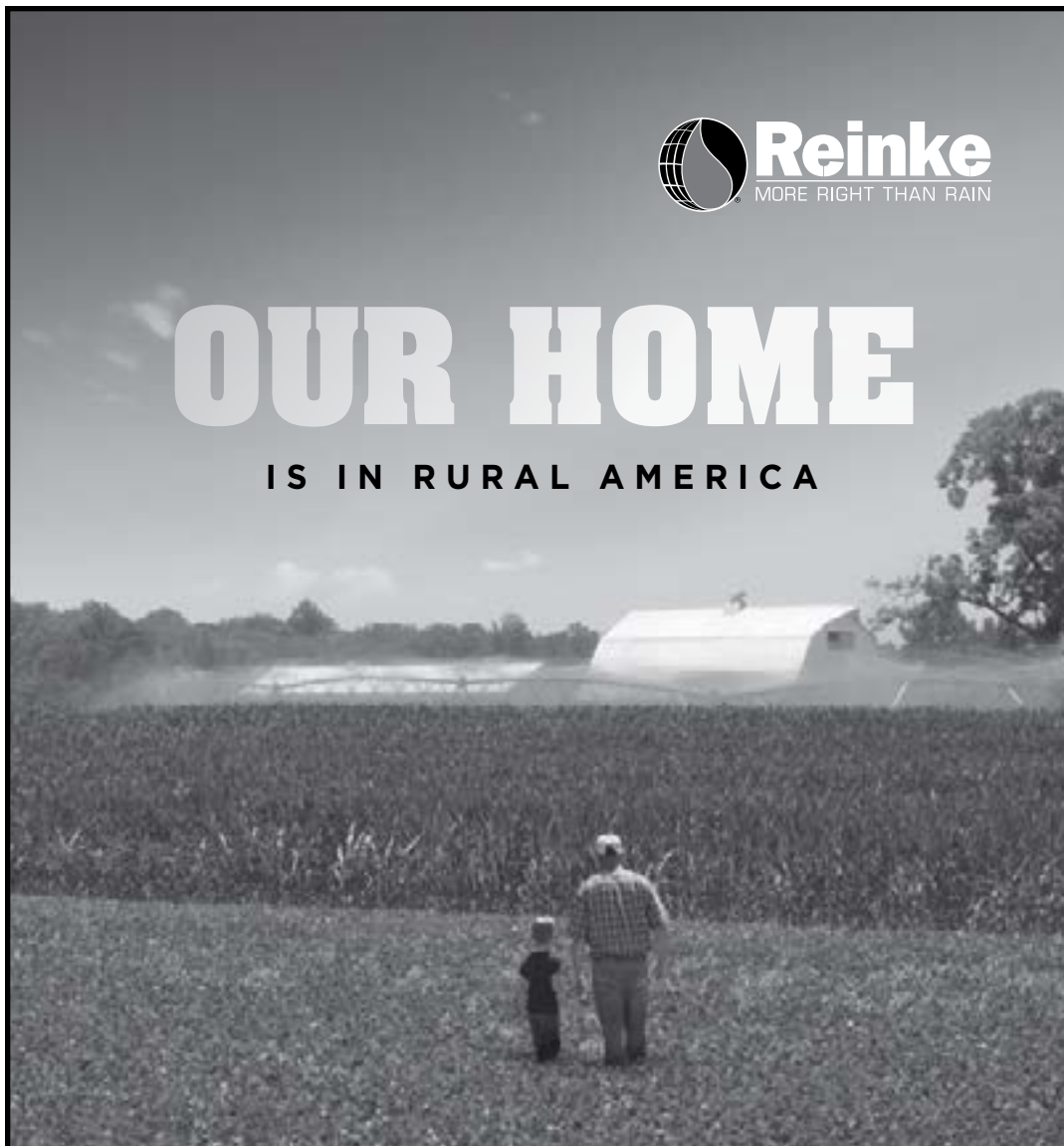
There is much much more to see and do with the food, vendors, exhibits, free concerts, and performances. There is sure to never be a dull moment at this year's fair. Fair buttons are \$5 this year and can be purchased at the fair office as well as the tickets for the events. For more information and times for the

Richland County Fair and Rodeo can be found on the Richland County Fair Website, www.richlandcountyfairandrodeo.org, or the fair office can be contacted by phone at 406-433-2801 Monday-Friday. The Richland County Fair-

grounds are in Sidney, MT, 2118 W Holly St.



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Sparks Looks Forward To Showing Her Animals At Richland County Fair

By Anna Garcia

Madison Sparks, Sidney, started her 4-H journey as a Yellowstone Valley Trailblazer Cloverbud in 2012 and is now on her last year with the Forever Buds 4-H club.

From a young age, she knew she wanted to be in 4-H because of the animals. "The animals definitely were a big part of why I wanted to join 4-H. I love to be around them," said Sparks.

Throughout her time as a 4-H member, she has shown steers, goats, pigs, alpacas, and rabbits. She has also participated in several indoor projects including photography, sewing, quilting, baking, cake decorating, and garden projects.

"My favorite projects are steers and pigs; I also really like cake decorating."

This year, Sparks will be showing her steer, market hog, and alpaca. She will also be exhibiting her photography projects.

"My goal for my projects this year is to get grand champion with my alpaca and a blue ribbon with my hog and steer for both showmanship and market classes."

Her favorite part about being in 4-H is getting to meet new people and seeing all the animals. "It is also great seeing all the support that comes from the clubs and community members."

This fall, Sparks will be attending Dawson Community College, Glendive for business management.

"4-H has definitely helped influence my career decisions and in the future, I hope to stay involved in agriculture."



Photos submitted

Larson Continues To Pursue His Passion For Cattle Industry

By Anna Garcia

Grady Larson, Sidney, has been an active member of the Richland Aces 4-H Club for 10 years. Throughout his time as a 4-H member, he has shown market and breeding beef, participated in several indoor projects, and competed on the livestock judging team.

This year, Larson will be working on a leathercraft and welding indoor project along with his Red Angus market steer, named August McCrae.

He hopes to secure a grand champion win this year but is mainly focusing on producing a high-quality market animal. "I always hope to have the grand champion market beef but overall, I just want to produce a good end product for the consumer. I want my steer to grade Choice or better, have a lot of marbling and taste good," said Larson.

Throughout his time being a 4-H member, he has shown a market steer every year and almost every one of them has come from Ron and Sharon Whited, Arnegard.

"Their cowherd is one of the best I've ever seen. I have had two reserve champion steers and almost every other steer has made the final drive."

Larson enjoys picking out a steer and watching it grow and change. "I love the cattle business and being able to take a steer and heifer project at nine years old was a big part of why I wanted to join 4-H."

He also enjoys working on his indoor projects. "I've learned a lot in leathercraft over the years and have made a lot of great projects for my horse that I use every day like headstalls, spur straps and a wallet."

While keeping busy with 4-H, Larson also participates in hockey for the Richland Rangers and rodeo, both of which he has been involved in for 13 years.

In the future, Larson hopes to stay as active as possible in the agricultural industry. "4-H has given me an avenue to pursue my passion for the cattle industry and I owe 4-H a lot for all the things it has taught me and all the experiences."

This fall, Larson will be attending Miles City Community College, where he will major in ag business and compete for the Pioneers.

"My goal is to make it to the College National Finals Rodeo and be in the top 10 in calf roping, steer wrestling and team roping. I also hope to work hard and practice a lot at my events and rodeo in our Montana circuit and one day make it to the National Finals Rodeo."

Larson also plans on attending auctioneering school so he can be an auctioneer at his parent's sale barn and at registered breeders' sales.

"After college, I will use my degree in ag business to help my parents in their cattle marketing company, Prewitt & Company and the sale barn, Sidney Livestock Market Center. I love the cattle business and my goal is to own my own ranch and run my Red Angus cattle herd while rodeoing as much as I can."



Grady Larson and his market steer August McCrae. (Submitted photo)

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New Weed Specialist Joins the WREC



Charlemagne Lim.
(Photo submitted)

By Anna Garcia

Charlemagne Lim recently joined the NDSU Williston Research Extension Center as their new Extension weed specialist. With this role, Lim plans to develop Extension programs to help producers identify, assess, and control weeds.

He said, "I am looking forward to the creative part of working with our clients and stakeholders for ideas and solutions relevant to North Dakota agriculture and its people."

Lim obtained his bachelor's degree in agriculture and master's degree in Agronomy from the University of the Philippines – Los Baños, Laguna, Philippines. In 2020, he received his doctorate degree in weed science at Montana State University and has worked there as a postdoc working on screening camelina accessions for nitrogen use efficiency and correlating agronomic traits with camelina seed and oil yield through field phenotyping.

During his time at MSU, he has also worked on several other research projects including a study on the efficacy of crop rotation diversity, herbicide use pattern, the effect of crop competition on weeds, and tillage on an herbicide-resistant weed population in the field.

So far, he has characterized the resistance to different herbicides of more than a hundred weed populations through greenhouse bioassays.

Lim says he is looking forward to working with area farmers, extension agents, and agronomists. "It's my pleasure to join NDSU and the WREC." He said, "I am feeling optimistic and honored to be able to work with a diverse group of professionals with great expertise in their respective fields."

He encourages people to drop by the center, message him, or send him an email if they have questions about weed issues on their farms, rangelands, pastures, garden, lawns, and other places.

"I'll be more than happy to help and discuss with you, so we can timely combat our weed problems before they get out of hand, to protect ourselves, our neighbors, natural habitats, and our environment.

You can contact me through phone at 701-651-6221 or email at charlemagne.lim@ndsu.edu."

Ag Appreciation Golf Tournament Winners

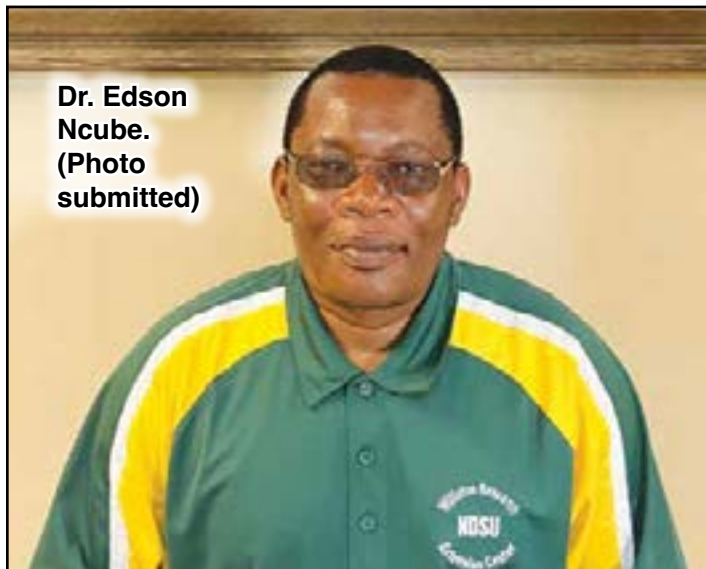


The Sidney Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture held their annual Ag Appreciation Golf Tournament on July 18. Pictured above is the lowest scoring team (L-R) Tim Cayko, Rob Breuer, Todd Cayko and Kyle Cayko. The team won a bottle of Pendleton and gift cards from Western Tire Co.



Pictured above is the highest scoring team (L-R) Tanner Hagler and Tim Cymbaluk. Not pictured are Danielle Steinley and James Johnson.

WREC Adds A New Staff Member To The Team



Dr. Edson
Ncube.
(Photo
submitted)

By Anna Garcia

The Williston Research Extension Center added a new staff member to their team, Dr. Edson Ncube.

“This is an exciting position offered by Dr. Audrey Kalil in which I am looking forward to conducting applied research targeting the management of crop diseases which cause economic losses to farms in the MonDak Region,” said Ncube.

Dr. Ncube will be working on plant disease research that increases climate resiliency of durum wheat, chickpea, lentil, and pea production. He hopes to address the current gap in knowledge regarding appropriate planting dates for the management of Pythium seed rot and Ascochyta blight in chickpeas.

Previously, Dr. Ncube was a plant pathology researcher at the Agricultural Research Council in South Africa, conducting research on corn ear rot diseases, mycotoxins, and sorghum foliar diseases. He obtained his PhD in plant pathology from Stellenbosch University, South Africa in 2017.

Ncube has previously conducted studies and published on the interactive effect of corn stemborers and Fusarium fungal pathogens on ear rot and mycotoxin contamination in order to reduce food losses and improve food safety. He has also conducted foliar disease screening of sorghum cultivars and produced data for use by farmers in selecting cultivars based on resistance to these foliar diseases.

So far, Ncube has really liked working at the WREC. “It is always a challenging time starting a new position. I have been fortunate in this position in that I have tremendous support from the Director Dr Jerry Bergman WREC director; as well as Dr Kalil and colleagues at the WREC. So, this has enabled me to adapt to the fast-paced work environment here at NDSU.”

Dr. Ncube is also enjoying living in North Dakota. “The people of North Dakota have been stunning in welcoming us to the United States. It is awesome and I am having the time of my life working here.”



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U Of M Range Student Interns At Culbertson Ranch



U of M/DNRC intern Bridger Line rides his horse gathering up cows at the Iverson Ranch, south Culbertson. (Photo submitted)

University of Montana student Bridger Line is spending his summer as a Montana Working Lands intern. A graduate of Missoula Sentinel he is experiencing eastern Montana's farming and ranching lifestyles. The program is headquartered out of the University of Montana, in accordance with the Montana DNRC.

Line is interning at the Iverson Ranch, Dick and Connie, on Timber Creek, 30 miles south of Culbertson.

The program consists of four interns spending two weeks each experimenting on five different ranches in weed management and the farming and ranching lifestyle.

His majors are resource conservation and wildlife biology.

The challenging and rapidly evolving field of environmental conservation requires broad training and the ability to integrate and communicate across disciplines. Resource Conservation is an interdepartmental undergraduate major that

prepares students for the diverse opportunities that now exist in environmental conservation, natural resource management and sustainable livelihoods and communities.

The Wildlife Biology Program combines the best features of a liberal arts curriculum with scientific preparation in wildlife conservation. The program provides students with an extensive knowledge in ecology, population biology, conservation biology and critical thinking and quantitative skills.

Left: Building water tanks for the cattle keeps Bridger Line busy during his internship at the Iverson Ranch, south of Culbertson. (Photo submitted)



Research Centers Hold Field Days

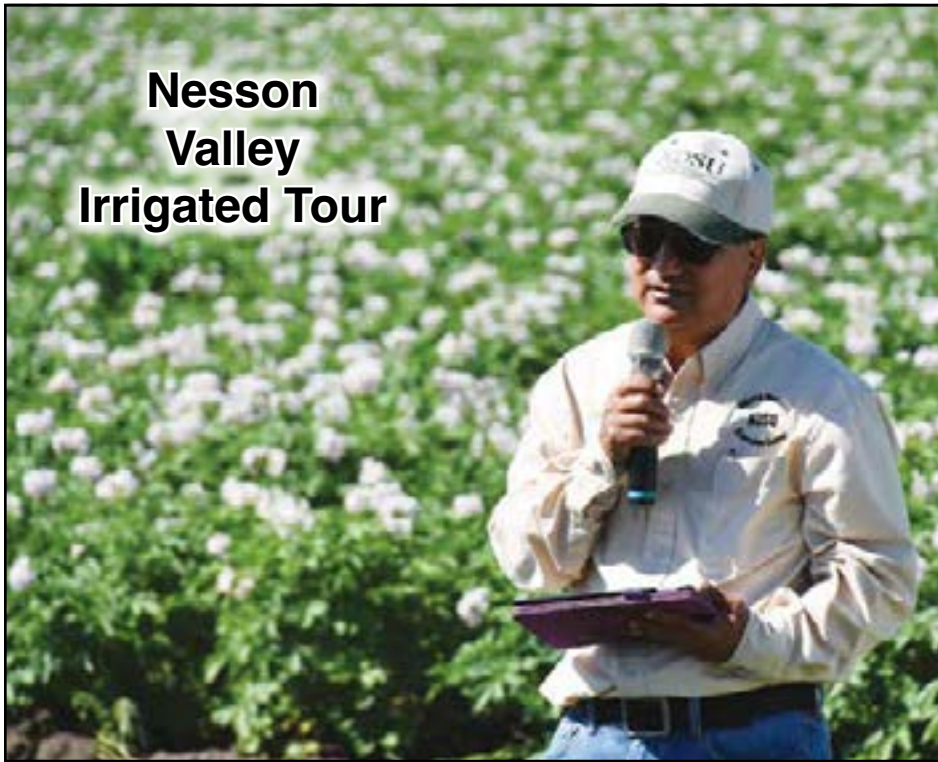


The MSU/EARC Field Day was held July 12 in Sidney. Above: Tavin Schneider Sustainable Oils agronomist discussed the potential of camelina in Montana and contracts that Sustainable Oils company offers to growers. Camelina is an oilseed crop, and the oil can be used to produce renewable diesel. Sustainable Oils has recently acquired a refinery in Bakersfield, CA, and they are looking to increase the acres of camelina grown in Montana. Sustainable Oils is also looking at winter varieties and herbicide resistant varieties in camelina. (Photo submitted)

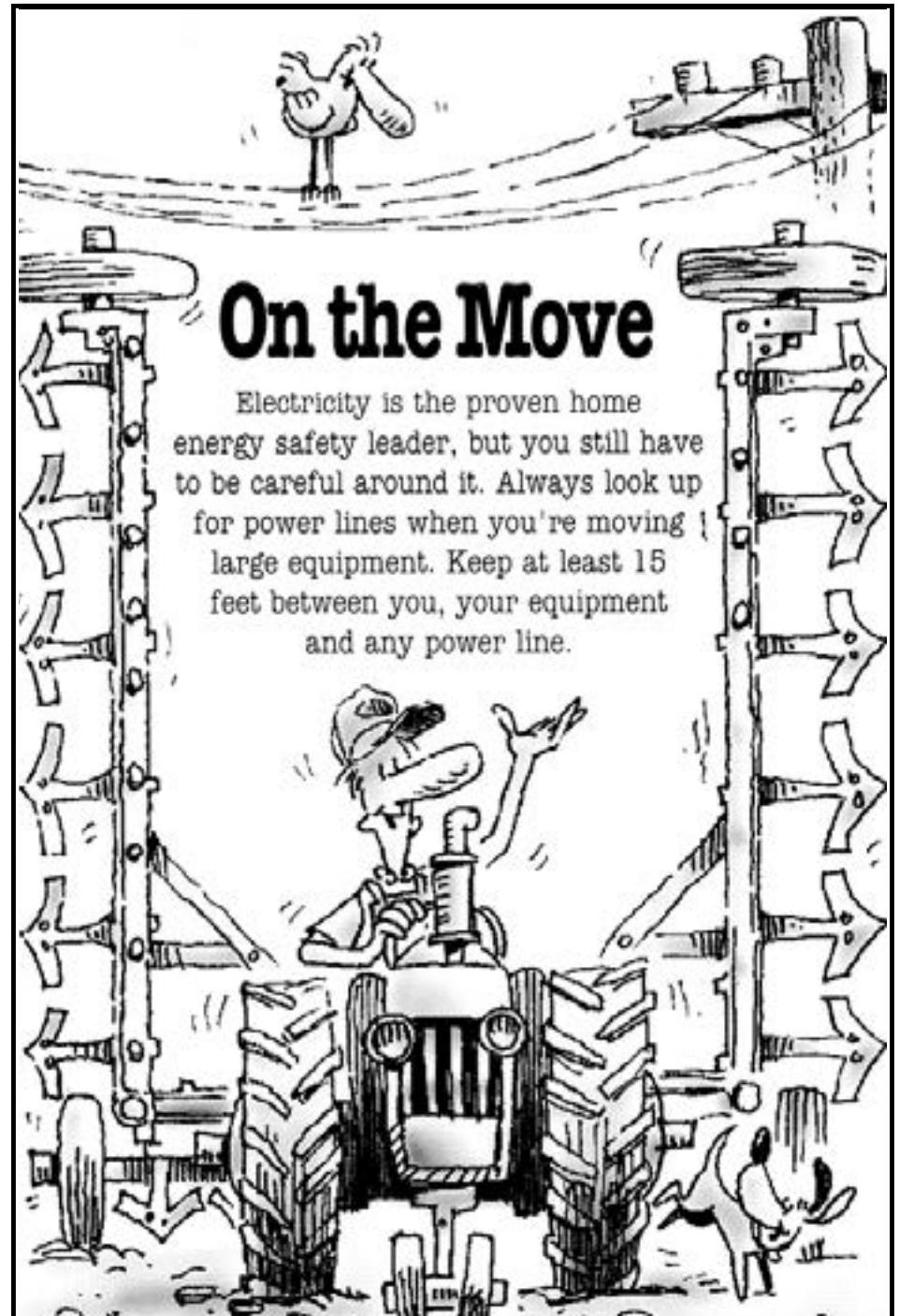


Part of the Williston Research Extension Center Fields days held July 13 and 14 was as much for non-farmers as anyone. Here people talk with each other while on the vegetable garden part of the Horticulture Tour Wednesday afternoon. Dave Andre, rural Grenora, snacks on cherries fresh off the bush at the Williston Research Extension Center Field Days Horticulture Tour Wednesday afternoon. (Photo by Roger Riveland)

**Nesson
Valley
Irrigated Tour**



WREC held their Nesson Valley Irrigated Tour on July 14. Above is Dr. Gautam Pradham, NDSU dryland agronomist, Williston Research Extension Center speaking on the study evaluating the feasibility of growing and cultivating guar and black gram in North Dakota.



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McKenzie County 4-H'ers Participate In State 4-H Engineering & Design Competition



Pictured from left, Ethan Morris, Nicholas Ellis and Dillon Morris. (Submitted photo)

Submitted by Marcia Hellandsaas
McKenzie County NDSU Extension Agent

Three McKenzie County 4-H preteens participated in the North Dakota 4-H State Engineering and Design Competition held on July 23 at the North Dakota State Fair in Minot.

Eleven-year old Dillon Morris, 14-year-old Ethan Morris and 12-year-old Nicholas Ellis designed a machine that watered a plant in 7 steps.

The team prepared a recordkeeping journal, posters and presentation of their experiences and chain reaction steps to complete the task, which was shared with two judges and the public.

The team was awarded a blue ribbon for their project.

The goal of this competition is to encourage critical thinking, creativity, innovation and problem solving in a non-traditional learning event and to have FUN in the process. Youth utilize their STEM knowledge and skills to solve problems, make a plan and design a solution.

The competition originated from Rube Goldberg (1883-1970), a Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist who was best known for the wacky inventions that appeared in his comics. His cartoons appeared in newspapers for more than 50 years.

A Rube Goldberg machine is an overly complex contraption that does a simple task. The Rube Goldberg contraption uses everyday items in a series of chain-reaction steps that accomplish a task. The 4-H Engineering and Design Competition allows youth to use physics, engineering, humor and storytelling.

For more information, please contact NDSU Extension/McKenzie County at 701-444-3451.

Blister Beetles Could Pose Risk

By Marley Manoukian, MSU Richland County Extension Agent

Blister beetles could be considered a beneficial insect as they feed on grasshopper eggs, however, they pose a significant risk. Blister beetles are named for a toxic in their body called cantharidin that causes blisters when it comes in to contact with the skin. This cantharidin is released when beetles are crushed, making it a concern for not only humans, but also for livestock producers, as hay containing blister beetles can be toxic to livestock.

Blister beetles feed on crops including sugar beets, canola, potatoes, and alfalfa. Defoliation in these crops caused by blister beetles is rarely economically damaging. The main concern is when alfalfa hay containing blister beetles is fed to livestock, specifically horses. There are many species of blister beetles that occur in Montana with the most common being the Black, Spotted, and Ash Gray. While these species are toxic, the most toxic species, the Striped blister beetle, has not yet been reported in Montana. It has been documented in surrounding states, however, so it is only a matter of time before it makes its way here.

When hay containing blister beetles is consumed, sores and blisters can develop in the mouth, on the tongue, esophagus, and stomach. Kidney and heart function may also be impaired, and in severe cases death may occur. Horses are the most sensitive to blister beetles. Research has indicated that it could take as many as 200 blister beetles to kill an adult horse, or as few as 30 to 50 blister beetles in the case of the Striped blister beetles. Although they are less susceptible than horses, sheep and cattle can also be affected by blister beetles. However, little information exists on toxic numbers for these species.

It is important to scout for blister beetles in your alfalfa prior to cutting. Because the toxin is still released in dead beetles, insecticides may not be the best option as the dead beetles can get hung up in the hay and still cause a threat. Blister beetles are attracted to the alfalfa blooms, making early harvest prior to the bloom stage an option to reduce the potential of beetle infestations.

If you have any questions or if you see any Striped blister beetles, please contact the MSU Richland County Extension Office at 406-433-1206 or marley.manoukian@montana.edu.



Ash Gray Beetle
(Photo submitted)



Spotted Beetle
(Photo submitted)



Black Beetle
(Photo submitted)



Striped Beetle
(Photo submitted)

McKenzie County 4-H'ers Win State Judging Contest



Front from left, Gavyn Darrington, Tylee Thorne and Gracyn Darrington; back, Jacob Rink, Nicholas Ellis, Jaden Darrington, Kyle Best, Gwen Signalness and Marcia Hellandsaas, McKenzie County NDSU Extension Agent. (Submitted photo)

Submitted by Marcia Hellandsaas,
McKenzie County NDSU Extension Agent

McKenzie County participated in the State 4-H Consumer Decision Making Contest held on July 26 at the ND State Fair, Minot, and came home with top honors.

The Junior Team of Kyle Best, son of Vawnita and Pete Best, Watford City; Jaden Murphy, son of Kim and Lee Murphy, Fairview, MT; Gracyn Darrington, daughter of Nikki and Partrick Darrington, Arnegard and Gwen Signalness, daughter of Wade and Katie Signalness, Watford City; captured 1st place.

Individually, Gracyn was honored with 9th placing, Gwen placed 11th, Jaden 28th, and Kyle 29th.

A second McKenzie County junior team of Gavyn Darrington, daughter of Nikki and Patrick Darlington, Arnegard; Jacob Rink, son of Shaun and Mandy Rink, Watford City; Nicholas Ellis, son of Chelsey and Chad Ellis, Arnegard; and Tylee Thorne, daughter of Calli and CJ Thorne, Watford City, received 5th place.

Individually these judges placed as follows: Gavyn was recognized with a 2nd overall placing, Jacob placed 14th, Nicholas 23rd and Tylee 38th.

Fifty-one 4-H'ers on 17 teams from across North Dakota participated in the contest.

4-H Consumer Decision Making judging activities are designed to help youth develop decision making skills. Their ability to observe and evaluate written materials as well as reciting oral reasons to justify their decisions determines their success in judging events.

For more information, please contact NDSU Extension in McKenzie County at 701-444-3451.

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