



The CityLink

Official News and Information
from the City of Billings

Billings Pride:
City-wide

Winter 2010

Construction in the City

It was another big construction season for the City of Billings residents this year. There were many exciting projects completed! This past summer, City staff was able to replace some aging water and sewer lines, improve roads, add some pedestrian and bike facilities, and install much needed storm drainage to several areas.

Now that most of the projects have wrapped up, City staff is looking forward to next year's projects. Here is what you can expect:

- 24th Street West will have another couple of weeks' worth of work next summer. Now that the utilities under the road have been replaced, the surface of the road needs to be improved. The road from Central Avenue to Grand Avenue will be milled and will get an overlay. Along with the completion of the concrete work for that section, this will finalize the work planned on 24th Street West!

- Rimrock Road from 17th to Forsythia is the next section planned for next summer. The water line under Rimrock will be replaced and the road section will be consistent with the section of Rimrock to the east. After this section is completed, only the portion of Rimrock from Forsythia west to Shiloh will be left to finalize.

- 6th Avenue to Bench Boulevard Bypass should be under construction beginning in the spring! This first phase of the project will include the bridge over Alkali Creek to tie into

Bench Blvd.

- A few traffic signal projects are in the works. Signals are being added at the intersections of Wicks and St. Andrews and at 29th Street West and Central Avenue. Also, the signals at seven intersections downtown are being replaced.

- Improvements are being planned on 32nd Street West with the addition of a right turn lane at Broadwater and restriping along the corridor to add a two-way left turn lane.

- The sidewalks on Jackson Street will be completed, and a sidewalk is planned to be installed on Central from 29th Street West to 32nd Street West.

- The major waterline projects next summer will be on 4th Avenue North, east of North 27th Street; the west downtown area near North 32nd Street; and several residential neighborhoods north of Rimrock, east of Shiloh Road.

- There will also be many small projects throughout the City installing sidewalk, curb and gutter, handicapped ramps at corners, and other miscellaneous improvements.

The City recognizes the disruption that these projects can have on traffic and in your neighborhoods and appreciates your understanding and patience! Staff will do what they can to minimize the inconvenience and get the projects completed efficiently.



From the City of Billings Staff

THE CITY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS:

Christmas EveFriday, December 24
(MET, Solid Waste and Landfill staff will be working on the 24th, but not on the 25th)

New Year's EveFriday, December 31
(MET, Solid Waste and Landfill staff will be working on the 31st, but not on January 1st)

Martin Luther King Day..... Monday, January 17
(MET, Solid Waste and Landfill staff will be working)

President's Day Monday, February 21
(MET, Solid Waste and Landfill staff will be working)

Inside this issue:

Holiday and Winter Fire Safety	2	Mayor and City Council.....	3	From our Readers.....	6
City Employees and United Way Campaign	3	Billings Neighborhood Task Forces	4	News from PRPL	7
We Want to Hear From You	3	News from the Library	4	City of Billings - Energy Star	7
		Pioneer Park Disc Golf Course	4	Upcoming PRPL Winter Programs.....	8
		Billings Dog Park.....	5		

Visit the City's website: <http://www.ci.billings.mt.us>

Holiday and Winter Fire Safety

Every year around the country there is a rise in the number of residential fires during the winter months. These fires are especially sad during the holidays.

Last year the Billings Fire Department responded to 53 structure fires during the months of November, December, and January alone.

As the temperatures drop and the utility bills go up, exercise caution when using alternative heating sources. With the holidays just around the corner, there are specific fire hazards that we all need to be aware of to keep our family and friends safe as we get together and enjoy the holiday season together.

Below are some helpful tips that can be used to prevent your family from having to go through the tragedy of having a fire in your home.

Wood Burning Stoves & Fireplaces

- * Keep combustible materials away from stoves and fireplaces.
- * Have the chimney inspected and cleaned annually - especially if it has not been used in a while.
- * Do not use flammable liquids to accelerate any fire.
- * Keep a glass or metal screen in front of the fireplace to prevent embers or sparks from escaping.
- * Never burn charcoal indoors - charcoal gives off high amounts of carbon monoxide.

Portable Space Heaters

- * Space Heaters need SPACE! Keep the area around your heater clear of combustibles.
- * Do not operate space heaters in confined spaces.
- * Keep them out in plain sight.
- * Plug directly into an outlet.
- * Do not use a light duty extension

cord.

- * All space heaters should have an automatic shutoff feature in case it is knocked over.
- * Do not use electric heaters in bathrooms.

Furnaces

- * Have your furnace inspected to make sure it is in good working condition.
- * Leave furnace repairs to qualified specialists.
- * Inspect the walls and ceiling near the furnace. If the wall is hot or discolored, contact a qualified specialist.

Cold Weather Issues

- * Never use an oven or range to heat your home.
- * Never try to thaw frozen water pipes with a blow torch or any other open flame.
- * If there is a fire hydrant near your home, you can help the fire department by keeping the hydrant clear of snow so that it can be easily located.

Decorations

- * Keep all decorations away from open flames and other sources of ignition.
- * Inspect holiday lights each year for frayed wires, excessive kinking, and cracked sockets.
- * Wires should not be warm to the touch.
- * Do not overload electrical outlets.
- * When necessary, use a UL listed electrical strip with overcurrent protection.

Christmas Trees:

Natural Cut Trees

- * Keep the tree stand filled with water

at all times.

- * Needles should be green and hard to pull off the branches.
- * Insure that the trunk of the tree has a fresh cut.
- * The trunk should feel sticky to the touch.
- * Keep your tree away from open flames and heat sources.
- * Heat will dry out the tree causing it to easily ignite if exposed to heat.

Artificial Trees

- * Ensure that the tree is fire resistant and contains a tag with a UL label.

Candle Care

- * Never use candles to decorate a Christmas tree.
- * Keep candles inside a 1-foot circle, away from decorations and other combustible materials.
- * Use sturdy candle holders that won't easily tip over and will collect candle wax.
- * Keep candles high and out of reach of children and pets.
- * Extinguish after use and never leave a candle unattended.

Cooking Safety

- * When cooking or baking for any amount of time, stay home and check it regularly.
- * Keep a fire extinguisher nearby.
- * For small grease fires, smother the flames by carefully covering the pan with a lid.
- * Never pour water on a grease fire.
- * Always turn pot handles toward the back of the stove to avoid accidental spills.

Turkey Fryers

- * Place the turkey fryer on a level surface, in an open area away from

homes, fences, sheds, and other structures.

- * Never place the fryer on a wooden deck, porch, or in a garage or carport.
- * Leave at least 2 feet between the fryer and the propane tank.
- * Keep the fryer in full view at all times.
- * Keep children and pets away from the fryer.
- * Check the oil temperature often. If you see smoke coming from the oil, turn off the gas immediately.
- * Completely thaw and dry the turkey before frying. Adding a partially frozen or wet turkey to the pot makes the oil splatter, causing a fire or explosion hazard.
- * Cover bare skin before adding or removing food from the fryer.
- * Raise and lower food slowly to avoid splattering or spilling oil.
- * Use the right amount of oil. To find out how much oil to use, read the fryer's instructions, or:
 - * Place the turkey in the pot,
 - * Fill with water until the turkey is covered by an inch of water,
 - * Remove the turkey and pat dry,
 - * Mark the water level in the pot,
 - * Dump the water, dry the pot, and fill oil to the level marked.
- * If the fryer catches fire, call 911 right away (do not try to put it out with water).

Be sure every level of your home has a working smoke alarm, and be sure to check and clean them on a monthly basis. Plan and practice a home escape plan with your family.

For additional information on fire safety topics, please contact Deputy Fire Marshal Matt Schieno at (406) 657-8425.

City Employees

Pledge \$15,494

in 2010 United Way Campaign – and a ton of hope to Second Chance Homes



Every year the City of Billings participates in the United Way of Yellowstone County charitable giving campaign.

This year, Candi Beaudry, Director of Planning and Community Services Department, coordinated the campaign. Representatives from other City Departments worked together to ensure information and pledge forms were distributed to all employees.

Committee members for the 2010 United Way campaign included: Melinda Balter, Municipal Court; Robin Grinsteiner, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands; Jaimi Johnson, Airport; Debra Hagel, Transit; Heather Leander, Library; Aura Lindstrand, Public Works; Laura Reyes, Legal; Val Ronquillo, Fire; and Diana Walker, Police.

Due to a later than normal start, the City was unable to participate in the Day of Caring. Instead, the committee chose to conduct a household items drive for Second Chance Homes. Second Chance Homes provides sober, supportive housing in Billings for families affected by substance abuse. The organization provides supervised and case-managed housing and comprehensive services for parents and their children.

In conjunction with the Day of Caring, Second Chance Homes requested household items such as toilet paper, disinfecting wipes, antibacterial hand soap, baby wash and lotions, toothbrushes,

and laundry detergent be donated. Response to this request by City Departments was overwhelming. In addition to hundreds of pounds of household items, the Legal Department donated hand-made quilts made by St. Phillips Church in Scobey, Montana. Billings Firefighters Local 521 also contributed \$1,500 in cash.

Contributions to United Way can be made through payroll deductions or as a one-time gift. City employees gave a generous \$15,494 to the United Way Community Care Fund and to specific agencies benefiting from the United Way campaign. Donations to the United Way of Yellowstone County Community Care Fund support three main quality of life objectives: education – helping children and youth achieve their potential through education; income – promoting financial stability and independence; and health – improving people's health.

In addition to the United Way campaign, employees also had the opportunity to contribute to Montana Shares, a charitable giving program focused on Montana-based nonprofit organizations. Donations to Montana Shares total \$1,328.

Many thanks to all employees for making the 2010 United Way campaign, Montana Shares campaign and Second Chance Homes household items drive a success!

We Want to Hear From You

Please provide us with input for our next newsletter.

What did you like most about the newsletter?

What would you like to see in upcoming newsletters?

Mail or e-mail your comments to us at:

citylink@ci.billings.mt.us

The City Link
P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59103

Mayor and City Council of Billings

Mayor Tom Hanel:
hanelt@ci.billings.mt.us
657-8296

WARD 1
Peggie Gaghen:
gaghenp@ci.billings.mt.us
259-2926

Jim Ronquillo:
ronquilloj@ci.billings.mt.us
252-5353

WARD 2
Denis Pitman:
pitmand@ci.billings.mt.us
670-7430

Angela Cimmino:
cimminoa@ci.billings.mt.us
698-9763

WARD 3
Vince Ruegamer:
ruegamerv@ci.billings.mt.us
259-1109

Rich McFadden:
mcfaddenr@ci.billings.mt.us
254-2144

WARD 4
Jani McCall:
mccallj@ci.billings.mt.us
670-3084

Ed Ulledalen:
ulledalene@ci.billings.mt.us
248-1478

WARD 5
Richard (Dick) Clark:
clark@ci.billings.mt.us
656-1086

Mark Astle:
astlem@ci.billings.mt.us
245-5576

Mailing Address:
City of Billings
P.O. Box 1178
Billings, MT 59103

Street Address:
City Hall
210 North 27th Street
Billings, MT 59101

Fax: (406) 657-8390

Billings Neighborhood Task Forces

The City of Billings, through its Community Development Division, supports seven neighborhood task forces by producing and mailing monthly newsletters.

The task forces were established to provide input to City government agencies in issues concerning their respective neighborhoods.

Each task force meets monthly at a location within its

specific task force area. In an effort to be good stewards of City finances, the task forces have opted to switch as many members as possible to email notification of meetings. Approximately half the membership is now receiving email notification, while the other half is still receiving hard copies. This small change has saved the City over \$1,500 per year.

The Heights Community

Task Force is mailing postcards instead of newsletters and emailing minutes to members for approval at their next meeting. They are now spending less than \$100 per month. Way to go!

As the task forces continue to implement cost saving measures, the Community Development Division continues to offer excellent customer service and good fiscal stewardship.

Pioneer Park Disc Golf Course

This past spring, the Billings City Council approved the Pioneer Park Master Plan, which included several recommendations for the future of disc golf in the park.

Those recommendations included removing and redesigning the existing disc golf course in the park to a 9-hole primary summer course that would reduce the size of the course, avoid conflicts with other park uses, and minimize potential turf wear, tree damage, and soil compaction and erosion. Other recommendations included closing the primary disc golf course between Dec. 1 and May 1 and establishing a temporary 9-hole winter disc golf course that would protect the turf on the primary course during winter dormancy and minimize soil and sod damage through the early spring.

The temporary winter course begins at the Zimmerman Center in Pioneer Park. Look for the course layout and rules sign at hole No. 1.

Since the adoption of the Plan, the Billings Parks, Recreation & Public Lands Department has been working with volunteers from AirFairways, a local non-profit organization which promotes disc golf, to implement the disc golf recommendations included in the Plan.

The task of moving equipment and signs for switching from the primary summer course to the temporary winter course has been completed, and it is now open for play. Baskets and tee posts were removed from the old course, and new baskets, temporary tee markers and course rules and signage were installed on the temporary winter course.

Rehabilitation of the eroded areas around the old tee markers and baskets has begun and is expected to be completed by next spring. The new primary 9-hole summer course will be installed next spring following the recommended course layout in the Plan. It is expected to be ready for play by summer of 2011. Once the primary summer course is ready for play, the temporary signs, baskets and tee markers on the winter course will be removed for the season. In the fall, the summer course will close and the winter course will reopen on Dec. 1.

With these changes in how disc golf is played, managed, and maintained, an inexpensive, recreational experience and physical activity for users of all ages can be provided in Pioneer Park.

News From the



Parmly Billings Library - Come play with our new Word Wall!

Parmly Billings Library staff is excited about the Library's new interactive Word Wall located in the Children's Services area. The Word Wall is the result of a gift from the estate of former Children's Librarian Edith Gronhovd and is the first interactive media wall of its type ever to be installed in a library setting.

The Word Wall is an immersive media experience that allows children – and adults – to interact with words, phrases and images using their shadow to manipulate those words and images. Children can also work cooperatively with each other to move the words along the 10-foot long screen.

The background of the Word Wall shows an image of Billings' landmark Sacrifice Cliff, based on a photograph provided courtesy of local photographer Phil Bell. Fun blue and purple birds fly through the screen, dropping phrases and images for those waiting below to play with. The words and images can be customized by the Library staff members, who will change them to coincide with story time themes or seasonal celebrations. One young boy who enjoyed the Word Wall on its opening

day exclaimed, "It's just like Harry Potter! It's magic!"

The Word Wall was developed with customized programming for the Library through Snibbe Interactive, which has placed similar interactive experiences in museums and commercial spaces.





Billings Dog Park: "A Place Where a Dog Can Be a Dog"

The Friends of Billings Dog Parks are busy with some exciting fundraisers. On Aug. 14, PRPL along with the Friends of Billings Dog Parks, hosted the first annual "Dash For Dog Parks" fun run at High Sierra Park, near Skyview High

School. The event was a fantastic success.

There were more than 150 people who registered for the race and more than 90 dogs accompanied their owners. There were numerous vendors and over 50 prizes were raffled.

The event raised over \$7,000 to go toward construction of the first of three dog parks at High Sierra Park. The event was so much fun and successful that it will become an annual event. The second annual "Dash For Dog Parks" will be Aug. 13,

2011, so mark your calendars and plan to join in the fun.

To date, over \$27,000 in donations has been raised, with more coming in daily. We need your help! If you are a dog lover and interested in making Dog Parks in Billings a reality, you can make a tax deductible contribution by filling out the form and sending it in along with your donation to the Parks, Recreation and Preservation Foundation, c/o Galusha, Higgins & Galusha P.C., Attn: John Fekety, P.O. Box 2532, Billings, MT 59103. There are many other donation opportunities, including sponsoring furnishings in the Dog Parks such as building materials, shelters, benches and drinking fountains. Please visit www.billingsdogparks.com.

If you or your business would like to know more about sponsorships and naming opportunities, contact Mark Jarvis directly through PRPL at (406) 657-8367 or at jarvism@ci.billings.mt.us.

Billings Dog Park "A Place Where A Dog Can Be A Dog"

Please find enclosed (check payable to the Billings Park, Recreation & Preservation Foundation or bill my credit card) my tax deductible gift of (circle one):

\$1,000 \$500 \$100 \$50 \$20 Other \$ _____

Visa/MasterCard Number: _____ Exp Date: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address is (receipt for tax purposes): _____

This gift is in honor of or memorial for:: (please circle one) _____

The Honoree's address is (necessary to send certificate upon request): _____

Please return this form with gift to:

Billings Parks, Preservation Foundation - c/o Galusha, Higgins & Galusha P.C.
Attn: John Fekety P.O. Box 2532 Billings, MT 59103

SuiteRewards™

Billings Federal Credit Union is proud to bring you a program that rewards you for using your Billings Federal Credit Union Visa® Check Card.

You have countless reward options!

- Merchandise • Travel • Gift cards
- Charitable donations • Downloadable music, ringtones, & books

To learn more, stop by and visit with a SuiteRewards expert or visit our website at www.billingsfcu.org

BILLINGS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Expect a difference.

248-1127 www.billingsfcu.org

760 Wicks Lane • 2522 4th Ave. N • 32nd & King Ave. W



The use of trade, firm, or corporation names in this publication is for the information and convenience of the reader. Such use does not constitute an official endorsement or approval by the City of Billings of any product or service to the exclusion of others that may be suitable.

Q & A From our Readers

Comments from Bob and Donna Witham of Billings:

Now that the dust has settled, we want you to know what an outstanding job the police officers did as they handled the tornado situation at our Heights business on Saturday, June 20. When we arrived on the scene, our building, business and two other businesses were destroyed. Quickly, the police officers arrived and started securing the scene. The officers were kind and compassionate to our situation. As other people arrived to survey the situation, the officers were efficient in securing the area so no one was in danger. They were also very tactful in keeping the curious at bay as other emergency vehicles arrived. Through the first part of the week, the officers were still on scene keeping it secure. Their manner showed professionalism that our police department can be very proud of. It is obvious that expectations for the officers is stellar and that leadership and training shine even in unique emergencies. Our thanks to you and the superb police staff.

Answer:

Our community's disaster response personnel came together and worked through the next few days to mitigate the situation. Thank you for your thoughtful comments. City staff would also like to take this opportunity to recognize the following agencies for the tremendous and invaluable assistance that they provided to the Police department and the City:

- The Montana Highway Patrol – represented by Captain Keith Edgell, who responded to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and provided his assistance and personnel during the recovery efforts.
- The Montana National Guard – Major Greg Olson and his staff arrived at the EOC within two hours of the incident and offered their assistance. With the Police department's resources stretched to the limit, Montana National Guard response and subsequent deployment to the scene allowed officers to reallocate resources and reestablish normal police services to the community.
- The Montana Department of Transportation - Tim Kaczmarek and his personnel quickly responded to the incident and provided the City with a lot of temporary signage and traffic

control equipment to manage the large volume of traffic flowing through the area until normal traffic operations could be restored.

- The Salvation Army – Major Kevin Jackson, Salvation Army staff and volunteers responded with their food preparation and distribution truck. They provided many meals, hot cups of coffee and smiles throughout the incident
- Northwestern Energy – Rick Burt and Northwestern Energy crews were on the scene quickly. They worked throughout the days and nights to get power restored to the water treatment plant, the traffic control systems and to the community.

Thank you to everyone who provided assistance during this critical time.

Comments and Questions from Rich Pittsley of Billings:

I enjoy reading the updates on projects and would like to extend my compliments on the garbage system and regular pickups. Dehler Park is disappointing. All the seats face the outfield and attendees get neck cramps looking sideways at most of the action on the mound and at home plate. There is also not enough rain shelter. Here are my other comments or questions:

1. Are there any plans to repair and pave Moore Lane?
2. Will the corner of 13th and Parkhill become a four-way stop? I think this would be a better use of our tax dollars than stoplights would be.
3. An update on the Landfill Methane project.
4. We need better street sweeper cleanup after major street construction, such as at 15th and Avenue E.
5. We need a turning arrow at the light on 15th and Grand.
6. We need stoplights on 15th Street West, which should be timed to allow traffic to flow. The right-of-way should not be Lewis Avenue.

Answers:

1. Moore Lane: The City is currently working with the property owners along Moore Lane to develop a Special Improvement District that would fund the construction of Moore Lane. A large portion of the cost of the improve-

ments will be the responsibility of the property owners, and they will be able to vote for or against the creation of the SID.

2. 13th and Parkhill: The Montana Department of Transportation recently completed a project at the corner of 13th and Parkhill to improve the safety of the intersection. At the time that the project was under design, neither a traffic signal nor a four-way stop were warranted by traffic volumes. This intersection will be re-evaluated to assess the impact of the improvements and to determine if and when additional traffic control will be warranted.
3. Landfill Methane Project: As of Nov. 9, contractors for MDU have installed 61 gas extraction wells in the landfill. The wells range in depth from 45 to 133 feet. The wells are connected laterally via HDPE pipe which transport the landfill gas to a processing facility. The processing facility is approximately 90 percent completed and is projected to be operational by the end of December. MDU's employees also installed a gas transport line from the landfill to the Midland Road to tie in to their existing distribution system.
4. Street Sweeping: Sweeping is a planned part of the project, but it tends to be done last, as debris continues to accumulate as work progresses.
5. 15th and Grand: The installation of signals or turn arrows are based on warrants – meaning there needs to be a high enough volume of traffic to “warrant” the addition of a signal or protected turn arrow. This intersection has been evaluated and has not met the warrants. It will continue to be monitored, and if turning volumes increase to a point where a turn signal is needed, it will be installed. The overall efficiency of an intersection is what needs to be assessed, and when turn arrows are added, they can actually cause the efficiency to decrease by taking “green” time away from the movements that really need it.
6. 15th St. W.: The signals on 15th Street West are timed to allow progression, but the heavy traffic volumes on Grand and Broadwater make it difficult to favor traffic on 15th Street West.

Thanks for reading the CityLink and for sending in your great suggestions and comments!



News From Billings Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Department



City of Billings – ENERGY STAR

Byron Nelson Park

The Billings Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Department (PRPL) will be initiating a park master plan study for Byron Nelson Park, located at the corner of 54th Street West and Bobby Jones Drive. The Yellowstone Country Club Homes Association (YCCHA) has provided the funding for the study and will work with PRPL to develop the master plan, a document to guide the development for this neighborhood park. After the City Council approves the master plan, PRPL and YCCHA will work together to determine if there is support for a Special Improvement District and Park Maintenance District to fund the construction and maintenance of the park. Byron Nelson Park will be a great asset to the Yellowstone Country Club and an attractive open space for recreation and social activities.

Swords Park Phase II Trail Development

PRPL and the City/County Planning Department have received approval from the Montana Department of Transportation – the state agency responsible for managing federal funding to build the trail – to begin the second phase of trail development on the east end of Swords Park. This new section will connect the existing 2-mile segment along the Rims with the tunnel and trail segment that was recently completed as part of the Airport Road Improvement Project at the intersection of Airport Road and Aronson Avenue. The existing section begins at the “roundabout” on 27th Street and ends near the electrical substation. The contract for this project went before the City Council on November 22 for approval. Design work is scheduled to commence shortly. Completion of this project is scheduled for December 2011.

Holidays at Mountview Cemetery

As the winter holiday season approaches, staff at Mountview Cemetery tends to turn a blind eye to most of the decoration regulations. Normally, decorations stuck in the ground or laid on the ground are not allowed. But, as the winter holiday season approaches, decoration restrictions are lifted, within reason. Some people put out small lighted Christmas trees and many put out wreaths in all shapes, sizes and colors. Please come and help make Mountview festive this year. Be aware however, that decorations must be removed from the Cemetery before Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011, if you wish to keep them for future years. On that day, staff will remove all ground-level decorations and any not in regular flower containers. Thanks for your cooperation, and have a wonderful holiday season!

Billings to Host 2011 Montana Recreation and Park Association Conference

The Billings PRPL Department, in cooperation with local Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks personnel and the Billings Chamber of Commerce Convention and Visitors Bureau, are gearing up to host the 2011 Montana Recreation and Park Association (MRPA) State Conference. The dates for the conference have been selected, and the planning for educational sessions, an awards banquet, and social events has begun. The conference will be held on Sept. 28-30, 2011, at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana. Billings last hosted the conference in 2004. The conference is expected to include over one hundred MRPA members from across the state and over twenty commercial exhibitors throughout the Northwest.



The City of Billings has joined ENERGY STAR as a Partner, making a fundamental commitment to continuous improvement of energy performance.

ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), designed to help save money and protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices. Because a strategic approach to energy management can produce twice the savings – for the bottom line and the environment – EPA’s ENERGY STAR partnership offers a proven energy management strategy that helps in measuring current energy performance, setting goals, tracking savings, and rewarding improvements.

EPA provides an innovative energy performance rating system which businesses have already used for more than 130,000 buildings across the country. EPA also recognizes top performing buildings with the ENERGY STAR. In partnership with ENERGY STAR, the City of Billings will:

- Measure and track energy performance
- Develop and implement a plan to

achieve savings

- Spread the word about the importance of energy efficiency to our staff and community
- Support the ENERGY STAR Challenge, a national call-to-action to help improve the energy efficiency of commercial buildings by 10 percent or more
- Highlight achievement with recognition offered through ENERGY STAR

To that end, the City received grant funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and is contracting with Montana State University-Billings (MSU-B). As per the proposal funded by the DOE through the City, this project will entail the following four activities:

1. Implementing data input into ENERGY STAR’s Portfolio Manager, which will be used to establish benchmarks of key metrics, such as energy intensity and cost and carbon emissions. This measure will assist in comparing those building benchmarks against a national average for buildings of the same type.
2. Develop a website to promote

Continued on page 8

Upcoming PRPL Winter Programs

Do you want to stay active and busy this winter? Look at what the Parks and Recreation Department will be offering. There are activities and classes for all ages!



- **Basketball** – Boys 4th, 5th and 6th Grade, starting Jan. 19.
- **Volleyball** – Girls 4th, 5th and 6th Grade, starting March 9.
- **Volleyball** – Adult Coed League. Deadline to register is Jan. 7.
- **Sports Specific Training** – ACL Injury Prevention Camp for High School females, starting Jan. 18.
- **Audubon Nature Camps** – More information to be included in Winter Brochure.
- **Belly Dancing** – Beginning class to learn basic moves and transitions.
- **Zumba** – Combines high energy Latin music with unique moves and combinations that allow you to dance away your worries and calories.
- **Download your Digital Photos** – New! Learn how to take your photos off your camera card and download them to your computer to print and email.
- **Digital Photography** – In-depth class that covers camera controls and settings exposure factors, how to capture the shots you want and the use of computer software for photo toning, cropping, manipulation, etc.
- **Fly Fishing** – Everything you need to know about fly fishing, plus hands on casting practice. Learn how to rig lines, tie knots, what fish feed on and keys to successful fishing.
- **Crochet Classes** – New! For beginners and those with some experience to learn the basics of Crocheting and understanding a pattern.
- **Knitting Classes** – New! Learn the basics and how to read and understand a pattern.
- **Kite Building for All Ages** – Instruction includes kite design, the science of how they fly, the history of kite use in aviation and the military, plus much more.
 - * Kite Building for Kids
 - * Kite Building for Teens
 - * Kite Building for Adults
- **GPS Classes** – Classes vary from learning the basics of using your GPS unit, to instruction in proper use of compass with maps, as well as hands-on assistance in setting up and operating your receiver.
 - * Intro to Recreational GPS
 - * GPS with Maps
 - * Getting the Most from your GPS
- **Martial Arts** – Heights and West end locations. Mixed martial arts class called Kyuki-Do that incorporates Tae Kwon Do , Hapkido & Judo.

Classes for Adults, Kids and Adult/Family

- **Pure Pilates** - Learn the fundamentals of Pilates matwork.
- **Sculpt, Tone & Stretch** – New! A more personal type of training for those not wanting to hire a personal trainer – includes use of resistance and hand weights.
- **Strong Woman Strong Bones** – A nationally recognized fitness program designed for women 55+ that focuses on strength training, improving bone density, increasing flexibility and improving arthritis symptoms.
- **Learn to Shoot Video** – New! Here is your chance to learn tips and tricks that will make video from any camera look and sound better and help you to better capture those special events.

All information, registration forms and complete class listings may be found on www.prpl.info. Also, the Winter Activities Brochure will be in the Billings Gazette on Jan. 1, 2011. You may register for all classes online, or drop off or mail in your registration form to the office located at 390 N. 23rd Street.

(Energy Star)

Continued from page 7

- public awareness and education about ENERGY STAR and conservation.
3. Develop and execute a public education/community marketing campaign for the community about ENERGY STAR and conservation practices.
 4. Assess public awareness of the ENERGY STAR Challenge and effectiveness of the marketing campaign in Billings.

Student interns, under the supervision of Dr. Mary McNally of MSU-B, will work through the designated City liaison, Saree Couture, Facilities Manager for the City of Billings, to accomplish these activities. Other faculty involved with the project will include Dr.

AJ Otjen, Dr. Sarah Keller, Dr. Jenny Leonard, Dr. Tim Wilkinson, and Dr. Scott Rickard.

The Billings City Council has given the go-ahead to accept the ENERGY STAR challenge, taking a leadership role in conservation that will encourage residents to make energy-saving choices.

The City is participating in a Performance Contracting process that begins with an energy audit that will help identify the City's first round of conservation changes. More on the exciting project will be forthcoming in future newsletters. The audit, paid for completely with grant money from ARRA under the Federal Stimulus Funds, administered through the DOE for energy efficiency improvements, will provide sustainable improvements to facilities owned and operated by the City that guarantee energy, operating, and maintenance savings.



125 years

of journalistic excellence,
we're bringing you the future today in...



print



online

now, on-the-go with
billingsgazette.com/mobile.





Montana and Northern Wyoming's Largest Information Provider.