Comments and Controversy

Ostrom Files For FVCC Trustee

Lead editorial in last week's Hungry Horse News headed "The Most Unusual G. George Ostrom" included these comments:

"One can wonder if the unusual G. George Ostrom — quite a personality — should have a future in public service..."

Conclusion commented on Ostrom being an interesting contrast to most persons in government. "He'd be a sparkler."

That editorial was published in Thursday's Hungry Horse News.

Sunday's Daily Inter Lake used a four-column page one headline "Ostrom files for college post." We don't recall a local candidate getting a more prominent headline in the Flathead's daily.

The story told of Ostrom filing for a three-year term on the Flathead Valley Community College board of trustees. Other candidate is incumbent, and respected, Robert Lapp, a Flathead high teacher. The board elects its own chairman, and chose Lopp.

Ostrom was critical of the FVCC board early last winter when it fired Dr. Donald G. Lindahl as president. His salary continued, and no substantial reason was ever given for the dismissal. Ostrom criticized the FVCC board and asked for their resignation.

In filing for election, Ostrom said: "The college is a business and should be run like one." The board of trustees has in the past intruded into the "academic side of things" where it had no business to be. They have at times seemed more interested in getting their dirty linen hung out on the public line than they have in quietly going about their business.

Ostrom concluded: "If elected, I will serve actively and deal fairly with fellow board members as well as the college leadership."

Thus G. George Ostrom embarks on a public service career.

Newspaper Coverage

There's tendency on the part of the public to overlook the situation that a newspaper is a mirror of the area. It should do much more than reflect an editor's prejudices.

Articles and pictures include more than what an editor likes and dislikes, and it is essential to present what the people of the area do and think.

During World War II we were a Navy gunnery officer, but the only hunting we do in the Flathead is with a camera. One needs to recognize there are many Flathead residents who consider hunting and fishing important reasons to live in these parts.

It came as no surprise to receive two letters, both from physicians who now live in the Swan, objecting to publishing a mountain lion hunter picture. What the hunter did was American, legal and it was somewhat unusual in that he used a bow and arrow.

Yes, we prefer photographs and stories about live mountain lions, elk, deer, bear, and so do most readers. But achievement of the hunter is still part of the story of the mountain west as it was in frontier days.

DAVID R. SHAFFER FAMILY photo taken by Earl McMaster. with Kandie in center. Christmas

Shaffer Family Thanks Community

Dear Members of Our Columbia Falls Family,

In August 1971 our family Carla, Mike, Karey, Kathy and myself moved to the Columbia Falls area from Salt Lake City. We came to the state of my birth to allow our precious children the privilege to live and play in this rural community. As we settled here we made a few friends quickly but having been raised in close knit families of five children and 15 children respectively, Carla and I did not "socialize" much. We felt you, the community, accepted us as a family and we set our roots deep here giving birth to Khrisy, Monte, and little Kandie.

Our life was happy and secure when the tragic events of March 1 fell on us. Ironically it was a friend, neighbor and fellow teacher who located me to hand the initial blow (Allen Jacobson). Of all things that could occur to us the worst would be the loss of one of our precious children.

Our entire lives are built around our family, recreation always including all from little Kandie to Mike. But there we were lost in the confusion, smells, and sounds. Our minds were deadened by the pump engines, men yelling, mothers crying.

In the midst of all this terror the hand of our larger family, you the Columbia Falls Community, reached down and grasped us by our shoulders and lifted us up to keep us from floundering in despair and turmoil. The Fire Departments fought to find and save our babies (Kandie and Warren Peterson), failing but trying with all their might. Our neighbors and friends held us tight, comforting us with physical support, spiritual support and temporal support.

We were not the only ones who mourn the death of our babies but we know that you also lost them.

Our brothers, sisters and parents arrived on March 2 to give us a lift. They did, and to their surprise our spirits had already begun healing, painfully, with the assistance of you our larger family including the members of the LDS Church.

We desire to express our sincere thanks to Mel Ruder for his accurate account of the events of that day. The truth helps to heal.

Our special thanks from the depths of our broken hearts to you, our large family, for your support during the trauma of the past week. Even though it is not over for our needs are great but you should know that our roots have not been torn out by this tragedy but have sunk deeper in this our Columbia Falls community by your nourishing hand.

Our Father-in-Heaven knows how much we love and appreciate you all. Thank you for your strengthening words of peace, financial assistance, and for your strong arms helping us. Our people may fight over trivial affairs as brothers and sisters do but when the important things come we pull together as a team for one purpose. May God bless you for your greatness of Spirit. May he help us all to keep our priorities straight and please let's raise our children with our time and love while we can. One day they may not be here.

God bless you, thank you.

David R., Carla, Michael, Karey, Kathryn, Khristine, Monte and Kandie Marie Shaffer

Reader Opinions

Jonkel Answers Critic

To the editor:

I didn't see the Feb. 24 item Mr. Sweet referred to (HH News March 3) in which I "blasted" the North Forkers, but having not communicated a blast or anything to that paper since last summer whatever he read was written by someone else.

As Mel Ruder normally writes pretty factual articles, I was rather surprised to see the letter by Mr. Sweet. I was equally surprised to note how little information on the bear study Mr. Sweet is aware of, despite the numerous newspaper and public explanations I've made.

I study the natural bears of the North Fork, of course, and have no authority to move bears there. The Fish and Game Department and the National Park Service (in cooperation with the Forest Service) do more bears there. However I try to aid the agencies in anyway I can help.

Last year I kept track of the Slippery Bill bear for the agencies though it put a serious strain on the bear study. In fact, there would be no solid evidence that the Slippery Bill bear was the rogue North Fork bear if I hadn't radio tracked him. He was never seen clearly enough the entire summer to make certain he was a tagged transplant. As a further aid, I gave daily reports to officials authorized to kill him.

Despite the bad publicity for the agencies from the one unsuccessful relocation, I still recommend to them that all re-located bears should be marked with radio collars so that we know what their movements are and whether they survive the re-location.

Such an effort is an important part of the bear relocation and grizzly survival program.

If Mr. Sweet doesn't like that, then he had better address himself to Congress as they passed the endangered species act. Within a democratic system the most votes rule, and if Mr. Sweat cannot live with the present federal law he can (1) try to change it, or (2) get out. To blame me for a federal law is utterly ridiculous; to advocate breaking the law is called sedition.

The law, of course, doesn't say you cannot protect yourself. That is sheer nonsense invented by Mr. Sweet. Anyone can kill a bear to protect oneself, and no jury or judge will convict you.

In fact, no warden will even give you a ticket, if it is an honest case of self-protection. However I know of four grizzlies shot maliciously in 1975, two or three in 1976, and at least two grizzlies which disappeared in 1976, all in the Flathead area. Maybe Mr. Sweet doesn't know of anyone going out to kill non-rogue grizzlies, but I do, and I don't like it.

And finally, I don't expect people to tolerate rogue grizzlies — that is a lie. But I do hold that people shouldn't move into grizzly country if they want to be completely safe from the grizzly.

Over 99.9 per cent of the U.S. south of Canada has no grizzlies, there grizzly haters can go to. I also think it is very unwise to clearcut log, build subdivisions, or run cattle in the heart of grizzly country. I'll continue to say so again, again and again. That's part of my job and my personal viewpoint in determining how the Endangered Species Act can be made to work for the grizzly as decreed by Congress (the people).

Yours Sincerely
Chas. Jonkel
BSF Forestry
University of Montana

Comments On Conference

To the editor:

Now that the big bear conference is over, it is interesting that in spite of all the educated men that are supposed to know all about grizzly bear, not one of them came up with two obvious facts.

First, anyone who has lived and hunted here in the Flathead for 50 years or more, knows there are several times their numbers than there were back in those days.

Secondly there has been not four, but several fatalities caused by the species. No one knows how many of the persons who have been lost and never found in NW Montana, including Glacier Park, that were killed by grizzlies. There will be more, for the bear population has exceeded the available food supply.

Of the four persons killed in the Glacier area, Slim Link, the girl at Trout Lake and the one last fall at Many Glacier, three of these were eaten by the hungry bear. This was unusual at Many Glacier, for last year there was a bumper crop of huckleberries. Such crops seldom follow in sequence and with the growing crowds of tourists in the Park, fatal encounters with these bear could be numerous in years ahead.

Another point they must all be aware of, but not one of them would admit, with the rapid increase in our population there in the U.S., in another 50 or 100 years, there will be no room for any of the large wild animals we have here today. The only factors that will prevent this is a natural catastrophe or perhaps a nuclear war.

Charles K. Green
Coram

Mountain Lions

To the editor:

In reply to Dr. Schreiber of Condon, who asks by what right a hunter is allowed to kill a mountain lion that he (Schreiber) "loves," I'll explain it to him — because it is the law of the land, the same as the one that allows doctors to kill unborn humans that millions of others love.

The only difference is that legal hunting is an honored and sensible tradition whereas mass killings of unborn babies (in the tradition of Buchenwald and Treblinka that so horrifies Dr. Schreiber) is a very recent "legal" act.

If all the weeping "nature boys" who have moved into the Swan in the last 15 years and built homes and fences would just move out, the Swan would take a giant step back towards being what it used to be.

Gordon L. Pouliot
Del Bonita

Thoughts About Bear Issues

To the editor:

"The Groan, Grant and Grin Club" is one of the major problems facing the average citizen today.

"The Club" consists of any number of self-styled experts in almost any field you can think of. But for the most part, they are college professors who do damn little professing at the institutions where they are paid to profess.

Here is how it works. Professor "X" decides he can rip-off his fellow taxpayers by getting the federal government to pay for the benefit of his self-proclaimed expertise in an academic discipline.

First he finds a benevolent bureaucracy, (just look in the phone book under United States Government), and GROANS like hell that he is the only person on the face of the earth that can solve a particular problem affecting his fellow man.

Then, of course, he tells the benevolent bureaucracy that to really solve the problem, he will need a government GRANT for a bit more study. He doesn't ask for too much at first, but when that money runs out he goes back to the source and says that the problem is much more complex than he originally thought and he needs more money to continue his studies. Presto! a lifetime job and the GRIN. It could also be construed as a snicker.

A prominent member of the "Groan, Grant and Grin Club" is Dr. Charles Jonkel, a Montana University professor, who is grinning his way through a grant to study grizzly bear.

Dr. Jonkel recently told an international bear conference that folks along the North Fork to the Flathead River will go out of their way to kill grizzly bear and bury their carcasses. Perhaps he thinks he will run out of study material and lose his grant. In any event, Dr. Jonkel has a short memory. If somebody up the North Fork did kill a certain bear, Dr. Jonkel should remember he took the incorrigible critter from another area and placed it in the North Fork where it proceeded to beat up dogs, gardens and cabins not to mention scaring hell out of people.

Dr. Jonkel shouldn't be so disheartened, because when he groans for his next grant he can ask for more money to find out what makes the grizzly so damn mean. In the meantime??????

Gus Sonnenberg
Columbia Falls

Bystander

by Mel Ruder

Libby Items

Senator Lee Metcalf has included a 22,000 acre area, Mt. Henry portion of the Kootenai National Forest, in S.393 a wilderness study bill.

Also included is the Ten Lakes Area northeast of Eureka. Opposing S.393 is the Inland Forest Resource Council, St. Regis Paper Co., Libby Chapter of Society of American Foresters.

Most influential supporters of the proposed Mt. Henry Wilderness 30 miles directly north of Libby are John McIntire who have maintained a home at the base of Mt. Henry for 39 years.

The Mt. Henry issue is presented in some detail in last week's Western News published by Paul Verdon at Libby.

McIntire's statement included: "I will not take undue time to describe this approximately 22,000-acre roadless area other than to say that it contains all the beauty and natural elements required by nature to maintain and perpetuate a true wilderness...." (he then tells of his opposition to clearcuts).... "Within a radius of only four miles from our home at the base of Mt. Henry, all forest cover has already been removed from over 5,000 acres by the devastating method known as clear-cutting...."

Last week's Western News also tells of the promotion of Robert Damon, who was district ranger at Hungry Horse for Flathead National Forest in 1958-59.

From 1969 to 1974 he was deputy supervisor Kootenai National Forest, then supervisor of Deerlodge National Forest and now regional timber sales group leader in Missoula. He's a Kalispell native, UM forestry graduate, Korean War veteran.

His successor as Deerlodge National Forest supervisor is Karl Mecklenburg, who succeeded Damon as assistant supervisor of the Kootenai. Mecklenburg is a University of Minnesota forestry graduate who came to Libby from Seattle headquarters of Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Also reported in the Western News last issue was the death in Portland of Paul Neils, 96, first manager of J. Neils Lumber Co. in Libby.

The Neils family had built its first mill in 1887, the year Paul Neils was born. It was Neils and Thayer at Sauk Rapids, Minn. In 1895 Tom Shevlin bought Tayer's interest and the firm was incorporated as J. Neils Lumber Co.

In 1911 the Dawson Lumber Co. at Libby was purchased by J. Neils and Paul Neils came to Libby in 1912 as manager. He returned to Cass Lake, Minn. in 1915 and moved to Portland in 1924. He remained president of J. Neils Co. until it merged with St. Regis Paper Co. in 1957 and then became a St. Regis director.

Survivors include his wife, two daughters, two sons, Arthur Neils, Libby and Julius Neils, Bellingham, Wash.; two sisters and two brothers including George Neils, Libby and Gerhardt of Portland.

Rep. Russ Baeth, D-Martin City, telephoned that he'd received considerable mail on the gambling issue. "Most were against any expansion of gambling."

Asked about legislation that would have permitted wine sales in grocery stores, he replied: "That was killed in the Senate."

In part this was from "an unholy alliance" of tavern operators protecting their interest, and ministers who didn't want any further liquor outlets.

Baeth called to report that HB-122 the massive, controversial bill to revise Montana's local government was killed on third reading. It had passed 53-46 after four hours of debate. The bill had been amended 430 times while in the House Local Government Committee.

Baeth saw some good points in HB 122 but voted against it Monday.

The Hungry Horse News is unaware of what the legislature has accomplished to avoid having future study commissions.

Canyon Mountaineers 4-H Club had a good trip to Helena and the legislature, reports Mrs. Kate Richter, leader.

There were 18 young people from the West Glacier to Hungry Horse area on the outing. They saw the Legislature in action, met with Lt. Governor Ted Schwinden. He answered a question by Clay Thornton: "It costs $197,000 a year to heat and light the Montana capitol complex."

Stops included the Montana Historical Society and Russell Gallery, the Montana Department of Highways building, talking to Jack Beckert, administrator for engineering who mentioned there was delay in U.S. 2 reconstruction because of condemnation. In the design section, Mr. Swenson and Dela Hunt showed the 4-H members sections of highway design.

Other stops included Frank Murray, secretary of state, who gave them an interesting talk; they laughed. The club had lunch with members of the Flathead delegation.

We hope the young people write something of their experiences for the Hungry Horse News.

Idaho statesman at Boise had a story on student teachers in Boise schools, and featured Cathy Gilk, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Gilk, Columbia Falls.

Cathy was student teaching in music education at Capital High for nine weeks.

She'll be with her folks this weekend for spring break, and will return to the University of Idaho at Moscow to finish her senior year. She's an honor student.

Thanks for Help In Coram Fire

To the editor:

We did not realize that people could be so wonderful until we had our early morning fire — most of our home and belongings were destroyed, but not our faith in mankind.

We can only say "THANK YOU" from the bottom of our hearts to the people from Kalispell, Columbia Falls, Hungry Horse, Martin City, Coram, West Glacier, Essex and espec-

[continued on page 7]

Praises Falls School Groups

To the editor:

Often times we tend to praise some and pass over others — while we have a wonderful athletic program and the coaches, students and fans are to be praised, so should the rest of the school. Win or lose football, wrestling, basketball or track; the Wildcats are exciting to watch (girls and boys). Our girls didn't have a great season this year in basketball but they have many more years to come and they are fun to watch, the boys had a bad season too, but every game a close one and always a thrill to watch such a great sport. Like I said, win or lose, Wildcats are best.

Now I'd like to take time to praise the rest, speech competition and our wonderful band and our very lovely and talented drill team. Let me tell you it was a thrill to be at the tournament and hear our band so outstanding and see our drill team get a standing ovation that I just wanted to stand up and shout "I'm from Columbia Falls."

Jeanne Squires
Columbia Falls

Hungry Horse News

Published each Thursday by Hungry Horse News Inc., P. O. Box 189, Columbia Falls, Montana 59912. Second Class postage paid at Columbia Falls, Montana.

Mel Ruder, Editor
Ruth B. Ruder — Ad Manager
Greg Sorenson — Printer Foreman
Keith Klingenberg — Staff Assistant
Mrs. Barbara Phillips — Ad Layout
Mrs. Gail Toole — Compugraphic Operator
Mrs. Grace Kracher — Subscriptions
Mrs. Betty Skare — Mailing

Subscription rates — One year in Flathead County and Glacier Park $7, six months $4. Elsewhere in Montana $8 a year, $4.50 six months. Outside Montana in U.S. $9 a year, $5 six months. Canada $10 a year.