

BIG SKY

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COOL RUNNINGS

A bear was seen running along Interstate 90

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Groups threaten to sue Yellowstone Club over pollution

By HELENA DORE
Chronicle Staff Writer

Two conservation groups and an environmental law firm are poised to sue the Yellowstone Club alleging the club is illegally discharging nitrogen into the South Fork of the Gallatin River.

Cottonwood Environmental Law Center, the Gallatin Wildlife Association and Montana Rivers last Friday sent the Yellowstone Club a 60-day notice of intent to sue for the alleged violations of the Clean Water Act, according to John Meyer, Cottonwood's executive director and the groups' attorney.

The groups claim the high-end club in Big Sky violated the Clean Water Act by discharging nitrogen into the South Fork of the Gallatin River from a stream on the Yellowstone Club golf course.

Meyer said he sent the notice after a volunteer collected water samples at three spots below, above and in a tributary coming off the Yellowstone Club's golf course. The results showed there were higher levels of nitrogen in the tributary running from the golf course, he said.

"The Montana Department of Environmental Quality has listed the South Fork of the Gallatin River

as a water-quality impaired stream, which means the Yellowstone Club cannot apply for a permit to make the discharge legal," Meyer wrote in a news release.

Over-irrigation of the club's golf course with reclaimed wastewater is likely causing the nitrogen pollution, he said.

Meyer wrote that he passed along the 60-day Notice of Intent to Sue to Montana DEQ and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Cottonwood plans to ask the U.S. District Court in Butte to bar the club from adding new sewer connections, he said.

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RACHEL LEATHE/CHRONICLE

The entrance to the Yellowstone Club sits at the end of South Fork Road in 2019 in Big Sky.

Summer reading program culminates with bike raffle



BOOKS AND BMX

By LIZ WEBER
Chronicle Staff Writer

A principal and three teachers laid shoulder to shoulder in the center of a gym floor on Wednesday morning as a rider on a BMX bike barreled toward them. The Sacajawea Middle School gym erupted in cheers and the thundering of feet on bleachers as the rider leapt into the air, easily cleared the group.

The assembly — the first the school held in the last 18 months — was the culmination of Read to Ride, a summer reading program the middle school held in partnership with USA BMX Foundation.

To encourage reading throughout the summer, students were given a raffle ticket for each book they read with the grand prize of a Mongoose BMX bike and helmet raffled during Wednesday's assembly.

Professional BMX athlete Cam Wood was there to talk with students, perform a couple of jumps and help raffle off the bike provided by USA BMX Foundation and Mongoose.

Wood, who also attended Chief Joseph Middle School and Bozeman High School, said it was important for him to come back home and do events like this to introduce and encourage students in both BMX and education.

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PHOTOS BY SAMUEL WILSON/CHRONICLE/REPORT FOR AMERICA

TOP: Cam Wood, former Bozeman student and professional BMX racer, helps eighth-grader Cash Shonkwiler with the bike she won as part of a reading incentive program at Sacajawea Middle School on Wednesday.

ABOVE: Wood jumps over four teachers and administrators.

Search continues for man missing in Yellowstone

By HELENA DORE
Chronicle Staff Writer

The day after the body of a 67-year-old Washington man was found along the shore of a remote lake in Yellowstone National Park, the search continued for the man's missing half-brother.

Search and rescue crews spent Tuesday and Wednesday looking for 74-year-old Kim Crumbo of Ogden, Utah, who went missing after going on a four-night backcountry trip with his half-brother Mark O'Neill.

O'Neill's official cause of death hasn't yet been determined, but he likely drowned, park spokesperson Morgan Warthin wrote in an email.

The park's crews looked for Crumbo by foot, helicopter and boat at Shoshone Lake, which lies in the southwestern corner of Yellowstone, on Wednesday. They planned to continue the search in the upcoming days as conditions warrant.

Crumbo is a retired National Park Service employee and a former Navy Seal. According to his bio on the website for The Rewilding Institute, Crumbo spent four years completing two combat deployments to Vietnam.

For 20 years, Crumbo served as a river ranger and then as a wilderness coordinator for the National Park Service in the Grand Canyon, the bio says.

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Annexation near Story Mill draws pushback

By NORA SHELLY
Chronicle Staff Writer

A proposal to annex 24 acres at the intersection of Story Mill Road and Bridger Drive into the city for development is drawing pushback from neighbors.

The Canyon Gate annexation request submitted in August is for property with one home on it at the northeast corner of the intersection. Part of the land is farmed for hay, developer Andy Holloran with HomeBase Partners said Monday.

HomeBase Partners bought the land earlier this year and has not submitted site plans yet, Holloran said.

Holloran said the plan is for the development to be largely residential, with an opportunity for some commercial use. The annexation and zoning application is under initial review by city staff.

Developers are requesting the land have four different zoning designations on the parcel, Community Development Manager Chris Saunders said.

B-2M zoning is proposed on the western property boundary with Story Mill Road, which allows for commercial uses to serve both the immediate area and "broader trade area," according to the city's code, and encourages multifamily residential use.

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Fire crews tackle 35-acre grass fire near Logan

By ALEX MILLER
Chronicle Staff Writer

A grass fire sparked next to the Logan Shooting Range and scorched about 35 acres Wednesday, but fire crews were able to mostly contain it.

The fire crept up and around a large hill next to the gun range, burning much of the grass on the back side of the hill and coming to a stop on a rocky hillside in front of Logan Trident Road.



ALEX MILLER

A grass fire that burned around 35 acres in Logan, Montana came within yards of the Logan Shooting Range on Wednesday.

The fire started around 12:30 p.m., and Three Forks Fire Chief Keith Aune said that

trucks and fire crews responded a few minutes later. The Willow Creek, Manhattan and

Clarkston Fire Departments all responded to the fire.

The only flames visible were coming from the rocky hill face which led to the road. Aune said the plan was to let the flame move closer to the road, using it as a break in the fire. Then crews would douse the flames from the roadside.

Gallatin County lifted its burn ban at the end of August. The energy-release component of fuels, like the dense grasses that covered much of the hillside at the grassfire in Logan, was the main driver for the ban.

"Just because the burn ban was lifted, it's still dry out," Aune said.

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