

# Winnett Times

## ~Winnett Montana Community Newsletter~

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September 2021



1920's Cat Creek oilfield worker filling a tank.

\*\*\*All photos in this article are credited to the Petroleum County Public Library\*\*\*

### “A Land Laced with Petroleum!”

--Part Two--

By Terry Lewis

Cat Creek is a stream that flows into the Musselshell River whose name may originate in the tale of a cowboy roping a mountain lion along its banks. The hills around Cat Creek are peaceful and barren, but imagine an innocuous anthill. Shove a stick in that and you'll set off frenzied activity. One hundred years ago, someone poked a hole – well, dozens of them – in the Cat Creek anticline. This formation caps what once was a combination of tiny sea organisms. Compress and heat this layer for hundreds of millions of years, and voila, you've got a potential oil boom!

Roll the centuries forward to 1914 when geological mapping defined a series of anticlines – up-thrust domes of rock – that extend eastward from the Judith Mountains and the Porcupine Dome. The map, created by a geologist named Bowen, depicted a V-shaped sandstone formation. It indicated a promising site for coal deposits, but there was also the possibility of oil. It was dubbed the Cat Creek Anticline. The Flatwillow, Cat Creek and Devil's Basin anticlines were also mapped; oil was found in Devil's Basin.

W.P. Kerr of Melstone noticed the reports and managed to drum up support from local businessmen. In the fall of 1918, they formed the Musselshell Valley Oil Company. By 1919, they finally gathered the funds to finance a test well. Kerr moved to Winnett, opened its first oil office. He then managed to secure a large acreage of lease-land on the Brush Creek structure and the Cat Creek Dome. The company engaged Al Field, a local water well driller to punch a hole eight miles north of Winnett on Section 26, Township 16, Range 27 in the Brush Creek structure.

Seeking financial backing, Kerr finally got a bite from Cosden Oil Company in Oklahoma. They sent geologist, Charles T. Lupton to survey the area. Though his report was favorable, Cosden Oil turned it down. Lupton was highly interested, however, and contacted Frank Frantz, a former Rough Rider and former governor of Oklahoma. He embraced the opportunity and formed the Frantz Corporation, backing it with three million dollars. Meanwhile, the Brush Creek test well sunk by the Musselshell Valley Company had

struck a heavy flow of water at 600 feet.

They abandoned it. Undeterred, Frantz Corporation decided to drill an exploratory well on their Cat Creek holdings and sent drilling superintendent L.S. “Rosey” Lantz, drillers J. S. “Curley” Meek, and Saul Alderdice, plus tool dresser Fred Barnett. On October 9, 1919, the four men checked into a Winnett hotel.

After investigating the terrain, Lupton abandoned his first drilling choice. It was just too far from the water that was needed for drilling. Instead, he chose a site close to the Musselshell River on what was known as the Charles Lease, about 25 miles from the railhead in Winnett. Equipment arrived from Wyoming by rail and then need must be freighted by wagon to the oil field. That was going to present a challenge.

#### TOUGH GOING

The freight-loaded wagons moved out from Winnett to Cat Creek via a mere track. They had no sooner reached camp and unloaded when one of the worst early blizzards on record struck.

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#### HIGHLIGHTS

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# Community Spotlight

## Carie Hess and the Petroleum Co. Conservation District: Providing Local Common Sense Conservation Services

To outsiders, Winnett might look like a sleepy little town where next to nothing happens. But a visit with Carie Hess, the District Administrator of the Petroleum County Conservation District (PCCD), soon puts that idea to bed. She has been in her position since 2008, and has expanded both the organization's budget and its activity in the community. Today's busy office has grown exponentially since its founding in the middle of the last century.

**“Her attention to detail has made the PCCD an example to other CD's in office organization and structure.”**

*Laura Kiehl, PCCD Board Member*

### **A Brief History of the Conservation District**

The idea of forming Conservation Districts in the United States which would work to safeguard valuable natural resources started with Hugh Hammond Bennett in the late 1930s. His work as a writer and speaker for the Department of Agriculture and the Interior Department made him an expert in soil and water conservation. His ideas promised to prevent the terrible experience of the “Dirty Thirties” from happening again, and under his guidance local



Perhaps the longest-lasting and defining project of the PCCD is the effort to cap the many artesian wells in the county. Since the early 2000s, 68 wells have been capped and/or winterized for land owners all around the area.

conservation districts began springing up around the country.

The movement reached Petroleum County in 1951 when the Petrolia Soil Conservation District was organized. Five local producers served on the first board of directors including Ray Bohn, Isaac Iverson, William Welter, Torger Sikveland and Clarence Saylor. Through several name changes, the Conservation District has remained continually active since that time and will be celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> birthday on October 4, 2021.

According to Carie, the mission of the PCCD has always been to provide local, common sense conservation services for area landowners and producers. The board members and administrator work together to be a voice for Petroleum County ranchers and farmers and to be an agent of communication between federal and local government agencies. Current board members J King, Ralph Corbett, Brenda Brady, Rodney Rowton, Laura Kiehl, and Nathan Descheemaeker stand ready to keep the mission alive.

The Conservation District is funded partially by a small share of county property taxes, but the biggest part of its budget comes through applying for and administering grants. Carie says the CD now partners with 25 other organizations, both governmental and non-governmental, to identify grant monies that can be used to improve conservation in the county. These organizations include the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pheasants Forever, Northern Great Plains Joint Venture and Winnett ACES, just to name a few.

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The Hess Family: Carie, Cha, Caleb, Katelynn



The Hess Family  
at Caleb's Rangers Football Game



Gatherings such as the Rangeland Grazing  
and Monitoring Workshop



Adults are invited to many CD sponsored  
workshops throughout the year as well.  
Ladies' Day on the Range

## Community Spotlight Continued...

Currently, Carie administers 13 grants which fund a number of different local projects, and the office has a budget of around \$400,000. The CD also has one full time and six part time employees.

All this activity obviously requires an organized and efficient manager, and Carie fits that description. Current PCCD board member Laura Kiehl says, "She has helped me understand the budgets and the inner workings of the partner organizations as well as how the organizations work together. Her attention to detail has made the PCCD an example to other CD's in office organization and structure."

### **Willing to Learn**

But has she always known so much about rural areas, conservation, grant writing and administration? When asked about her background, Carie chuckled. She said she was born and raised in Billings and considered herself a city girl. She did have some interesting ties to Winnett, however. Shortly after she began dating her husband Cha, they discovered both their grandmothers went to Winnett High School. Not only that, Carie's grandma Sylvia Patterson Stoddard and Cha's grandma Mary Oster Brindley were in the same graduating class of 1951.

Since starting her job as District Administrator in 2008, Carie has attended numerous workshops, classes and seminars to increase her knowledge. She is now certified as a Procurement Specialist, a Contract Specialist and a Grant Manager. All these skills have proven to be valuable as she works on practical on-the-ground projects in Petroleum County.

### **Pet Projects**

Carie says she has had several favorite endeavors in her job over the years, and nearly all of them fall under the category of education and outreach. It has been a big focus of the CD to reach both children and adults with useful,

accessible information that improves conservation in the area.

*In case all these projects do not keep Carie busy enough, she finds time to volunteer at other community events as well...the Winnett ACES' Pasture Golf Tournament... PIE at the school and in town cleanup and beautification days.*

One of Carie's "pet" projects, Ag Education Day, has been occurring annually in the local school since 2008. This workshop provides students with hands on activities that broaden their knowledge about soil types, erosion, ground covers, and other aspects of conservation. Carie says a favorite activity of the school kids is interacting with the Rolling Rivers Trailer. This teaching aid is owned by the Montana Association of Conservation Districts and provides a real time, live action display of the ways water impacts soil, crop land and native pasture.

Adults are invited to many CD sponsored workshops throughout the year as well. Ladies' Day on the Range is a popular event for Women where they can hear informational speakers and have their own chance to get out in the field and do some hands-on learning. Gatherings such as the Rangeland Grazing and Monitoring Workshop

provide just one example of valuable information distributed to farmers and stockmen right in their local area.

A recent project undertaken by Carie and the PCCD has been planting trees near the rodeo ground outside of town. Trees are always an asset on the prairie, and the hope is these trees will provide a windbreak and shelter for wildlife and people alike for many years to come.

Perhaps the longest-lasting and defining project of the PCCD is the effort to cap the many artesian wells in the county. Since the early 2000s, 68 wells have been capped and/or winterized for land owners all around the area. The CD currently monitors these wells for leaks or other problems.

In case all these projects do not keep Carie busy enough, she finds time to volunteer at other community events as well. She has also been involved in PIE at the school and in town cleanup and beautification days.

For these reasons, many locals will be sad to learn she plans to leave her position at the PCCD at the end of September. She and Cha will be moving to Billings where they will be closer to both of their families as well as their two young-adult children Katelynn and Caleb. Best wishes to Carie as she moves on to other adventures. The PCCD and the entire community will miss her.

*By Dixie Iverson*



One of Carie's "pet" projects, Ag Education Day, has been occurring annually in the local school since 2008.



A recent project undertaken by Carie and the PCCD has been planting trees near the rodeo ground outside of town.



# Winnett School News



## Superintendent's Message:

Hello everyone,

Welcome to the 21-22 school year! We are very excited to have our students and staff in the building.

One big piece of news from Winnett School is that we are starting the process of developing a strategic plan. A strategic plan asks stakeholders (community members, staff, parents, students) to give feedback on where we are presently as a school, and determine where we want to go from here. A strategic plan identifies what is important in our community and creates priorities for curriculum, staffing, building projects, spending - the whole package. You'll see postings for different community feedback meetings throughout the fall and winter and you may be asked to fill out a survey online or on paper. Community feedback is very important to the process and we hope you'll give us a few minutes when we come knocking.

Thank you and we'll see you soon! ~*Lindsey Wilkerson*

## September Lunch Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Proudly serving Local Beef</b>	<b>**Menu is subject to change</b>	1 Fish Fillet Salad Mac & Cheese Fruit	2 Tacos Veggies Fruit	3 Pizza Salad Fruit
6 <b>LABOR DAY NO SCHOOL</b>	7 Chicken Dijon Broccoli Fruit Bread Sticks	8 Hamburgers Nachos Salad Fruit	9 Chicken Mashed Potatoes Cheesy Beans Fruit Roll	10 Sloppy Joes Fries Salad Fruit
13 Italian Chicken Sub Chips Veggies Fruit	14 Walking Taco Corn Fruit	15 Baked Ham Potatoes Veggies Fruit Roll	16 Crispy Chicken Wrap Fries Salad Fruit	17 One Dish Supper Green Beans Fruit Roll
20 Ham & Cheese Sliders Salad Fruit	21 Chicken Nuggets Fries Veggies Fruit	22 Lasagna Salad Fruit Garlic Bread	23 Pigs in a Blanket Fries Veggies Fruit	24 Super Nachos Corn Fruit
27 Chicken Fajita Corn Fruit	28 Cheeseburgers Fries Veggies Fruit	29 S&S Chicken Vegetable Rice Fruit Roll	30 Pasta Bake Salad Fruit Garlic Bread	<b>** Breakfast served daily</b>

**\*\*Milk and Salad Bar Served Daily\*\***

## 2021 Grass Range/Winnett Rangers Football & Volleyball Schedules

DATE	SPORT	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME
3-Sep	HS & JH Volleyball	Fromberg	Grassrange	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
	JH Football	Jordan	Jordan	TBA
4-Sep	HS Football	Wibaux	Grassrange	1pm
	HS & JH Volleyball	Harlowton	Grassrange	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
7-Sep	JH Football	Roundup 5th & 6th	Grassrange	4pm
10-Sep	HS Football	Valier	Valier	7pm
11-Sep	HS & JH Volleyball	DGS	Grassrange	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
	JH Football	DGS	Grassrange	9am
16-Sep	HS & JH Volleyball	Broadview/Lavina	Grassrange	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
17-Sep	HS & JH Volleyball	Roy/Winifred	Grassrange	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
18-Sep	HS Football	Roy/Winifred	Denton	1pm
	HS & JH Volleyball	Melstone	Melstone	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
23-Sep	JH Football	Roundup JH	Roundup	7pm
24-Sep	HS & JH Volleyball	Tri-Cities	Moore	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
25-Sep	HS Football	Harlowton	Stanford	1pm
	HS & JH Volleyball	Jordan	Jordan	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
1-Oct	HS & JH Volleyball	Broadview/Lavina	Broadview	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
2-Oct	HS & JH Volleyball	Jordan	Winnett	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
	JH Football	Centerville	Centerville	11am
7-Oct	HS & JH Volleyball	DGS	Denton	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
8-Oct	JH Volleyball	JHVB TOURNAMENT	Hobson	TBD
	JH Football	DGS	Stanford	4pm
9-Oct	HS Football	Centerville	Centerville	1pm
	HS & JH Volleyball	Tri-Cities	Grassrange	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
11-Oct	JH Football	Tri-Cities	Grassrange	4pm
15-Oct	HS & JH Volleyball	Fromberg	Fromberg	3, 4, 5:15, 6:30
16-Oct	HS Football	Geraldine/Highwood	Stanford	1pm
18-Oct	JH Football	Harlowton	Harlowton	4pm
22-Oct	HS & JH Volleyball	Harlowton	Harlowton	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
23-Oct	HS Football	Tri-Cities	Moore	1pm
	HS & JH Volleyball	Melstone	Winnett	3:30, 4:30, +20, +20
Oct 28-30	HS & JH Volleyball	DISTRICTS VBALL	Melstone	TBD
30-Oct	HS Football	1ST ROUND PLAYOFFS		
Nov 4-6	HS & JH Volleyball	DIVISIONALS VBALL	Laurel	TBD
6-Nov	HS Football	QUARTERFINALS		
Nov 11-13	HS & JH Volleyball	STATE VOLLEYBALL	TBD	TBD
13-Nov	HS Football	SEMIFINALS		
20-Nov	HS Football	STATE CHAMPIONSHIP		

\*\*\*Winnett/GrassRange Basketball Schedule will be in the October Edition\*\*\*



# Kid's Korner



## Autumn Wordsearch

O R C H A R D C K S A U K K I  
 T Z O C U S E I E Q O W H E C  
 R O T C O S C A R E C R O W Y  
 A K U A R R G K S C E N I C T  
 K V W N W Y N O Z P C Q Z M R  
 E R L N C T A S U W I N E A E  
 J Q E I O F P H T R O K Z P E  
 A C A N L X P A A A D O S L S  
 C R V G O H L O M Y L S D E T  
 K I E C R A E Q C I B K I S U  
 E S S I F R S H G Z G A S C E  
 T P N D U V N J Q A O R L U V  
 H X Q E L E E U Z R O J A E G  
 Y U C R O S Z Q M C R U B T J  
 R A D W P T U U B A K I N G E

Puzzle Answers on Page 11

- |            |           |          |          |
|------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Cornstalks | Scarecrow | Colorful | Canning  |
| Harvest    | Migrate   | Apples   | Hay Bale |
| Orchard    | Gourds    | Jacket   | Scenic   |
| Cider      | Baking    | Woods    | Leaves   |
| Maple      | Trees     | Crisp    | Rake     |

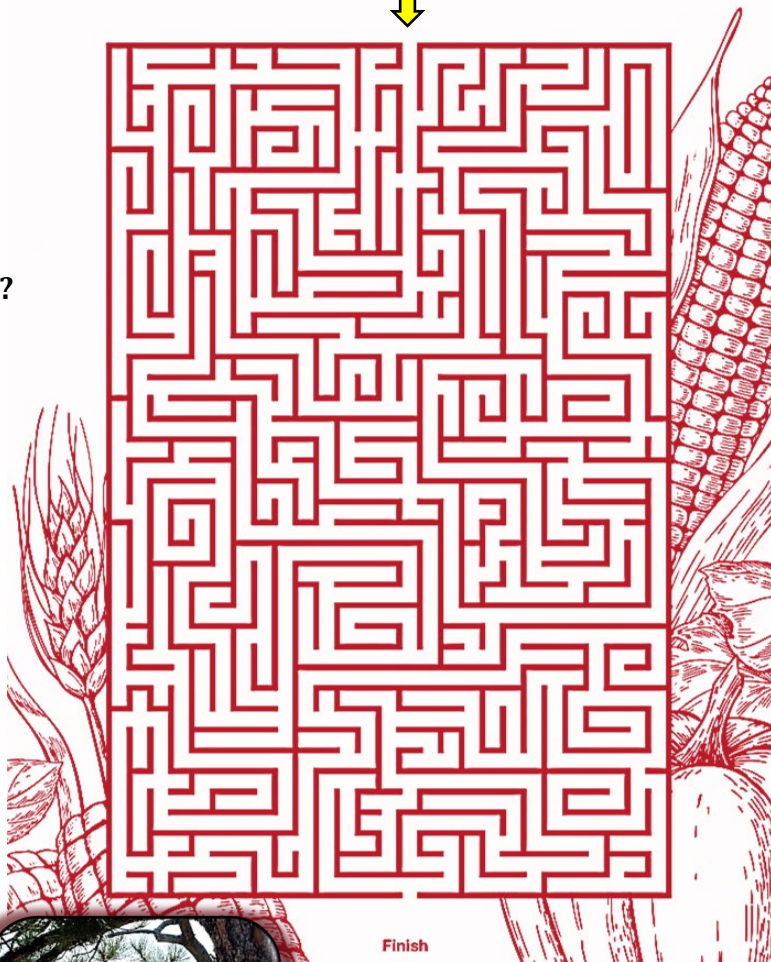
## LOCAL COOKBOOK RECIPE HIGHLIGHT

### BANANA BREAD

Joan Murphy  
Winnett, MT

- |                               |                  |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| ½ c. Shortening               | 2 c. Flour       |
| 1 c. Sugar                    | 1 tsp. Soda      |
| 2 Eggs, well beaten           | ½ tsp. Salt      |
| ½ c. Sour Cream or Buttermilk | 1 c. Banana Pulp |
| 1 tsp. Vanilla                |                  |

Cream shortening, add sugar gradually, add eggs and vanilla and mix thoroughly. Add dry ingredients alternately with sour milk. Add banana pulp and mix thoroughly. Bake in two well greased 8'x4'x2' pans. Bake at 350 °, 45 to 60 minutes or until shrinks from side of pan.

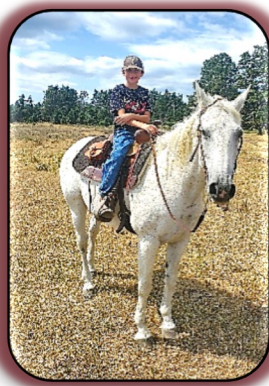


## “Things Kids Say”

What are you excited about for school this year?



“Basketball season!”  
~Aubrey



“I am most looking forward to playing basketball and playing football at recess!” ~Bodie



“I’m excited to meet the new art teacher!”  
~Grace



“I’m excited for my new teacher!” ~Cami



“Playing sports!” ~Ridge



# Cat Creek Oilfield Continued...

Ira Pierson was put in charge of smoothing out a useable road. What a formidable task! The route necessitated winding through steep hills down to the river bottom. Even today, locals know not to step foot off the gravel if it's rained. At one point, the road formed a figure-eight around a butte in order to enable heavy, long loads to make the sharp curves. The next chore was to cobble together some shelter. The must-have cookshack was built in Winnett and then clapped on Tom Carr's wide-set threshing machine wheels. Every camp must have a cook; Scotty Spears was hired and told to ride along with the cookhouse, which was pulled by a six-horse team. Six loads of building materials and equipment accompanied the chow-wagon, so Scotty had to cook along the way. They made Cat Creek just in time for Thanksgiving.

Adding to road and weather challenges was a coal strike. That meant a shortage of fuel for the steam-powered locomotives and the drilling engine. They reverted to burning \$8/cord cottonwood. The round-trip trek from drilling site to Winnett's trailhead, given no mishaps, took freighters five days. Due to the drought and early winter, hay prices ran at \$73 per ton. Often, horse hay made up half the freight. It cost around \$100 a ton to haul freight; many loads weighed several tons.



Cat Creek in the 1920s

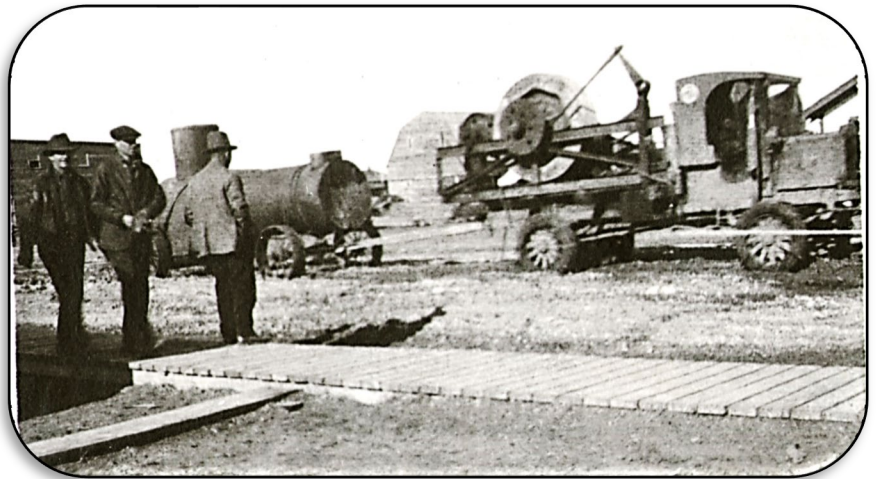
The blizzard left behind snowdrifts and chilling temperatures. Nevertheless, on December 18, 1919, the Charles No.1 was spudded in. Drilling was slow, laborious work. The crew must unspool eight thick rope cables and pull the tools when they ran a joint of pipe which, in turn, was lowered with wire. Then the process was reversed. Early in 1920 they struck an artesian water-pocket in the



Cat Creek cook house



Cat Creek oil train



1920s Cat Creek -- building pipeline

First Cat Creek sand. It gushed 200 barrels of "steaming" water a day which flowed up and over the well head, forcing the men to stand in water, water that soon froze into a mini-glacier around the rig. In freezing conditions, they ran a length of pipe; then dashed to the cookshack for a thaw-out. After 'stabbing' with ten joints of 20-foot, 8-inch pipe, they were able to shut off the water.

Finally on February 19, the crew pierced the Second Cat Creek sand, revealing a promising show of oil. The crew was under strict orders to notify Frantz Corporation by secret code, thus preventing an "oil-news leak". If the well was successful, Frantz had government leases to secure. The news would be delivered by a not-so-secure telegram. "Trees grow tall" or "trees grow small" indicated the strike size. "Come ye men of war" translated to "send a passel of workers". When Frantz received the telegram, it read: "PINE TREES GROW TALL HERE. COME YE MEN OF WAR." The Cat Creek anthill was poised to erupt.

### TARPAPER TOWN

News of the oil strike soon hit the front page of The Winnett Times. On February 25, 1920, the headlines shouted: "FRANTZ WELL IN WITH BIG PRODUCTION". People could

read about the strike, but not see it. No spectators were allowed near the site. By that Monday, seven officers of the Frantz Corporation arrived to witness the "bringing in" of the well. Meanwhile, other companies scrambled to grab leases. On April 2, The Winnett Times reported that, over a three-day span, equipment was on the move to four Frantz locations. On March 28, 22 four-horse teams left Winnett with supplies and equipment for the Frantz sites. All other companies' set-ups were at West Camp – today's Cat Creek. This, incidentally, was Cosden Oil geologist Charles Lupton's first-but-rejected choice for drilling.

On Aril 24, Frantz's next well was spudded in. On May 18, it began flowing at 200 barrels/day, percolating up from the First Cat Creek sand. Ironically, this well yielded four times the production of the first well and wasn't as deep. For the second time the "anthill" had been punched, stirring up oil fever that spilled over into all of Fergus County. This rich strike did have an "oops" attached: There were no storage facilities as yet! The non-environmentally friendly solution was to let it flow into a coulee. Folks came to view the lake of petroleum. The oil was of such high gravity that it could be poured into a tractor or Model T's tank. And for now, it was free – help yourselves!

Construction of storage tanks in Winnett began immediately. Now to get the oil from the well to the tanks. That was solved with a two-inch pipeline that summer, and by August

## Cat Creek Oilfield Continued...

28<sup>th</sup>, the first oil flowed into Winnett's storage tanks. The next day, three tank cars of Cat Creek oil left by rail for the refineries in Wyoming. Almost immediately, workers began building a larger pipeline. It was completed in a record-breaking 21 days. And now the petroleum anthill fairly swarmed with activity.

Each drilling company put together its own camp. Even the smallest outfit needed a cookshack and a bunkhouse. Larger companies added cabins for their workers. Tarpaper and wood were the easiest materials to haul. One wagon could transport the materials needed to construct a shack, and it could be assembled in one day. The small dwellings dotted the barren hills in a randomly spaced colony.

By December 31, 1920, eleven producing wells were flowing, the results of the efforts of six different companies: Frantz, Mid-Northern, 56 Petroleum, Montacal, West Dome, and Great Western. Of special notice was the 56 Petroleum Company. It was made up of Montana investors in a Montana venture rather than some big oil business. At the time of a November 14, 1920 Winnett Times news article, it was producing 2,000 barrels a day, filling its four 500-barrel tanks every 24 hours. At that rate, the well would be worth \$5,000,000. The tarpaper anthill was a boom town!

### FROM BOOM TO BUST

News of the oil strike reached the Grass Range paper. It reported on October 28, 1920 that two trains a day had been added to transport the oil from Winnett. On that Sunday, 18 cars of oil shipped, and another six departed on Monday. Things were humming now! By the end of 1921, close to 70 wells were producing under at least 60 leasing companies in what is now Petroleum County. The barren hills around Cat Creek did resemble a stirred-up ant colony!

In Winnett, the oil strikes produced a different frenzy. Within a year, about 200 new businesses erupted, some temporarily housed in tents. A 55,000-barrel tank was constructed in Cat Creek to replace the coulee-full of oil. A sprinkling of random businesses sprouted throughout the various camps. A one-story tarpaper hotel and also the first post office (the Canfield

Trading Company), a combination store and pool hall, and of course a school. After the first year, there were enough students to require two teachers. There was a blacksmith shop at the Mid Northern site, and several camps boasted livery stables. The community hall at the Frantz camp hosted all sorts of activities, from chivarees to Sunday school.

Water was required at a drilling site. At first it was hauled to rigs with horse-drawn tanks, but soon Cat Creek Water Company ran a pipeline from the Musselshell River to West Dome for the bargain price of a dollar a barrel, the same price for which oil was selling. Eventually every cookhouse folded except Frantz's. Scotty Spear's cookhouse consisted of a waiting room attached to the dining room. It seated only 40 men at a time, so the second shift waited. Considering what Scotty had to work with, the meals weren't bad. He fed around 150 men each meal. The connecting doorway could become a regular shoving match!



**1920's Cat Creek building**

Hopes were pinned on abundant oil-bearing sands stretching from Black Butte on the northeast end of the Judith Mountains to beyond the Musselshell, but it just wasn't happening. In reality, oil production was limited to only ten sections in an area measuring one mile by six; a gap of miles separated Cat Creek's West Dome from Mosby Dome on the Musselshell. The well-punctured anthill was faltering even though times were changing. Trucks replaced horses, rotary rigs took over cable tool rigs, internal combustion engines were used instead of wooden derricks, graveled roads improved trails, and new strikes in the Kevin-Sunburst north country eclipsed the excitement of Cat Creek.

Many workers vacated the rigs; mergers and consolidations left only a few companies at Cat Creek's Oil field. By August of 1924, Frantz Company was in financial trouble. It and two other companies eventually merged into Continental Oil Company.

Continental's 1930 president, Dan Moran, ran a snug ship. In short order, he replaced tarpaper cabins with 3-room frame houses, scrubbed the powerhouses, painted buildings, and created a much safer workplace. Cat Creek dwellers were now proud of their little anthill.

### ROUNDS TWO – AND THREE?

CONOCO (Continental Oil Company) modernized the now-diminished Cat Creek Oil field. They ran a phone line to Winnett. The camp boasted an active PTA, a ladies' club, lighted horseshoe pits, and even a baseball team. All dressed up in CONOCO's green and white paint, it was a slicked-up company town. REA brought power to Cat Creek in 1950, so rod-lines were replaced with electric pump-jacks. A trucking company underbid the railroad, which meant petroleum was hauled to Billings refineries by truck. Then in 1958, a pipeline connected the Cat Creek field to the Ivanhoe Dome near Melstone. It already had an existing pipeline to Billings. Still, oil production declined from three million barrels in 1922 to 112,353 barrels in 1944.

But wait. . . The October 4, 1945 Winnett Times shook things up. It reported that Spencer and Livingston of Cody, Wyoming drilled only nine inches into the Ellis sands – enough oil pressure to force aside 12-pound mud erupted! Drilling was quickly stopped so they could run casing. An emergency call brought Halliburton Company from Wyoming for a next-day rescue. They ran cement into the hole to shut down water from the Cat Creek sands. With only hours to spare, they averted losing the well. The result was a 300-barrel/day well. A string of four 250-barrel tanks connected to CONOCO's pipeline.

Schrock #3 broke their own record by drilling 1414 feet in 40 hours and 30 minutes. On January 1, 1945

Spencer and Livingston struck a 1000-barrel/day gusher at 1376 feet. There were other strikes across the Musselshell River at East Dome and on Rattlesnake Butte. What followed was one of the greatest land lease scrambles in Montana history. A new camp sprung up with a cookhouse and four bunkhouses. With hopes running sky-high, 14 new businesses opened in Winnett. *Continued on Page 9*



# Cat Creek Oilfield Continued...

Farmers Union Central Exchange operated one of the state's biggest refineries in Laurel. Purchase of state leases allowed them to supply their own crude for production and for their retail sales. By 1947, production at the Cat Creek Oil field was up to 416,032 barrels/day but dreams of a "mother pool" of untapped oil remained unrealized. It was estimated that 50% of the oil had been extracted by flow, pumping, or air-pressuring. In 1959, a water-flooding program was instituted which could squeeze up to 30% more from the field. Production increased from 11,913 barrels of oil/day in July of 1959 to 15,695 barrels/day in July of 1960. Farmers Union was now in a position to buy out CONOCO's holdings at Cat Creek. All of the petroleum from the field flowed via pipeline to Melstone's Ivanhoe



The town of Cat Creek

Dome and beyond. By 1988 Cat Creek's total operation could be handled by four men. Now it has passed into Mark See's hands, (Spotlighted in Part One of the Cat Creek articles). The original undisturbed anthill may evolve into yet another boom. Mark See is a man of vision and seems to make it erupt into frenzied activity once again.

*These articles describing the early days of the Cat Creek Oil Field summarize the well-written and detailed account from Petroleum County's history, Pages of Time. For more information, you'll want to delve into its pages. Though other sources were sought out, that volume truly tells the tale.*

## Winnett Shamrocks 4-H Fair Awards



**Shaylie Ahlgren** – 1<sup>st</sup> in Vet Tech Level 1  
**Virgil Tholt**– 1<sup>st</sup> in Outdoor Adventures, 1<sup>st</sup> in Rally Novice B (dog), 2<sup>nd</sup> in Jr Dog Showmanship  
**Gracie Gill**– 1<sup>st</sup> in Photography Level 2  
**Johnnie Schultz**– 1<sup>st</sup> in Jr Western Equitation, 1<sup>st</sup> in Sheep Educational Display, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Woodworking Level 2  
**Hayley Stahl** – 1<sup>st</sup> in Sr. Cat Showmanship, 1<sup>st</sup> in Replacement Heifer, 1<sup>st</sup> in Suffolk Sheep, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Sr. Beef Showman  
**Jasper Tholt** – 1<sup>st</sup> in Jr. Dog Showmanship, 2<sup>nd</sup> in Rally Novice A (dog), 3<sup>rd</sup> in Agility A (dog)  
**Manny Rodriquez**– 1<sup>st</sup> in Rally Novice A (dog), 2<sup>nd</sup> in Agility A (dog)  
**Brodie Ahlgren** – 1<sup>st</sup> in Sport Fishing Level 1  
**Ridge Arntson** – 1<sup>st</sup> in Beef Carcass



# WINNETT COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## September 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Ambulance 6pm	2 Seniors	3 JH-FB vs Jordan in Jordan TBD VB vs. Fromberg in GR 3:30/4:30/+20,+20	4 Catholic 530pm Mass Posture Golf 1pm HSFB vs. Wbdoux in GR 1pm VB vs. Harlo in GR 3:30/4:30/+20,+20
5 Methodist 1030am Baptist 11am Lutheran 4pm Mosby	6 <b>Labor Day</b> No School	7 Pet. Co. Commisr's gam JH-FB vs Roundup in GR 4pm PCCC Meeting 6pm	8 Town Council 5-6 PIE Meeting 6pm	9 Rimrock Readers 7pm Vol. Fire Dept. 7pm Seniors	10 HS-FB vs. Valier in Valier 7pm	11 JH-FB vs DGS, in GR 9am VB vs. DGS, in GR 3:30/4:30/+20,+20
12 Catholic 10am-Word Methodist 1030am Baptist 11am	13	14 Booster Club 7pm Sheriff's Reserve	15 Pet. Co. Search & Rescue Youth Group 7-9	16 VB vs. Broad/Lawna in GR 3:30/4:30/+20,+20 Seniors Kids Club 3:30-5	17 VB vs. Roy/Wrnfired in GR 3:30/4:30/+20,+20	18 Catholic 530pm Mass VB vs. Melstone in Melstone 3:30/4:30/+20,+20 HSFB vs. Roy/Wfir in Denton 1pm Coi Creek 100 Yr Celebration BBQ & Street Dance 6:30
19 Methodist 1030am Baptist 11am	20	21 PCCC Meeting 6pm School Board Meeting	22 Youth Group 7-9	23 Seniors Kids Club 3:30-5 Winnett ACES Meeting 4-6 JH-FB vs Roundup in Roundup, 7pm	24 VB vs. Tr-Cities in Moore 3:30/4:30/+20,+20	25 VB vs Jordan in Jordan 3:30/4:30/+20,+20 HS-FB vs. Harlo in Stanford 1pm
26 Catholic 10am-Word Methodist 1030am Baptist 11am	27 PCCD Meeting 3-5	28 No School Parent Teacher Conf. Lions Club	29 Youth Group 7-9	30 Seniors Kids Club 3:30-5		

ALL community meetings & Events may not be listed. Calendar will be updated as any new info is given. CONFIRM day/time of meeting or event before attending.  
Please contact Patti at 429-5601 BEFORE WEDNESDAY to reserve a SENIOR MEAL.

# 12th Annual Tasha Keith Memorial Co-ed Softball Tournament



"Gophers" - 1st Place



"Jager Bombs" - 2nd Place



Charlie, Anna & Kaden Keith



"Twisted T's"



"Roundup Team"



"Flint Trucking"



"Where's My Pitches"



"Savage Glove"




"Boozehounds"



"Mike's Misfits"

## Notices & Announcements



BRUNO & EVELYN HILL BETTI

### YOUTH PROGRAM

September 7, 2021

WHERE: FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN WINNETT, MT  
WHEN: MONDAY-WEDNESDAY 3:30-5:30  
HOW TO ENROLL: PLEASE EMAIL LANCE OLSON AT PCCCDIRECTOR1@GMAIL.COM


\$5 day use/drop in  
\$10/month  
\$100/year

**September 18<sup>th</sup>**  
Cat Creek: 100 Year Anniversary Celebration – Looking back and moving forward.

6:30pm Street Dance & Live Music with Wylie & The Wild West

BBQ/Potluck (meat provided) and Open Mic @ 5pm on Main Street; Pre-street dance Bluegrass Music; Kids roping arena; Some activity for a Winnett ACES fundraiser (horseshoe competition jackpot..?); Stand with pictures & history of the Cat Creek field with some old timers there to tell stories; And as part of that stand more materials/pictures/graphics on future plans at Cat Creek.

### WIN THIS PAINTING



"Moving Day" by Diana Brady

Raffle tickets: 1 for \$25, 3 for \$50, 7 for \$100  
Drawing to be held September 18, 2021 at the Winnett Street Dance  
Need not be present to win.

The community of Winnett is working hard to revitalize "downtown". Proceeds from this raffle will help save the old Sugar Shack/Odd Fellows building to become a business building with 2<sup>nd</sup> floor apartment.

Purchase Tickets at the Winnett Bar or The Breaks General Store.  
Or, from committee members: Laura Nowlin, Laura Kieh, Jess Hogg, Carrie Hess, Chris King, Lindsay Pitt, Pam Bevis, Carol Schaeffer, Austin Kieh, or Luann Knutson.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual WINNETT ACES PASTURE GOLF TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> at 2pm  
→Rodeo Arena Northwest of Winnett←

Signup begins at 1:00pm  
\$20 per person to ENTER

ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO WINNETT ACES

The Petroleum CD is celebrating 70 YEARS of local common-sense conservation. They will be providing CAKE and ICE CREAM following the tournament.

\*\*\*Teams will be drawn at the event after signup\*\*\*  
Clubs and balls will be provided, but bring old clubs if you have them.

### Pool Manager Position Open for Summer of 2022

This position would include:

- Overseeing and scheduling lifeguards and attendants
- Overseeing daily water tests
- Daily Check of Chemical Levels
- Daily Maintaining of Filters and Pumps


Training will available this summer.  
Please Contact the Town of Winnett if Interested (406)429-5451

STARTING SEPTEMBER 16TH

## KID'S CLUB

Snacks, Games, Songs, & Fun Bible Lessons for Grades K-6

THURSDAYS FROM 3:30-5:00 P.M.  
AT WINNETT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH



Starting Wednesday  
SEPT 15TH

## YOUTH GROUP

Wednesday Nights

Supper, games, worship, & Bible study  
7:00 - 9:00 P.M.

For grades 7-12  
Odermann's House  
407 S. Broadway Ave. Winnett, MT

ORCHARD CK SAUKKI  
TZOCUSEIEQOWHEC  
ROTCCSCAREFCROWY  
AKUARRRGKSCENICOT  
KVNWNWYNQZPCQZMR  
ERLNCITASUWINEAE  
JQEIOFPHTRQKZPE  
ACANLXPAAADOSLS  
CRVGOHLOMYLSDET  
KIECRAEQCIBKINSU  
ESSIFRSHGZGASCE  
TPNDUVN JQAORLUV  
HXQELEEUZROJABG  
YUCROSSZQCRUBTN  
RADWPTUUBAKINGE

Page 6 Puzzle Answers

**NOTE:**  
Please email your Notice by September 10<sup>th</sup> for the October edition

Contact Info: winnettimes@gmail.com -- Find & Follow us on Facebook & Instagram

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We greatly appreciate your support!

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Anonymous Cash Donation

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Terry & Lynda Johnston  
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Melody Whitcher

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Staff time is all volunteer based and they are not  
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If you would like to donate to the Winnett Times  
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**PLEASE SEND YOUR TAX DEDUCTABLE  
DONATIONS TO:**

**Winnett ACES, PO Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087**  
with "*Newsletter*" in the Memo.

Thank you to Winnett ACES for being our Non-Profit  
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