

# YELLOWSTONE COUNTY NEWS

EXHIBIT 2  
DATE 2/16/09  
HB 431

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED J. ROBINSON



ILLINGS - Cub Scouts  
in Pack 77 of the Hunt-  
Project area partici-

**Huntley Project school district**  
Catherine Lawrence with Paul, Sam and...

## Pit bull owner in Custer cited after dog attacks neighbor's dog

### NEW HOUSE BILL WOULD FORCE OWNERS TO PAY MEDICAL BILLS

by Robert Nolte

**CUSTER** — An attack by a pit bull has resulted in a \$200 "vicious dog" fine against a Custer man, who neighbors say keeps a dog that has terrorized not only other dogs in town but also children and adults.

Meanwhile, a Ballantine woman is heading for Helena again Monday to testify about a new bill that would force owners of dangerous

dogs to pay for medical expenses incurred by victims and animals that have been attacked.

Shelly Wittman testified Jan. 22 during a hearing for defeated House Bill 192 that would have banned pit bulls in Montana.

This time, a new House bill has a better chance of passage because it places responsibility on dog owners instead of on one breed.

Stories of pit bull attacks in Custer will be read into the record as well as clashes between the breed and others

(Continued on page 17)

## Lockwood Fire asked to cover more acreage for wildland fires

by Evelyn Pyburn

LOCKWOOD — The  
90,000 acres in Yellowstone  
County is in need of hairer

Continued from page 1)

driving and failure to  
andy and Carol Fark  
l a civil suit against the  
ool district in September  
8.

andy Fark was present  
a closed session of the  
ool board Tuesday night  
made no comment when  
meeting reconvened in  
n session.

When asked the amount of  
settlement, Supt. Dave  
hon told the Yellowstone  
unity News that the school  
trick's attorney, Michael  
stedt, would reveal the  
ount on Wednesday.

Yellowstone County News  
eived the settlement docu-  
ents early Wednesday af-  
noon.

The board also discussed the  
h (CMR) Contract Manager  
Risk proposals it received  
d reviewed last week.

The board narrowed the  
ld to four at the meeting.  
ney are Hardy Construc-  
on, Fisher Construction,  
nglas & Associates of Bill-  
ggs and Wright Brothers of  
eridan, Wyo.

Board vice chairman Mark  
o explained his reasoning  
r the selection was because  
local contractor will stand  
hind their work and they  
ould be nearby and easier  
o contact.

Trustee Steve Erb ex-  
lained his decision was be-  
ause he didn't want the  
school to incur expenses for  
irline tickets and motel fees  
out-of-area contractors.

Chairman Mark Jones  
reed but said it would be  
n the best interest of the dis-  
rict to take into consider-  
ation out-of-state contrac-

agreed and added he would  
like to know the fee struc-  
tures of the contractors.

These contractors will be  
interviewed on Monday, Feb.  
16, starting at 12:30 p.m., at  
the central office.

JGA Project Manager  
Terry Sukut explained to the  
board the evaluation criteria  
it should use for the inter-  
views. These included past  
CMAR experience, manage-  
ment personnel experience,  
history of schedule control on  
public projects over \$9 mil-  
lion (a rough estimate for re-  
placing the school), refer-  
ences, financial status, years  
in business, bonding capac-  
ity, Montana residency and  
fees provided.

"Insufficient or no bonding  
capacity is unacceptable and  
will disqualify an applicant,"  
said Sukut.

Subcontractors will be re-  
sponsible to the contractor  
manager and the contractor  
will be responsible to the dis-  
trict, added Sukut.

Sukut advised the board to  
call for references on the ap-  
plicants.

Erb asked if they could  
check other references be-  
sides the ones included in the  
proposals. Sukut responded,  
"Yes."

The next school board  
meeting will be Tuesday, Feb.  
17, at 6:30 p.m.

Western States Insurance  
representative Casey  
McGowan will present the  
board with a final settlement  
for the new high school at  
this meeting.

# Club Notes

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when the Montana House  
convenes next week to mull  
the new legislation, House  
Bill 191.

At least five Custer resi-  
dents have stories to tell about  
Jim Sinclair's pit bulls, Adam  
and Gina. One of his dogs rav-  
aged a Blue Heeler owned by  
Jay and Roxie Harrison that  
resulted in nearly \$500 in vet-  
erinary bills.

"Those bills would be paid  
by (Mr. Sinclair) under the  
terms of HB 191," said  
Wittman, whose pets have  
been mauled by pit bulls in  
Ballantine.

Sinclair told the YCN that  
he has already paid the vi-  
cious dog fine but contends  
that the Harrisons' two dogs  
attacked his pit bull first and  
injured it.

"My dog was wounded but  
I know how to treat an in-  
jured dog with a little peni-  
cillin and bandages," said  
Sinclair. "The report they  
filed against me was b—s—,  
but I don't have the money to  
fight it."

Roxie Harrison said her  
dogs did not provoke an at-  
tack on Sinclair's pit bull.

"His dog attacked ours in  
our own yard," she said.  
And it's not the first time,  
she noted.

"His male pit bull is vi-  
cious," she said. "It has at-  
tacked four other dogs, plus  
mine, and displayed aggres-  
sion toward humans. I know  
it has knocked down one  
woman."

"He walks to the post of-  
fice with it loose. . . that's



**CUSTER - Jay and Roxie Harrison's dog, named Berg, is mending after an attack by a pit bull belong-  
ing to Jim Sinclair of Custer. A Hysham veterinarian  
treated the wound, which was stitched, but later the  
skin died back so the wound had to be left open in or-  
der to heal. Sinclair was fined \$200 for having a vi-  
cious dog. (Courtesy photo)**

when all this happens. He  
has a female pit bull that is  
tied up all the time and I  
think he may be breeding pit  
bulls because he now has a  
litter of puppies."

Harrison said Sinclair's  
dogs live a block from Custer  
School and she is concerned  
about attacks on children. A  
school bus driver reported an  
incident with Sinclair's dog  
when it chased after a stu-  
dent, who was able to escape.

Both the Harrisons and  
Wittman in Ballantine are  
critical of animal control in  
Billings for not quickly re-  
sponding to incidents in their  
towns.

"It took a week for animal  
control to come down and  
give (Sinclair) a citation and  
four days for the sheriff to  
come out," said Harrison.

Wittman said she has had  
similar experiences with ani-  
mal control and finally called

complain about animal  
control's reluctance to return  
calls or tend to complaints.

Last week, the YCN called  
animal control for a comment  
on complaints the newspaper  
has received about their ser-  
vice, but did not get a call  
back.

Wittman said she is now  
videotaping pit bull incidents  
in Ballantine and has a video  
proving that a dog is running  
loose in the town, evidence she  
believes should result in a ci-  
tation from animal control.  
"If they will return my  
calls!"

**Give the  
Gift that is  
fun to open**

**52**  
times a year

**The Yellowstone County News**