Montana Tree City of the Year
For a Second Time!

Friends of the Urban Forest Board along with MSU Extension agent Kellee Anderson had an eventful two years. “Busier than ever,” reports a board member at a recent meeting. In 2015 and 2016 Urban Forestry is at the forefront in Butte. With this win, Montana Tree City of the Year, the group set out on a grant hunt to fund the $48k project proposed, Victory Circle.

This pocket park at the corner of Park and Arizona Streets is at a main corridor to the historic uptown district. It will serve as a nice spot to rest during festival season, and will replace a lost park to needed development uptown. This green space will be the home to public information boards, benches, and a walking path around a garden.

This project is truly a community effort, applications for partnership and grant aid were made to Superfund Advisory and Redevelopment Trust Authority, and East Butte Renovation and Rehabilitation Agency. Due to the time necessary to fundraise for a full design installation of the project and showing signs of winter early, we will not see this green space come to fruition until spring 2017.

MSU Extension Butte-Silver Bow and Rotary Find Common Ground to Beautify Butte

While participating at the statewide Rotary conference in Fairmont, Montana hosts decided to engage members in a project to plant vegetation at the World Museum of Mining. The museum, on the west side of Montana Tech campus, has long served as a destination to learn about mining for students and the public alike. Agent Kellee Anderson led the group to plant 75 saplings on site. Each tree was flagged and watered. In the spring plans are made to return to see their progress.

Opportunity and partnership has emerged from this project. The local Rotary chapter will join the fundraising effort in hopes to sponsor the large Spruce tree to be installed at Victory Circle. One day, these groups hope it serves as Butte-Silver Bow’s destination to start the holiday season in Uptown Butte with Main Street Christmas Stroll and a tree lighting ceremony.
SNAP-Ed Nutrition Education

Hello! My name is Molly Viall, I am the new SNAP-Ed Program Manager for Butte-Silver Bow and Anaconda-Deer Lodge Counties. The SNAP-Ed Program is brought to our community through the MSU Extension Nutrition Education Programs, known as Buy Eat Live Better. It is designed to address health disparities and obesity issues that are often found among limited-income populations.

The SNAP-Ed (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education) Program is designed for individuals and families who are participating in SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) or those who are eligible for benefits. SNAP-Ed is conducted in three ways. First, there is the eight-class series for adults known as Eating Smart; Being Active. The lessons provide practical nutrition knowledge and skill development for food preparation, planning and shopping for healthy meals, food safety, and easy ways to increase physical activity. In 2016, classes were taught at Rosalie Manor, the North American Indian Alliance, Southwest Montana Aging and Disabilities Services office, and the Silver Bow Developmental Disabilities Council.

Second, there is the new youth class series, Youth Understanding MyPlate (YUM), which was debuted in June. YUM is a six-lesson series which engages students in hands-on learning about healthy food choices and physical activity. YUM is available to eligible Title 1 schools, afterschool and summer programs.

And third, SNAP-Ed engages in public efforts to improve the general wellness of the community through Policy Systems and Environment change. This involves working with school wellness committees, the National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana Team Nutrition, community gardens, and other organizations. These efforts increase relations with agencies that have health-oriented goals, and serve to improve the wellbeing of everyone in our area, especially those living on limited incomes.

In the coming year, we plan to partner with all eligible schools and reach more children through the YUM program. Another goal is to continue pursuing our partnership with the Butte Emergency Food Bank in order to reach more recipients of the food bank program and improve the efficiency of the food bank operations. Also, SNAP-Ed will be working with local community and school garden committees to increase gardening participation and knowledge. Nutrition and lifestyle education, as well as community wellness efforts. The SNAP-Ed Program is a great investment in Butte-Silver Bow and will continue to serve the wellbeing of our community.

SNAP-Ed by the Numbers

Community members exposed to SNAP-Ed information: 466
Partnering community organizations: 12
Eligible Title 1 elementary schools: 4
Adult class participants: 39
County Support of Forestry at an All-Time High

Butte-Silver Bow Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Community Development, Planning, Reclamation, Community Enrichment, Weed Control and Heath Departments come together to help the volunteer-based Urban Forestry Program in many ways. County department heads have seen the needs of Butte’s urban forest and delivered. Not only with extra funds for tree projects, or turning over labor to help volunteers with planting, picking up debris from tree related activities, watering trees, and weeding tree wells, these departments have involved groups in the planning process to find more ways to preserve and enhance our cityscape through forestry.

Elected: Mile High Conservation District

In 2016, Kellee Anderson, MSU Extension Agent Butte Silver Bow, was elected to be the Urban Supervisor of the Mile High Conservation District. She will fulfill a limited term of two years. This group is entrusted by the state with mandated activities and serves as the local point of contact for numerous federal programs as well as the role of educating landowners and youth about sound conservation practices, tree planting and organizing outdoor classroom educational activities for elementary school children.

Over the past year this district hosted two outdoor classrooms for sixth graders. In the spring and fall, the district invited 10 volunteer presenters, including Anderson. This group of volunteering experts taught on many conservation topics including forestry, fish, weed identification, ground water, archeology, range, soils, and wildlife. Each group consisted of 20 students spending 20 minutes with each presenter, translating to over 600 sixth graders receiving four hours of conservation education.

This group works with many partners including Watershed Restoration Coalition of the Upper Clark Fork, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Resource Conservation and development organizations, Fish Wildlife and Parks, as well as Extension. Anderson being part of this group will be beneficial through agency partnerships and more significant projects in forestry, horticulture and agriculture.
Old Traditions, New Beginnings
Silver Bow County 4-H

The future is bright for Butte-Silver Bow 4-H program. A bright fresh new crop of volunteers has stepped up to reenergize the program, keeping some of the old traditions and adding some new favorites.

For starters, the 2016 Silver Bow County Fair went off without a hitch thanks to many hours of dedication on the part of 4-H leaders, parents and MSU Extension. 4-H’ers had a great time showing off their animals and indoor projects at the Butte Civic Center. A dunk-tank was added to the line-up of fun Fair activities to the delight of many.

Livestock members were particularly well prepared for fair this year thanks to a special “Fit and Show” event planned by the new leaders who have stepped up to guide the program for the county. Special guests this year were members of the Montana State University Livestock Judging team. The MSU students demonstrated showmanship and livestock fitting techniques and shared secrets of the skill of livestock judging. Several 4-H members have now expressed an interest in starting a livestock judging team in the county as a result of the event.

Staffing changes are the big news this year in the Butte-Silver Bow 4-H program. Silver Bow has been the largest county by population in Montana with only one Extension Agent until now. A second agent will be added to the Extension Office in early 2017 to administer 4-H and Family Consumer Science programming.

In the interim, MSU Extension assigned two veteran Extension Agents to help with fair and getting the new 4-H year off to a good start. Meghan Phillippi, Montana 4-H Volunteer and Program Delivery specialist brought her decade of experience in 4-H program management to help volunteers plan an educational and fun fair. Tara Mastel relied on her decade of experience as an Extension Community Development agent to help get new Interim Council members seated and oriented and headed in the right direction for the 2016-2017 4-H year. Mastel, in cooperation with the Montana 4-H Center, is guiding the Interim 4-H Council to modernize its bylaws and fair book with an eye to best practices across the state in order to create a strong foundation for future growth and development of the program.

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