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CLARK FORK FREE PRESS

April 1983

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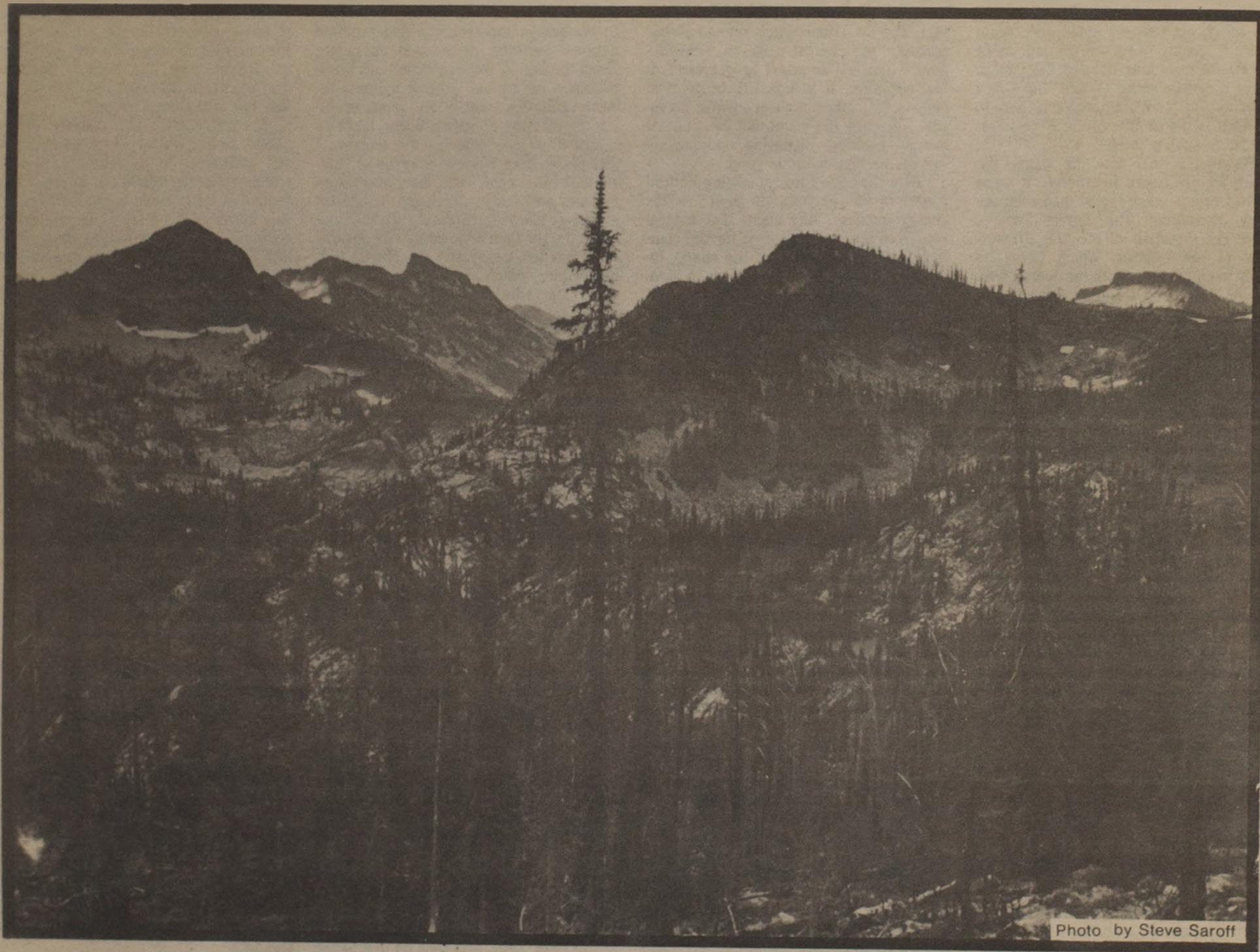


Photo by Steve Saroff

"When people first came to the West, particularly from the owned and fought-over farmlets of Europe, and saw so much land to be had for the signing of a paper and the building of a foundation, an itching land-greed seemed to come over them. They wanted more and more land — good land if possible, but land anyway . . . The early settlers took up land they didn't need and couldn't use; they took up worthless land just to own it."

John Steinbeck, East of Eden

The Selling of America

When I sit down with the Sunday Missoulian I usually read the entire first section. After that I'll flip through, scanning the headlines. It was Sunday, April 3 that one particular article, buried in one of the back sections, caught my eye. The headline read: "Crazies Sale: At Stake is Western Heritage," and the article went on to explain the intentions of the U.S. Forest Service to put the Crazy Mountains up for sale. "For Sale?" My question sounded alien when I thought of the Crazy Mountain range running north of Livingston. As this image blurred and faded once again into the Sunday paper on my lap, more immediate questions popped into mind. "Who are they going to 'sell' the Crazy Mountains to?" "What purpose is there in it? What is the motive of the Forest Service to do such a thing?"

Reading further into the article the bigger picture began to emerge. It turns out this sale is much larger than even the Crazy Mountains. The Forest Service, under the direction of the U.S. Department of the Interior, which forms its policy in conjunction with the overall policies of the Reagan Administration, announced plans to study the possible sale of up to 6 million acres of National Forest Land throughout the country. This warranted some deeper investigation.

The deeper my search for information went, the bigger the picture became, and the more horrifying were my conclusions. Back in August of 1982, the Los Angeles Times reported, "Interior Secretary James Watt has declared that in the next five years he will sell up to 35 million acres of public lands (an acreage the size of Florida)." This is a quantum leap from the 'mere' six million acres I first encountered in the April third Missoulian. And Hey! I was under the impression that the Department of the Interior was going to leave the wilderness areas alone. It turns out Watt's statements regarding wilderness areas were just a decoy, a wooden duck thrown out to provide 'Watt watchers' with a sense of security. I too had relaxed, content with the notion that Watt had finally realized he couldn't buck popular sentiment regarding public and wildlands. But he is a cagey fellow, and while we are watching him talk out of the right side of his mouth, we better pay attention to what he is saying out of the left side.

It seems every category of federal land (save National Parks and congressionally designated Wilderness Areas) that Watt is not statutorily prohibited from developing, is for sale. So now the cat is out of the bag. And there are still those questions: "Who will buy the land?" and "Why does Watt wish to sell so much public land?"

The general speculation is that large corporations will buy, being mainly interested in developing the natural resource potential of the land. This speculation is not unfounded. It is common knowledge that for some time the energy industry has been eyeing gas, oil, and mineral reserves situated beneath public lands. Even given the fact the sales will be held as public auctions, what rancher up near White Sulphur Springs or Wilsall can afford to buy adjacent land in the Crazy Mountains?

So the corporations end up with the land. Buy why does the federal government want to sell the public lands in the first place? The Reagan Administration says proceeds from the sale of public lands will add money to the federal coffers. The federal budget is in trouble. The government has been deficit spending since the Viet Nam war put the budget irretrievably in the red. The money, they claim, would help to ease the strain such a large federal deficit has put upon the economy. But there is more to it than that. The LA Times article quoted earlier reveals, "the current drive to 'privatization' is not just an effort to increase federal revenues. It is a matter of political philosophy rather than economic necessity, reflecting the belief that government has no business managing national resources for the common good."

Who then ends up 'managing natural resources for the common good'? — the energy industry. Any claim that natural resources are safely secured for the common good in the hands of the energy industry is highly dubious. We here in Montana know as well or better than most what energy developers can do to the land, to the economic base, and to the democratic control of state politics. Witness the strangle hold Montana suffered at the hands of the Anaconda Co. which controlled the press, the judiciary, the legislature, and the land early on in this century.

Editorial

The 'common good' eludes strict and clear definition, but even in its obscure state most would agree that any notion of the 'common good' must include consideration for future generations. A major premise in the logic given for the need behind federal control and management of large areas of land is the need to promote prudent use of the resources contained therein. The American people realized long ago that the development of resources, left to the control of market forces, would be wasteful and harmful development. The common good is left to become so obscure that it is forgotten. Protection of the common good, then, in whatever form that notion might take, demands a government responsible to those who embody the common good — the people.

James Watt, in response to allegations that he is acting irresponsibly with regard to public land use, speaking to the Interstate Mining Compact Commission last summer in New Orleans, said past governmental policies "were weakening our economy and endangering our national security. We now have a staff at Interior committed to the full stewardship equation — that is, people who understand that our mission is not simply to acquire and lock away all the national resources we possibly can." The result, presumably to strengthen the economy and promote national security, is to open up public lands for sale or lease in monstrous proportions. Leaving the issue of national security aside for another day, let us examine the viability of selling public lands as a means of 'strengthening the economy.' The Spokesman Review editorial of Nov. 10, 1982 comments, "The sheer magnitude of sales and leases precludes thoughtful economic planning. Without even the time to survey the land adequately, the government has left to industry the crucial task of deciding which areas are to be developed. The Administration seems desperate to get rid of the public properties as quickly as it can."

In this time of economic recession, the competition among buyers which should be present in these sales is non-existent. The demand is simply not there. A glut in the market for oil and coal has ravaged energy company profits, restricting their cash flow. Also there is some indication that the sudden increase in availability of government lands for resource development is leading to a fall in the price industry is willing to pay. Critics of the program have charged that the anticipated price declines could amount to billions of dollars in savings to oil and mineral companies buying the reserves. In Wyoming's Powder River Basin, the Decker Coal Co. is paying one-hundredth the going rate for coal by the ton. The government isn't getting what the land is really worth and thus the additional monies for the federal treasury are not what they could potentially be.

Proponents of the Interior Department's plan say the public will benefit as cheaper prices for resources are passed along to consumers. What will really happen is that as industries obtain land and leases at artificially low rates, they will hold on to their gains until prices rise again. LA Times reporter Robert Jones quotes one industry source, "Everybody understands the deal, lease the coal now, as fast as possible, and hang on to it for as long as possible." This principle can foreseeably apply to other resources as well. The potential outcome of the plan to

dump 35 million acres of public lands and lease millions more is a windfall of gigantic proportions to buyers and an equally great loss to sellers, who are, willing or not, the American people.

The Interior Department's plan to sell off public lands is terribly harmful to the long range interests of the American public. The attractive wrapping of consumer benefits is just so much rhetoric. Geoffrey Webb of Friends of the Earth said recently, "The real legacy of the Watt administration will be the massive turnover of public property to the private sector. For decades to come we will be seeing the fallout from this, because decisions over the use of that land and property will also fall to the corporations."

Federal control and management of public lands, while overly bureaucratic and inefficient in its administration, is still better protection of our interests than control of these lands in the hands of private business. If we are to understand the common good as containing some provision for the needs of future generations, and thus show ourselves to be proper stewards of public lands, the public sector must continue to control them.

The public land sales can occur only with congressional approval. I have been unable to determine exactly when this issue will reach Congress for debate, but our congressmen are aware that it is forthcoming. Start sending your letters to Washington, D.C. now and let's keep public lands public.

REP. PAT WILLIAMS
HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

SEN. JOHN MELCHER
SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

SEN. MAX BAUCUS
SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

John E. Smith

If you have any questions please contact John E. Smith, c/o The Clark Fork Free Press, Student Action Center in the University Center of the University of Montana.

"Man is but a part of the fabric of life — dependent on the whole fabric for his very existence. As the most highly developed tool-using animal, he must recognize that the unknown evolutionary destinies of other life forms are to be respected, and act as gentle steward of the earth's community of being."

Gary Snyder

Impressions

Opinion By Felix Killabrew

In response to the last round of ASUM elections and the subsequent proceedings that failed to invalidate them, I must give a response of my own... horse-hockey! Not only were numerous ASUM bylaws broken, but the magnitude of gross unethical and irresponsible behavior virtually splits the seams of the ASUM political system with question and skepticism. Something that it better be getting used to by now.

Since the events of the election proper have been adequately documented, a mere review will suffice. However, the rationale used by various former CB members in refusing a valid request for new elections deserves a bit more serious consideration.

Unfortunately, the ASUM elections are bound by no rules but its own, even though state funds are its only means of survival. This leaves a sort of Fibber McGee's closet just waiting to be opened and, indeed, the door has been cracked. For instance, petition deadlines were extended for a select few (most of which won), polling places were not clearly marked, advertising for petition deadlines and elections were not done according to Article 3, Section 4 of the bylaws, a person who had filed for candidacy was allowed to operate a polling place while another was a poll watcher (violates Article 7 of the bylaws). The ASUM Constitution states that elections are to be held in the spring (Article 8, Section 3), which is obviously not the case.

These seemingly minor infractions display a lack of respect for ASUM's own rules and seem to suggest that ASUM will bend its own rules if a certain result is de-

sired. Who is to say what other rules will be broken when they think no one is looking. Folks... this ain't Chicago!

The former ASUM president was seen "giving advice as how to vote" while being a poll worker. This was not denied. A special interest group had tables so close to the polling tables as to be indistinguishable from them. So close, in fact, that campaign literature was being passed to voters while they were waiting in line to vote (which is grossly illegal under federal, state and county laws).

Whereas ASUM has no rules forbidding such behavior, common sense should dictate that forbidding electioneering at the polls is good ethical practice and should be followed if for no other reason than the good examples set by all branches of government. Unfortunately, if ASUM were to outlaw these actions, it may turn into another "rubber rule."

When these questionable displays of behavior were brought before Central Board, there were indeed some amazing results.

In response to the charge of electioneering, many CB members replied with something resembling, "if anyone is so weak as to be influenced by someone else's suggestions, that's their problem." The shortsightedness and sheer ignorance of that sort of statement is incredible and deserves no comment short of a good gut-wrenching laugh of dismay. But, being a person of control, I'll elaborate.

The question involved here is a moral one and deals with the presence of electioneering, not whether people are strong or weak in response applied pressure. Since many people vote as a matter of duty and may have no specific candidate

in mind, a certain amount of "chance vote" is present and probably would even out among the candidates, if left to chance. But when a crew of "advisors" is present at each polling place, funneling this "chance vote" all to one side, effect are more than probable. Since the winning candidate won by only 9 votes (out of over 1200 cast), the validity of the results is at the very least dubious.

Defying logic once again, CB members dealt with two petitions in a rather lopsided way. The first contained 6 pages of documented observations of election discrepancies and infractions of ASUM regulations and was signed by 32 people directly or indirectly involved with its writing and/or compilation. No attempt was made to circulate it to the general public for approval. Without firsthand knowledge of the information, how it was obtained, and how it relates to the ASUM election regulations, etc., it would have made little sense to circulate it. Yet, the flipside of this, namely a petition approving the elections and their results, and having 302 signatures, was proudly brought before Central Board. All this without hearing the allegations and accompanying testimony. It's hard for me to fathom those 300 some odd signatures being taken seriously when the evidence hadn't been presented to them yet. This amounts to a "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil" three monkey scenario.

But, CB members saw it fit to ice this cake. They promptly pointed out that as a representative body, it was up to Central Board to support 302 signatures instead of 32. It's depressing how a show of numbers can mean so much when its basis is merely a "rah-rah for our side" cheer. I

can only hope that the next Central Board possesses a little more gray matter, or honesty, whichever is pertinent. I need not condemn them all, only 13 of 22. Two CB members even voted by proxy against new elections without hearing presentation of allegations! It takes a pretty presumptuous and righteous juror to make a decision on a case without being present for the testimony.

All this may seem like nuking a dead horse, but the questions beg themselves and desperately need answers. Given that so much of the student population has given up on voting in the ASUM election as a lost cause, it's time to build some stability and credibility into the ASUM elections as well as the electorate. Of course, the latter may stem from the former. At the very least, massive election reform is needed: restrictions on electioneering practices, one (1) deadline set each year for petitions, unbiased election management (say, the League of Women Voters), and most of all, once passed, these rules should be followed. Following present rules may help as well.

But in dealing with the election at hand, the options are numerous and complicated. Firstly, the last elections could be thrown out, via referendum and we could start anew. This option is in the wings on consideration. Another option is to leave everything "as is," which is obviously the easiest path. But, is it the most just? It seems to me that people who were elected honestly wouldn't mind a new election if the old one was as fishy as the one in question. That is, of course, if honest elections are the goal here.

Anyone for resurrecting a dead horse?

FOUR FLAGS ARE MISSING

During the Northern Plains Resource Council Benefit, 4 flags, worth over several hundred dollars, were stolen. Northern Plains is responsible for the flags or their replacement cost. Anyone with information regarding their whereabouts is asked to contact the Student Action Center (X5897). If returned, no questions will be asked.

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Environmental Issues

While the 48th Legislature struggles with existing resource laws, strengthening or weakening environmental statutes, giving tax credits or imposing new taxes on the extraction of energy providing resources, it fails to address the implications of its actions.

For example, the House Taxation Committee recently heard and passed a bill effectively reducing revenues from the Coal Severance Tax. The proponents of HB706, Western Energy, Montana Coal Council and others, described in detail how Wyoming coal surpasses in quality Montana reserves. Wyoming coal has less sulphur, less radium, thicker seams and greater BTU's. While Montana retains a fair percentage of the world mineable reserves, circumstances and physical attributes of Montana's coal results in higher transportation processing and reclamation costs, for less energy, more waste.

Montana's main aquifers are coal, and no one really knows the ramifications of strip-mining central and eastern Montana aquifers. The 'overburden' removed to expose the coal is agricultural land. Yet no one opposed HB706. No one questioned whether it is in the best interest of Montana to encourage coal production.

Mineral extraction has many impacts upon local and regional socio-economic conditions. It creates boom and bust situations that in the medium or long-range scenario do not dramatically diversify or benefit state or local economies. Coal mining removes agricultural land from

production. Coal is also relatively scarce. The longer Montanans keep their coal in the ground, their agricultural land in production, the more valuable that coal becomes — the more competitive the Montana market becomes. Is it in the public interest to encourage mining at this time?

I have yet to hear any legislator, at the Capital, or after hours, mention this vitally important question. Does Montana want dependence upon internationally controlled resource markets, or do her people desire a Montana based, diverse economy?

This legislature faces at least \$30 million in budget cuts resulting primarily from the recent and proposed drop in oil prices. The state stands to lose \$30 million in oil tax revenues because of OPEC. At this point, your taxes do not support state government, non-renewable resource taxes do. Why do you the people, and your legislators ignore the implications of incremental law-making and the implicit encouragement of non-renewable resource extraction?

I believe your voice demanding an incisive review of state economic and environmental policies can expose the issues Montana needs to address. Your voice in 1-95 instructed the legislature to begin economic reform. This has begun, but not with the honesty and clarity of vision this state and her people deserve.

Submitted by Anne Black
Missoula, Mt

Future Vision

A Short Story By T Moore

Saturday, November 24, 2007:

Tyler Jopes glanced from the highway to the tall line of mountains rising to the west. The gray cloud ceiling accentuated the shape of the east-facing reefs, but deprived them of the color Tyler so vividly recalled. The last time he'd seen the Rocky Mountain Front those same cliffs were tinged with the red and orange rays of early-morning sun. That was twenty-six years ago, the morning that Tyler moved with his folks from Choteau, Montana to Colorado.

Although Tyler lived in Montana for only his first eight years, he well remembered his stay in the Big Sky. Tyler recalled huddling in wool blankets in his father's jeep, while dad trudged through two or three feet of fresh windblown snow to track an antelope across the prairie. He remembered swimming in the chilly Sun River pools, the only way to cool off on a 95 degree July afternoon. But mostly Tyler reminisced about running wild and free west of town to Teton Buttes. From the buttes he could see for miles in all directions. Tyler loved to hike there after supper to watch the summer sunset. On other occasions he'd rise early and run to the buttes to watch the sun rise over the hilly plains east of Choteau.

As he recalled his early childhood memories, Tyler watched a solitary snowflake melt off the windshield of his car. This was one of two kinds of typical late fall day along the Front. Tyler could predict that an autumn day would either be cold and overcast, with snow falling, or bright and sunny, with massive gray clouds hovering about the peaks to the west.

Tyler gazed at the sign to the side of the road: "Choteau — 6 miles." Almost home. Tyler didn't know why he'd waited so long to return to his birthplace. Colorado had plenty to offer — blue skies, big mountains, clear streams. Tyler knew the Colorado Rockies well, too. But something was missing in his life. There was an empty space that Tyler could be filled by returning to the high prairie and rugged reef country of his youth. He felt an attachment, a longing for something that had long been separated, but not severed from his life.

As a few more snowflakes fell from the northwest, Tyler looked at the blue-bunch wheatgrass bending with the wind along the side of the road. "Does the wind ever stop blowing here?" he thought, relieving the pressure on the gas pedal, and realized that no, the wind doesn't ever completely stop blowing along the Front. It merely changes direction and speed.

Soon, houses began to appear along the distant sides of the highway. Choteau was near. For the first time, Tyler wondered what he would do now that he was back. He planned to hang around town awhile, and hike in the mountains, but he'd made no specific schedule.

Tyler looked at the dashboard clock. Twelve-thirty. What could he do in Choteau, Montana at twelve-thirty Saturday afternoon? He'd had a long drive since

leaving West Yellowstone at six that morning. Physically he didn't feel up to beginning a hike. Maybe he could pass the afternoon in Choteau. Maybe even renew a childhood acquaintance or two.

Approaching the outskirts of the south part of Choteau, Tyler noticed something not normally unusual in a town, but seemingly out of place here. About a half mile before the beginning of what he remembered as the fringe of town were two large trailer courts — one on either side of the highway.

"Hmmm," thought Tyler. "Town's grown a bit."

Soon after passing the trailers, Tyler drove through a vaguely-familiar neighborhood, past maple and old cottonwood trees, now bare of leaves, standing silently in readiness for the approaching winter. While the houses didn't look completely familiar to Tyler, they weren't totally peculiar to his senses either. It was a case of vague remembrance, of recalling a scene rather than the particulars of the scene. Tyler had seen many similar stormy fall afternoons from the very street on which he drove. He felt a warmth, a sense of homecoming.

Tyler made the sweeping right turn leading to Main Street. Everything appeared generally as he'd left it twenty-six years past. The houses were older, and the trees taller, but Choteau was the same town.

Passing the County courthouse, he noted an emptiness in town. Saturday afternoon was normally the epicenter of the week's activities. Ranchers usually came to Choteau by the truckload on Saturday. How strange. Not only were parking spaces in ample supply, but the three-block long downtown was almost completely deserted. A couple of girls jumped rope on the sidewalk, and an elderly gent enjoyed a slow walk in the brisk breeze.

Then Tyler noticed a large banner strung between two light poles.

The sign read "Choteau: Home of the State Champion?"

"Odd sign," thought Tyler. "State Champion what? It's football season. Did the... what is the high school team called... win the championship this year?"

Tyler pulled into a parking space before the Pioneer Bar. He knew where to get information in Choteau.

On a sign on one of the bar's windows were the printed words "Go Oilers" with a line drawn through "Go." Painted after "Oilers" was "SUCK."

"Kids are still the same," mused Tyler. Still, he wondered who the Oilers were. That wasn't the name of Choteau High's team. They were the Cougars, or Lions, or Panthers, or something like that.

Tyler entered the Pioneer Bar, and found, to his astonishment, that the tavern was empty. Not a customer. On Saturday afternoon? The sole occupant of the establishment was a tall, white-haired man tending bar. He could explain the lack of life in town, but was talking on the phone with his back to the door.

Approaching the bar, Tyler noticed a poster on the wall that solved the mystery of the other two signs. This one read:

Montana State Championship Football
West Choteau Oilers

vs.

Choteau Bulldogs

Saturday, November 24, 1 p.m.
Choteau High School Field

Tyler's eyes widened in amazement. "West Choteau High?" he wondered aloud.

"You for the Oilers?" asked the bartender, hanging up the phone.

"No. No, I'm not for the Oilers," answered Tyler. "Not that I'm against them. I didn't even know there was a West Choteau High."

"You're not from this country, then, er ya?"

"Actually, I am," responded Tyler. "I was born in Choteau, and lived here until I was eight years old. First time back since '81."

"That's why you ain't heard of the Oilers. West High just got built ten years ago."

"In Choteau? But why two high schools? There's barely enough people here for one high school."

"You have been aways for awhile!" the bartender bombasted Tyler. "How'd you come into town?"

"Through Augusta."

"That's it. You didn't see the new housing projects — all the neighborhoods, and apartment buildings."

"Sure I did," argued Tyler. "I remember those trailers south of town weren't here when I was a kid. But how much do those trailers raise Choteau's population. A thousand maximum, I bet."

"You're right about the trailers, but that's just a drop in the bucket." The bartender scratched his chin. "Why, I bet there's ten, twenty thousand more people here than when you left."

"What?!" gasped Tyler. "But why? Why has the town grown so much?"

"Progress. Progress and oil. Bunch of folks struck oil in the 80s and 90s. Some of the wells are capped, some are still pumping. But the town grew like wildflowers in the 90s. First all the drillers came in, then all the pipeline folks. Naturally, they needed somewhere to live and somewhere to eat, so more people came to build houses and stores. After that, even more people came to work in the stores and restaurants."

"My mother told me about climbing Ear Mountain. Got up in the middle of the night under the full moon and climbed up for sunrise. She always said it was the most beautiful thing she ever saw, the moonlight on the mountains, and sunrise on the plains."

"You ought to see the west side of town. All new neighborhoods, fancy parks with swings and slides, condominiums and apartments. Yes, sir, old Choteau's really grew up. Why, we've even got a Dairy Queen going north out of town, and a McDonald's by the new high school. Served almost a million burgers themselves in only five years. In fact, they're having a contest. The person who orders the one millionth burger gets a whole year's supply of Big Macs. If you're hungry you should eat at McDonalds. You might just be the lucky winner. Don't worry about having to eat all those Macs

at once... they'll be giving coupons that you can use at any McDonald's in the country. Yep, you ought to hurry right over there now. The manager thinks they'll hit one million today. They'll serve a couple thousand today after the game, that's for sure. You hungry? Go right to McDonalds."

"I'll take a draft first," said Tyler, staggering onto a barstool. "Choteau sounds a lot different than when I lived here."

"Oh, bigger maybe, but not so different," answered the bartender as he slid a glass of beer down the counter. "In a way, it's kinda the same ol' thing. Everybody works all week and whoops it up good on Saturday night. Although I admit, downtown's been a sight livelier during the week ever since the college opened."

"College?!" sputtered Tyler, choking on a mouthful of beer. "In Choteau?"

"It's not actually in Choteau. About a half mile outside the city limits. Where the Miller Ranch used to be."

"Clyde Miller? Clyde, the one with sons named Jerry and Bart. Clyde sold out?" asked Tyler. "Clyde always said he'd keep that place forever. For his sons and grandchildren. I visited him all the time. Clyde would never sell his ranch."

"No, but Jerry and Bart would, and they did. Got plenty for it, too. Good thing, though. We need that college. Rocky Mountain Institute of Engineering. Ain't been nothing like it since Anaconda shut down in Butte and Montana Tech closed. Yep, them kids at that school learn just about all there is to know about geology and oil and mineral exploration. Big reason why we're gettin' so much oil from the ground right now. Thirty years ago they was sayin' there weren't much there. Wonderful thing, education."

"Terrific," concurred Tyler, finishing his beer.

"Want another?" asked the bartender.

"No thanks, it's time I had a bite to eat."

"Well, you know McDonald's is having that..."

"Maybe something else," interrupted Tyler. "Think I'll eat at the Sip'n'Sup. The folks used to take me and my sister there for Saturday lunch."

"Too bad," consoled the bartender. "The Sip'n'Sup shut down years ago. They just couldn't compete with the fast-food chains. You can still eat in the same building, though. It's a Colonel Sanders now."

"Mmmm," said Tyler, and walked out the door.

Tyler exited the Pioneer, and the decision between whether to eat Kentucky Fried or Big Macs quelled his appetite. The scattered snowflakes had turned to a light flurry, and the wind bit a little harder than it had a few minutes earlier. Tyler gazed up and down Main Street, hoping to see a familiar face. He soon realized, though, that most of the town faces, familiar or otherwise, were at the football game. Tyler decided to walk to the stadium to join the rest of Choteau.

As Tyler approached Choteau High,

the streets became jammed with cars. He was glad he'd walked, for there wasn't any place to park near school. From two blocks away he could hear the blaring of a band, the roar of the PA system, and a general excited hub-bub from the crowd. Tyler walked to the entry gate and found it unattended, so he entered the small football stadium.

As the snow fell faster, and excited parents cheered freezing baton twirlers, Tyler made his way through the hot dogs, peanuts, and cokes to the end of the eastern bleachers. At the bottom of the bleachers he asked a woman holding a cup of oddly scented coffee who was ahead.

"My God, they do this to us every other year!" she complained. "Isn't that enough? Now, they make us play the championship game here this year, too, when we could have played in our nice, cozy stadium."

"How's that, ma'am?" Tyler asked sympathetically.

"The stadium, the stadium!" she raved, extending her arms and spilling a little coffee. "You're with the Bulldogs, aren't you? You have that earthy look about you."

"No, ma'am," answered Tyler. "I'm from out of town."

"Dupuyer?" the woman asked. "Bynum? Oh, it doesn't matter. Everyone knows all those hick towns are against the Oilers, so it doesn't matter which town you're from. But it does matter where we play the game!"

"What's wrong with this field?" asked Tyler, glancing at the majorettes. "Looks like there's enough seats."

"Enough seats! Enough seats! You act like the only important thing about a football stadium is whether or not there's enough seats!"

"Just a consideration," mumbled Tyler apologetically.

"Certainly not the only consideration," insisted the woman, gulping several ounces of coffee.

"What is wrong with this field, then?" asked a bewildered Tyler.

"Just look at it!" the woman belated, finishing her coffee. "They're those crummy cheap bleachers we thought we left behind in Texas. Why, the wind blows right through them. I'd be frozen on a day like this without my coffee."

The woman poured another cup from the thermos she kept in her handbag. From a side pouch she pulled a pint of whiskey and added a long shot to her coffee.

"Care for a drink?" she asked.

"No, thanks," Tyler replied. "So what's the big deal with the West Choteau stadium?"

"The big deal," the woman responded indignantly, "is class. Oiler Stadium has class. And it's comfortable. It's completely enclosed by a twenty foot wall. Keeps this nasty wind away. And the benches are heated so the boys don't get cold while they're on the sidelines. And there's bathrooms there! On both sides of the field!"

"There aren't bathrooms here?" asked Tyler.

"No, there aren't! All they have are those awful port-a-johns that my husband has to use when he's at work in the oil fields. And they're all on the other side of the stadium. Do you know how long a walk that is? Why, in this cold weather, I can't always make it all the way to that side, so I have to go in the bushes behind the snack shed."

"That's not so terrible" comforted Tyler.

"It's gross! Have you ever had to

squat in the bushes on a cold day?"

"Only while camping" said Tyler.

"Ooooooh, camping" replied the woman sardonically. "You are earthy, aren't you?"

"I like to think so."

"I must get back to my seat now," the woman stated. "Wouldn't want to miss the whole halftime show."

"You never told me the score," insisted Tyler.

"The scoreboard, silly. Look at the scoreboard!"

Tyler peered to the opposite end of the field, where the small scoreboard read "Bulldogs 7, Visitors 7." He gloated skyward, and took a moment to enjoy the complement of white flakes of snow on the gray background. The wind had subsided some, and the snow was falling more nearly vertically than it had been earlier. Tyler took a flake on his tongue, and opted to watch the second half from the Bulldog bleachers.

As he walked to the west side of the field, Tyler's hunger returned. He carefully inspected the menu board at the snack shed, and found a bag of peanuts best suited to his palate. Having bought the peanuts, he was just about to find a seat in the bleachers when he heard a voice say, "It's always a pleasure to come to Choteau when I run into Charlie Brock. You take care now, Charlie, and look me up when you get to Simms."

The well-wisher disappeared into the milling crowd, but the object of his compliment remained at the far end of the bleachers.

Tyler looked at the man. He was short and squat, about sixty years old, wearing a cowboy hat and wool coat. Tyler peered harder at the man, and ran the name "Charlie Brock" over and over through his mind. Somehow the name was familiar, but he couldn't place it. The man's face was vaguely familiar, but non-descript beneath the hat and coat. Tyler tortured his mind to remember, tried to fit the pieces together, to relive the moments in which he must have known this man. Suddenly, a gray-haired, middle-aged woman joined the man. The sight of her sparked Tyler's memory, and his life in Choteau was reborn.

"Charlie," he said, extending his hand to the man. Charlie Brock looked surprised.

"And Clare," Tyler continued. "You might not remember me, but I sure remember you. I used to play on your ranch almost thirty years ago."

"Son," said Charlie, "every kid in Choteau used to play on my ranch thirty years ago. Now, which one of them kids are you?"

"Tyler. Tyler Jopes. Do you remember?"

"Tyler Jopes," said Clare. "Little Tyler Jopes. We hadn't heard hardly a word of you since you moved. Is it really you?"

"In the flesh. I'm back for a visit."

"After all these years . . ." said Clare.

"I've returned."

"And what brings you our way agan, Tyler?" laughed Charlie. "Get an urge to chase my goat and roll in the haystack again?"

"No, no. Just came for a visit. I miss this ol' country. Down in Colorado we got big mountains, but nothing quite like this. Nothing like the way the prairie just rolls up to the cliffs and rises straight up to the mountains, with nobody around for as far as the eye can see. I guess I finally missed it bad enough to come back."

"Choteau's changed quite a bit since you lived here," warned Clare.

Tyler shook his head in wonderment.

"So I've seen," he agreed. "Guess nothing stays the same. The town's grown more than I expected, I'll admit. Oil, they say."

"All around town," explained Charlie. East and West. The oil companies bought out quite a few ranches, including ours."

"You sold your ranch?" Tyler echoed.

"Had to," said Charlie.

"Couldn't keep up," added Clare.

"Getting too expensive to live in little Choteau these days. It's the drillers. They live too high. Oh, the whole thing started innocent enough. All the store owners charge a little extra to make money off the drillers. They thought it was temporary. In a way it was. A driller comes for awhile, works and leaves. He's temporary. But the whole buisness goes on and on. Two new drillers replace the one that leaves. Always a new hole in the ground. Always somebody new in town. Costs go up and up. We could barely get by in the past. Everything goes up but the price of beef. That's why we sold our place. They found three wells out there. We couldn't run cattle with all the men and equipment out there. Besides, we made more money than we ever dreamed of by selling the land. But I wonder . . ."

Clare was stoic.

"You can't eat oil," said Charlie.

"One million barrels served," scoffed Tyler quietly.

"We gotta go, Charlie," urged Clare.

"The Bulldog band is coming on the field."

"Wouldn't want to miss that," said Charlie. "Our granddaughter, Jenny, plays the flute."

"The Bulldog band isn't as big as the Oiler band," added Clare, "and their uniforms aren't as fancy or new, but they sure got a lot of spunk."

"Just like the rest of us oldtimers," teased Charlie. "We might not have the

money to buy them lollapalloosin' uniforms every year like them oil people do, but we'll sure put up as good a fight, and have twice as much fun doin' it."

"And win the football game, too" added Clare.

"You said it. Let's sit down. Look us up before you leave, Tyler, ya hear?"

"I'll do that."

His appetite perked by the conversation with old friends, Tyler returned to line for more peanuts. He was just about to the snack shed when a high school girl dropped a quarter taking her change from the counter. Tyler retrieved the coin and handed it to the girl, a pert redhead named Sarah.

"Thanks, mister," she said as Tyler handed her the quarter. "You don't live around here, do you?"

"Bag of peanuts, please," Tyler ordered from the snack shed attendant.

"No, not anymore. I used to, though . . . years ago."

"What ya doin' here now?"

"Visiting. I got a longing to come back. I was pretty young when we moved, but I remember Choteau and the country well."

"What ya gonna do here? Not much to do this time of year unless you like bowling and movies. Plenty of that on the west side of town."

"I'm not here to bowl," chuckled Tyler. "Thought I'd pick up a deer or an antelope tag and go hunting."

"Around here?" questioned Sarah. "There's not many of either of them animals to hunt around Choteau."

Tyler was puzzled.

"Not many deer? Or antelope? Why, the prairie is full of them. I remember watching big herds lope across the snow when I was a boy."

cont. on page 6

Ground Zero Week

"What About the Russians?"

April 24-30, 1983

Events

Monday, April 25

Noon Forum, University Oval

Speakers: Bryan Black, Philosophy Dept., UM
Representative from Women for Peace,
Gayle Sandholm

Music: Paul Becker & Cathy Rapp

Tuesday, April 26

Display Tables in UC Mall 10-3. Local groups will provide information on peace activities.

Wednesday, April 27

7:30 P.M., Underground Lecture Hall

"What About the Russians?" Lecture. John McNamer, leading MX opponent and member of Western Solidarity. Phil Maloney, Professor of Foreign Languages, UM.

Thursday, April 28

7:30 — UC Lounge

Films: "The Last Epidemic"
"Shatterer of Worlds"

Sponsored by the Student Action Center

"That must have been a while ago, mister," said Sarah. "My dad says there were lots of animals when he was a kid. He says they're pretty much gone now, though. Dad blames it on the oil men. Says they poached all the deer. My biology teacher says that there's just been too many houses built along the Teton. Too many people. Animals had to go somewhere. Nobody knows where they went, but they're gone."

"Oh," said Tyler quietly. He was slightly disappointed. He hadn't really planned a hunting trip, but he had been looking forward to watching the wildlife on the plains.

"You can still see some animals, though," consoled Sarah. "Just go out Willow Creek Highway to the Pine Butte Zoo. They have deer and antelope, and elk, even a grizzly bear. Don't worry, though. It's in a cage. Won't bite. Yeah, you should go to the zoo if you really want to see some wild animals."

"That's ok," said Tyler. "There's plenty of other things to do. If the snow lets up, I'm going up on Ear Mountain."

"You're too late for that, mister. The tram's shut down for the season."

Tyler's jaw dropped to his chest.

"The what?" he quivered.

"The tram," Sarah repeated. "Teton Forks Resort shuts down the Ear Mountain tram at the end of October. Starts getting too windy and cold then. No one wants to go up when it's cold out."

"I want to," raved Tyler. "You bet. Tram or no tram. My mother told me about climbing Ear Mountain. Got up in the middle of the night under the full moon and climbed up for sunrise. She always said it was the most beautiful thing she ever saw, the moonlight on the mountains, and sunrise on the plains. She said the sun looks like a red ball rising from the earth. All the ponds on the prairie turn red for awhile, and the glaciers in Glacier Park reflect the first rays of sunlight. Ma said she never saw nothing like sunrise from Ear Mountain."

to the top of Ear Mountain is more my speed."

"Oh, you can't go to the top of Ear Mountain," said Sarah.

"Why not? Is the tram in the way?"

"No, the tram can't go to the very top of Ear Mountain, either. It's a sacred place."

"I'm sure it is," smiled Tyler.

"It is sacred!" emphasized Sarah. "Officially. Legally."

"How so?" asked Tyler, readying himself for another surprise.

"The Indians used to go up there for vision quests," Sarah explained. "Now the top of Ear Mountain is an official 'Vision Quest Historic Site,' part of the 'National Vision Quest Preservation System'."

"I remember hearing about that long ago," recalled Tyler. "I didn't realize the system still existed."

"Yep. The 'Vision Quest Protection Act' of 1986. The Secretary of the Interior proposed the law so people would respect his position again. The previous secretary treated the public land so bad that the new administration had to do something to regain the people's trust. Good idea, because everybody was sure mad at that other secretary by the time his president — you know, the actor, what's his name? — lost his second election."

"You know your history," commended Tyler.

"I do go to school, mister," reminded Sarah.

"Then I suppose you can tell me why I can't go to the top of Ear Mountain."

"Sure, as part of the 'Vision Quest Preservation System,' the site is preserved. It's surrounded by big stones so people won't sit on the site."

"What's wrong with sitting on the site?" queried Tyler.

"It's for vision quests. You can't just sit there. You have to look for a vision."

"Can't I do that?"

"Of course not!" exclaimed Sarah. "Only Indians look for visions. You couldn't have one."

I'm for the Bulldogs. I like the old school . . . and old things . . . and the old way."

"That's good. I gotta go now. Nice talking to you, mister."

Sarah spurted through the crowd like a quarterback on the sneak. Both bands began to play as the teams returned to the field. The wind had nearly subsided, and the snow was falling fast and heavy, quickly coating the field with a soft, crystalline blanket.

"The second half will be interesting," thought Tyler, as the Bulldog kicker booted a low kick to the West Choteau ten yard line. The crowd roared as the Oiler ballcarrier eluded the grasp of two Bulldog tacklers and raced along the sideline. After a long run, the returner was tackled near the Bulldog twenty yard line, and fumbled the ball. Snow flew everywhere as black and white Oilers battled maroon and gold Bulldogs for the crazed pigskin. When the melee was over, an official signaled the Bulldogs had captured the ball.

"Hmmm," thought Tyler. "Seems the Oilers can take things only so far without fumbling."

To be continued . . .

Be looking for the exciting conclusion to **Future Vision** in the next issue of the **Clark Fork Free Press**, on University newsstands at the end of May.

Editor's note:

The author, T.Moore, is a recent graduate of the University of Montana, and resides in Missoula. He is currently serving on the Board of Directors for the Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council, and edits their newsletter. The Montana Council for Indian Education published a collection of T.Moore's short stories titled, **Ancestors Footsteps**. He is waiting publication of **Nightmares** coming soon as a Great Western publication.

"Oh, the whole thing started innocent enough. All the store owners charge a little extra to make money off the drillers. They thought it was temporary. In a way it was. A driller comes for awhile, works and leaves. He's temporary. But the whole business goes on and on. Two new drillers replace the one that leaves."

"It is gorgeous," sighed Sarah dreamingly. "They have lots of postcards like that at the mall."

"The mall?"

"You sure do repeat things a lot, mister," scolded Sarah. "Don't you hear well?"

"I hear fine," answered Tyler. "I never dreamed there'd be a mall in Choteau."

"Oh, it's not in Choteau," corrected Sarah. "It's right at the base of Teton Buttes, where the creek used to be."

When you want some tires, or duds, or a ball or you need those books or shoes for fall whatever you want, you hear our call just drive on out to Teton Buttes Mall. Lower prices, faster service, freindly people.

That's their theme song. You hear it all the time on TV."

"I bet" agreed Tyler. "But I think I'll pass the trip to the mall this time. A hike

"I could try," boasted Tyler.

"They wouldn't give you a permit. I tell you, you have to be an Indian to have a vision on Ear Mountain. Only people with one quarter or more Indian blood can get a Vision Quest permit."

"And who issues the permits?"

"The Bureau of Indian Affairs, of course," replied Sarah, eyeing Tyler like he was the village idiot.

"I should have known," apologized Tyler.

"That's right," agreed Sarah. "You adults never remember anything when you finish school. Speaking of, I better get back to my friends now. The second half is about to start. And we're gonna whip their butts. Them Oilers think they're so tough. I guess they are. They're always fighting and stealing cars at West. But that won't help their football team. This state championship goes to Choteau High School, not them Oiler goons. Are you rooting for the Bulldogs, mister?"

"I hadn't much thought about it. I missed the first half . . . but sure, yeah,

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Poetry

Yankee Go Home

I'm ashamed to salute to the Stars and Stripes
I can't answer for what it represents.
The world sees a cartoon of stereotypes;
Uncle Succor with his selfish intents.

I know that I'm chicken and lazy;
Enjoying this bourgeoisie cruise.
My conscience is driving me crazy.
Starvation's a hard thing to choose.

I just wish peace and security
Could be had without pinning people down.
I can't pose with righteous demurity
When my halo's a conqueror's crown.

When I see the hunger and squalor . . .
It rattles my comfy aplomb.
I know they want more than my dollar.
Oh where can a Yankee Go Home?

Brian Massman

"A world of interdependent relationships, where things are intelligible only in terms of each other, is a seamless unity. In such a world it is impossible to consider man apart from nature, as an exiled spirit which controls this world by having its roots in another. Man is himself a loop in the endless knot, and as he pulls in one direction he finds that he is pulled from another and cannot find the origin of the impulse. For the world of his thoughts prevents him. He has an idea of himself, the subject, and of nature, the object. If he cannot find the source of the impulse in either, he is confused. He cannot settle for voluntarism and he cannot settle for determinism. But the confusion lies


in the tangle of his thoughts rather than the convolutions of the knot. Yet in the present atmosphere of Western thought the realization of man's total involvement with nature is perhaps depressing. It is humiliating for a culture which always used to think of man as nature's head and lord. Even now, despite ever louder voices of warning, the culture still revels in technical power. Contrary to its avowed philosophy of living for the future, its perspective is really no longer than the day after tomorrow, for it exploits the resources of the earth and the energies of radioactivity with only the most fragmentary knowledge of the complex relationships so disturbed."

Alan Watts

"Each torpid turn of this world bears such disinherited children to whom neither what's been, nor what is coming, belongs."

Rainer Maria Rilke

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Milltown Update

By Lisa Fleischer
MontPIRG Toxics & Water
Quality Coordinator

Relief is in sight for Milltown residents whose water has been contaminated with arsenic and other heavy metals. As required by law, the state of Montana agreed to fund 10% of the cost of providing clean water for Milltown. Federal Superfund monies, derived from taxes on industry, will provide the other 90%.

Representative Bob Ream (Missoula) sponsored the legislation, H.B. 200, which commits state funds for the Superfund match. It has passed both houses and was signed by Governor Schwinden. The state's \$220,000 contribution will be derived from surplus money in the Junk Vehicle Fund. Beginning in 1986, 6% of the interest from the Resource Indemnity Trust Fund will be used to pay for clean-up of Montana's superfund sites.

In order for Milltown residents to receive clean water this year work should begin in May. Tests of the water systems in the area must be conducted in the spring when the ground is soft. Construction of new wells and water systems also must be done before the ground freezes.

These time constraints pose a problem because state-appropriated funds will not be available until July 1. At present, local and state officials and Milltown residents

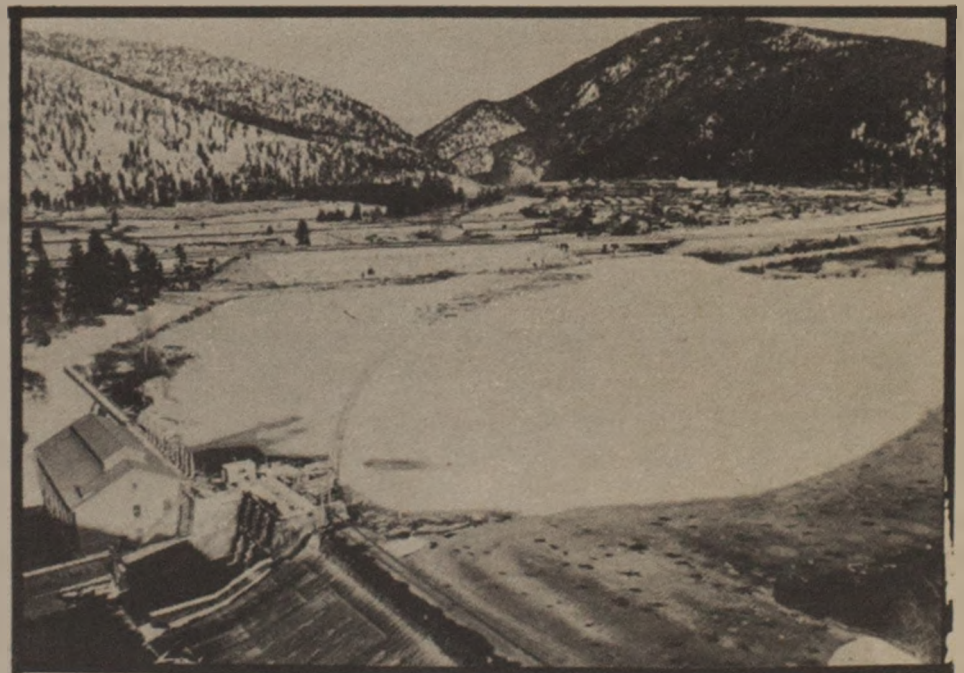
are trying to arrange a way for work to begin in the spring.

Students from the University of Montana have been giving support to Milltowners since January. The Montana Public Interest Research Group has been active in the community — particularly in the drive for Superfund money.

MontPIRG has also initiated a study of the health of the Milltown residents. Using student administered medical questionnaires we hope to discover if any illness has been produced by the water contamination. Although this data will not be epidemiologically significant, we hope that it will encourage maximal action from EPA.

A long-term approach to the problem is needed. Since the arsenic contamination is a Clark Fork River-wide problem other people may be affected. If significant water contamination is found upstream or in the neighboring towns of Bonner and East Riverside, MontPIRG's model health survey and experienced interviewers will be useful.

Hopefully, the results of our study will allay the fears of Milltown residents and provide good community experience for students.



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CHANGES CHANGES CHANGES CHANGES CHANGES CHANGES CHANGES

Ferron — Folk Rebirth

Canadian folk artist, Ferron will be appearing at the University of Montana Campus, in the University Theatre, on June 3rd, at 7 P.M. One of Canada's most respected folksingers, the Vancouver performer has been steadily gaining fame and followers in the United States for the past six years. One of the most exciting talents in women's music, Ferron's vocal style reaches out beyond that genre. When asked her stance on the women's movement, she asserted that she is simply "a woman moving." Ferron speaks as a woman honestly and directly and in doing so, speaks for everyone.

Ferron refers to herself as a "folk-poet," singing songs straight from the heart, and indeed her lyrics boast the hard chiseled personal imagery of poetry. Her voice has power and authority; it's reminiscent of the haunting quality of the early Leonard Cohen and the drive of early Bob Dylan.

In concert she has a hearty, jovial sensuality, and her performance is always personal, highly moving, and evocative in it's imagery. Ferron has a reputation for weaving a mystical bond between herself, her music and audience. "People cry at the shows," she says, "they laugh. We get real close."

Ferron has produced three albums by herself, not willing to give up any of her control or freedom. "My philosophy is that anything you create is yours and has meaning in your life. And you don't want that dirtied at any cost," said Ferron.



Photo by James LaBounty

"This is what I do, and nobody is going to step on that. And if they do step on it, then they step on me. I'm not out to make a dollar, I'm out to make a life." Ferron has no desire for her music to become another piece of product on a store's shelves.

Her latest album, "Testimony" is available in Missoula for those unable to wait for her performance in June. Ferron's music speaks to the quieter moments of our lives, and shares feelings that are universal in their appeal. Her rough folk style should be a refreshing change from Missoula's standard concert fare. Tickets are available at the Women's Resource Center, for six dollars.

Winter In The Blood

"Our inventive, up-to-the-minute, wealthy democracy makes new tests of the human spirit. Our very instruments of education, of information and of "progress" make it harder every day for us to keep our bearings in the larger universe, in the stream of history and in the whole world of people who feel strong ties to their past. A new price of our American standard of living is our imprisonment in the present."

Daniel J. Boorstin

"Maybe that was the difference between robots and humans. Viva la Difference!"

Kilgore Trout



Missoula was graced with a local production of an adaptation of some regional literature. The University of Montana Drama Department's *Winter in the Blood* is a thought-provoking, sobering tragedy with stark realism and valid social commentary. The play portrays a young native American man in Eastern Montana. His story and his awakening consciousness to the extent of his reality is effective in that it affords the audience insight in that reality. The play tells of the social, emotional and spiritual problems stemming from the American Indian's ancestral past getting lost in modern culture.

Winter in the Blood recreates the story and tone of James Welch's book. The action and dialog translates well into the screenplay. Excellent casting and creative use of the small stage brought to intimate life the world of these Highline reservation Indians. Be ready for rough language and mature topics because it is a story about a people with a tough, hard life. It

exposes the audience to a lifestyle a bit less than upbeat, sometimes all too foreign, yet one that is found routinely in the average antics of some of Montana's bars.

Drama is well-suited for expressing the state of the world as it is. This play offers a perception into another culture, the non-biological system people use to cope with their environment. There is a wary message buried in the play of what one generation can transfer or reinforce in the next. Collective action is a necessity for a culture to survive the great assimilation of America.

Winter in the Blood will be shown two more evenings in coordination with the Kyi-Yo Conference in Missoula on the last weekend in April. I encourage anyone who missed the first showings to see the play. It is a worthwhile show with a good story. Certainly it is some of the most original and thoroughly realistic play Missoula has seen in awhile.

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