

# Silver Bow County



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*Photo taken from the Granite Mountain Mine Memorial in uptown Butte, by Kellie Kahtani.*

Located in Southwest Montana along the Continental Divide in the Rocky Mountains, you will find the “Richest Hill on Earth.” Known for its vast history as a mining town, rich in its Irish heritage, and recognized by the “Our Lady of the Rockies” statue and the Berkley Pit, Silver Bow County is unique in many ways. It is one of two counties with a combined city-county government and is run by an elected Chief Executive and 12 county commissioners. There is a county population of 34,400 with a land area of just over 718 square miles, making it the smallest county in Montana. The county’s economy is driven by health care, education, and mining, with St. James Healthcare and NorthWestern Energy being the top employers. The MSU Extension office is staffed by Family, Consumer Science and 4-H Youth Development Agent Kellie Kahtani, and SNAP-Educator Abbie Phillip.

## 4-H Members Recognized for Accomplishments at Project Assessment Days

The Butte-Silver Bow County Fair was officially cancelled in May 2020, but that didn’t stop the 4-H program from showcasing the talents and accomplishments of dedicated members. The county 4-H council, livestock committee, dedicated volunteers,

and the MSU Extension agent worked together, with approval from the BSB Health Department, to bring an in-person event to highlight what the members completed this year in 4-H. Leaders held virtual meetings until we were able to meet in small groups to prepare members in their projects, and the hard work showed at the Project Assessment Days.

With social distancing and sanitation being key to holding the event, the schedule for judging was spread out throughout the last week of July. The horse show kicked off the event on a Friday afternoon, with animal projects scheduled through the weekend, finalizing the animals on Monday night with the 4-H Market Sale. Due to the amazing support of our businesses and residents of Butte-Silver Bow, our members had a very successful market sale. Our talented indoor project members showcased their completed projects and participated in interviews with community judges from Sunday through Wednesday. Members and parents liked the new schedule, spreading out the judging, citing less stress and congestion from previous years of having all the judging take place in one evening.

Overall, thirty-nine members of the 4-H program exhibited 120 indoor projects, 35 market animals, and 32 breeding animals and horses.

## Silver Bow County 4-H Focuses on Health and Wellness

As Silver Bow County schools opened this fall, there was a void in activity for students. With the backing of the Silver Bow County 4-H Council, an afterschool health and wellness program was started. Members of the county 4-H program could meet after school Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in September and October to learn about nutrition, fitness, and the game of soccer at the Copper Mountain Park in Butte. Being outdoors, we were able to social distance and add an exercise program into our weekly routine. Each day started with a healthy snack and time to warm up on the playground at the park, followed by an hour of organized fitness activities, and ending with time to cool down and work on homework. Tuesdays and Thursdays, the organized fitness activity was learning the rules, practicing drills, and playing the game. Wednesday's organized lessons were focused on healthy eating and activities from the "Lifetime Fitness and Health Decisions" 4-H curriculum. Members learned the importance of moving for 60 minutes each day and partnering healthy eating with exercise, all while being outside and being able to socialize with their peers and have fun. During this 2-month program, members increased their knowledge of types of play and how to incorporate exercise into their daily routines. They also were able to increase their ball control through the use of drills and organized play in soccer.



**Top:** Hailey interviewing for her baking project at the Project Assessment Days, by Kellie Kahtani; **Bottom:** Hallie, Karissa, Cooper, and Colin participating in the end of day soccer game during the afterschool healthy living program, by RuthAnne Shope

## Silver Bow County Staff



Montana State University Extension is an ADA/EO/AA Veteran's Preference Employer and provider of educational outreach.

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