

Wibaux County

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A beautiful fall day of rural America by Danielle Harper.

Wibaux County is a small, rural, agricultural county composed of 890 square miles providing homes to roughly 1,100 residents. The major industries include farming and ranching, and some oil production on the county borders. Currently 75 percent of Wibaux County acreage is farm and ranch production. Cover crops and pulse crops have been on the rise in production popularity in Wibaux County with a large majority of producers being beef cow/calf operators as well. Hunting small game is popular in Wibaux County along with fishing in the well-known Beaver Creek. Wibaux County has a very strong and supportive community, since the town of Wibaux is the sole town of the county. A variety of successful MSU Extension programs have taken place in the community this past year. Highlighted is the Strong People Exercise Program, the afterschool 4-H Cloverbuds Program and the partnership with the County Weed Department on local weed control.

4-H Cloverbuds afterschool program reaches record high participants

The Wibaux County 4-H Cloverbuds program is uniquely designed to be an after-school program offered January to

May with 10 classes. The 4-H Cloverbuds are 4-H members aged 6-8 (grades K-3). The youth enrolled in the Cloverbuds program experience activities in a non-competitive setting. The program is designed to introduce youth to the many different opportunities 4-H has to offer and to help members decide the projects they are interested in when they reach the age of nine and can become a full 4-H member. Each year, the Wibaux Cloverbuds program chooses a theme that incorporates 4-H skills, projects, knowledge, and interest, into a fun interactive and educational activity. In 2019, the Cloverbuds traveled the globe collecting passport stamps and learning about different countries and cultures. Each of the 10 lessons was themed around a different country with guest speakers, learning how to say please and thank you in a foreign language, and trying new foods from each country.

This year, the National 4-H theme is Opportunity4All. The Cloverbuds learned all about the endless opportunities 4-H provides, especially highlighting the International Program for Young Adults that 4-H members can take advantage of as senior members. After the Cloverbuds “visited” each country in their 4-H Passport book, they told how they wanted to visit a new country and why. This year was the first year the number of participants had to be capped at 30 students due to space

and supplies. The Cloverbuds were split into two groups; group #1 first-years, group #2 second- and third-year members. The difference between the two groups demonstrated the positive impact 4-H has on its youngest members who are growing through the Cloverbuds program. The experiences and lifelong lessons learned, even as a Cloverbud, are truly an excellent testimony to the 4-H program.

Strong People Strength Training Program

The Strong People Strength Training Program is a class designed for adults 50 and older, who want to stay fit, strong, and healthy. The Strong People Program was offered in several local communities across Montana in 2019. The 12-week program focuses on providing participants an increase in joint flexibility, muscle strength, balance, and overall well-being, in a social, fun, and supportive environment. 2019 was the first year the Strong People program was offered in Wibaux County, but surely will not be the last. The community interest in this program has extended opportunities with offering Adult Education classes at the local schools, along with community-wide classes throughout the winter. Wibaux’s first class had 28 community members over the age of 50 participating. Strong People participants reported the following impacts: 95% felt stronger; 89% improved balance; 85% moved more free & easy; 85% increased stamina; 83% strengthened social ties; 77% felt less stressed.



Top: The first year Cloverbuds group had fun being leprechauns and learning about Ireland, by Danielle Harper; **Bottom:** Strong People living healthy lives, by Danielle Harper

Wibaux County Staff



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