

Editorial: Pie auction buys more than dessert

Why would someone buy a pie for \$500 when they could easily buy one at Costco for less than \$10? The answer is not to sound ridiculous. The answer is because it's for a great cause.

The annual Ophir School Pie Auction has recently taken place and over the years has become a growing tradition over the nearly quarter of a century in the Big Sky community. This year's Pie Auction marked the 23rd annual fundraiser helping finance the school's programs and activities. This year the Pie Auction raised a whopping \$18,500, a record breaking amount of which proceeds will help purchase athletic equipment, computer software, books, field trips, and art and music supplies, all benefiting Ophir students and not available without the funds raised at the annual event.

Auctioning off pies wasn't the only thing that raised money at the largest fundraiser of the year for Ophir School Council. There was a silent auction, raffle prizes, and attendees were entertained with a skit by Ophir's teachers.

As students, we are very grateful of Ophir School Council (OSC) to hold such a wonderful event that raises not only money, but opportunities for our future. As children, we used to wonder why our parents and people in the community would spend over \$500 on a pie that would be eaten by the next day. Now as young adults, we know the real reason.

Ophir celebrates National Children's Book week

Who Wrote this
The Miner Times

Some schools celebrate spirit week, and others have pep-rally, Ophir celebrates these weeks too, but in addition to this, Ophir celebrates national Children's Book week. Kathy House, the founder of Ophir's book week explains that, "I love Book week because it is important to focus on reading and books."

We start off the week on Monday when it's "Hats off to Books" day. We honor our favorite books by wearing our most creative/favorite hats. On Tuesday, we celebrate "sock it to books," wearing our craziest socks. Wednesday we "pair up with a good book," this is matching twin day. On Thursday we "Get wild about books" today, its crazy hair day. At the end of the week, we top it all off with Ophir's

favorite day, "cuddle up with a good book," P.J. day.

Along with all of these fun days, the students also have a book mark contest for the book fair at the end of the week. Each year they include a catchy slogan. This year's slogan was Get week. Kathy House, the founder of Ophir's book week explains that, "I love Book week because it is important to focus on reading and books."

In addition to the book marks and fun days, each class decorates their classroom door with their favorite book. "The door contest is wonderful, because you get to see each of the different opinions from the grade levels, and all of the kids' imaginations."

Book week does not only honor all of the great authors, or our freedom to read what we choose, but it also focuses on encouraging kids to read.

Local talent shines in Christmas tradition

Hunter Anderson
The Miner Times

What would make a dancer practice for seventy hours and do only two 1 _ hour performances? Well that is what we are going to find out. In this magical story Clara's Uncle Drossimier gives her a Nutcracker for Christmas. When she falls asleep she has a nightmare about her Nutcracker becoming life-size and fighting a battle against the Rat King and his Evil mice. After the Nutcracker wins the battle he takes Clara away to the Land of Sweets where she sees snowflakes and angel doing a beautiful dance. Soon she is watching Russian, Spanish, and

Chinese doing a lively jig for her. All of a sudden out pops Mother Ginger and her little Ginger Children skipping merrily. The beautiful flowers come and do a waltz. When its time to go Clara and her Nutcracker are waved away by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her Caviler. That is why a dancer would practice for so long to bring joy to people of all ages.

The Nutcracker isn't an easy performance to put on; it takes choreographers, teachers, dancers, a stage crew, and also a lot of volunteers. People from different places in Montana come to see Montana Ballets Nutcracker. There are months of practicing and perfecting to make the show outstanding, and

every year the show gets bigger and better.

"It takes a lot of hard work and a lot of time but when you look out and see the audience and dance your best its all worth it." Said Heather Bing an Ophir student, who danced in the Nutcracker. As you can tell it takes up a lot of a dancer's time but they still love doing it. "A lot of people underestimate dancers but if everybody knew how much time we put into the Nutcracker they'd be sure to think different." Said Hunter Anderson an Ophir student, who was in the Nutcracker. For years families have been going to the Nutcracker as a tradition, and maybe you should make the Nutcracker a tradition too.

School puts finishing touches on Crail Creek Trail

JJ Bishop and Tyler Johnsen
The Miner Times

The eighth grade class at Ophir School is putting the finishing touches on the Crail Creek Trail that is located on the west side of the golf course. The trail is finished, but the trail signs are still being produced. The signs will tell things such as what type of trees and plant life are in the environment as well as the rules of the trail.

The trail will be a hiking and biking trail only and no motorized vehicles will be allowed. All dogs must be kept on a

leash and pet owners will be required to clean up after their dogs.

Local resident and trail user Lori Bishop says that "The trail is a great way to walk your dog or little kids without having to worry about cars. The Trail is a great addition to the community and a safer way to walk and get exercise." The trail should be finished in the spring when all the trail signs get put up. Ophir school teacher Alec Nisbet also believes that the trail is a great addition to the community and a great place to walk. Also, he says that, "the trail will be a great place to walk

because of the change in the environment." Student Hunter Anderson believes that the trail benefits the community "because the trail isn't to long and isn't to short allowing for a good walk but not to strenuous of a walk."

At the beginning and end of the trail there is a place to get plastic bags so that you can clean up after your dog. When using the trail please respect the wildlife and watch for golf balls. Clean up after yourself and throw away your trash. Remember to look for the trail signs next summer when walking or riding on the trail!

The Miner Times

We'll put everyone's name in here

Resort Tax Funds Big Sky Skate Park

Who Wrote this
The Miner Times

In the spring of 2001, a few local boys, Ian Whorrall, Mike Cyr, Chris Schwalbe, and Brent Mach were skateboarding at the Blue Mall. They were having a good time, when one of the owners came out and said that they could not skateboard there anymore. One of the boys said, "I wish we had somewhere to skateboard like a skate park."

The next day at school they asked their P.E./Tech teacher Mike Coon and Brian Wheeler, if they would bring up the idea of a skate park at the next resort tax meeting. Mike Coon came back from the meeting and said it didn't look good. The boys didn't give up. They decided to go to the next resort meeting. In the end, the resort tax board decided to give the

boys 15,000 dollars to use for a skate park to go to the Big Sky Park by the baseball field. Until they can get a slab of cement the boys were given \$8,000 dollars to buy ramps and rails for temporary use. Until next summer, all of this equipment is stored down at the Ophir School's outside basketball court.

"The skate park construction project will begin in the spring of 2002. The first phase will be completed by the end of the summer." Said Mike Coon

"The skate park will be good for every one in Big Sky, because all the skaters will not be skating in the street, and we will have a place to be," said Ian Whorrall from Ophir School.

With a lot of hard work and high expectations, local skateboarders are on their way to making their dream become a reality.

Teacher makes a difference

Who Wrote this
The Miner Times

Mr. Coon, a very unique teacher, who thinks that Ophir School is haunted, loves to run, and teaches so many things, makes us wonder how he keeps it all together. He is a very well rounded teacher, and likes us all for different reasons.

Mr. Coon is from Miles City, Montana. He went to Montana State University. He did his student teaching with Mr. Nisbet. Mr. Coon taught technology at Monforton, and is now with Ophir School. He has also trained our teachers how to use their computers more efficiently.

Currently, Mr. Coon is teaching math classes, technology, physical education, and sixth grade science (The Jason Project). In technology, the eighth graders are doing a school newspaper that will become part of the

Lone Peak Lookout. "The newspaper is a great thing and I am glad to be a part of it," said Heather Bing, Ophir School Student Council president. In physical education, we run about two miles for one day and the other days we do a fun activity. The most common quote we hear from Mr. Coon is, "We are running today! It's only two miles!!". The sixth graders are doing the Jason Project for their science requirement. The Jason Project is about studying different parts of the world. This year the sixth graders are doing the Arctic and Antarctica.

And if that's not enough, he is also Ophir School's athletic director. Having this job makes him responsible for our entire athletic program. He is involved with coaching girls and boys basketball,

see Coon page 4

Heather Bing

The Miner Times

Imagine finding yourself 30 feet above the ground holding on to nothing but a sliver of rock. As you hang there your hands covered with sweat, you manage to find one last bit of courage and pull yourself to safety!

In the new Geysers Whitewater building next to bucks T-4. There is a climbing wall, a vertical, composite rock wall approximately 15 feet wide and 30 feet tall.

Over the last couple of weeks, Ophir Middle School had the opportunity to visit the Geysers climbing wall. Mr. Coon took advantage of expanding Ophir's Physical Education program. "I did this because the students will have fun and get exercise along with it," exclaims Mr. Coon.

"We had a great time yet a great workout as well," Said 8th grade student Kelly Ryan. "It was scary at the top because there were not many things to hang on to!" declared Meranda Smith. "This experience was physically challenging

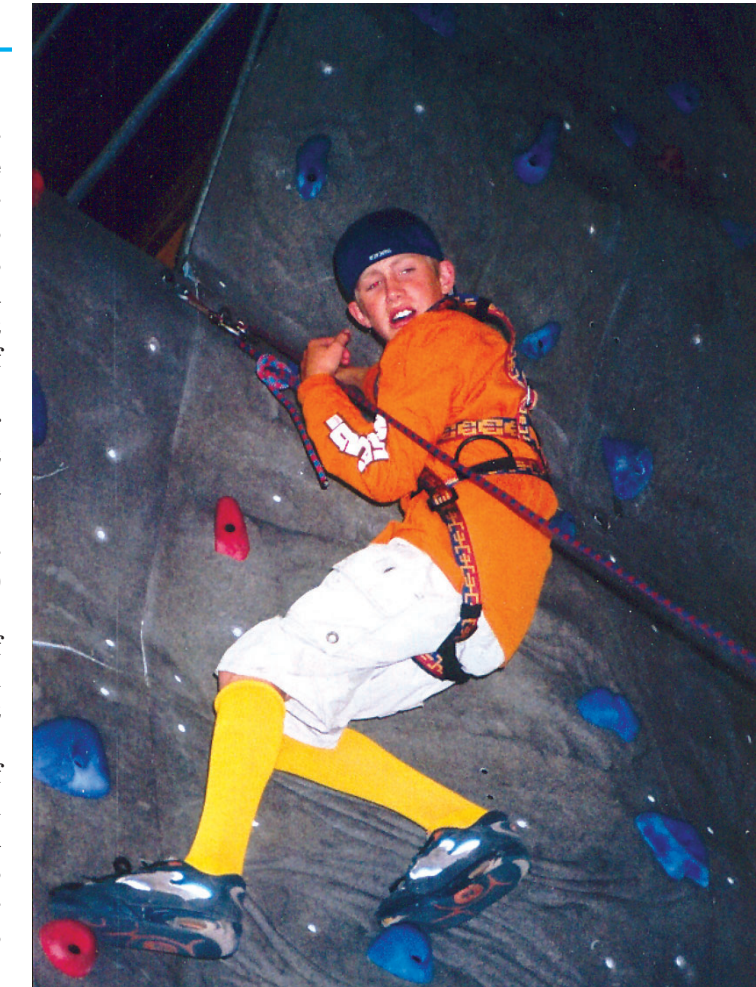


Photo by

and fun was had by all." commented Hunter Anderson. Ophir students feel fortunate to have a local business like Geysers that offers such opportuni-

ties. Ophir School Students would like to give a special thanks to Pat Whorrall, Diane Anderson, Beth Cox, Mr. Coon, Ophir Athletics, and Geysers climbing wall!

Ski team attracts local schussers

Who Wrote this
The Miner Times

The Peak of Lone Mountain is white with snow and the Big Sky Ski Team is training for the season. Winter in Big Sky means its time to tune your skis, practice running gates and work hard on conditioning in preparation for the ski racing season. The Big Sky Ski Team contains members of Kelly Ryan, Molly Ryan, Kristi Knaub, Conor Kelleher, Amanda Cox, and Clayton Peacock. For these kids ski team is not just for skiing. It is a time for the chance to make Junior Olympics. For the other kids,

Chase Ryan, Andrew Kircher, Bridget French, Greg and Emily Danza Luke Strand and, Derek Strand a ski team is for fun but also for training and learning.

The Big Sky Ski Education Foundation is a program that teaches kids how to ski different terrain while improving their ski racing skills. The team has members that range from the age of five to sixteen years old with a focus on ski racing, but also learn how to ski better overall.

The team is led by Head Coach Matt Murphy who has been coaching the Big Sky Ski Team for several years and has been involved in competitive ski-

ing for a lifetime. "We have great coaches that are constantly helping you to improve and they make a fun sport even better," said ski team member Kelly Ryan. "They help you to reach any goal you strive for."

The ski team competes in several Junior Olympic qualifying events each year around the state. To become a member of the Big Sky Ski Team or for more information call the BSSEF Secretary Beth Cox at 995-4065.

"The ski team is fun," said ski team member Clayton Peacock. "I have really improved my skiing skills by being a member."