



January 5, 2022



Deni Fitzpatrick: A decade of continuing her education leads her to her dream job.

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Pondera, Toole and Glacier County Elections: Filing begins Jan. 13 See stories inside!



Glacier Reporter

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THE VALIERIAN

GET FIT

Health and wellness center, year-round arbor and Care Center coming to Blackfeet Country

By JOHN MCGILL
Glacier Reporter Editor

A trio of projects is on the horizon in Blackfeet Country as the Tribal Business Council has closed in on directing funds received as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. While other projects are still in the preliminary planning stages, a health and wellness center, a year-round dance arbor at the Indian Days campground and a new Blackfeet Care Center are beginning to take shape.

"This proposed facility has been approved with a \$30 million budget," said architect Michael Gervais of the health and wellness center. "That includes hard costs and soft costs. Depending on construction material costs and interest from and availability of contractors, this facility could potentially be from 50,000 to 60,000 square feet and include aquatics, basketball court (multiple courts with multi purpose use) running track, weight rooms, cardio, commercial kitchen for concessions, offices and other program spaces to be determined."

A Tribal member who was born in Browning, Gervais earned his architectural degree from Montana State University-Bozeman. He has around 30 years of profes-

sional experience in his field and is working with the Tribal Council to firm up plans for the projects.

Finding a place to put the new health and wellness center is the main issue at present. It needs to be accessible yet with enough room to house wanted features and programs.

"That's the big question we're waiting on because it will affect the overall design," Gervais said.

Under the rubric of "aquatics" are such possibilities as a pool, waterslide and a "lazy river." The latter has water that circulates, carrying folks on inner tubes around at a leisurely pace. A group of Tribal Council members has toured such facilities to get an idea as to what might be possible.

"The thing is it depends on funding as to how many things we can include and what those things will be, but the Councilmen were really pleased with these three ideas," Gervais said. "We're also looking at exterior features for the summer, like a fountain. The goal is to have a place for people of all ages, from babies to elders."

With exercise equipment set up at the health and wellness center, the Southern Piegan Health Center will be relieved of hav-

Trio of Projects • A5

Don't miss 53rd Booster Club Wrestling Invitational Jan. 7-8



Photo by Paula Andersen

Cut Bank's Jacob Hjartarson works for the takedown at the Shelby Showdown Mixer Dec. 23 in the Shelby High School gym. Hartarson and the Wolves will be in action with 29 other teams at this weekend's Cut Bank Booster Club Invitational.

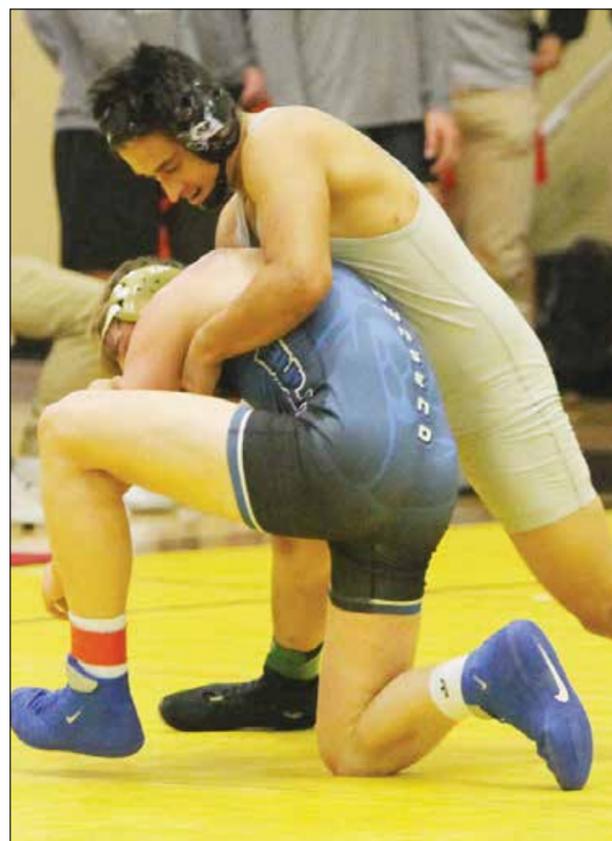
After a year of COVID-19 protocols, the 53rd annual Cut Bank Booster Club Invitational Wrestling Tournament will return to the Willie DeGroot Gymnasium on Jan. 7-8. Organizers are expecting approximately 30 teams, Circle to Superior, to compete in this year's event.

Wrestling will begin at noon on Friday, Jan. 7, and 10 a.m. on Saturday. The final matches are scheduled to start approximately at 2 p.m. on Saturday. The weekend will also feature a junior varsity tournament on Saturday at the H.C. Davis Elementary School Gym. Action will begin at 9 a.m.

Admission for each day's session is \$7 for adults and \$5 for students and allows fans to attend matches at both gyms. Concessions will be available.

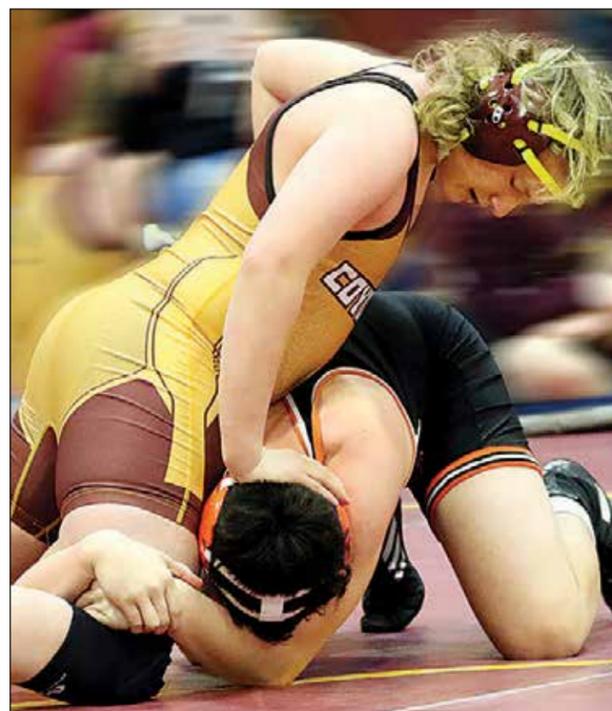
With the addition of girls wrestling in Montana, the tournament will be running a girls' bracketed tournament alongside the boys. The girls' tournament will begin on Friday and may conclude on Friday depending on the number of participants. If possible, the girls' tournament will take place on Friday with awards on Friday night. If the number of participants warrants it, the tournament will continue into Saturday and conclude later that day.

Organizers invite everyone to come out and support the Cut Bank Wolves wrestling team. The tournament is known for the high-quality wrestling it attracts from throughout the state. Several reigning state champions will be competing, including Cut Bank's Austin Vanek and Mariah Wahl.



Photos by Stacey Steele and Mike Bashor

Valier's Joe Ramos, above, and the Valier Panthers and Bryant Mertz, below and, the Shelby Coyotes will join the fray this weekend at the 53rd Cut Bank Booster Club Invitational at the Willie DeGroot Gymnasium.



Photos by Crystal Cole

After 20 years, Fred Greco decided it was time to retire from his job with the State of Montana Job Service. He was promoted to Manager last year. His official retirement day was Dec. 31 but Fred let his office and family throw a retirement party a little early. Pictured with Fred is his wife, Jamie, and son, Brandon.

