

Billings Gazette

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18, 2001

The Source

LOCAL EDITION

Today's briefing

Local

■ **NEW SCHOOL:** Three of the four students who were active protesters at Little Big Horn College decided to drop out of the school, saying the two-month battle for control of the college stripped their trust in tribal government. The students said they would continue their education at Rocky Mountain College. 1B

■ **NEW PLEA:** Ronald Snow, a former Billings man, decided to change his plea on a federal child pornography indictment to guilty. Snow was in the second day of a jury trial when he sent word to Chief U.S. District Judge Jack Shafter that he wanted to withdraw his not guilty plea. 1B

State

■ **SNOWMOBILE POLICY:** A new National Park Service policy that reaches far beyond the snowmobile debate went largely unnoticed last year. Park Service Director Robert Stanton issued a directive clarifying that national parks are to be preserved unimpaired for future generations. 1B

Nation

■ **SUPREME COURT RULING:** Harsh conditions or a lack of treatment behind bars do not justify releasing a sexual predator a state considers too dangerous to society, the Supreme Court ruled Wednesday. The court underscored its position that states can lock up sex offenders after their sentences are over. 2A

■ **CONFIRMATION HEARING:** John Ashcroft pledged Wednesday that as President-elect Bush's attorney general he would not challenge Roe vs. Wade, the landmark 1973 decision that legalized a woman's right to an abortion. 6A

World



The fox won out over the hounds Wednesday as Great Britain's House of Commons voted to ban traditional fox hunts. The 367 to 174 vote brings the long-debated prohibition on fox-hunting a step closer to becoming law, but it may yet languish in the House of Lords. 6A

■ **EL SALVADOR QUAKE:** With relatives homeless and hungry and many villages cut off from the outside world, Salvadorans living in the United States flew home Wednesday to help bury the dead and rebuild their country after a devastating earthquake that killed nearly 700 people. 5A

Weather

Still a flurry
High 31 Low 20
Morning flurries, then turning partly cloudy and windy. 6B

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■ Take a look at what happens on and below the Earth's surface when an earthquake hits.



It's official

Monument status for Breaks, Pompeys Pillar



The Missouri Breaks area given monument status Wednesday includes 160 miles of the Upper Missouri River from Fort Benton downstream to the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. The monument covers about 377,346 acres of federal land, including the Missouri Breaks country north of the river.

Designation prompts a mixed reaction

By CLAIR JOHNSON

Of The Gazette Staff

Noting the legacy of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and seeking to create his own legacy for environmental protection, President Clinton Wednesday designated as national monuments two Montana sites with ties to the historic journey.

He also created monuments in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Montana's new monuments are the Upper Missouri River Breaks in central Montana and Pompeys Pillar, 28 miles east of Billings. Both will continue to be managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

While monument status for Pompeys Pillar received strong support and was welcome news, the designation for the Upper Missouri River Breaks is far more contentious. While environmental groups, conservation organizations and many Montanans support the designation, some groups say monument status would change traditional uses and bring more federal oversight.

The BLM will be putting together planning teams to look at management

Pompeys Pillar east of Billings is a 150-foot sandstone structure that bears the only remaining physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Capt. William Clark carved his initials in the landmark on July 25, 1805.

"Ranchers will wake up tomorrow and find little change."

— Hugo Turck
Coffee Creek farmer/rancher, chairman, Central Montana Resource Advisory Committee

issues like hours of operations, visitor use and recreation boating on the Missouri River, said BLM State Director Mar Milenbach. The planning will also involve the state.

Pompeys Pillar, open during the summer, will be considered for visitors year-round. Milenbach said Pompeys Pillar does not have enough staff to operate year-round.

Recognizing that the Missouri Breaks designation is more controversial, Milenbach said he already has met with some of Gov. Judy Martz's natural resources officials to find a way to work together. There also are interest groups involved with the area.

"If we can all work together to

Please see Monuments, 10A

Clinton promotes Clark, Sacajawea

By LORNA THACKERAY

Of The Gazette Staff

When Capt. Meriwether Lewis accepted the job of leading an expedition to explore the Northwest, fellow Virginian William Clark was his choice as co-commander.

They had served together briefly in the Army in 1795 when Lewis was assigned as an ensign in a company commanded by Clark. During the few months before Clark resigned his commission, the two made an impression on each other.

In tendering the offer of a co-command, Lewis informed Clark that President Jefferson had authorized him to grant Clark a captain's commission. But when Secretary of War Henry Dearborn sent the paperwork, it did not

authorize a second captain — only a lieutenant.

Clark accepted anyway and retained that official rank until Wednesday, when President Clinton officially granted him the captain's rank that Jefferson had promised.

Also, during a White House ceremony attended by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and historian Stephen Ambrose, Clinton commemorated the expedition with posthumous Honorary Sergeant promotions of Sacajawea, the Indian woman who helped the explorers, and York, Clark's slave.

During their three years together, Lewis treated Clark as an equal, not a subordinate, and the talents of the two men complemented each other to make



An artist's conception shows William Clark, Sacajawea and Clark's slave York. Clark was finally promoted to the rank of captain Wednesday and Sacajawea and York were made honorary sergeants.

Please see Clark, 9A

Going green

Will cleaner snowmobiles be the key to averting ban in Yellowstone Park?
Outdoors 1C

LOCAL EDITION

Teacher scrutiny proposed in Senate

By ERIN P. BILLINGS

Gazette Staff Bureau

HELENA — A Missoula senator said Wednesday that privacy rights don't outweigh the need to fingerprint prospective Montana teachers to protect Montana children from abusers.

"This bill has one issue: It's called the safety of children," said Sen. Dale Mahlum, R-Missoula, sponsor of Senate Bill 233.

SB 233, presented by Mahlum to the Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee, would authorize the state superintendent of public instruction to require fingerprinting and background checks of applicants for K-12 school jobs, including teachers and administrators.

The measure also would allow a job applicant's criminal history to be made available to the superintendent, school districts or businesses that provide services to children.

The bill, backed by education groups throughout the state, wouldn't apply to teachers already on school staffs.

Though fingerprinting may only catch a few abusers,

Please see Teachers, 9A

The 2001 Session

Proposal would refine law on child abuse, 2B

For up-to-date news on the session, go to: www.billingsgazette.com

California imposes blackouts

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Pushed over the brink by a hatched experiment with deregulation, California cut off power to hundreds of thousands of people Wednesday in the first rolling blackouts imposed during its electricity crisis.

Lights blinked off about noon in parts of San Francisco, Sacramento and San Jose, as well as other sections of Silicon Valley.

No major problems were reported, but the outages knocked out TV stations, ATMs and traffic lights across the San Francisco Bay area, backing up traffic and forcing college professors to hold class in dimly lit classrooms. Police officers directed traffic and store owners turned to pocket calculators.

The rotating, hourlong blackouts in northern and central parts of the state were halted in the afternoon. A second wave of blackouts in the evening was averted as the power supply met demands. Los Angeles was considered safe because it has its own utility.

Utilities avoided cutting power to essential services such as hospitals and airports. Citing security reasons, they declined to identify exactly which areas lost power.

"If you knew power was out in certain areas, you'd also know that alarms were out and security cameras were out," said Ron Low, spokesman for Pacific Gas & Electric Co., whose territory stretches from Oregon to Bakerfield, 500 miles away.

Please see Power, 9A

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