

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, ending the two-month battle for their trust in tribal government. The other student, who originally would continue their education at Rock Mountain College, IB.

■ **NEW PLEA:** Ronald Snow, a former Billings man, decided to change his plea in his federal trial to a guilty plea instead of a guilty plea. Snow was in the second-day of a jury trial when he went to the judge and told the judge Jack Shanstrom that he wanted to withdraw his not guilty plea. IB.

State

■ **SNOWMOBILE POLICY:** A new National Park Service policy that reaches far into the state's snowmobile debate was largely unaffected last year. Park Service Director Robert Sturm issued a memo last July specifying that national parks are to be preserved unimpaired for future generations. IB.

Nation

■ **SUPERIOR COURT:** A new Harsh conditions or a lack of treatment behind bars is not justifying releasing a sexual predator to society, the Supreme Court ruled yesterday. The court underscored its position that states can lock up sex offenders after they have served their time. 2A.

■ **CONFIRMATION HEARING:** John Ashcroft pleaded Wednesday that as President-elect Bush's attorney general he would not change the vs. Woods. In last month's 1972 election that legalized a woman's right to an abortion, GA.

World

■ **EL SALVADOR QUAKE:** With relatives homeless and hungry and many villages cut off from the outside world, Salvadorean living in the United States are sending money to help bury the dead and rebuild their country after a devastating earthquake that killed nearly 700 people. 8A.

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's below the Earth's surface when an earthquake hits.**

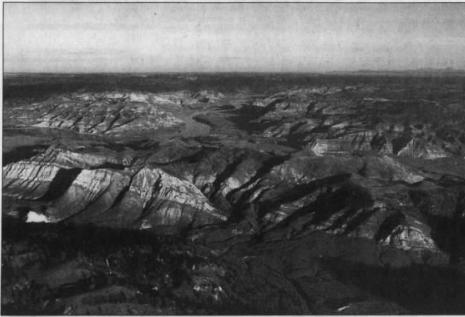
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Going green

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

It's official

Monument status for Breaks, Pompeys Pillar



The Missouri Breaks area given monument status Wednesday includes 149 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 signed Wednesday designated as national monuments two Montana sites with ties to the historic expedition.

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

Montana's two new monuments are the Upper Missouri River Breaks in central Montana and Pompeys Pillar, 28 miles west 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 was less so for some. While environmental groups, conservation organizations and many Montanans support the designation, some groups say more money should be spent on traditional uses and bring more federal oversight.

The BLM will be putting together planning teams to look at management issues like hours of operation, visitor use and recreation boating on the Missouri River, said BLM State Director Mat Millenbach. The planning will also look at the

Pompeys Pillar, open during the summer, will be considered for visitors year-round. Millenbach said Pompeys Pillar does not have enough traditional uses and bring more federal oversight.

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recognizing that the Missouri Breaks designation is more controversial, Millenbach said he already has officially granted him the promotion to captain. Jefferson had promised.

Also known as a White Horse, Clark was promoted to captain by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and historian Stephen Ambrose. Clinton commended the expedition with posthumous Honorary Sergeant promotions to 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 superior, and the two agents of the two men complimented each other to make the paperwork, it did not

Clinton promotes Clark, Sacajawea

By LORNA THACKERY
Of The Gazette Staff

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

The two 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 from the expedition, the two made an impression on each other.

In tendering his offer of a company to Lewis, Clark informed Clark that President Jefferson had instructed him to make 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 became the official rank until Wednesday, when President Clinton officially granted him the promotion to captain.

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.

Teacher scrutiny proposed in Senate

By ERIN P. BILLINGS
Gazette State Bureau

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

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

 **The 2001 Session**

S B 233, introduced by Mahum to the Senate Education and Cultural Resources Committee, would authorize the superintendent of public instruction to require fingerprinting and background checks of applicants for school jobs, including teachers and administrators. The measure also would allow a job applicant's criminal history to be available to the superintendent, school districts or businesses that provide services.

The bill, backed by education groups throughout the state, has been supported by teachers already on school staffs.

Though fingerprinting may only catch a few abusers, Please see Teachers, 9A

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. — Power companies in the state, which had been experimenting with deregulation, California cut off power to hundreds of thousands of people Wednesday in the largest 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 forced people to use candles, ATMs and traffic lights across the San Francisco Bay area, backing up traffic as drivers stopped to hold class in dimly lit classrooms. Police officers directed traffic and some drivers turned to pocket calculators.

The blackouts, hitting blackouts in northern and central parts of the state were halted in the afternoon. A second wave of blackouts in the evening were stopped 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 were cut off.

"If you knew power was out in certain areas, you'd also know that there were out-of-service cameras working," said Ron Low, spokesman for Pacific Gas & Electric Co., whose territory stretches from Oregon to Bakersfield, 300 miles away.

Please see Power, 9A