



"Whitepine Whispers"

News of Whitepine Grange #102

9 Faro Lane, Trout Creek, MT 59874

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May-June 2025



JOIN US FOR MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY, 7PM, MAY 30

Take time this Memorial Day weekend to honor and remember those brave men and women who served our country and now rest in peace at Whitepine Cemetery.

For decades, this moving ceremony has been held at Whitepine Cemetery on the traditional (original) Memorial Day, which is May 30. The ceremony is open to the public and features a color guard, music, a short speech, and the reading of the 160+ names of veterans who rest at Whitepine. It concludes with the playing of "Taps" by a bugler.

In the past, the ceremony has been produced by Whitepine Church. This year the torch is being passed to **Whitepine Grange**, the new sponsor.

Please turn out for a very pleasant evening Friday, May 30, 7pm at Whitepine Cemetery. The event will be held under cover in the building at the rear of the cemetery, and will last about an hour.

See more details about this event on pages 2 and 4.

Hot Springs grad wins Grange scholarship

Nick McAllister of Hot Springs High School is this year's recipient of the Whitepine Grange scholarship award.

Upon graduation, he plans to pursue a degree in Agriculture Technology at Montana State University in Havre.

Three exceptional applicants were in the running for the \$1,000 scholarship this year. The scholarship committee ultimately chose McAllister, who comes from a strong ranching background and plans to pursue a career in professional drone operations for agricultural purposes. He already has his commercial drone certification.

McAllister has a lengthy background in volunteerism and community service. He has been a star athlete throughout his schooling, and is a National Honor Society member. He served as a page in the Montana State Legislature this year, and you may have even seen him at regional rodeos where he's won awards as a team roper.

Congratulations, and best of luck, Nick, from all of us at Whitepine Grange!



Nick McAllister

Passing the torch

Whitepine Grange takes on a new roll in community

By Jan Manning, Whitepine Grangemaster

It was May 30, 2007, when my husband and I first attended the annual Memorial Day ceremony at Whitepine Cemetery. We'd read about it in the Ledger. It coincided with the formal dedication of the Veterans' Memorial there, and was well attended by local dignitaries and Sanders County residents. The pastor who prevailed over the outdoor ceremony was Mary Harker, a small but hardy woman whose voice was WAY too deep and strong to match her petite frame. Mary was pastor at Whitepine Methodist Church, just down the road.



Pastor Mary Harker

Mary Harker made such an impression on us that night that we vowed to attend this ceremony every year. Mary is now departed, but I can still hear her deep, resonant voice delivering a moving message to us about the importance of honoring veterans on that day—and not just those who died on active duty, but all who served and are now gone.

For many years, the church had coordinated with the Whitepine Cemetery Board to present this ceremony, always held on May 30 which Congress had originally called "Memorial Day." Lloyd and Pat Austin, church members, were also on the cemetery board and active in the planning of the Memorial Day service there. Church members volunteered with details.

The most outstanding feature of each year's service was the solemn "Roll Call" reading of names of all veterans who rested at Whitepine Cemetery. That number has grown each year, and the current roll includes more than 160 names.

This year, with Pat Austin's blessing, Whitepine Methodist Church is handing the torch to Whitepine Grange, which will add this important annual event to its community services. The Grange is happy and honored to take on this roll and insure that this event will continue each year without interruption.

If you drive past the cemetery just west of MM36 on Highway 200, you will notice the flags and white crosses posted on all the graves of military veterans at this beautiful site. These flags and crosses are part of the annual observance. They are placed there by community volunteers—this year by Whitepine 4-H members.

Take an hour away from your barbecue on Friday, May 30, and attend the Whitepine Cemetery ceremony. The men and women who rest there with flags on their graves made it possible for you to enjoy those hotdogs, beer and RV trips. **May 30 is about those people.** Honor their memories!



New construction underway!

Thanks to the **Nesbitt Family Foundation** and **AgWest Farm Credit Services**, Whitepine Grange is growing an appendage! These two entities have graciously provided funds for construction of a 12'x12' storage room that will be added to the northeast corner of the Grange building.

Contractor for the project is Matt Braun. John Haakenson, Grange executive committee member, coordinated the project.

The new room will have an access door from the front of the main room. It will accommodate tables, extra chairs, trampolines, plus other exercise equipment and dog training materials. This will clear the main floor of clutter along the walls and will add considerable working space to the room.

"Friends of Whitepine Grange" is a nonprofit organization that has written the grants and coordinated fundraising for virtually all improvements made to the building over the past four years. "Friends" is deeply indebted to the **Nesbitt Family Foundation** and to **AgWest Farm Credit Services** for making these improvements possible!

Air conditioner is coming!!

Exercise classes, dog training classes and other regular events will be carried on through the summer this year, thanks to new air conditioning! Installation will be done early this summer, just in time for the hot weather that normally forces indoor activities to slow down due to heat buildup.

The air conditioning unit and installation are funded in part by a grant from **Montana Blue Cross/Blue Shield**, an organization that realizes the importance of being able to continue fitness classes and other health-related activities without a seasonal break.

The Grange offers two fitness classes called "Joy of Movement" at 9am on Mondays and Thursdays. We have also started a "Beginner Clogging" class that meets on Wednesday evenings. Dog training classes are held on Wednesday mornings. And....we are hoping to host Zumba Gold classes starting very soon! Activities like these would have been unpleasant or impossible in the "old days" (five+ years ago) before the Grange had such amenities as windows and ceiling fans to keep patrons from sweltering. Now, with real A/C, you 'll have a COOL place to work out and no excuses not to do so!

Spring Calendar

Mon., May 12	Joy of Movement, 9am
Tues., May 13	Beginning Clogging, 6pm
Wed., May 14	Rally Dogs practice, 1pm
Fri., May 16	Sew Day
Mon., May 19	Joy of Movement, 9am
Tues., May 20	Beginning Clogging, 6pm
Wed., May 21	Rough & Rowdy Dogs, 10:30am
Wed., May 21	Rally Dogs practice, 1pm
Thurs., May 22	Joy of Movement, 9am
Mon., May 26	Joy of Movement, 10am
Tues., May 27	Grange potluck & program, 6:30pm
Wed., May 28	Rough & Rowdy Dogs, 10:30
Wed., May 28	Rally Dogs practice, 1pm
Thurs., May 29	Joy of Movement, 9am
Fri., May 30	Memorial Day ceremony, 7pm
Mon., June 2	Joy of Movement, 9am
Wed., June 4	Rough & Rowdy Dogs, 10:30
Wed., June 4	Rally Practice, 1pm
Wed., June 4	Beginning Clogging, 6pm
Thurs., June 5	Joy of Movement, 9am
Fri., June 6	Sew Day

Monday thru Friday, June 9-13: Grange closed for Cloverbuds Camp

Mon., June 16:	Joy of Movement, 9am
June 18-25:	Grange closed for private class
Thurs., June 26	Joy of Movement, 9am
Mon., June 30	Joy of Movement, 9am

Whitepine Grange
invites you to a

COMMUNITY POTLUCK

Tues., May 27, 5:30pm

Bring something to share, and bring
your own beverages. Tableware provided.

Program:
"Masterminds Among Us" w/Gene Pope

Whitepine Grange, corner of Hwy 200 & Faro
Lane, between Thompson Falls & Trout Creek,
near MM38.

Memorial Day Ceremony

Whitepine Cemetery

Friday, May 30, 7pm

Sponsored by Whitepine Grange #102

The Program

Presentation of Colors: *American Legion*

"The National Anthem," *Sue Marsh, piano*

Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation, *John Chamblin*

"America the Beautiful," *Sue Marsh, piano*

Thoughts for the Day, *Dianne Hanna*

"God Bless America," *Sue Marsh, piano*

Roll Call, *Don Manning*

Closing Prayer, *John Chamblin*

"Taps," *Tyrell Schweiger*



SFT proves Montana seniors' fitness level is "above average"

Living in the "Last Best Place" provides countless blessings—one of which is a healthy lifestyle and longevity.

The National Senior Fitness Test offered at Whitepine Grange in March proved this to be true. About 60 participants, ages 60 and up, took part in the testing supervised by licensed physical therapist Jim Bittinger and a crew of trained volunteers. The test was offered free of charge to all, thanks to a grant from the **Community Health Alliance** in Missoula.

Our most senior participant was Blanche Williams, 96, who blew away the competition in the arm curl test with a 5-pound dumbbell. Bittinger coached her and lost count of how many reps she did!



Above: Grange volunteer Sue Scott coaches a Senior Fitness Test participant through the "step test."

Left: Blanche Williams does "just one more" arm curl for physical therapist Jim Bittinger.

Highway cleanup is full of surprises—and prizes

Whitepine Grange members picked up litter between MM48 and MM50 of Highway 200 last month, fulfilling their annual "Adopt a Highway" obligation. It was a splendid spring day, and the trash pickers completed the whole two miles in just over one hour.

Helpers included Dave and Deb Oliver, Trena Sanders, Carrie Greene, Kerri Cobb, Bill Beck, Noel Furgiss, and Bill Beck's dog Brandi.



We always hold a contest to see who finds the most unique object in this roadside scavenger hunt. The winner this year was Trena Sanders who found a complete GHOST COSTUME! As an award, Trena received a fly-tying kit, presented to her at the Grange Potluck held the following week.

Dave Oliver, pictured at left, found a shovel, but it was not too functional for large excavation projects.



Trena Sanders with her trashy ghost costume. Trena is our newest Whitepine Grange member!

The Grange:
"Strengthening individuals, families and communities through service, education, nonpartisan grassroots advocacy and agricultural awareness."



From left: Kerri Cobb, Deb Oliver, Dave Oliver, Carrie Greene, Trena Sanders, Noel Furgiss and Bill Beck.

Community Potluck Program to feature local Amazon pioneer



Remember back when Amazon was known as “The World’s Biggest Bookstore”? It operated out of a warehouse in Seattle and sold only books on-line. The staff was miniscule.

Trout Creek resident **Gene Pope** remembers, because he was part of that miniscule staff. Gene was one of the very first people hired by founder Jeff Bezos. Now, many years later, he’s a retired hobby rancher who raises Scottish Highlander cattle on his property in the Whitepine area. He is also a member of Whitepine Grange.

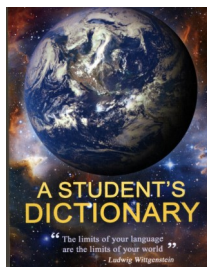
At the Grange’s Community Potluck on Tues., May 27, Gene will talk about his early days at Amazon, but he’ll also address the “masterminds among us” right here in Sanders County. This area is now home to many brilliant leaders in business and science, and most have chosen to retire here because of the quiet, relative solitude where they can escape the rat race and live “normal” lives away from the spotlight.

This fascinating presentation will immediately follow the Community Potluck, which starts at 5:30. The public is invited. Bring a dish if you can...if not, just bring yourself and your own beverages. There is always more than enough good food at a Grange Potluck! Tableware and plates will be provided.



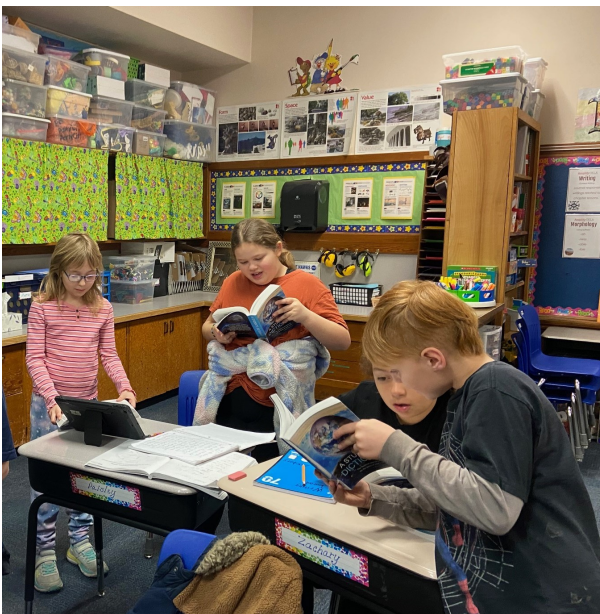
James and J.J. Boyer of Whitepine chow down at last month’s Community Potluck.

Below: Francois Comunetti finds his favorite dish at the potluck feast.



Third-graders delight in dictionaries donated by Whitepine Grange

Third-graders in Thompson Falls, Trout Creek and Noxon got a big surprise recently when Whitepine Grange members delivered dictionaries to each of them as part of the annual “Words for Thirds” project. The Grange has long been one of the principle participants in this national program. Pictured below, Patty English and Debbie Mason introduce enthralled recipients to the many features of this dictionary designed specifically for young learners.



Join Whitepine Grange today!

For yourself, your family, your rural neighbors & community!

MEMBERSHIP TYPES - Check Box

☐ Individual Membership: \$35/year ☐ Family Membership: \$70/year

Name: _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Date of Birth ____/____/____ Phone _____
Email (please print clearly) _____

What are your hobbies? (so we can plan programs of interest to you and maybe utilize your expertise) _____
Signature _____ Date _____

For Family Memberships:

Spouse/Partner's Name _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Date of Birth ____/____/____ Phone _____
Email (please print clearly) _____
Children:

Date of Birth ____/____/____

Date of Birth ____/____/____

Date of Birth ____/____/____

Date of Birth ____/____/____

Seven winning reasons to join Whitepine Grange:

- Build a support network with your rural neighbors.
- Great monthly programs on topics of local interest.
- Family friendly activities like potlucks, parties, dances and Bingo.
- Community service projects like highway cleanup, the dictionary program, Family & Friends shut-in outreach, and military care packages.
- Exercise classes for all ages.
- A gathering place for neighbors.
- Your membership dollars help pay for upgrades and maintenance for this historic building. Whitepine Grange was chartered in 1938. The building was constructed in 1961. In 2023 the Grange is still going strong! Join Whitepine Grange #102 and become part of its long, wonderful story!



Please make checks to "Whitepine Grange #102"
Return this form, with payment, to any Whitepine Grange officer, or mail to:

Whitepine Grange #102
PO Box 1313
Trout Creek, MT 59874