

MSU captains share brotherly bond heading to FCS title.

SPORTS, B1



Grizzlies have expanded their overall range in Montana.

OUTDOORS, B10

WINCO COMING TO BUTTE  
GROCERY CHAIN  
CONFIRMS RUMOR



TOM BAUER/MISSOULIAN

WinCo Foods opened its Missoula store in 2021 in the former Shopko building on Reserve Street.

Details sparse on when store will move into Butte Plaze Mall site

**MONTANA STANDARD**  
Rumors of WinCo coming to town have been circulating for months but there had been no confirmation until Tuesday. An email from Noah Fleischer, WinCo’s director of corporate communications, confirmed those rumors were true. “WinCo is still in the design stage for the store,” he said, “so we do not yet have a target opening date.” Until late Tuesday afternoon, there was no such announcement

from the company, but records filed on cadastral with the State of Montana revealed the grocery store chain had plans to come to Butte. However, county officials remained tight-lipped. Butte-Silver Bow Chief Executive J.P. Gallagher said while no official announcement had been made, he confirmed the company had filed official permits to build on 9.6 acres at the site of the old Butte Plaza Mall. “We are pretty confident they’re coming,” Gallagher said, “but they

have not officially announced that they are building in Butte yet.” Darren Dickerhoof told The Montana Standard in June he wasn’t ready to disclose the name of the grocery store chain that’s coming but said it will likely purchase its parcel soon so work can begin. “The grocer still doesn’t want me to talk about who they are yet,” said Dickerhoof, indicating it should be soon.

Please see WINCO, Page A2

Customs delays put rink on ice

Anaconda will have to wait a year for skating surface

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A key component of the chiller system designed to keep ice on Kennedy Common during the winter got hung up in customs as an import from Italy. As a result, the recreation staff for Anaconda-Deer Lodge County will stick this winter to the traditional flooding of the common to facilitate skating. Joe Ungaretti, director of the city-county’s recreation department, said the mat portion of the system got stopped in customs. The related delay has pushed completion of the chiller system back several months. Crews had installed all the necessary infrastructure to provide glycol to the mat when the time is right. “We got everything in for next winter,” Ungaretti said. Commissioners in Anaconda-Deer Lodge County voted unanimously in June to allocate a portion of a \$2.75 million tourism grant awarded in 2024, and disbursed over five years, to outfit Kennedy Common with the infrastructure, both below ground and above, to ensure ice remains intact for a season stretching roughly from November to late February. The grant came from the Montana Department of Commerce. Commissioners awarded the ice rink contract to Chill Skate/Universal Rinks. It will cost about \$1.03 million. The ice mats will sit on the surface and transform water into ice. The mats will be removed when the season ends. Ungaretti said the chiller unit will be located on a trailer and the rink’s shape will be circular, ringing around the tree at the center of the common. The Kennedy Common project is part of a regional effort to increase winter tourism.

LOOKING BACK

Montana Standard reporter’s top stories from 2025

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As 2025 draws to a close, Montana Standard reporters reflect on coverage that unfolded throughout the year. Reporter Tracy Thornton covers various topics for The Standard, including business, history and features. Thornton discusses her top stories from the year here:

Rumbles in the Rockies: Montana’s seismic record begins with ‘mysterious’ 1868 quake

It may seem insignificant to most, but a discovery was made while researching the history of Montana earthquakes. Oct. 18 marked the 90th anniversary of a devastating earthquake that hit Helena and was felt across many parts of Montana. While many Montanans knew of the Aug. 17, 1959, earthquake near Hebgen Lake, many had not heard of the 1935 quake. Hence the story.

It also got me thinking about the history of Montana quakes and through some pretty extensive research, I discovered the earliest newspaper account of a quake was not, according to AI and other previous publications, May 22, 1869. Thanks to newspapers.com, it was Jan. 16, 1868, with an account of the tremor appearing in the *Helena Semi-Weekly Herald*. On a lighter note, it was fun to learn that Montanans would also argue over who had the stronger quake or question whether a quake had occurred at all. Particularly during Montana’s infancy, newspapers, particularly in Butte and Helena, had no problem taking jabs at any of its competitors when reporting on these tremors. In 1973, the Butte Bulldog’s biggest rival wasn’t a team — it was measles In the first few months of 2025, the debate over the validity of the measles vaccine was prominently featured in local and

nationwide news outlets. Combining history and present-day data, I wrote a story about the 1973 Butte High Bulldogs, a basketball team competing in the State AA tourney in Missoula. Several team members came down with the measles, were quickly quarantined and then sent home. I combined their story with the most recent data shared by the CDC and Butte’s health director. ‘A huge part of our identity’: Beara visitor views Butte as a second home There’s a good reason why Butte was nicknamed Ireland’s Fifth Province. The mining town’s largest immigrant population came from Ireland. The ties that bind Butte to Ireland’s Beara Peninsula remain particularly steadfast. Which is why, in May, more than 50 people from Beara descended on Butte, including



PROVIDED

During his visit to Butte, Wayne O Sullivan Shandon took a walking tour of the Butte Hill. Here he is standing outside the Original Mine, located directly across the street from the old St. Mary’s Church on North Main Street.

Please see TOP STORIES, Page A2

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Opinion	A6
Sports	B1
Outdoors	B10
Classified	B12
Comics	D3

