

BREAKFAST EXCHANGE CLUB

BECON

December 10, 2021

Our breakfast meeting today was again held at the Metra Café. It was a good spread of biscuits and gravy, eggs, and bacon. We must have had a special guest.

The special guest was Bill and Sue Dutcher. Bruce Glennie called today, The Bill Dutcher Appreciation Breakfast. As we all know, Bill is retiring on December 31st after 40 years at the Metra. Bill has been the General Manager for 16 years. In this role and as the Operations manager before that, Bill was a GREAT friend to The Breakfast Exchange Club. He was always in support of what we did and why we did it. More on that later.

Announcements.

12/10 – Bill Dutcher retirement party. We are all invited. This will be held at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center. Time is from 4pm to 7pm.

12/17 – Year End Breakfast meeting. This will be held at the Moose Lodge. 131 Calhoun Lane. Yellowstone Kelly's will be hosting and will have the traditional Mimosa bar. If you have any gift cards to be used as a door prize, please get them to Tony Parish, Rene' Critelli or Bruce.

12/17 – Membership happy hour from 5pm to 7 pm. Location is TBD. Rene' will let us all know when she finds a location. Entre' is sponsoring this event. As someone said during breakfast today, start drinking in the morning and continue right through to Happy hour.

12/18 – Chase Hawks. Signups are open for this event and will close on 12/11.

Bill Kennedy has stepped down from the BEC Foundation board. If you are interested in being appointed to that board, please get your name into Chris Kosine or Bruce. They would like to appoint someone at the next board meeting. So get your name in quick. The next meeting is this upcoming Tuesday.

Guests.

We had several senior members of the BEC in attendance today. I saw Steve Linder, John Eastman, John Clawson, Kevin Davis, and Kent Koolen. All of those guys are 40+ year members. Other 40+-year or very close to it members are Ed Kaufman, Arnie Bejot, Mike Fleming, and Larry Iacopini. If I missed anyone, I sincerely apologize.

Stacy Dresseen gave a big thank you to everyone who helped out or bought trees at the recent Festival of Trees. Dina and Rene' led the effort on the BEC tree. Like was mentioned last week, Tarra Grazley-Pfister purchased the tree and donated portions to two organizations. As was mentioned last week, a large number of Exchange club members (from all area clubs) help out

with this worthy event. Stacy mentioned that the proceeds of the Festival contribute up to 25% of their annual budget.

Program.

This morning the program was to Thank Bill Dutcher for all his hard work at Metra Park. 40 years of good natured and happy service to our community. Several members stood up and roasted Bill a little bit and gave heart felt thanks for all he has done.

Steve Staebler reminded us of the great golf that Bill played at the annual Bejot Open. Bill was famous for his proficiency in playing the famous 14th hole at Pryor Creek. To remind everyone, that hole is used to award the golfer who has the shortest drive. Over the years that Bill played in the Bejot, he was able to win the flag prize on that hole 90% of the time. That is a remarkable achievement. And in fitting fashion, the Bejot Open committee (Steve and Larry) have decided to name the 14th hole after Bill; The Bill Dutcher Short Drive Hole. Bill was also given a bag name tag declaring him as the Short Drive Champion.

Denny Yonts shared a memory of Bill and Sue. Sometime in the past during an event at the Metra where beer was being served, Bill, Sue and Denny posed for a picture. When the picture was published, the caption said Bill Dutcher and Mr. and Mrs, Yonts. So from then on Sue Dutcher was referred by the 3 of them as Denny's wife.

John Eastman gave a nice tribute to Bill. In 1978 when the BEC first gained the right to serve beer at Metra events, the club raised \$500 at a hockey game. Since then over 43 years, we have seen a lot of changes and events. John said Bill was a good thing for Metra but a greater thing for Billings. Altogether through the Metra partnership we have put \$3.5M out into the community.

Dave Staton talked about the respect that all of the Metra board and staff has for Bill. It won't be the same without Bill here.

Bruce Jensen emptied out the Intermountain Distributing trinket cabinet and presented it all to Bill. He gave his heartfelt thank you to Bill on behalf of the club and Intermountain.

Tim Crowley presented Bill with a Kids and Cowboys Belt Buckle. Bill has been instrumental in helping the Kids and Cowboys event grow and prosper throughout the years.

Bruce Glennie echoed all of the same sentiments as listed. He also presented to Bill a plaque thanking him for all that he has done for the club. He also gave him a \$500 gift card as a retirement gift.

Bill Dutcher's turn to speak came up at the end. As we all know, he could have gone on for hours. Since the Cats and Griz are playing in quarterfinal playoff games this weekend, he told us that he is a fan of all of them because he went to 5 different colleges.

Bill talked that relationships matter. And that is how he has gone through life. Once he heard a speech from basketball great Jerry West. Jerry said something to the effect, "If you win at the

people thing, all of the rest falls in line.” That was a profound moment for Bill and he worked to make that happen.

Bill also gave tribute to the BEC members who have passed. He mentioned Bob Bushing and John Wilson as they both worked directly on projects on the Metra park grounds with Bill.

Bill told us about one of the most memorable experiences that he had working with the Club. When Kelly Clarkson came during the Fair one year, she was very sick. She did her best to put on a show but was going to leave at 9:20 on the dot to head home and they wanted to get paid or all hell would break lose. Being a Sunday, Bill did not know how he was going to pay them the balance due. He thought of the BEC and namely Mike Fleming and Ed Kaufman. They got together, collected the necessary funds from our sales, paid off the performer and saved the day. Bill said that is what a good relationship does.

He also told several other stories. It was fun to listen to him as always. Good Luck in retirement Bill and Sue.