

## **BECON 10/6/2023**

Our meeting was kicked off with an invocation from Sheri . This BECON is brought to you by yours truly, Shannon Johnson, and BACON!!

### **Guests:**

Our guest today was Will Robbins (my apologies if that is not spelled correctly), who is a referee for college football, and high school basketball.

### **Announcements:**

Dina said the 3 Rodeos close today, so get on the website and make sure to mark yourself available/unavailable.

Bill Kennedy announced that on November 11, 2023, (Veteran's Day), the American Legion will be hosting a ceremony for our Vets at 10am, and at 11am, taps will be played. Lunch will directly follow that. The VFW is also hosting a luncheon for all Vets at 12pm up at the heights location. Thus, after you Dress a Child, and then have breakfast, your lunch will be served after you support our Vets! It will be a banner day!

Craig announced that the Dress a Child event on November 11, 2023 still has some spots available, so if you want to sign up for that event, let him know or come to breakfast so we can see your smiling face and you can autograph that sign up yourself! The event is going to take place at Wally World (Walmart west end) at 7am. Breakfast will be immediately following.

Craig also wanted to point out, (humbly) that he made the Exchange Magazine cover!! He AND his beautiful wife were featured along with our local celeb Leif Welhaven who was on almost every page. Craig offered to give autographs this morning, so if you weren't at breakfast, you may have missed this rare, one-time event. This is the magazine to keep in your memories box folks!

Craig brought up the new members Jan Green and Ryan Kahn to give them their official certificates from National, and had each of them give a few seconds of an introduction.

He then ordered the group to follow our guests to breakfast, at which point, Bruce Glennie elbowed Steve Solberg to hurry up and get up there since he is still a guest. Much to everyone's happiness and delight...THERE WAS BACON.

Now, on with the regularly scheduled programming:

John Eastman gave a very robust and elegant introduction for Will Robbins. I, on the other hand, am probably the worst person to have been on BECON duty, as there is not one iota of me that is athletic. So I will make apologies in advance for anything I get incorrect or use inaccurately in a sentence. (This is why you need to come to breakfast to hear in person). I

thought the basics of football included catching the ball and running like hell for 50 yards...turns out, there's a heck of a lot more to it. So let's down to brass tacks:

Will Robbins was born and raised in Absarokee, MT. He played football at Montana Tech, has two kids (daughter and son), and has been an official since 1994. He began as an official for college basketball, then in 2003 he did football, then in 2007, he started college football games. His next game is the Idaho/MT game that is upcoming.

Becoming an official isn't for the faint of heart...or those who don't like taking tests. There are a lot of tests that he has to take regularly to keep current on all the rules and regulations, and to keep his knowledge sharp. He takes an online test in June, and then in the fall, the real season starts. And he has to do both online and physical tests.

A typical schedule for him is watching 5-6 hours of film before every game, traveling on fridays to the game, game day is Saturday, then he has a post game report he needs to input by 5pm on Sundays. He is consistently on calls with his own crew, and also with the national group, and those are either biweekly or every 2-3 weeks depending on what is going on.

He takes a weekly test for the conference, and has to be in the game town by 5 pm on friday. Once there, he will watch 1.5-2.5 hours of film with his crew together, and reports to the game 3 hours before kickoff. He meets with the coaches 1.5 hours before kickoff to establish a rapport, and discusses any surprise formations or if they have concerns about their opposing team. He also establishes rapport with the main players (captains, long snappers (?), and the centers. This is how he controls the game - through the center. (That is a player in case you were curious.)

He is the umpire (the guy with the white hat is the Ref), and each of the guys on his team have primary and secondary keys that they keep their eyes on during the games. His primary keys are the center, left guard, left tackle, (and maybe one more I missed); secondary key is the quarterback.

He does 10 games a year, and gets 2 weeks off. He is the only onfield guy from MT anymore in the Big Sky Conference. That is a 9 state stretch. This is his 11th season in Big Sky, and he wants to work 5 more years before he 'calls it.' (See what I did there?) He still does help with high school basketball, and that is just something he loves to do. He also judges other referees to help keep their skills sharp too.

He mentioned something about a transfer portal, and I thought maybe they were talking more about Quidditch now than football, so if I'm mistaken...oh well...I had to look most of the terms up that he mentioned anyway. And I'm happy to report that now I know what the heck the 'line of scrimmage' means (Thank you Tarra). Guess you really do learn something new every day.

\*grins\*