

B.E.C.O.N
October 27, 2023

Sorry to say there was no bacon. Maybe it's a good thing Shannon couldn't make it. 😊

Our only guest was Stoney Field, General Manager of Metra Park.

The invocation was given by Kim Lewis.

Announcements:

1. The Halloween party was hosted by the Social Committee, at The American Legion. It was well attended. The food was great and it was fun to see all us Westerners out and about for an evening.
2. The Grants Committee will meet on 11/7, so watch for an email for the location.
3. Dress-A-Child is scheduled for 11/11 at 7am at the West End Walmart. WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS – SO PLEASE SPREAD THE WORD, BRING A SPOUSE AND TAKE MORE THAN ONE CHILD.
4. Don't forget breakfast for all our Veterans after the Dress-A-Child event.
5. Please consider Dina's suggestion about the district fundraiser. Remember the district supports Youth-of-the-year and the A.C.E.S. Dina is suggesting a holiday shopping event on December 2nd 11am – 2pm. The venue is yet TBD.
6. Dina is collecting items and/or \$\$ for the BEC Festival of Trees Tree. Our theme this year is The Patriotic Nutcracker. So, please keep that in mind while you're out shopping. Again, Dina would be happy to shop for you.
7. A HUGE CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR VERY OWN TIM COWLEY FOR RECEIVING THE NILE'S HERO AWARD, FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO KIDS AND COWBOYS.

Speaker:

John Eastman introduced our speaker, Stoney Field. Stoney mentioned how much he appreciates what we do and how service organizations are very important. He has been a member of the Elks for over 20 years. He came to Billings from Montrose, CO. He grew UP with rodeo and hunter/jumper events and was excited to be a part of building a new facility in Montrose. He mentioned that he was part of improving the equine and rodeo events at that facility.

Stoney mentioned that there are no concerts in the Montrose venue, so the Metra has been a new challenge for him. He gave great kudos to the Metra Park staff and said the team there is great. He said that many of the employees have been there over eight years, and they all work crazy hours. So, he wanted to celebrate them for all their hard work.

His goal for the Metra is to make it a more efficient facility. He wants first and foremost understand where all the money goes and how it's being used for every event. Then he can determine if there are efficiencies to be gained on each event. With this information he can determine if there are improvements to be made to the Metra as a whole.

Stoney explained that every public facility gets subsidies, otherwise they would be owned by a private company. He's not promising to make money, but to improve the efficiency of operations, which will help mitigate the cost. He wants to work on more equine events to serve the local need.

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A question was asked about hockey returning to the Metra. Stoney explained that the equipment has all been taken out of the Metra, except a few pieces of equipment that have been sourced for other events. He said in all honesty he doesn't foresee it coming back, especially not when there is an ice rink just up the hill.

A question was asked about what's happening with the Grandstands. His goal is to have an outdoor arena. He said this would reduce the cost of turning the Metra into an indoor arena. He said with an outdoor arena it could be multi-functional (i.e., rodeo, motor-cross, small concerts, etc.). He said it would help other events to be held at a lower cost.

Someone asked how much money the Metra brings to other businesses in the community. He said it's really hard to tell. There are multiple platforms out there that help to generate data, but there isn't really an exact science to it. He did mention that a program utilizes A.I. to ping phones and it can tell them things like this person went to Scheels first, then to The Roadhouse and then to the Metra. He said currently it's about 30% accurate, but it's this A.I. technology that will help them gather data in the future.