

# **BEC BECON**

## **Friday, May 24, 2024**

### **Guests:**

**Joe Burst, Tyler Bell and our speakers, Bill Dutcher and Prudy Ladd.**

### **Announcements:**

**Our social committee is putting together a fun social for Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:00 pm. Touch base with Tanya to sign up. Location to be announced soon.**

**Our club favorite event, The Bejot Golf Tournament, is scheduled for Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup> at Pryor Creek Golf Course. NO BREAKFAST THAT FRIDAY.**

**Trina gave an update on the foundation. The foundation has been doing very well the last year or two. They were able to grant \$5,000 to Big Brothers and Sisters. She also reminded everyone that the foundation does accept donations if you have any extra bills sitting around waiting for the right organization to come along for a donation.**

**I sent around the FY 24-25 committee volunteer list for sign-ups. It looked fairly pitiful when it came back around. It will make its way around breakfast in June and you can also email me to sign up for committee/s.**

### **Program:**

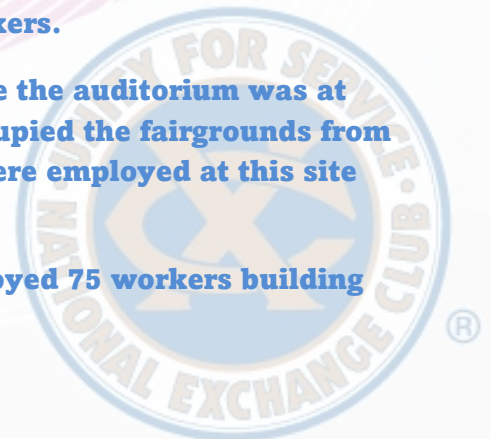
**Bill Dutcher and Purdy Ladd spoke on behalf of the Yellowstone Historical Society. The program was The Dragon Wagon and How it Affected Billings During WW11.**

**There was a lot of “war money” going everywhere except Billings. Billings people were told to write campaigns if they wanted to get anything here which people did.**

**In 1937, the Works Project Administration set their headquarters up in Billings. The M-25 retriever trailer was built downtown by Pointer-Willamette. Pointer-Willamette employed 180 workers.**

**The M-26 Dragon Wagon Cab was assembled where the auditorium was at what is now MetraPark. Pacific Car & Foundry occupied the fairgrounds from October 1937 through August 1945. 550 workers were employed at this site operating two assembly lines.**

**Eaton Metal Works also came to Billings and employed 75 workers building buoys.**



**All of these opportunities were equal opportunity. Men, women and minorities were all employed at all job levels and skill sets.**

**The Foundry was a great supporter of community spirit and paid their employees to participate on sports teams such as baseball and held social events.**

**The E Award at the time was an award for companies who had great community spirit. Pacific Car & Foundry received the award once and Eaton Metal received the award twice.**

**When the war ended, there were celebrations in the streets. However, this meant recovery needed to start since contracts and orders were canceled.**

**Midland Empire started the fair where the Foundry was located in 1946.**

**The next Yellowstone Historical Society meeting is September 20<sup>th</sup> at Hilton Garden Inn. You must RSVP to attend and the dinner is \$28.**

**Have a great four-day weekend!**

**Dina**

Dragon Wagon and Retriever Trailer

