



Next membership meeting

**Jan 15, 7:00pm
Mayflower Church
(Rehberg & Poly)
*Bring a neighbor!***

December 2024 Update

From the Desk of Howard Evans, RNTF Chair

Hello neighbors,

NEED FOR FULL BOARD. The position of Board Secretary remains unfilled and we're still anxious to fill it. RNTF is actively advocating safety changes on Rimrock Road which is a time consuming, intense process. Leslie Cooke is currently spearheading the process along with her other duties as Vice Chair and Secretary, and could use help in the less demanding office of Secretary. Please consider volunteering to help make our neighborhoods safer.

PRESENTERS. The RNTF Board is always looking for meeting presenters. There are many issues of interest to you, our membership, but we need to know of them. Your input is welcome and desired. I have left a “door open” for the Public Works Department to present information regarding the recent water billing problem. Hopefully this issue will be resolved and adequately explained prior to the January meeting. Also of interest is the scope of Riverstone Health’s engagement in the community.

MEETING SCHEDULE. It has been suggested by some task force members that the RNTF meeting night be changed to avoid conflicts with other meetings. We have investigated that possibility and have found that Mayflower Church could accommodate us on Tuesdays. Change is always unsettling, but if we can reach more members a change may be beneficial. We are asking for your input and will include discussion and a membership vote at our next meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2025.

NEWSLETTER. As we continue to improve our Newsletter through the inclusion of local organizations, we have decided to drop the “Drug Corner” and replace it with local health & safety issues from Riverstone Health.

Whatever observance you follow, whether it be Hanuka, Kwanzaa, Christmas or any other celebration, we would like to wish you **Happy Holidays**

Sincerely, Howard Evans, RNTF Chair



Crime Prevention Corner



Project Eyes on the Block

Did you know that our Police Department has a partnership with the public to identify suspects when a crime is being investigated?



**Do you have a security or doorbell camera?
Would you be willing to share video footage with our local Police?**

Here's how it works: Residents or businesses can sign up on the Police website. When a crime has been committed, officers know who in the vicinity of the crime might have video footage.

Police do not have access to your video unless you voluntarily provide it.

To participate, just fill out the [Project Eyes on the Block Sign-up Form](#)



Graphic Design Volunteer needed:

RNTF needs a volunteer with digital graphic design skills to assist with occasional newsletter items, as well as images to use in social media posts. This is especially important as we're working on the Rimrock Corridor Safety Committee! If you have graphic design experience and can volunteer, please email RIMROCKTASKFORCE@GMAIL.COM Thank you!

RIMROCK CORRIDOR



RIMROCK CORRIDOR SAFETY COMMITTEE:

Work continues on gathering data and meeting with local leaders and organizations.

If you know of a local organization that would welcome a presentation on our work, please let us know at rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com

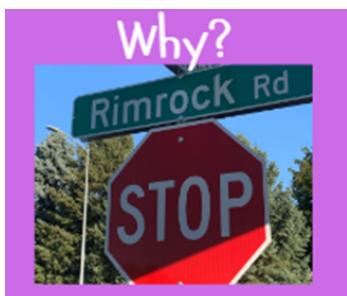
Neighbors -

Let's talk about the **WHY** behind the RIMROCK CORRIDOR SAFETY COMMITTEE....

Rimrock isn't just a busy street. Rimrock is a neighborhood street. Citizens along, above and below Rimrock want a safe place to walk, drive, run and bike.

So let's begin with Rylee's story

Rylee was in an accident in 2023 on Rimrock.



Rylee's story was featured on KTVQ when she wrote a letter thanking the doctors who helped her recover.

Watch the news story here:

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/billings-11-year-old-thanks-st-vincent-s-for-care-following-head-injury>



We are so grateful that Rylee's story ended well. She's now in Middle School and thriving.

Rylee was one of the patients featured at the 2024 All Saints Ball Fundraiser

***Her story starts half way thru this video
@ 3 minutes, 16 seconds:***

[Rylee's Story - video](#)



*Thank you to St Vincent Foundation
for use of this video!*

If you or someone you know has experienced an accident along Rimrock, we'd like to hear what happened, so we are fully equipped to advocate for much-needed safety improvements.

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Rylee's story is one of many  
Let's work to make sure there  
are no more!

You can reach the RIMROCK CORRIDOR SAFETY COMMITTEE by email at:

[rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com](mailto:rimrocktaskforce@gmail.com)

### **Rimrock Corridor Safety Committee's mission statement:**

Given increasing traffic volume, tragic accidents and deaths, and growing concern from residents, the Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force (RNTF) aims to improve pedestrian and traffic safety along Rimrock Road.

In advocating for greater pedestrian and traffic safety, the RNTF created the Rimrock Corridor Safety Committee to work with allies including residents, schools, churches, City Council and administration, School District 2, the Police Department, and other organizations that represent and/or serve people living along the Rimrock corridor.

Our initial focus will include working closely with the City on their master transportation plan to include greater safety measures along Rimrock Road. [Thank you to Jennifer Isern for helping us with our mission statement]



# School District 2 Update

**INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL TAX CREDIT** – The Innovative Educational Tax Credit is a way for Montanans to support their school district and receive a ***dollar for dollar credit on their Montana State Taxes*** (House Bill 408). In 2024, SD2 received \$114,000 in donations through this Innovative Educational Tax Credit!

## Link to info, and to donate

A promotional flyer for the Billings Public Schools Innovative Educational Tax Credit. The top left features the school's logo with a sun and mountains, and the text 'BILLINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS'. The top right has the tagline 'INSPIRE EDUCATE EMPOWER'. The main title 'Innovative Educational Tax Credit - Benefit Education & Students - Save on Your 2025 Montana Tax Bill' is displayed in large, bold, blue and orange text. Below the title, a paragraph explains the tax credit: 'You can make a donation directly to Billings Public Schools & get a **dollar-for-dollar tax credit** on your 2025 state tax bill.' Another paragraph describes the award: 'This dollar-for-dollar tax credit is awarded on a FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE basis. Individuals or corporations can donate to our district's innovative educational programs. This is a great opportunity to have your tax dollars stay locally and work in our community for our students and schools!' To the right is a circular graphic containing a photo of five diverse young children smiling. At the bottom left is a QR code. A blue arrow points right with the text 'LEARN MORE' and a link 'https://tinyurl.com/2wjn4b4h'.

# Code Enforcement Division



## **Buckthorn Grant Update**

**The grant program to fund the removal of buckthorn throughout the city has begun. If you believe you have buckthorn on your property, please contact the Code Enforcement Clerk at 406-237-6146 to be added to the list.**

**A code enforcement officer will inspect the property, verify that it is buckthorn, and then the address will be forwarded to the removal contractor. Please do not contact the contractor directly.**

***The initial grant was for \$25,000; however, we will be applying for additional funds in January 2025.***

***Buckthorn is easier to identify in the winter months, so this will drive removal efforts. Removal will continue as long as there is grant funding.***



## ***Snow Removal***

***Winter is here, and we have had our first snowfall of the season. This is a reminder that sidewalks in front of or adjoining a property need to be cleared within 24 hours of the storm. We appreciate your assistance with keeping our city safe.***

## **Solid Waste - Holiday Schedule**

- City offices will be CLOSED Christmas Day (12/25/24) and New Year's Day (1/1/25)
- Garbage & Cardboard collection will be delayed by 1 day for both holidays, for those with Wed-Fri trash/cardboard collection schedules.
- The Billings Landfill will also be CLOSED both holidays.



**CARDBOARD RECYCLING NOTE:** Please do not include wrapping paper, gift bags, ribbons, bows and all things glittery / glossy / shimmery in your cardboard recycling stack

# Help a Neighbor



**Do you know Rimrock area neighbors who need one-time help for code enforcement issues like snow removal, weed removal, graffiti removal, etc? We can help!**

**Adults, youth, and families are all welcome to participate.  
Text or call Kevin at 406-690-1718 for help, or if you'd like to volunteer.**

## COMMUNITY HEALTH CORNER

## *From our neighbors at Riverstone Health.*



# Alcohol misuse in Yellowstone County



<https://riverstonehealth.org/community-health/substance-misuse/>

**Nearly 1 in 4 Yellowstone County residents reported excessively drinking in 2022.**

Alcohol misuse has a negative impact on individuals, their families, friends and the community.

It includes binge drinking (4 or more drinks per occasion for women, 5 or more drinks per occasion for men), drinking alcohol while pregnant, and alcohol use under age 21.

Nationwide, excessive alcohol use costs \$249 billion each year in healthcare costs, lost productivity, criminal justice costs, and accidents.

One step to avoid excessive alcohol use is to know how much you are drinking by knowing standard drink sizes, and using tools like the “Alculator” to calculate how much alcohol is in your drink.

If you are worried about your own or someone else's alcohol use, resources are available by calling 2-1-1 or going to: <https://findtreatment.gov/>



## **DECEMBER CYBER SECURITY TIP:**

**Brought to you by Anastasia Edwards with BILLINGS, MT - Anti-Scam and Cybersecurity Awareness Public Service Group**  
[Link to her Nextdoor Group with cyber tips](#)

## Who Wants Your Child's Digital Information? The Hidden Players

As your child grows, so does their digital identity – and there are many who want access to it. Ever heard of data brokers? These companies collect, buy, and sell personal information to advertisers and even governments.

They're constantly watching what we do online to build profiles about us.

These profiles influence what ads we see, what services we're offered, and even how we're treated by algorithms.

But here's the thing – most people don't even know this is happening. It's time to be aware of who's after your data and why. <https://bsqsmth.blogspot.com/2024/09/who-wants-your-digital-information.html>

## NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS:

**THANK YOU** 

In November, we collected food and monetary donations for the Education Foundation for Billings Public Schools.

Donations help fund food pantries and back-pack food programs to help students at risk for hunger.

If you missed the meeting, but would like to help out this program, visit their website at:

<https://www.ebps.org/food-insecurity-programs.html>



**At least 500 students regularly use the teen pantries each school year. Donate today to ease the worry of empty stomachs and help students focus on their education.**



## City Council Corner -

Our Task Force area includes parts of both Ward 4 & Ward 1.

To determine your Ward, see the Ward Map on the City's website:

<https://mt-billings3.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/49070/Ward-Map-4-2022>

### City Council Contact Information: EMAIL: [Council@billingsmt.gov](mailto:Council@billingsmt.gov)

210 N. 27th St. ~ Billings, MT 59101 ~ P.O. Box 1178 ~ Billings, MT 59103

Phone (406) 657-8433; Fax (406) 657-8390

Upcoming City Council meetings are posted on the City website:

<https://www.billingsmt.gov/calendar.aspx>

Information on past meetings can be found at: <https://billingsmt.gov/117/Agendas-Minutes>



**Ed Gulick**  
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(406) 698-2747  
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**Kendra Shaw**  
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**Dan Tidswell**  
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### **RNTF Board Position on possible change in funding for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and Transportation Alternatives:**

At the December 9, 2024 City Council meeting, Ward 4 Council Person Scott Aspenlieder brought up the possibility of shifting "Transportation Alternative funds" (primarily for adding trails) over to Safe Routes to School.

Your Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force board supports this potential change in funding for these reasons:

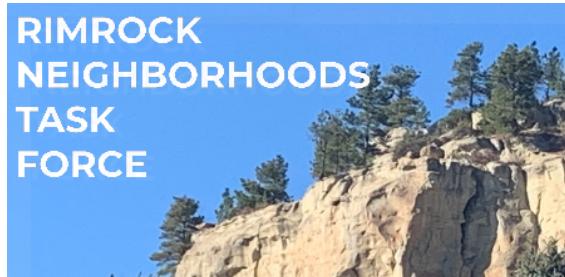
- At this time, the City is not in a position to increase funding for parks maintenance. Since new trails would come under City budget after construction, ongoing maintenance of new trails can not be supported financially at the present time.
- Safe Routes to School needs a boost. There are many SRTS projects that haven't been built out. These projects are essential for the safety of children in our community. Further, it is our belief that more SRTS projects will be needed as the City grows.
- More children utilize sidewalks and crosswalks getting to and from school than use trails. Existing trails are still available for recreational use.
- Trail development can continue using private fundraising and grants for both construction and maintenance. Bringing future trails into our City park system can be reconsidered in the future should the economic situation for the City improve.

RNTF is not anti-trail. However, considering the current economic conditions, we support the prioritization of the safety of children over the expansion of recreational opportunities.

Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force does not politically endorse any current office holder or candidate.

We extend an open invitation for attendance and participation in our task force meetings to all elected officials and candidates.

We appreciate all those who attend and help escalate neighborhood issues.



**In addition to Task Force meetings, you can connect with Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force through email and social media:**



- Follow Rimrock Neighborhoods Task Force on Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/BillingsRNTF>
- Connect to ***Rimrock Taskforce*** on the Next Door app on your smartphone
- EMAIL the task force board: [RimrockTaskforce@gmail.com](mailto:RimrockTaskforce@gmail.com)  
Be sure to include your phone # when emailing the board, in case we need to call you!
- City website:  
<https://www.billingsmt.gov/1730/Rimrock-Neighborhoods-Task-Force>

Links should be click-able, but if your browser doesn't support a direct link, just highlight the website address, then copy and paste into your browser's search bar.