

## BTBC Chairman's Report

By **HARRY BARNES**  
BTBC CHAIRMAN  
For the Glacier Reporter

Trained as an electrician, I had to study a lot of math, algebra and trigonometry. I thought I just had to show up and not get shocked. I thought I left all of that behind in high school and college. Then getting into business I found new challenges in numbers, and my mind was still resistant to all them figures. Everywhere there was numbers. This week I have to share some sobering numbers with you, but I hope you will read it all.

I had the opportunity to testify before the Department of Justice in a government-to-government consultation last month, and the subject was the "Violence Against Women Act." The original law was modified to address the high incidence of violence on Indian Reservations, especially directed towards women. For the first time it also allowed Tribal Courts to have jurisdiction over non-members who commit acts of violence against tribal members. Of course we have to make our court system look like their system.

As I prepared for my testimony I looked for data on our Blackfeet Reservation so I could speak from the local perspective. I was appalled at the numbers! They were not only staggering; they were absolutely scary. One in four Native women can expect to be victims of rape in their lifetime. Compared to other Montana reservations, Blackfeet has a violent crime rate four to five times higher. According to the Montana Crime Board's Annual Report 2005 through 2009 there were 2,214 reported cases of domestic violence, 89 forcible rapes and 36 attempted forcible rapes on the Blackfeet Reservation!

The University of Montana Childhood Trauma Research Center conducted a survey of 7th graders in Browning Schools and found a significantly large percentage of children who showed symptoms of child traumatic stress with additional components for traumatic grief. In the 2007 study of 193 students, 62.2% scored above criterion in violence exposure, and 54.4% were above criterion for the Child Traumatic Stress scale. In a subsequent 2010 Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES), Browning Middle Schoolers scored an average of 14. The National average is four! When acts of violence against Blackfeet women occur, they do not happen in a vacuum. A future generation becomes desensitized to violence and comes to accept it as a natural way of life. Our children all are suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome.

That brings me to my next subject, bullying. Many have said the Browning School District is not doing enough to stop bullying. Why do they allow this to go on? Why haven't they stopped this? I have talked to the Superintendent and several staff members on this very topic. I believe the District is working very hard in an attempt to reduce the incidences of bullying. Countless hours of training have been devoted to staff on this nationwide epidemic.

I also believe it may be beyond the District's ability to completely eliminate bullying. The District has received an Aware Grant (see last week's *Glacier Reporter*) and feel very strongly that this will go a long way in mobilizing the public and providing some tools to combat this plague. Keep in mind how many of our children have been desensitized to violence. This is not a school district problem in Browning or Heart Butte, which faces the same issues. This is a Reservation problem that will require all of us to participate in finding solutions beyond the blame game. I am working with the districts to get resource officers in the schools. Just one piece of a broader solution.

My good friend Father Ed Kohler added a scary statistic to his sermons to try to awake me and others to our problems. (He always struggled just to

keep me awake.) He said 40% of the babies being born at the Blackfeet Community Hospital had drugs in their system. I always thought that was too many.

Visiting with Tim Davis from BCH a week ago he said of 10 babies born in the last two weeks, seven had drugs in their system. I am not a math wizard, but that seems like almost 70%. Drugs and alcohol have become one of our greatest challenges. If we look around the world, wherever there are pockets of intense poverty (certainly we live in one) there are certain things that follow that poverty – drug and alcohol abuse, spousal abuse and child abuse.

We suffer from all of these. Why do the police do nothing

to stop the dealers? Everyone seems to know who they are, but no one wants to help convict. The police do have a big role in the drug problem. But again this is a Reservation problem. The Montana State Patrol will be cross deputizing our Blackfeet Law officers who will be able to ticket non-members. That will give us a little more safety. During the 2009-2013 measuring period there were 33 fatal accidents on the Blackfeet Reservation. Of these at least 30 were drug or alcohol related. We need to come to grips with the numbers.

Each of us as community members, as parents, as grandparents, as uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters and, yes, as cousins, must take owner-

ship of our collective challenges. Every member of Blackfeet Law Enforcement, School District employee, Tribal Council Member and Tribal employee, and IHS employee must own up to our role in a broad based solution. The school district Aware Program aims to educate and bring parents into the loop for solutions. Blackfeet Community Hospital needs help in their "Healthy Women – Healthy Babies" initiative where you can be a part of positive change. And we as leaders must recognize that our role is to empower, engage and support community members to bring about a better future for our young people. They are the ones we will expect to take care of us. Invest in our future.

## Energy Share program offers assistance with heating bills

Energy Share of Montana is accepting applications for emergency heating assistance at Opportunities Inc. in Great Falls, 905 First Avenue North, 761-0310 or 1-800-326-0955. Energy Share is a private non-profit organization established in 1983 to help Montanans who are facing financial difficulties and loss of heat or lights in their home due to circumstances beyond their control. A local volunteer Energy Share Committee works with Opportunities Inc. to review the applications. Energy Share helps people no matter what their heat source, but the assistance is usually only once every 10 years or so because the organization is truly a source of emergency funds, intended to complement government assistance programs but not replace them.

Energy Share helps an average of about 2,500 families per year (over 6,000 individuals). The organizational structure is unique because the applications are reviewed individually,

allowing people in need of help with their energy bills to explain the difficult circumstances they are facing. Situations that compel people to apply for help with their energy bills through Energy Share could include extreme medical issues, unemployment or reduced wages/hours, or a wide range of other issues that create financial difficulty.

The only way Energy Share can provide the individual attention it does to each application is through a cooperative effort. While all of Energy Share's stakeholders are involved at some level, the nuts and bolts of Energy Share "happens" with the 10 Human Resource Development Councils (HRDCs) and the Local Energy Share Committees that each HRDC coordinates. The Committee that covers Cascade, Chouteau, Glacier, Pondera, Teton and Toole Counties is made up of volunteers representing NorthWestern Energy, senior citizens, Sun River Electric

Cooperative, Paris Gibson School, Glacier Electric Cooperative, Cut Bank Gas, Marias River Electric Cooperative, and Energy West. Committees across the state vary as dictated by the specific needs of the community. These Local Committee volunteers donate many hours of time on behalf of the organizations they represent.

Supporting this entire organization is, of course, Energy Share's donors. Utility companies, electric cooperatives, propane vendors, large electric users and individual donors all provide the means by which the mission is accomplished. You can donate online at Energy Share's website, [www.energysharemt.com](http://www.energysharemt.com).

Look for Energy Share donation envelopes or pledge cards in this month's utility bill or, if you're a member of an electric cooperative, in the *Rural Montana* magazine. For more information please visit the website or call the statewide office at 1-888-779-7589.

ATTENTION ALL  
PAST ISSKSIINIIP  
STUDENTS!

Do you need to  
certify OR  
re-certify for a CNA  
or EMR /EMT  
license?

Blackfeet Community College Issksiniip Project will be offering REFRESHER classes for Certified Nursing Assistant & Emergency Medical Responder credentials.

**Dates:**

CNA Refresher 1: November 1, 2, & 8, 9

9 a.m.—6 p.m. (2 weekends)

Refresher 2: December 8, 9, 10, 11

9 a.m.—6 p.m. (weekdays)

**EMR /EMT Refresher Dates:**

December 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17

\*\*\* All classes will be at the RED FOX Building \*\*\*

\* Please bring your books that you received.

RESERVE YOUR SEAT NOW!

Please contact Alicia Yellow Owl at: 338-5441 Ext: 2249



**Blackfeet Community College**  
P.O. Box 819  
Browning, MT 59417-0819

Glacier Community Health Center

### MARKETPLACE HEALTH INSURANCE OPEN HOUSE EVENT

Glacier County Library, 21 1st Ave SE ~ Cut Bank

Friday, Nov. 21 • 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Certified Application Counselors will be on hand to answer all your questions and help you enroll.

Find out your eligibility results for financial assistance, Medicaid, and Healthy MT Kids

Apply for an exemption to avoid non-insured penalty fees

**DOCUMENTS TO BRING WITH YOU**

- Employer and income information for everyone needing coverage (paystubs, taxes, etc)
- Social Security Numbers OR document numbers for legal immigrants
- Tribal ID cards
- [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) login information if you have it

**OPEN ENROLLMENT IS FROM NOV. 15  
THRU FEB. 15. DON'T DELAY!**

Currently enrolled in a Marketplace plan? You must report your income, even if it has not changed.

If you cannot make this open house, or if you have questions, please call Kim Winchell at 406-873-5670 in Cut Bank or Cissy Worth at 406-868-4764 in Browning or go online to [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)

Family Medical  
519 E. Main St  
Cut Bank, MT 59427  
406-873-5670  
877-873-5675



Glacier  
Community Health Center, Inc.

Dental Clinic  
140 S Central Ave  
Cut Bank, MT 59427  
406-873-5222

# SHACK FRIDAY

## Special Hours! Special Prices!

### HOLIDAY HOURS:

Wednesday, November 26 • 9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 27 • CLOSED

Friday, November 28 • 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 29 • 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

*Special Black Friday pricing on  
Nov 28th and Saturday specials, too!*

*Toys, Tablets & More Great Gifts!*



*Come early for the best selection!*

**RadioShack®**  
DEALER



**3 RIVERS**  
COMMUNICATIONS

104 E Central Ave • Browning • 338-2345