

The Wagon Tongue

Volume 8 Issue 4

Madison Valley History Association, Inc.
website: www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org

October 2010

From the Wagon Seat:

Now that summer is over and the museum has closed for the season, it is time to take a breather and reflect on our accomplishments since June. For our first season in our new location, we are pleased with the attendance we have had at our new museum. The statistics for our first season at the new site are given in another article in this newsletter.

Our summer field trips have once again proved to be a favorite event for our members who reside during the summer in the Madison Valley. In July, over 70 people traveled with us up the Varney road to visit the old power plant (now a beautiful residence), the Ennis fish hatchery, the Varney school, and the site of the old Varney post office. In August, Dan Northway from the Yellowstone Mine (Rio Tinto's talc mine) gave us a guided tour of the talc mine and its operation. Over 30 of our members enjoyed this trip and came home with rock and talc samples from this operation.

One of the highlights of the summer was the August 6th "branding party" in which we dedicated the "Walk of Names." A big thank you to all the MVHA board and members who helped in many ways with set up, providing cookies, cooking hamburgers, serving, clean up, branding, coordinating the brands and boards, taking guests through the museum and socializing with guests. People brought their branding irons and branded the boards that were routed with their name or names of loved ones. (Remember, the "Walk of Names" project is still ongoing and if you have not done so yet, there is still the opportunity to purchase a board for yourself or to honor someone who is special to you.) The afternoon concluded with a barbecue and socializing that was enjoyed by all. On August 7th, at the all school reunion, the name was drawn for the quilt that we were raffling off. Robert Hughes, who grew up in the McAllister area and now of Enumclaw, WA, was the lucky recipient of this beautiful work of art.

We have returned to our regular third Thursday of the month afternoon programs at the First Madison Valley Bank. In September, Don Black gave a presentation on the "Women of the Madison" in which he shared some stories about our "founding mothers." As you read this, we will have had our October program "People v. Thomas W. Cover" in which Gary Forney plays the role of Moses Veale, U. S. Attorney for the Montana Territory, as he presents evidence surrounding the death of John Bozeman in 1867. In November, Dave Kelley, a local attorney, will present a program comparing East Coast legal traditions with Western legal traditions and will use interesting local Montana stories to illustrate the differences. Then in December, we will have our annual Christmas pot luck dinner and program.

We have concluded Phase 1 of the Otto Coss-Oscar Angle Forge building. The concrete work is finished and we are ready to begin Phase 2 next spring/summer. We are still seeking donations to help with this project, so as tax season approaches and you find yourself in the position to make a donation, remember, we are a 501 (c) 3 organization and all donations are tax deductible. And if you are around next spring/summer and have some carpentry skills, feel free to volunteer to help us with this construction project. It takes all of our members to keep "the wagons rolling."

Your Wagon Master, Otis Thompson

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History Quilt Raffle During the last two years the Piece Makers of the Madison made a quilt for the MVHA to raffle. You received a picture of this beautiful quilt and raffle tickets in your April 2010 WT. Many members sold many tickets for this quilt and the final tally was \$2103 worth of tickets sold and a profit of \$1620.44 after expenses of color printing, raffle ticket printing, postage and paying for the materials for the quilt. As Otis mentioned above, Robert Hughes, MVHA member and great contributor (see article this issue) won the quilt and the MVHA was pleased that the winner was also a person who has made contributions to our organization. Congratulations Robert! Special thanks to Terry Engel, MVHA member, who took over the quilt project, designed and made a good portion of the quilt, and sold \$115 worth of tickets. She and Dick helped move the quilt from bank, to bank, to Library and to quilt show. Thanks to June Haigh, MVHA member, who built the quilt frame and helped move the quilt. Shirley and Larry Love also were quilt movers. Top ticket sellers selling more than their allotted \$10 worth were Carolyn Tupis, Flo B. Free, Ann White, Betty Hudson, James Nelson, Ethelyn Hanni, Dottie Fossel, Barbara Pate, Mona Durham, Liz Applegate, Mary Ann Silve, Deb Townshend, and Karen Shores. If you were unable to sell tickets and would still like to help out, donations are still being accepted toward the quilt project.

Welcome to Membership The following have joined since the July issue. Please add to any membership list you might be keeping for your committee work. If you need a complete list of members, please contact Shirley Love and she will print a complete, updated list for you. Please send any corrections of name or address to the Wagon Tongue.

Clark, Gayle & Dannette (F)

168 Ennis Lake Rd. 682-4451

Ennis, MT 59729

Daems, Joy (I)

26 Gravely Range Road (682-4838)

Ennis, MT. 59729

(Editors note: Joy actually joined in May but was inadvertently left out of the July Issue. Sorry, Joy)

Gaughran, Kathleen and George (F)

630 Nortontown Rd

Guilford, CT 06437

McClanahan, Dotty & Don (F)

30623 Sea Horse Circle (951-244-7521)

Canyon Lake, CA 92587

Morgan, Harriet & Jerry (F)

P.O. Box 421

Manhattan, MT 59741

Ramsey(Hendricks),Edna(F)

4238 Lillian Hall Lane (407-306-0209)

Orlando, FL 32812

Saunders, Norma & Ray (F)

16206 128th Pl. S. E. (425-226-5188)

Renton, WA 98058-5507

Whitaker (Armitage), Kristin & Family (F)

4161 E. Grandview Circle

Mesa, AZ 85202

Membership Update 2010 memberships are all due, There are memberships still outstanding for Jan.(1), Feb.(3), Mar.(1),April(6), May(1) June (2) July (1), Aug.(2) and Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. and Jan.'11 are now due up to the time of the Jan '11 issue of the Wagon Tongue. Please check your address label on your issue of the Wagon Tongue and you can tell when your membership is due or if you have not purchased it yet. Your membership is good for a full year from the date that you purchased it and you are not penalized for submitting early. Memberships are \$5.00 for students, \$10.00 for individuals, \$15.00 for families, \$50.00 for Businesses and \$100.00 for Patrons. If your membership comes due before the next Jan. '11 Wagon Tongue, you will find a membership application enclosed. If you are inviting a new person to join or want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write out name, mailing address and type of membership and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT. 59729.

The Board of Directors of your Madison Valley History Association appreciates all the memberships that are purchased as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley:)

Memories

The Wagon Tongue has been getting favorable feedback on the memories of our members and long time Madison Valley residents and natives who have passed on. Please help out by sending your stories and memories about deceased members or residents to the Wagon Tongue. Obituaries from the local newspapers will not be reprinted. We are looking for stories that will expand on the deceased lives, genealogy, and contributions, etc. to the history of the Madison Valley. The Madison County Trails and Trials and Progressive Years have helped but not everyone's family history is included there and sometime there are good stories out there that have never been printed. So help out if you have information to share. The Wagon Tongue does not want anyone excluded because of lack of new stories. Please, I need your stories. I do not have much information on some of these folks.

Long time Ennis resident, **Priscilla Smith Overstreet**, better known as "**Smitty**" passed away on July 1, 2010 at the Pioneer Medical Center in Big Timber. She had lived there since November, 2009. Smitty was the original founder of the Madison Valley History Association in 1989 and the one who started the dream of having a history museum in the Madison Valley.

Smitty was born in Melrose, Massachusetts on October 10, 1925, daughter of Frederic and Edythe Kingston Smith. She was a 12th generation American descended from four passengers on the Mayflower. From her ancestry, one can easily see how she had history in her blood. She graduated from high school during WWII and worked for a defense related company for a few years. In 1946 she and her friend, Joann Goff, rode a Greyhound bus West and eventually got jobs in Yellowstone Park. She worked on a dude ranch in Arizona the following winter and returned to Yellowstone Park for the 1947 season. That year she met James W. "Cap" Overstreet, the cowboy of her dreams, and in September 1947, they were married in Bozeman.

The Overstreets moved to the Lichte Ranch, SW of Cameron on Nov. 9, 1947 to feed cattle for Homer Wilson who had bought the Lichte hay. In the spring of 1948 they moved to the Wall Creek Ranger Station where they herded cattle for the Wall Creek Cattle Association, a job that Cap held for 10 summers. In the winters Cap usually broke horses or did other ranch work. They were on the old Flying D for three winters where Cap broke many horses.

Two winters were spent at the old Call Ranch working for Gerry Gerard breaking horses, feeding, calving etc.

Older son, Jim, was born in Bozeman on Dec. 5, 1949 and younger son, Ried, was born in Ennis, May 15, 1952. When Jim started school, they moved to the Indian Creek Ranch, then part of the Sun Ranch, where Cap worked for more than 18 years. He broke horses there, many of which went for polo horses. He also worked with the cattle. *(continued on pg 3)*

Memories continued from page 2

After leaving Indian Creek, the Overstreets moved to Ennis and Jack Creek until buying acreage on Moran Creek from Vi Thexton. They moved into their new home December 1979. This is the home where Smitty lived until she hurt her back in the spring 2009.

While living at the home ranch of the Flying D, which is in Madison County, the Overstreets were snowed in much of the time. They were eight miles from anyone, but did have a phone, One time they were going to town with the team and sled, It was one of those days with clouds and no shadows, just white. They got off the road several times, and then the team just stopped and refused to move. Cap told Smitty to get out with the boys and walk away from the team and sled. Cap cautiously moved the mares sideways until he could turn them around and find the road again. Looking back where they had been, they found that the mares had gotten above the road and on top of a small outcrop of rocks with an 18 to 20 foot drop or cliff.

Smitty was an avid arrowhead hunter and she proudly displayed her collection in the museum and donated her collection to the new MVHA museum where you can now see her collection.

The MVHA and museum continues today thanks to Smitty's constant work over the years. She worked many hours at the two temporary museums--one at Grandma's Overflow on Chowning Street and the second at 121 W. Main in the Wildlife Building. During the last season at 121 W. Main in 2009, she worked all day every Friday all season long, setting a good example for all of the other MVHA members. She was a tireless volunteer and a fantastic historian.

Progressive Years Madison County Vol II pg 765

“Cap”and “SmittyOverstreet by Smitty Overstreet
Madisonian Obituary July 22, 2010

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Long time Madison Valley resident, **Jennie Mae Robison Crumley** passed away July 29, 2010 at her home. Jennie was born On May 31, 1920 in Idaho Falls, Idaho to Heber Alvin and Jennie Bybee Robison. She was raised in the Bone, Idaho area and graduated from Iona High School. Jennie married Bill Richard Crumley on June 25, 1942 in Iona. They lived in the Idaho Falls area until March of 1950 when they moved to McAllister where they raised their family and ranched.

Jennie is the older sister of Max Robison.
Obituary from *Madisonian* August 5, 2010

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Longtime MVHÅ member, **Carol Lee Piper Boyer** passed away Aug. 1, 2010. She was born Mar. 18, 1938 to Theodore Benjamin Piper and Joanne Lee Watkins in Salt Lake City, Utah. Carol Lee's paternal grandparents were Augusta and LD Piper. LD was born in Gillaim, Saline County, Missouri on March 22, 1885, son of Benjamin and Georgia Piper. With his parents in 1894, LD came to the ranch in the Madison Valley known as the Valley Garden Ranch. Her father,

Theodore, was born on the ranch. L.D. was employed by the Montana Power Company during the early development of the power project in the Madison Canyon. He also ran a small farm and her grandmother gave piano lessons to children in the surrounding area and entertained at many social functions.

Carol Lee's maternal grandparents were Andrew Jackson (Jack) Watkins who remained on the home ranch. During his early years as a young man, he was interested in hunting and trapping. He raised Black Angus cattle. He married Ethel May McCormick Winter of Butte, MT. Ethel May started her life in an interesting way, being born on the way from Nebraska to Utah. Jack and Ethel built a most unusual and beautiful log home on the ranch site.

Carol Lee's mother, Joanne, was born Dec. 1918 and married Theodore Piper and later married James Kinsella.

Carol Lee was raised in Ennis and graduated from high school in 1955. She loved music and learned to play piano at her grandparent's home on Ennis Lake. She and her father braved the hard Montana winters to get her to school, often times traversing the frozen Ennis Lake. She married Lloyd Ray Gottlob on Sept 23, 1956 and raised three children in the Ennis area. She married Charles Richard “Dick” Boyer on Jan. 19, 1978 and moved to Bozeman and then Billings in her professional career as office manager in automobile dealerships.

Obituary *Madisonian* Sept. 16, 2010 Progressive Years Madison County Mt II page 768 Robert Davidson. Ruth Juanita Piper by Davidson Piper. Pioneer Trails and Trials .pg 153 LD Piper by Pauline Nelson and pg 197 George S. Watkins Children by Catherine Watkins Carrau

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Longtime Madison Valley resident and MVHA member, **Max Robison**, passed away Sept 6, 2010 at his home North of McAllister. Max was born on Oct. 1, 1925 to Heber and Jennie (Bybee)Robison in Bone, Idaho. He spent his childhood on his father's ranch. When his father sold his ranch, Max remembered that leaving was one of the hardest things that could happen to a boy. He lost his first pony and an easy ride to all the best fishing holes he had ever known. The family moved to Iona, Idaho near Idaho Falls. But to Max town life was not a good life. Seeking something better and at the young age of 15, he followed his brother, Wayne, to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. He learned his work in Wyoming, working for various cattlemen as a rider/ranch hand during the years preceding WWII. He was 17 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. In Oct. 1943 he was inducted into the U.S. Navy. After boot camp, the Navy sent him to Moscow, Idaho to communications school. He served his country in the Pacific as a radioman.

After the war, he returned to Idaho and Wyoming, but he did not stay long. In 1946, he was in Montana working with his brother, (continued pg 4)

Memories continued from page 3

Wayne, on a ranch on North Meadow Creek. In 1947 at a dance in Ennis, Dan Segota introduced Katherine (Kate) Armstrong to Max.

Kate and Max were married on March 28, 1948. After the marriage, they lived in a small house across the creek from Wayne's ranch house. Shortly after their third child was born, they moved to the old Squires place. Max bought two sections of farm and hill land. There the family made a ranch and a home.

In his first years in Montana, Max rodeoed in the Montana Rodeo Association. He was all-around champion in the association in 1953.

Each summer Kate and Max drove their cows and sheep to summer pasture. The sheep were the last large band to graze in the Madison. Max and Kate liked to have friends visit them in the mountain camps where they grazed their sheep and cattle. There was always friends to help celebrate the end of the drive to summer pasture. And in the fall, friends were there to help them with the round-up.

Most of the ranch was planted to alfalfa and grass for winter hay. But Max also planted oats. In the fall the family harvested it with an ancient John Deere binder. They shocked the sweet smelling oat bundles to cure in the autumn sun. When it had cured, they hired Slim Rennawanz and his threshing machine to thresh the grain.

Obituary from *Madisonian* Sept. 9, 2010 and Progressive Years, Madison County, MT II pg 694-696 by Katherine Armstrong Robison

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MVHA Member Robert Hughes has provided the WT a electronic copy of his father's (Thomas Hughes) diary written from Oct. 31, 1904 to early 1906. This diary will be reprinted in this and future issues of the WT. His diary started on Oct. 31, thus the start in the

October issue of the Wagon Tongue.

DAD'S DIARY By: R R (Bob) Hughes, October, 1992

Revised, September, 2001

FOREWORD

The following transcriptions were copied from diaries and records, consisting of two small notebooks, a small black journal, and a loose leaf manuscript (handwritten) left by our Dad (Thomas S Hughes). The diaries and records recorded activities for intermittent periods in his life beginning in 1903 up until the middle of July, 1906. The two small notebooks are a handwritten diary of his trip to California and Arizona with his friend, Army Adams.

Some punctuation has been added but the spelling is his. Due to the dimness and faded condition of the original writing, in lead pencil, some trouble was experienced in correctly deciphering a few words. The pocket sized notebooks in which he wrote are faded and worn but still in good condition considering that they were carried on horseback, freight train, packhorse, etc. Also, they were written 86 or 87

years ago — on the bottom of a frying pan!

The first booklet of the trip diary begins with the Oct 31st entry. He did not enter the year. However, the year is established as being 1904 through a calendar date comparison check and through references to a presidential election (1904) entered in the diary itself. Many thanks to daughter in law, Linda, who (in 1992) typed this manuscript into her computer.

SPECIAL NOTE RE AGE AND DATE OF BIRTH
Some earlier data/records showed Dad's birthday and year as May 15th, 1885. This has to be an error since he was 21 years old in 1905 according to his own diary entry on Monday, May 15, 1905. The correct date of birth is May 15th, 1884.

Diary of Thomas S. Hughes

Trip to California and Arizona

(From October 31, 1904 to early 1906)

PREFACE

DIARY (Notebook 1)

With pencil in hand and the bottom of a frying pan for a writing desk, I now commence a correct and truthful diarrhea (l) of my travels hoping that it will be handed down from generation to generation and that all will derive benefit there of.

My very dear friend Army Adam's and myself, having so arranged our business and so disposed of our running capital that we might leave it for awhile, decide that it has fallen upon us to open up new territories for the extension of the common industry which will result in a great benefit to the whole world in general.

After due deliberation, we, for various reasons decide to employ a pack train as our means of conveyance, knowing full well that the discomforts attached to such a mode of travel and especially in the winter months.

With the strictest possible regard for the veracity of each statement, I will now give each days events. I may add that for reasons best known to ourselves we decided to take a very limited amount of money, resolved to get through as much as possible on our own resources.(1) *Perhaps a deliberate misspelling of the word "diary".*

Oct. 31

We stayed up all night to pack our horses, all bronchos or outlaws.

Leave home 4 a.m. Go about three miles when Nellies pack slips. All kinds of fun at once. Get off to adjust packs and change saddle horses, Annie and Red stand. Nellie gets scared and bucks into them, and by the moonlight we can see them in the distance, going for the hills. By record breaking sprinting they are finally caught and we again get on our way.

About noon Aunt Annie develops a tendency to lean back very gently on the halter so we put her pack on Red and I ride her. This change suits me very much as Red has been trying to buck all morning.

No breakfast or dinner, we have great anticipation for supper. Camp at Wolf Creek. Late and windy. Can't cook so we content ourselves with the "anticipations". Busy day!

(continued on pg 5)

Dad's Diary continued from page 4

Nov 1st

Start late. See big bunch of sage hens. I got four fine "shots". Camp. Good feed but in a lonesome hay stack. Decide to start early on this account next day.

Nov. 2nd

Cold last night. Army crowds me out of bed on the ground. Says he was following covers. Arise 6:30 We are physical culture advocates may be seen running and kicking every morning. Reason, to get warm. No wood last night meaning no supper. Ate some raw ham. No breakfast this morning. Go on to store at Henry's Lake. Big lunch and provisions. Go on to Registry Station in Park. Here I learn some more things. As a consequence I am carrying my six shooter with cylinder tied to outside. Camp at same place that Army camped a year ago. Good feed. Good supper. Make gun holster, may have sworn a little. Forgot to say that on 1st days ride, while riding along on Aunt Annie, Army asks me what time it is. Watch in hand, I compare time with him, when all at once, in some unaccountable manner, find myself sitting astride a barb wire fence and find Army amidst a bunch of bucking and kicking horses. Get things straightened out, no damage done except a tear in wire where it met the posterior of my anatomy. Mixup unexplainable, except that Nellie pulled my saddle over this causing Annie to buck into the packhorse.

Nov 3

We are camped close to upper Geyser Basin. Good feed and fine camp on account of Army knowing Park so well. Seeing things all day, mostly geysers, but an elk track interests me more than all the geysers in the Park. Won't get to see best part of the Park as we haven't time. Just baked a batch of punk in two skillet for dutch oven got it a beautiful brown. No trouble with horses today. Red getting quite civilized, have finally succeeded in getting him tired. Nellie doing fine but had sore back.

Army bot a halter and five biscuits today for ten cents. Both of us developing an extraordinary amount of "gall". Dad's Diary continued in Jan 2011 WT

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Museum closes for Season

The MVHA museum closed on Sept. 13 after a very successful tourist season.

Have you noticed the busiest folks
Are always the ones who came through,
To tackle a project or take on a job
That others can't find time to do?
They serve on Committees without pay
And go door to door for a cause,
Giving their time and their talents for free
With no thought or thanks or applause.
Perhaps you may wonder what manner of folk
Add to their burden each day,
By donating hours or service and time
With never a penny of pay.
They're people who find it rewarding enough
To know that because they come through

A project succeeded--a job was well done--
Some lives were made happier too.
Perhaps their example will help us to see
That the world would be better by far
If more of us shouldered our share of the load
No matter how busy we are--

The MVHA thanks each and every one of you for the many volunteer hours of time and help to make the very first summer of the first permanent museum for the Madison Valley a huge success. Special thanks to Kevin Brenneke, Zoe Todd and Shirley Love for doing the scheduling of the volunteers. A big thanks to Vern Thibodeaux who was last year's scheduler and who volunteered for every Thursday afternoon this summer. Thanks to Janice Klaumann and Barbara Blomeley, community members, who worked as museum volunteers. Hopefully next spring and summer we can find many more folks who will say yes when called upon to volunteer at the museum:) MVHA needs every one of you!!

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Where did everyone who visited come from?

Our guest book at the museum is not an exact science because some of the volunteers do not ask guests to sign and some guests just do not like to sign the book. And some sign (for exp) "Jones Family" and we do not have record of knowing if it is 2 or 6 or whatever unless the volunteer makes a note.

But with the facts that we do have, more than 700 visitors signed the book--pretty good compared to around 800 at old Wildlife site in 2009. Because we were a "work in progress" all summer, we did not advertise state wide or nationally. 392 visitors were from Mont. compared to 178 in '09. 172 were from the Ennis area compared to 18 in '09. MVHA is pleased that our own valley has discovered us!!

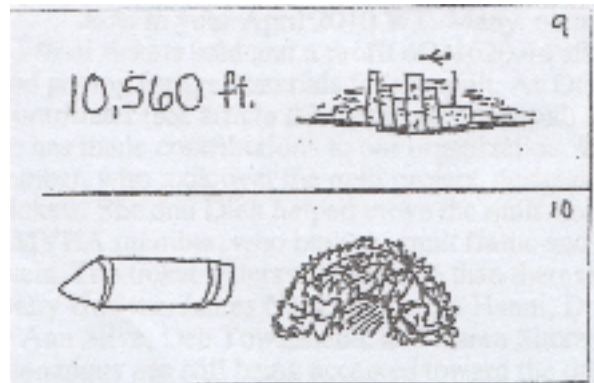
California led the way with 47 signing, Washington with 36, Utah 22, Idaho 17, Texas 15, Nevada and Oregon 12 each, Arizona 11 and Colorado 10. 23 states had less than 10 and 18 states were not recorded. 5 guests came from Canada, 3 from Germany, 2 from China and 1 from Ireland.

The MVHA feels that we had a very good first year at the new "work in progress" site.

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Montana Trivia Answers to July 2010 issue:

7. Lincoln 8. Roundup



For Your Reading Pleasure

Meadow Creek History by Robert R. Hughes
The pioneer community of Meadow Creek becomes McAllister. This manuscript is not published but was donated to the MVHA and a copy is available for check out from Larry Love or Otis Thompson.

Looking Ahead

November 18, 2010 Local attorney, Dave Kelley, will present a program comparing East Coast legal traditions with Western legal traditions and will use interesting local Montana stories to illustrate the differences.

November 27, 2010 Woman's Club Holiday Bazaar. MVHA will have a table and will need your help as volunteers to man the booth and as customers to place a Walk of Names order or pick up copies of the most recent books and pamphlets MVHA has for sale.

By Early December Your history stories, memories of deceased members, history tidbits or any history items to be printed in the January 2011 issue of the Wagon Tongue need to be submitted to the editor no later than the potluck dinner.

December 16, 2010 Annual Christmas pot luck dinner and program Time and place TBA

January 20, 2011 Regular meeting at 4:00pm at the First Madison Valley Bank Program TBA

Madison Valley History Association, Inc. Board of Directors

President: Otis Thompson
Vice President: John White
Treasurer: Neil Kent
Secretary: Duane Thexton
Director: Larry Love
Director: Kevin Brenneke
Director: Don Black

Meetings held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month. Watch Madisonian for details of time and place and program. (Note the change from 2nd to 3rd Thursday)

Board Meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of each month 10:00 am. First Madison Bank conference room. The Wagon Tongue will be published quarterly. Next issue will be January 2011.

Editor: Shirley Love

Contributing editors:

From Progressive Years Madison County Vol II

Smitty Overstreet page 765

Davidson Piper pg 768

Pauline Nelson pg 153

Catherine Watkins Carrau pg 197

Katherine Armstrong Robison pg 694-696

R.R (Bob) Hughes *Diary of Thomas S. Hughes*

Kevin Brenneke *Montana Trivia*

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