



Volunteers provide a little TLC to a headstone in the Monarch Lutheran Cemetery this past spring. In addition to cleaning grave markers, mending fence and clearing brush, volunteers also spent time collecting as much information as they could about the graves, some simply grassy mounds.

Documenting history along the Black Diamond Trail, one grave at a time

There's a certain magic in May as the foothills begin to green. Life springs renewed as verdant leaves emerge from their seasonal, sepia-toned slumber. It's a necessary reminder that our land is as vital as it is vivacious.

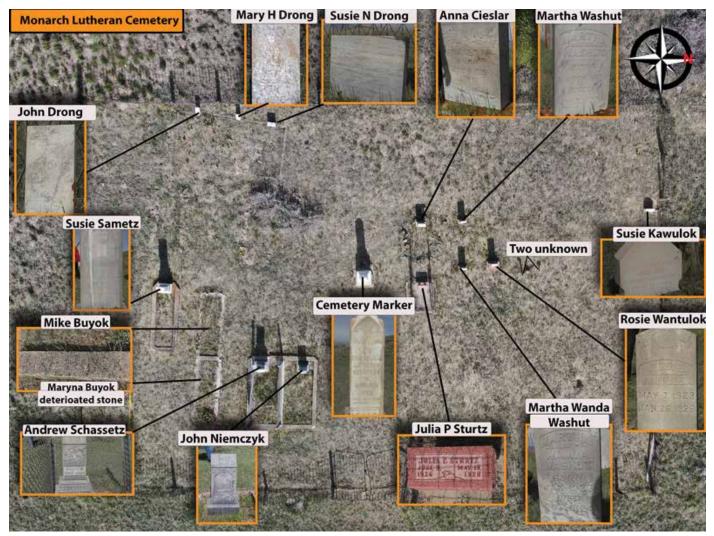
As a group of volunteers provided a large load of elbow grease, life sprang from the foothills above the Tongue River renewed as the Monarch Lutheran Cemetery received some needed TLC. But cleaning markers, mending fence and clearing brush weren't the only ways the group was helping preserve Sheridan County history - the group was also there to document gravesites, both marked and unmarked.

"After preliminary research, in the Wyoming Room and conversations with local community members, I realized there was very little documentation on this specific cemetery in the rural cemetery archive," Carrie Edinger, Historical Program Manager, explained. "After learning this, I developed the clean-up project to include documentation methods to preserve this rural cemetery."

To do so, Carrie enlisted the help of Kevin Knapp with Little Goose Multimedia for aerial and ground photography and volunteer Todd Wold, who created a preliminary map of unmarked graves from areas with rocks, metal markers or sunken-in ground. Those maps were used by volunteers in the field to document graves.

"This fieldwork is significant in the documentation process, because by physically notating what is being observed, this documentation becomes a resource for making maps," Carrie said.

The work continues as Kevin creates maps of marked and unmarked graves. Meanwhile, Todd and



A preliminary map of known graves at the Monarch Lutheran Cemetery created by Little Goose Multimedia. As SCLT continues to document graves at the cemetery, names of the deceased buried there will be shared with the Wyoming Room so future generations have access to information that previously didn't exist.

Wyoming Room staff have been researching burial records of those who were interred at Monarch from local funeral homes. Carrie said there are more unmarked than marked graves at the site.

Now that the research and documentation is complete, the information has been provided to the Wyoming Room at the Sheridan County Fulmer Library so it is accessible to the public. It includes a compilation of funeral home records, newspaper obituaries, and death records along with gravesite maps and a list of people established with reasonable certainly to be buried at the cemetery.

"While the information and visuals of the cemetery are significant to local community members who have ties to the mines north of Sheridan, this preservation project also offers insight to broader

American history relating to immigrants who came West and the challenges they faced starting a new life," Carrie elaborated. "These challenges range from accidents to illness, which, in this time period, the Spanish flu was prevalent."

The preservation Discovery Session was funded in part by a Wyoming Humanities Council expansion grant; additional cleaning supplies were donated by Greensky Commercial Cleaning. SCLT is grateful for the support of Padlock Ranch, which allowed our volunteers access to the cemetery for this important preservation project.

For more information about SCLT's historic preservation efforts, visit SheridanCLT.org or email Carrie at History@SheridanCLT.org



Calie and Jordan LeDuc are among the many members of Bomber Mountain Cycling Club who have taught community members how to enjoy SCLT trails through several years of popular Mountain & Gravel Bike Discovery Nights.

'For volunteers, there's something for everyone'

Since our inception, SCLT wouldn't be able to serve our community if our community didn't serve alongside us. While trails may be the first thing that comes to mind when you think about volunteering with SCLT, as SCLT responds to more community needs, the ways you can give back to a place you love are nearly limitless.

"For volunteers, there's something for everyone with SCLT," remarked volunteer Todd Wold. "I chose to volunteer with SCLT because of the multi-faceted approach to conservation, making great outdoor areas recreation-accessible for hikers and bikers and their dedication to historic documentation, preservation and education."

Todd was drawn to May's historic preservation project at the Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery of Monarch. Serving as an "advance party," Todd spent portions of several days weed whacking so volunteers could more efficiently clean headstones, mend fence and document gravesites. He also flagged potential unmarked graves - key to the preservation work ahead.

A summer surgery put the brakes on Todd's intentions to volunteer on the trails. Carrie Edinger asked him, as a follow-on project to the cemetery cleanup, to dig into who may be buried in the foothills just above the Tongue River. Not literally, of course; in this case he poured through a litany of resources to try to establish the identities of as many of those who had been buried at the cemetery but did not have a headstone marker.

Microfiche funeral home records 1909-1940 were "key" along with many books and pamphlets all housed in the Sheridan Fulmer Public Library, its Wyoming Room, and its incredibly helpful staff. It's "Obituary Card Catalog," coupled with digital newspaper and death record collections helped establish the cause of death for how many people passed, while other online resources allowed him to obtain copies, census data, passenger manifests, church records and more

from the National Archives. The Sheridan County Recorder's Office aided with copies of land purchase and wedding records.

"My goal was to attempt to pull as much information as I could find from the Wyoming Room and online for each person and hopefully make it available electronically for other researchers or family members, so they could have 'one stop shopping' for the information and research leads rather than combing through *a lot* of databases, locations, books and empty leads."

All told, Todd invested more than 250 hours in the project. In October, SCLT donated the results of the research, along with aerial images from the cleanup that serve as a map to graves, and a list of people established with reasonable certainty as having been buried at the cemetery.

What did he learn about the people? Nearly all are first-generation immigrants to America or the American children of first-generation immigrants. About 65% interred in unmarked graves are believed to be children.

"Preservation projects such as this one are instrumental in providing the historical background and context of their stories - heartrending in many cases - as well as documenting the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences that helped to shape Sheridan and Sheridan County. These are the stories of the blue-collar, working-class families who helped put Wyoming coal at the forefront of energy powering the State and the Nation," he closed. "But of course, there is always more to be learned about every individual interred, as well as their families, and the 'Rest of the Story."

And without Todd's generous help, those stories wouldn't be preserved and told today so they aren't forgotten tomorrow.

If you'd like to give back to a place you love, scan the QR Code or visit SheridanCLT.org/Volunteer.



Opposite page: Whether you're 2 or 102, when you volunteer with SCLT there's something fun for everyone to do. Oliver Granger (6) helped clean headstones at this spring's Monarch Lutheran Cemetery cleanup. At the tender age of 2, Aubrey Samson was SCLT's youngest volunteer. You can see her showing her mom Daisy Delaney (7) how to pull posts at a fence removal near Parkman in August. The Explore History, Discovery Sessions, and Unplug programs wouldn't be possible without volunteers who kindly share their time, knowledge and stories. David Nicolarsen (2) taught our Young Explorers about geology and even had them mine gypsum at a local quarry. Gordon Edwards (4) and Emily Emond (5) taught us the critters that live in Goose Creek. The Clearmont Historical Group helped us tell stories about some influential women of SE Sheridan County, including Franz Felz (8), who told her own story! Of course, trail work will always be a volunteer staple. At Hidden Hoot, good friends helped smooth tread (3) while Kensly Lund (inset) took pics. Sheridan HS Woods students (9) plied their skills building a bridge while Big Horn MS (10) students helped at Red Grade Trails during their Service Day. John C. Schiffer Collaborative School students (11) helped remove fence and invasive Russian olive at Bridges West. In September, First Interstate Bank (1) employees joined us to build The Brink Connector at the top of Red Grade Trails.







Suzanne Beaudelaire hadn't been backpacking since she was in Girl Scouts. Now retired, she was determined to get deep into the Cloud Peak (left) and succeeded thanks to her time training on SCLT community trails (right).

After 45 years of life getting in the way, Beaudelaire backpacks the Bighorns by training on SCLT trails

"Life got in the way," Suzanne Beaudelaire mused when ask why she hadn't backpacked in the 45 years that had passed since she was a teen exploring the Angeles National Forest with her fellow Alta Sierra Girl Scouts north of L.A.

Being outdoors has always been essential for Suzanne. "I've been an outdoor girl all my life. That's where I can breathe deeply, relax and fill all my scenes; that fills my soul, promoting gratitude and happiness," she said.

Freshly retired from a 34-year CPA career, the self-described "outdoor girl" knew she wanted to get back to the backcountry and backpack deep into the beautiful Bighorns backyard she has called home for the past decade.

That was supposed to happen in the summer of 2021 as part of a trip organized by The Hub on Smith. But, "Two days before that trip, I put on my full pack for a short walk in the morning, then proceeded to have a particularly physical day," Suzanne said, explaining, "By that afternoon, I had pulled a muscle in my calf."

But Suzanne would not be deterred. After all, the Girl Scout motto is "Be prepared."

"I was so disappointed," she reflected. "That experience is what inspired me to train for this year's trek."

About five weeks before this year's Hub backpacking trip to the Seven Brothers lakes in the Cloud Peak Wilderness, training began for Suzanne. She aimed for



The payoff that made all of Suzanne's training worth it - a first-hand view of Bighorns that looks like it could hang on a museum wall. She said reaching Seven Brothers was "thrilling" and that thanks to training on SCLT trails, the hike in was "a pleasant experience where I could enjoy the scenery in relative comfort and ease."

two to three hikes each week, at varying elevations and distances.

"I started out with just a day pack and loaded it up with binoculars, a book on local flora and fauna, and lots of water and snacks. After a couple weeks, I graduated to the backpack I'd be carrying, starting with about 10 pounds and increasing the weight until I had all my gear, clothing and food," she said of her training regimen.

For nearly all her hikes, Suzanne relied on another Girl Scouts rule: use the buddy system. She tapped friends and contacts she's made through Hub hikes and a Facebook Hikeristas group. They'd accompany her on hikes at Hidden Hoot Trail and Red Grade Trails. She said the new sections at Poverty Flat Trailhead were particularly enjoyable. Her only solo trip was Soldier Ridge Trail, where she was able to enjoy her time at the end bench before a sunset hike back.

Finally, the July trip was at hand, but a canceled flight returning from an L.A. wedding left her stuck inside of Billings with the Bighorn blues again. Thankfully, a quick call to the Hubby Taxi Service got her to Sheridan where she met the Hub group and made the trip.

Starting with little shade and extreme heat, she described the four-plus-mile hike to camp that gained

more than 1,600 feet to reach an elevation of 9,585 feet "challenging" but training conditioned her muscles and lungs. That made for "a pleasant experience where I could enjoy the scenery in relative ease and comfort."

About that scenery: "Unbeatable!" Suzanne asserted. "There are incredible boulder fields, breathtaking lake views and wildflowers galore! The company was unbelievable as well." She even got to enjoy an afternoon at the beach - a striking, soft sandy surprise which awaits visitors at the end of the trail on Seven Brothers Lake #7.

For Suzanne, it was the little pleasures that made her time in the backcountry truly worthwhile. "I liked boulder hopping to the lake in the quiet of morning to sit and refill my water."

Suzanne thanked Lisa Wells and Steve Stresky for organizing so many great Hub hikes and recommended anyone interested in getting outdoors sign up for a hike. She was also appreciative of the trails SCLT has built.

"I can't imagine a world without SCLT trails!" she declared. "SCLT has done so much to increase local outdoor recreation access. I truly appreciate their vision and effectiveness," and added, "If you use SCLT trails, I hope you are committed, like I am, to give them your continued support."

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"For taking us walking on Red Grade Trails." ~ Donna & Larry Maddox and Dina & Jim Ormiston

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"Charlie introduced me to this part of Wyoming through his absolute love of place and history, wildlife and native plants - and as he became a steward of it over the last three decades. Because of Charlie, I now have this special place in my life, for which I am most grateful." ~ Karrie Jo Manson

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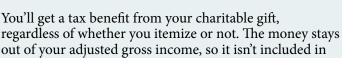
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Did you know you can reduce required minimum distributions from your IRA with charitable distributions? One strategy to help reduce your taxable income after you start RMDs is to make tax-free qualified charitable distributions (QCDs). You can give up to \$100,000 from an IRA each year to charity, which counts toward your RMD but isn't taxable. You must transfer money directly from the IRA to the charity (ask you IRA custodian for their procedure; the money can't go to a donor-advised fund or private foundation). Even though RMDs start at age 72, you can do QCDs after you turn 70½.



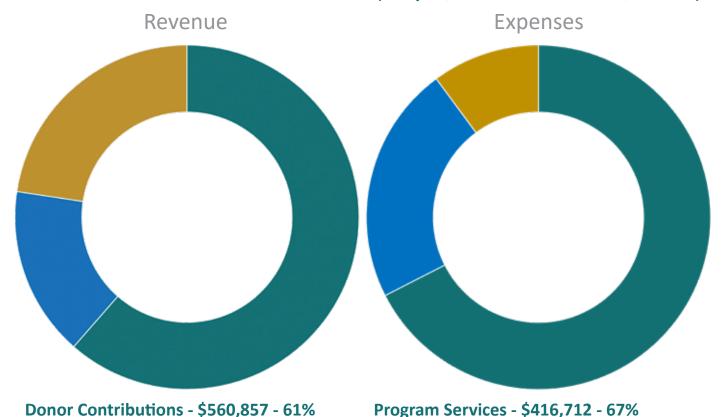
the income calculation for taxing Social Security benefits or the Medicare high-income surcharge.



"Your qualified charitable distribution gift to SCLT can be especially valuable because you can create a legacy for what you love and the distribution never shows up in your adjusted gross income. It truly is a win-win-win - for our community, for SCLT and for you and your family," said Executive Director Brad Bauer.

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Fiscal Year 2022 Financial Data (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022)



Investment Income - \$145,631 - 16%

Government Grants - \$206,467 - 23%

Program Services - \$416,712 - 67%

Administration - \$134,819 - 22%

Fundraising - \$61,281 - 10%



Steve Stresky describes how springs form in certain rock formations while leading a Discovery Session on Bear Knuckle Trail this summer. About 50 folks enjoyed a gorgeous night on the mountain learning about geology.

Discover what's new at Red Grade Trails

Another year, another season creating new ways for our community to get outdoors and connect with nature.

This season, 3.4 miles of new trail were built and completed on the upper portion of Red Grade Trails. The finishing touches were also put on several miles that were roughed in last season, while the Bear Gulch East and Poverty Flat Trailheads and parking lots were completed. Weather permitting, the Aspens trailhead and lot will be finished before winter closes Red Grade Road.

The trails are open to about any type of non-motorized recreation, whether that's a midday mountain bike ride, an afternoon hike, or simply a weekend day spent taking in the beauty of our Bighorns backyard.

A new way visitors can enjoy some of Red Grade Trails is by horseback. For now, The Brink Trail between Poverty Flat and Bear Gulch East (4.5 miles) is open to equestrians. It's a stretch that alternates between forest that feels primeval to jaw-dropping valley views. An additional route will run up from Base Trailhead once the system's upper and lower portions are connected.

Will Dutcher, Trails Program Manager, said all of the new trails are accessible from trailheads, "making them easy to find" and "easy to choose your own adventure." The Bighorn National Forest also smoothed FS Rd 318, which makes it possible for low-clearance vehicles to safely reach Poverty Flat Trailhead.

Simply getting there is all your adventure requires, because SCLT trails are free to use. There is no admission fee, and no membership requirement. This helps remove a barrier to the outdoors for community members.

Once on the trail, Dutcher said you can expect to experience incredible views into the Cloud Peak Wilderness, and of giant slabs of ancient, angled anticline rock - some that dates back as much as 3 billion years! Of course, you may see many types of wildlife, birds, insects and a plenty of plants and trees - especially when the wildflowers bloom.

His favorite spot is the top of Cliffhanger, which "travels along a rocky cliff and tops out with a great view of the Cloud Peak Wilderness." He also loves Farenheit "where the trees open up with a view of the mountain from where you've just hiked."

Before you go, Dutcher advised grabbing a trail map from our website or downloading trail routes available on several online apps like AllTrails, Trailforks, Gaia and Mountain Bike Project. They'll help you navigate as junction and wayfinding signs are installed.

The most important part of the build season; however, was that so many community members were able to explore and enjoy Red Grade Trails. What a thrill! "As the trail system grows and becomes more popular over time, it is important to know who yields to who," Dutcher said, adding that bikers yield to hikers and everyone yields to horses, with downhill traffic yielding to uphill traffic.

"We all like to use trails in our own way, so it is important to be respectful to other trail users by knowing trail etiquette. And, if you pack

it in, pack it out. Use Leave No Trace principles," he concluded.

Need a map? Scan the QR code to get all SCLT trail maps or visit SheridanCLT. org/Recreation/Maps.





Sheridan County Water Supply Report a 'one-stop shop' for essential info for your ranch and your land

SCLT is excited to offer the Sheridan County Water Supply Report. This new, time-saving tool collects essential information about water supply locally, and around Wyoming, that can quickly help people make decisions about how they manage their ranch and their land.

The report contains the latest information about water availability, streamflow, snowpack, drought, soil moisture, and water supply forecasts for the Tongue and Powder Rivers.

"This report is a one-stop shop that can help you make decisions for your ranch and your land," said Lila Walker, a Big Sky Watershed Corps Member serving with SCLT who created the report.

The Sheridan County Water Supply Report is a monthly report that can be downloaded from the SCLT website. Anyone interested in the report can sign-up to have it delivered directly to their email inbox. Readers are also invited to share their feedback on what they would find

most helpful through a survey on the page.

Walker said the Sheridan County Water Supply Report is the culmination of feedback SCLT has received from community members.

"In our surveys, we learned that community members wanted easier access to information about water and weather. This report will save people time and effort because all the information will be in one place, so you don't have to spend time and effort tracking it all down

each month," Walker concluded.

Scan this QR code with your phone's camera app to get the latest report, sign-up to have it sent to your inbox each month, and leave feedback. You can also get all the info at SheridanCLT.org/Water.



White-tailed deer were among the many wildlife caught on game cameras moving across fences at Bridges West outside of Sheridan in early 2022. In May, SCLT completed its first wildlife friendly fencing project by removing unneeded fence with the help of students and staff at the John C. Schiffer Collaborative School.

Volunteers help wildlife move more easily thanks to successes of four friendly fencing projects

The summer sun was shining bright in the foothills along Pass Creek on a Saturday morning in late August as a group of volunteers worked to swiftly strip nearly three-quarters of a mile of barbed-fence off its posts. Just behind, a fence winder on a skidsteer loader slurped strands from the pasture's plate like a hungry toddler eating spaghetti - except the only hosing down needed afterwards was a quick dunk in the cattle tank to cool off. By noon, all that was left to do was gather posts.

And with that, SCLT's fourth friendly fencing project of 2022 was complete. Meghan Kent, SCLT Conservation Program Manager, said the first year - which saw projects near Sheridan, Story and, in the Bighorn National Forest at Elgin Park as part of the newly-formed, multi-organization Bighorn Fence Initiative (BFI) - was a resounding success for wildlife and landowners.

The Parkman area project was a collaboration with Mule Deer Foundation of Wyoming and the Backcountry Horsemen Association as the second BFI project, with volunteers from USFS assisting.

According to Meghan, this project in the Parkman area was chosen because, "The Northern Bighorn Mule Deer Movement Study shows a lot of activity in this area, and we know it is important habitat for other wildlife, too."

This project was particularly appealing, she stated, because the ranchers are "dedicated to conservation and improving wildlife passage while keeping their land in operation."

Those ranchers are Gordon and Edith Harper. Together they run a small cow-calf operation with red angus-hereford cross cows in one of Sheridan County's most picturesque places. When they learned about SCLT's friendly fencing initiative, they knew their ranch and the wildlife that move through could benefit.

"I am very enthused about SCLT's initiative to promote wildlife friendly fencing," Edith explained. "We had a fence in disrepair that needed to be removed to eliminate wildlife getting hung up in it, and to remove it as a hazard for horses and cows. It seemed to be a win-win."



Volunteers helped SCLT complete a fence removal in the Parkman area in late August. It was the fourth friendly fencing project SCLT led or assisted with in our first year working on friendly fencing.

While fence removals or modifications aren't well-suited for all situations, Edith's experience has taught her such projects "can improve wildlife safety, and hopefully reduce rancher time spent repairing the fence if it is modified so that wildlife can safely pass under, through or over while still preventing cattle and other livestock wandering on the road, or in pastures where they should not be."

Meghan agreed, saying that landowners can benefit by spending "less time and money doing fence repairs, and can help Sheridan County have healthier wildlife populations without sacrificing functionality for cattle or sheep grazing."

As a founding member of the BFI, Meghan has ensured SCLT will have an important role helping local families meet the needs of their ranch and wildlife. She said BFI is taking what the Absaroka Fence Initiative has found successful and applying it here, with projects prioritized by data like those collected by the Northern Bighorn Mule Deer Movement Study.

Meghan also shared some simple steps you can use to make your fences more wildlife friendly. "Leave a gate open and keep fences in good repair because loose wires are more of a hazard than taut ones, no matter the design." She's also happy to help you answer any questions you may have about friendly fencing, and is always on the lookout for a for a removal/modification project.

And SCLT's projects come highly-recommended by the Harpers. "The SCLT team was very well organized, efficient, did their best to pick a date that was good for us, brought ample tools and equipment, cleaned up everything, and were cheerful!" Edith espoused.

Learn more about friendly fencing by scanning the QR code with your phone's camera app. If you have a fencing project idea, please email Meghan@ SheridanCLT.org.





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SheridanCLT.org







Sheridan Community Land Trust works to preserve our heritage of open spaces, healthy rivers and creeks, working ranches, wildlife habitat and vibrant history, while expanding recreation opportunities to connect people with the places they love.

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WY I choose SCLT, by Sarah Jo Sinclair

My parents and grandparents taught me about land and open spaces. I learned to care about grass and cattle and water as I worked alongside my family on our ranch. As a two-year-old I sat horseback with my maternal grandfather wandering western grasslands in search of black cows. As a teenager, I drove the dump truck while my father harvested corn and alfalfa. As a young adult, I paddled big rivers with my dear mother. We worked outside. We played outside. The land provided our living and fed our spirits. Eventually the dirt and grass of cattle country seeped into my soul. My parents worked hard to make a big, open life for me and my brothers; consequently they taught us about stewardship and the importance of open spaces.

And now, as I watch my own nearly-grown children hike, fish, and hunt in Sheridan County, I am grateful not only for the lessons of my family but also for the opportunities SCLT creates in our community. I am also grateful to serve with SCLT - the two stories align almost eerily. SCLT's mission statement (in the upper left column), speaks to me personally as it reminds me of the legacy left to me by my parents and my grandparents.

I support SCLT for very simple reasons: land, connection, people and most importantly love. Please consider the places and people you love as you plan your year-end giving. I hope you too find inspiration and hope in the beauty and history that surrounds us in Sheridan.

Shopping through Amazon? Smile & Amazon will donate to SCLT! Just make certain you selected "Sheridan Community Land Trust" as the organization your are "Supporting."