



FALL 2026

NEWSLETTER | NINE MILE COMMUNITY CENTER

APPLE CIDER FESTIVAL & CHILI COOKOFF
Saturday, October 10th, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

FREE!



Your family is invited to our 9th annual community **Bear Aware** event. This is a hands-on event where everyone is invited to pitch in cleaning, chopping, and pressing fruit into cider. As always, the goal is to keep excess fruit away from prowling bears; however, we know that this year's local fruit harvest is way down due to hard weather. Thanks to some generous donations, our Board will provide 150 pounds of apples for processing into cider. That should be a good start. It would be great to have more fruit so everyone can enjoy some fresh squeezed cider, and that is where you come in. Please bring your home-grown or store-bought apples or pears as well as a clean, quart-size container to bring your cider home. (We do not have growlers for sale on-site this year.)

JOIN US FOR A HEARTY CHILI COOKOFF LUNCH **October 10th, 11:30**

\$5 gets you samples of all the chilis for voting, and also a small bowl of chili of your choice along with chips, drinks, and sides. Proceeds benefit the Nine Mile Community Center.

Chili contestants receive one free lunch and possible glory (and prizes) for winning the cookoff contest. Email ninemilecc@gmail.com if you are interested in being a Chili Cookoff contestant. Cookoff rules are posted on our Community Center website. There is no entry fee, but the entrees are limited to 12 contestants. Sign up by October 8th. See you, rain or shine!



Nine Mile Community Center Annual Meeting & Board Election

Tuesday, October 13th, 7 p.m.

Are you interested in how the Community Center is run and how you can help? Come to the next Board meeting and see what is coming up and how you may be a part of our local success story. Everyone is welcome to attend our October 13th Board of Directors meeting. This meeting is for the purpose of having the community elect the Board of Directors and receiving annual reports from the Board. There are three Directors elected each year for a term of three years, and there is a total of nine people on the Board. We also have our Friends of the Nine Mile Community Center for volunteers to help assist with events and/or workdays. The meeting is informal and kids are welcome to attend. Contact Board President, Julie Van Hise at ninemilecc@gmail.com, or talk to a Board member, or come to the October 13th meeting, for more information. Email your completed ballot to ninemilecc@gmail.com or drop your ballot off at the Apple Cider Festival or at the Nine Mile Community Center by 7 p.m. on October 13th. All welcome!

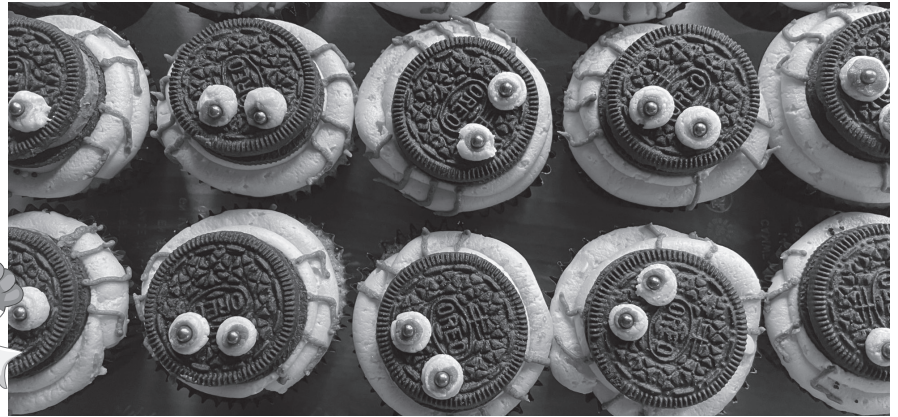


FREE! FAMILY HALLOWEEN AND POTLUCK PARTY!

Saturday, October 24th from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Join us for our outrageously fun Halloween Trunk or Treat, Potluck & Haunted House, happening on the Saturday one week before the holiday.

Trunk-or-Treat: Adults will park around the Community Center grounds and the kids will go vehicle to vehicle trick-or-treating. Please bring treats and goodies to share with the kids. A prize will be awarded to the best decorated trunk!



COMMUNITY CENTER GRANT UPDATES



Missoula County Rural Impact Grant, Hazard Trees Removal & New Water Heater, \$4,000 - Managed by Julie Van Hise

The December 2025 windstorm blew many trees down, including several that crashed through the roof of our beloved pavilion and squashed a portion of our fence! We were very fortunate it was not worse - as the Center is surrounded by large pines! People came out to help with the immediate cleanup. Thank you! We held our Christmas Eve event - alongside our damaged pavilion. Shortly thereafter we became aware of the Missoula County Impact Grant. However, we couldn't apply that to the pavilion repair, as that repair needed to be completed prior to the period in which the grant money could be used. So, we turned our focus on what we needed to be done to prevent similar or worse catastrophic events in the future, and any high-priority projects that were delayed due to our reserve funds being used for pavilion repair. That is when we decided to apply for tree removal and replacement of our very old hot water heater - both issues of which could result in loss or very expensive repairs to the historic schoolhouse, church, and/or pavilion and/or injury to our guests - we applied to the County, and we were awarded \$4,000! We truly did not understand the relief that this grant would give us until we experienced several more wind events - some of which resulted in more tree loss on neighboring properties. We then learned upon replacement of the hot water heater there were several leaks discovered from the old and worn valves. We all breathe much easier now :-)

We started the County grant project in early May completed the project in July 2026. We are also being good stewards of the materials and are milling several of the trees for future Community Center projects. Wood not claimed for milling purposes will be donated to the community for firewood. The grant funding of \$4,000 by the County ensures the priceless value of the Nine Mile Community Center as the heart of neighborhood. We are so thankful to Missoula County!

Costume Contest: Following the Trunk-or-Treat, all kids will be entered into the Halloween costume contest. 1st and 2nd place prizes will be awarded to the best costumes!

Haunted House: There will be a little kids haunted house where parents can accompany their little ones through the less scary portions, and then it will be opened up to the big kids for the full experience.

Potluck: Please bring a snack, dish, or dessert to share with family and friends. There will be a prize for the best Halloween-themed potluck dish!

Pumpkin Contest: Bring your decorated/carved pumpkin and enter it into the pumpkin contest - a prize will be awarded to the best! (Please, no candles.)

We need lots of volunteers to get everything together the week before the Saturday party. Contact Julie Van Hise at 406-626-2535 or Tabitha Boyle at 406-360- 4635 if you are interested in helping with the setup. All abilities are appreciated to help with event support, and cleanup.



Missoula County Community Parks & Recreation Grant, New Storage Shed Project, \$3,444.96 - Managed by Steve King

The Community Center owns a variety of maintenance and recreational equipment to service the property and public events, and that equipment is currently either left outside, or awkwardly stored inside the Stark Schoolhouse. The security and convenience of our equipment, tools, and supplies will be enhanced by having a dedicated storage shed discretely located on the grounds. In October 2025 the Community Center Board applied for grant assistance from the Missoula County Community Parks & Recreation Grants Program. We proposed that the new shed would provide secure storage for our existing equipment, along with event supplies and youth games. In early December 2025 the County awarded us a \$3,444.96 grant for the project!

The project was originally scheduled for spring 2026, but the severe windstorm in December 2025 caused significant damage to our outdoor pavilion. Our 2026 project priority shifted to repair the building damage and remove hazard trees away from our historic structures. The shed project will be constructed in the spring of 2027 using lumber milled on site from the downed trees from our own property. Thank you again, Missoula County!

Historic Stark School Outhouse Preservation Project, \$7,185 - Managed by Steve King

In January 2026 the Nine Mile Community Center Board of Directors sought grant assistance from the Foundation for Montana History to repair and preserve the historic Stark School's two architecturally distinctive outhouses. Preservation of these structures is vital to maintain the remaining integrity of the grounds, enhancing the historic context of this 110-year-old school property. Originally the 2.5-acre property had horse stables and a little teacherage building. Those burned down some time ago, but the outhouses persist as a reminder of the way things were, before modern indoor plumbing. We also plan to add a new information plaque for the outhouses which will complement the plaques already in place on our other landmark buildings. Each structure has its own origin story, and the little custom outhouses will have their own story as well.

The tasks of preparing building sites, repairing the structures, replacing the roofs, and fresh paint work will be accomplished on-site in October 2026. Our cost estimate for the work, including in-kind volunteer labor, is \$9,685 and we requested and were awarded in April 2026 \$7,185 in grant assistance. Thank you, Foundation for Montana History!

Photo: Kate Davis



NINE MILE COMMUNITY CENTER
PO Box 1061
Frenchtown, MT 59834

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FUSED GLASS HOLIDAY ORNAMENT CLASS

Tuesday, November 3 at 6 p.m.

Have you ever wanted to explore the world of kiln formed glass? Sign up for glass fused Christmas ornaments at Nine Mile Community Center on Tuesday, November 3 from 6:00 - 9:00 PM with Pearl Cash! You will make decorated trees, a Christmas sweater, and try your hand at watercolor wash on enamel. Your creations will be fired in Pearl's kiln, and arrangements to pick up later will be made. Light snacks and beverages will be provided. Additional information and safety tips provided after sign up. There is a limited number of spots available, so RSVP today!

Cost: \$35/person, **Age Requirement:** 14+, **Registration:** You must RSVP and pay for your seat to this event no later than **Saturday, October 17, 2026**. If writing a check, please make it out to Pearl Cash and mail it to 25685 Nine Mile Road, Huson, MT 59846. *Venmo is also accepted (@Pearl-Cash).*



CORRECTION: The Holiday Fair is scheduled for November 28th from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

We have some wonderful community events coming up for Fall and Winter! Just check out our website at ninemilecommunitycenter.com, or join our Facebook and Instagram pages for more information. Community Center rental information is available at Eventective.com, and cash donations are always welcome through *Venmo* at @ninemilecc. Donation cash or checks made out to NMCC may be dropped off at any Community Center event, or sent to NMCC, P.O. box 1061, Frenchtown, Montana 59834.