

Dear Board of Regents:

I have been aware of the attempts to convert your **WONDERFUL** golf course to housing in the past and now apparently you are looking at putting university buildings there. I am not a Missoula resident nor a resident of Montana. I live in Spokane Washington. However, I would like to tell you about my experiences with Missoula because of that golf course and the Mountain West Classic cross country meet that is held there each year in September.

For the past 12 years I have brought my team over there for this meet. I don't know if you have ever done an economic impact study on this specific meet or not, but I did one on my team after this weekend. We stayed at a hotel - filling 16 rooms (\$1500). The girls team ate at Applebee's (almost all girls spent between \$15-25 for their meal and there were 51 girls, 4 coaches and one bus driver—about \$1000). Then after the meet we went to an area with fast food restaurants. The girls spent between \$7-9 each for this meal (\$500-600). We also stopped at the Silver Dollar bar where the girls really spend money—some walk out with huge bags. This is just the girls' team for Mead High School. Others' team also goes over every year. And we are just one of 60-80 teams a year that go to this meet. I believe that this group also puts on several other meets throughout the fall for cross country, triathlons, etc. This is the 94th year that I know in cross country, triathlons, and even some running. I can't imagine what it will be like in another 10 years.

Sample

This is just one side of the story but this is my personal view of the meet. There are several other things that aren't as measurable. Because I came to the meet and LOVED it over there and have such a great experience at the meet, I have run the Missoula marathon and half marathon the last few years. I would never have gone to this race had I not had the positive experience at the cross country meet at the golf course. I barely knew that Missoula existed. Since I talk to people about the Missoula marathon (it is an awesome event), others have begun to come over for that too. And they talk to others.....

Another effect I noticed this year—I had two girls stay over with their families to tour the college campus. I asked them why they are thinking of going to school in Missoula and they said it is a direct effect of coming over to the Mountain West Classic for four years. They love the whole experience. They both said that if they knew that people were short-sighted enough to get rid of the golf course they wouldn't like that. They said they want to know what is decided because it would affect their decision of where they are going to go to school.

Please reconsider this – buildings can be put anywhere.

Thanks,

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