

Montana Juniors Ride Summer Range

The scenic Little Belt mountains on the upper Judith River attracted Montana Junior Angus Association youth last August.

Much of the early history of the range cattle industry in Montana took place in the Judith Basin country. The dust of Texas trail herds rose on the horizon as cattle spilled into the ocean of grass and open range of the basin. In the 1880s, Utica was a stage stop and headquarters for huge roundups where thousands of cattle were thrown together spring and fall for branding and shipping.

There were some pretty tough characters on the scene in those days and their tales are colorful legend.

Seven Montana Juniors rode Lewis & Clark National Forest summer pasture allotments near Utica in the Little Belts. Camp was at the historic Judith River Banger Station. Excellent programs on USFS range allotment management, range ecology and forest ecology were presented on two afternoons by Tom Osen, USFS range conservationist, and Wayne Phillips, USFS ecologist.

Another highlight was an evening of campfire entertainment by talented guitarist and singer, Lisa Zutt.

Special thanks to Penny and Doug Linhart, Hobson, whose efforts and assistance made this trip a great experience for kids.



Montana Juniors ready to ride at the old ranger station,



Range Management 101 class in session.



Lisa Zutt with a campfire ballad.

