

4/23/1998

Gus!

I HOPE EVERYTHING IS OK  
WITH YOU. I THOUGHT YOU  
WOULD WANT TO SEE THIS  
ARTICLE ABOUT THE MATADOR.  
HOPE TO SEE YOU THIS SUMMER.  
BEST WISHES

MIKE FRISINA

04-25-98

Hi Gus

Hope all is fine with you.

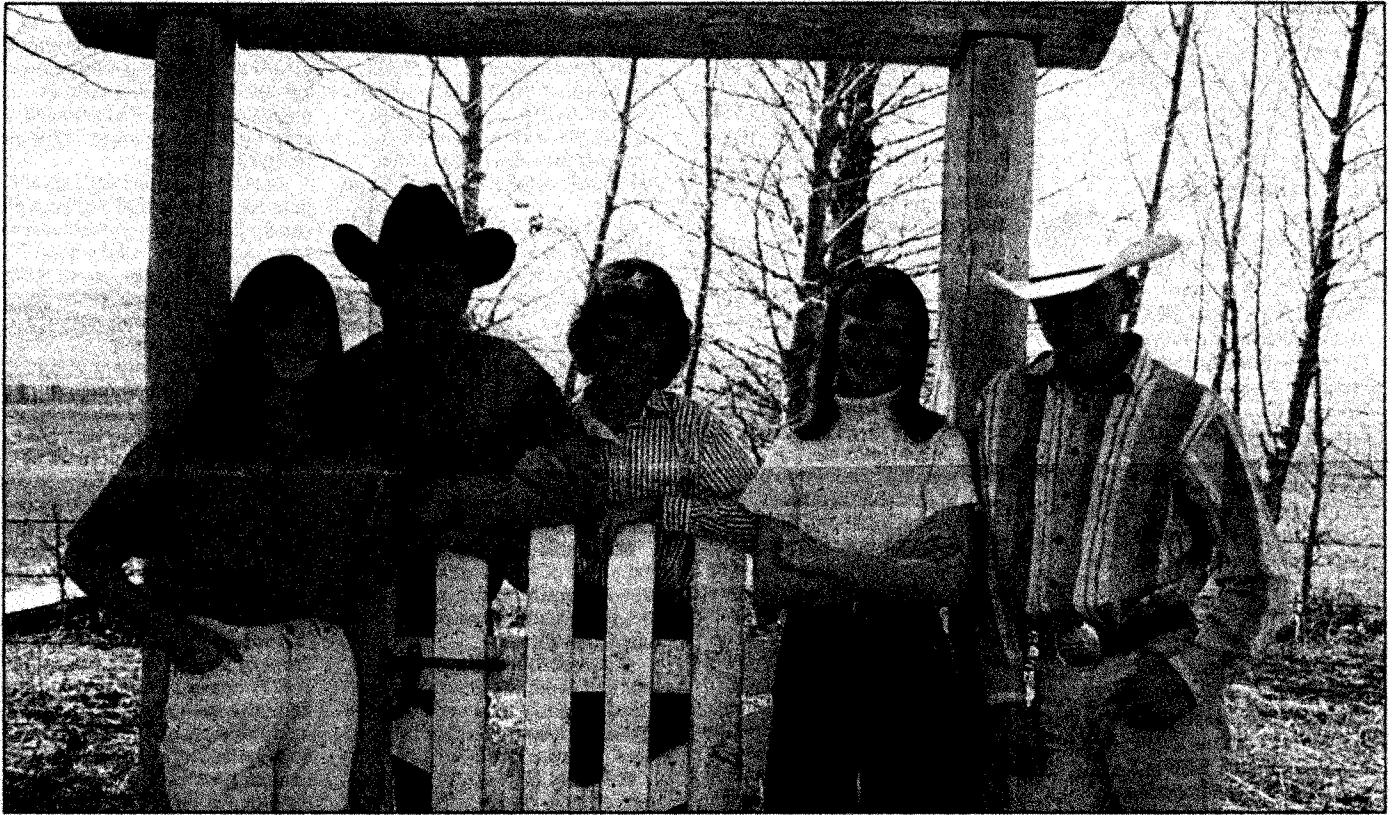
Here is a recent article you may be interested in.

I wasn't aware however, that the Montana Wildlife Federation ever supported rotation grazing. I think Ray means the Skyline Sportsmen's Association.

Hope you are doing well with your book.

Best regards,  
JACK

## EARTH DAY HONORS



PERRY BACKUS / THE MONTANA STANDARD

**RAY AND SUE** Marxer's belief in protecting the ranch land they manage near Dillon has earned them the Montana Stockgrowers Montana Environmental Stewardship Award. Ray and Sue, behind fence, are pictured with their family, Anna, Kristy and Clayton.

# Matador Ranch wins stockgrowers' award

BY PERRY BACKUS  
of *The Montana Standard*

DILLON — Ray and Sue Marxer's goal for managing the Matador Cattle Co. near Dillon is simple — leave it in better shape than how you found it.

Since they took over management of the 250,000-acre ranch in 1974, they've practiced what they preach: They use rest rotation grazing strategies, fence critical waterways and protect native vegetation and wildlife

habitat. Taking a proactive approach to management, they've worked with federal and state land managers and others to find common sense solutions that both protect the resource and their livelihood.

Today in an Earth Day celebration at the State Capitol in Helena, the Marxers will receive the Montana Stockgrowers' Montana Environmental Stewardship Award. The award recognizes cattle ranchers who use innovative practices to pro-

tect and enhance natural resources while maintaining or increasing the profitability of their business.

"The Marxer family is a wonderful example of how ranchers not only maintain the land, but actually improve the land's productivity," said Montana Stockgrowers Association President Lynn Cornwell. "They are living examples of how Earth Day is a 365-day-a-year celebration for Montana cattle producers."

Ray Marxer said that growing up on family-operated ranches in Montana taught he and his wife early the importance of good stewardship of the land.

"Any time that your whole business revolves around the health of a natural resource, you learn early that you either take good care of that resource or you are out of business," he said.

Marxer said the company that owns the Matador Cattle Co., Koch Industries of Wichita,

**See MATADOR / Back Page**

### Matador ...

*Continued from Page A1*

Kan., "allows us and expects us to operate in an environmentally sound manner."

With that direction, Marxer said he's taken a proactive stance in trying to work with federal and state land managers, as well as other members of the public interested in range management. About one-third of the ranch is deeded, the rest is leased from the state and federal government.

A favorite Marxer success story centers around the public lands leased by the Matador in the Sage Creek area between Dillon and Dell. Long before it was fashionable to work with public land managers and

environmental groups, the Marxers developed a rest rotation grazing plan for the Sage Creek area that has been in place for 23 years.

When it was questioned, Marxer said members of the Wildlife Federation and other sportsmen and environmental groups came to the rancher's defense.

Marxer said the ranch has also worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management to protect Westslope cutthroat trout in several streams. This included reseeding and temporary fencing to protect a population in Bear Creek in the Centennial Valley.

Even with these kinds of environmental efforts, Marxer said the ranch's overall carrying capacity has been increased by eight percent over the past seven years and live-

stock weaning weights have increased by more than 110 pounds per calf.

"When you take a proactive stance, it gives you the opportunity to direct change rather than be subjected to it," he said.

The Marxer family's award-winning application will advance to regional and possibly a national competition through the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. They will also be recognized during the keynote luncheon at the Montana Stockgrowers Association's meeting June 5 in Glendive.

"We are certainly proud of the stewardship accomplishments of the Marxer family," said Cornwell. "The work that they and so many ranchers throughout Montana have done on the land has helped to make this great state what it is today."