

Was it the Rainmaker?

Contributed by Samar Fay

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"I don't care how he does it," Jim Fuhrman says, "When he comes we get rain."

Matt Ryan, the rainmaker from Mt. Shasta , California , has come to Montana again. Since May 17 he has been working in Ryegate, Winnett, Lewistown, Brady, places he has never been before, and Fort Peck . And it has rained in all of them.

The Fuhrmans have been working with Ryan since 1992. The record extends to 1993, 1998, 2000, and now 2001. In all those years he has never failed to bring on rain.

He came to this area on May 31, set up down on Duck Creek and now the Fuhrmans have had 2" of moisture.

He was in the Great Falls area in February and March, using a gas auger to drill holes in the thick river ice for his pipes. He said they got above average precipitation until April, but the drought came back.

The means are unorthodox. Ryan places metal pipes into large bodies of water, but lots of people do that. Every irrigator does it every spring.

But Ryan does his dunking with intent. He claims to use science and art to redirect energies with these pipes. Removing stagnation in the weather systems and helping nature get back into balance. He uses the pipes like antenna, as water dowers use their instruments.

It's all a matter of timing, a big thing with Ryan. People have forgotten nature and gotten out of touch, he says. They have changed the weather with massive forest cutting, more cars, and chemicals in the air. When they are made desperate by drought, and are ready to listen, they call him. The timing is right.

"I don't solicit work," Ryan says. "I only go where people call me."

About 30 people in the northeast area ponied up \$15,000 for this visit, more people than ever before. They are from Lustre and Glasgow and Brockton and even Canada.

There aren't enough of them, though. Phyllis Fuhrman is quite annoyed with people who don't support his efforts with a contribution. She got nothing from the Glasgow business community, she said, unlike in Ryegate, where the people got together and there were 75 contributors, including businesses and banks.

"It's been a struggle," Fuhrman said. "It's a community project and I would like to have a little more community help. \$500 is not a lot of money. It's one calf."

Ryan says traditional scientists don't believe in what he does, and he says flatly that the Glasgow National Weather Service bureau lied last year, claiming they had predicted the drought breaking rains he produced.

Ryan doesn't have a traditional background. He left college, worked at odd jobs for several years, and at age 30 left New York and went west looking for an Indian medicine man he had heard about. He found Sun Bear, and sometime after, he also met a man named Jerome Eden, who was a student of the scientist Wilhelm Reich. Both of these men were rainmakers, in their way, and Ryan was so new to it he thought everyone out west was a rainmaker.

He started rainmaking in 1984 and says he had bout a 70 percent success rate. In 1992 he says he made a deal with the Universe, which he also calls the Wholeness, or God. He says he's partners with the Universe.

Since then he has batted .1000 in the rain department. He said if ever fails to make rain, he will quit.

Then he and his wife, Gigi, headed off for Havre, where it has been might dry.

It was sprinkling again as they left.