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Ralph Lloyd McLane III "Shorty"





Ralph Lloyd McLane III, affectionately known as Shorty, went to be with the Lord on February 24th, 2026 after a courageous struggle with heart failure and COPD at the age of 58.

Born on May 19th, 1967 in Farrell, PA. Shorty grew up in Brookfield, OH before moving to Montana with his family in 1982. A proud 1986 graduate of Beaverhead County High School, he took great honor in being "the Third" and was even more proud to pass the tradition of the Ralph Lloyd name down to his own son. He was a true "Jack of all Trades". Over the years, he lent his talents to logging, produce agriculture, the restaurant industry, Centennial Foods, and Barry Brigs Construction before his health required him to retire. Outside of work, he found joy in the simple things: hunting with his Dad, and caring for his devoted cat of 17 years (Wally) and spending days by the water with his favorite fishing partner/ granddaughter Avery. If you knew Shorty, you knew laughter: he had a genuine sense of humor only a Ralph Lloyd could have and a gift for finding something to smile about in every situation.

He is survived by his loving parents, Ralph Lloyd Jr. and Hope Elaine (Nagel) McLane; his children Ralph Lloyd McCarthy; Avery, and Mandi Cain (husband Jake); Kinslei. His sister Rebecca McLane; Jedidiah Schwake, Hannah Hein (Cody), Ruth Rehn (Mackenzy); great niece Evelyn Mary. Aunts Cheri McCarthy (Tom), Jeannie Spoon (Earl);Cecilia & William, and Bonnie Barnes (Paul); Barb, Bob, Jay & grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held to celebrate Shorty's life at Dillon Baptist Church on March 21st, 2026 at 1:00PM. Family and friends are invited to share coffee, stories, and laughter in his honor- just as he would have wanted.

Condolences for the family may be posted online at www.brundagefuneralhome.com

Lorene Alice Hatfield, 91

Lorene Alice Hatfield, 91, of Dillon, passed away Saturday, March 7, 2026 at Pioneer Care & Rehab with her family by her side. She was born on June 6, 1934 in Union Point, Georgia to William & Mattie (Nunn) Swann.

Service will be Wednesday March 18th at 10am, Internment at 11am. The obituary will be published once finalized. Arrangements are under the direction of Brundage Funeral Home. Condolences for the family may be posted online at www.brundagefuneralhome.com

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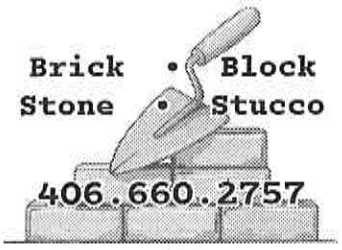
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Dillon Garden Club March Workshop

Fresh Floral Design Workshop

The Dillon Garden Club invites you to join us for a festive Easter-themed centerpiece workshop, offering a hands-on, fun-filled experience. Come create a fresh floral centerpiece with us on Monday, March 23, 2026, at 6:00 pm at The Bank Of Commerce conference room, second floor, 110 S. Idaho St.

The materials fee of $20 per person covers all supplies needed for the workshop, and you'll leave with a beautiful centerpiece and new skills. No experience required and all skill levels are welcome. The step-by-step workshop will be instructed by Mary Kemph, National Garden Club Flower Show Life Judge.

To register, please call Mary at 406-925-2903 before March 18th, as seating is limited. Reserve your spot soon to join the fun! Regular club business meeting will follow at 7:00 pm and all are welcome to attend.

CALLING ALL SENIORS

Lunch at the Senior Center, 126 S. Montana St. on Wednesdays from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. $5 for over 55 years and $6 under 55.

March 11th, Baked Chicken, seasoned rice, vegetable or salad, fruit or juice and dessert.

Beaverhead County HS Activity List

3/11 Wed	State Send-Off - Boys & Girls Basketball		Auditorium
3/12-3/14	Thu-Sat	Boys & Girls Basketball @ State	Great Falls
3/13-3/14	Fri-Sat	Pep-Band @ State Basketball	Great Falls
3/14 Sat	DMS Wrestling Tournament	BW Lodge	9:00 am

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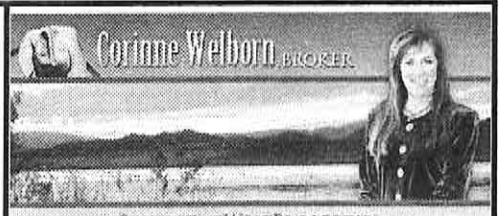
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Hands-on activities allow students to gain first-hand experience in medical, trades, and technology careers at Highlands College Exploration Day

Highlands College of Montana Tech will host Highlands College Exploration Day for high school seniors on April 8, 2026. Highlands College Exploration Day offers students hands-on experiences in their chosen field. The Construction Technology-Carpentry Program will showcase a variety of carpentry projects, while tours of the Machining Lab will demonstrate precision manufacturing on CNC machines and lathes, tours of the Radiologic Technology Lab will demonstrate simulation activities, and the line workers will practice knot-tying and explore the bucket trucks, which are part of the Pre-Apprentice Line Program.

"Highlands Exploration Day is designed for students preparing to begin one of our trades and technology programs at Highlands College," Director of Admissions Kelly Horsley said. "The event offers an opportunity to explore campus through guided tours, complimentary brunch, and participate in hands-on, interactive sessions designed to introduce students to their future programs."

"This event is designed to help students connect with the Highlands College community," Highlands College Dean Tammy Burke said. "They will explore our programs, connect with faculty, and find their way around campus. We are excited to show students the road to their future."

Students can tailor their day by choosing from a variety of immersive breakout sessions, including:

- Automotive Technology, A.A.S.
- Computer Networks and Cybersecurity, A.A.S.
- Construction Technology - Carpentry, A.A.S.
- Pre-Apprentice Line Program, Certificate
- Precision Machining Technology, A.A.S.
- Radiologic Technology, A.A.S.
- Welding Technology, A.A.S.

To register for Highlands College Exploration Day, go to:

https://iam.mtech.edu/highlandscollegeexplorationday2026/inquiryform

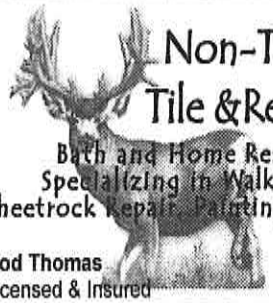
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CLOSE CALLS - A TOASTED PICKUP

By "Swede" Troedsson

In the summer of 1957, I worked as timber aide on the Skykomish Ranger District, on the Snoqualmie National Forest in western Washington.

We had just completed laying out a 52 million board foot timber sale on Maloney Mountain, when a fire broke out on state and private land below the timber sale. I drove up to the Maloney Mountain Lookout, situated above the fire, to join District Ranger John Sarginson, who was already there sizing up the fire. He pointed to a Forest Service pickup towing a water trailer that was approaching the fire, and asked me to run down to the pickup and drive it up to the lookout so he could retrieve his calked boots (boots with spiked soles).

When I arrived at the pickup, it was parked just below a steep switch back. I realized that the two wheel drive pickup, pulling a water trailer, could not make it up and around the steep switchback (later determined to be 18%).

A logger in a four wheel drive pickup offered to attach a tow chain to the pickup, and tow me up and around the switchback. By then hot smoke was boiling over the switchback.

After attaching a tow chain to the pickup, the logger proceeded to tow me up and around the switchback. Two seasonal employees were riding in the bed of the pickup. By then hot embers were falling on the pickup. In the middle of it all, the tow chain came undone from the front of my truck. The logger's pickup just kept going up through the smoke. I was stuck, I couldn't go forward, and I couldn't back up with the attached trailer. The two men riding in the back of the pickup jumped in the cab with me to escape the falling embers. I told them to jump out and run up the road and out of the hot smoke. Shortly thereafter, I grabbed the Ranger's boots, and bailed out of the truck. I ran uphill through the hot smoke and falling embers, and walked up to the lookout.

The pickup gas tank had been topped off with gasoline that morning. The gasoline got to boiling, the filler cap popped off, and the gasoline poured onto the ground and ignited. The truck, including a nice compass in the glove box, and the trailer, were completely consumed by the fire.

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Portion of Gallatin River to close during Markley Bridge replacement

A portion of the Gallatin River will close to boating starting next week while crews with the U.S. Forest Service begin work to replace Markley Bridge near Big Sky.

The closure will begin March 9 and could last through May 18. This closure will temporarily restrict boating on the Gallatin River from the Upper Deer Creek boat launch—located just above Markley Bridge—to the Portal Creek boat launch. Boaters will still be able to put in at the Portal Creek boat launch and float downstream. Wade angling and other walk-in use will continue to be allowed, except in the immediate area of bridge construction.



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Attorney General's Office secures first conviction and sentence under Elder Justice Unit

A Big Horn County woman received a 10-year deferred imposition of sentence and was ordered to pay $101,171 in restitution for financially exploiting her mother and stepfather, Attorney General Austin Knudsen announced. This case marks the first conviction and sentence investigated and prosecuted by the Montana Department of Justice's Elder Justice Unit, which was permanently created by the Legislature in 2023 and requested by Attorney General Knudsen.

Kristel Marie Blair was convicted in August 2025 on two counts of exploitation of an older person or incapacitated person as both victims were over the age of 65 when the crimes were committed.

In early 2019, Blair signed a Power of Attorney (POA) that allowed her to oversee her mother's finances and authorized her to make gifts, including cash, to her mother's family consistent with an "established pattern of giving." However, the POA prohibited her from compensating herself.

In December 2019, Blair violated the POA when she wrote and deposited two checks worth $61,000 into her account purportedly as a "gift investment."She violated the POA again in July 2020, when two additional transactions worth $15,840 were deposited into Blair's account. Each transaction exceeded Blair's authority under the POA and was not authorized by her stepfather. Blair is facing similar charges in Wyoming.

The case was investigated by the Division of Criminal Investigation's Elder Justice Unit, the Big Horn County Sheriff's Office, Montana Adult Protective Services, and the Sheridan County Wyoming Sheriff's Office.

The Elder Justice Unit is currently investigating 12 active cases. To report financial exploitation and abuse of seniors, Montanans can contact the Montana Department of Justice at 406-444-3874.

Montanans can report suspected cases of Medicaid fraud or elder abuse by calling the Medicaid Fraud hotline at 800-376-1115.

Special Meeting Of The City Council

Wednesday, March 11th, 2026 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Report

A. Appoint Walter "Wally" Congdon As City Attorney
B. Public Comment On Items Of Significant Public Interest Not On The Agenda And Within The Jurisdiction Of The City

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Montana Department of Commerce Weekly Roundup

Mark your calendar for the 2026 Made in Montana Trade Show for Food and Gifts, Saturday, March 14, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Lewis and Clark County Fairgrounds in Helena. This is the premier statewide event to see, sample and purchase the newest products and developments in the Made in Montana food and gift industry. Businesses interested in attending wholesale buyer day on March 13 must register.

The Montana Heritage Commission is looking for concessionaires interested in running business operations in historic Virginia City, Nevada City and Reeder's Alley in Helena. A list of currently available opportunities is at commerce.mt.gov. Please email mhc@mt.gov with any questions.

Save the date for the 2026 Montana Department of Commerce Governor's Conference on Tourism. This year's conference will be held Sept. 16-18 in Great Falls. More information will be available on the conference website when registration opens this spring.

Business

The Opportunities in Rural Economies Program is accepting applications from economic development organizations to enroll in the program through our online application portal. The enrollment period is open-ended, and organizations that are engaged in active economic development are encouraged to apply.

The Wood Products Revolving Loan Fund is accepting new applications under updated program guidelines. The program has transitioned to a loan participation structure for funding requests of up to $2 million and will continue to offer direct loans for amounts under $1 million. The application portal will remain open until all available funding has been committed to eligible businesses. Currently, the WP RLF has approximately $1.4 million available for lending. For more information, contact Program Specialist Chris Ryan at chris.ryan@mt.gov.

The Montana State Small Business Credit Initiative 2.0 Loan Participation Program-Recycled Funds application is open and will remain so for the duration of the program, with capital availability contingent on repayments from existing borrowers. A list of participating lenders with funds for

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recycling can be found on the SSBCI web page.

The Rural Tourism Asset Grant Program will accept applications now through March 26. The TAG Program supports projects that strengthen rural communities by enhancing visitor experiences with amenities, improving tourism assets and fostering economic growth.

The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Program is returning to Montana, and applications are now open until May 18 to small business owners ready to grow. This tuition-free, 12-week program offers one-on-one advice and personalized guidance, as well as better tools, clearer financials, stronger strategy and a trusted peer network to help grow small businesses. Businesses must be at least two years old, have at least two employees and have revenues over $75,000 in the most recent fiscal year.

The Montana Main Street Program seeks nominations for the Excellence on Main Street Awards. The award categories include best event, best education project or activity and small business of the year. The nomination deadline for is March 15. Click here for Excellence On Main Street Awards Guidelines.

Dillon Library invites the Public to attend upcoming Child Abuse and Neglect programs:

Strengthening Families, Safeguarding Futures: A Community-Based Approach to Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect

These are presentations in conjunction with a grant received from Montana Children's Trust Fund. The grant allows authority figures to present information that brings awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect to our community. The public is welcome to attend, and there will be light snacks provided. An activity will be available for children that come with parents/guardians.

March 10 at 5:30 p.m. : Chief of Police Joel Stewart will join the Representatives from Child and Family Services at their presentation at Dillon Public Library.

March 24 at 5:30 p.m. : Representatives from Child and Family Services and the CASA program (Court Appointed Special Advocates) will present at the Dillon Public Library.

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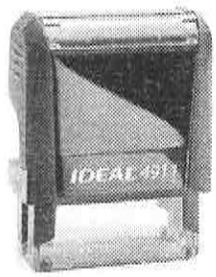
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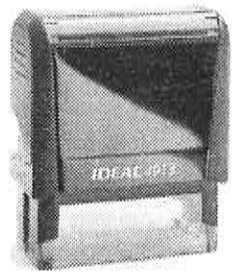
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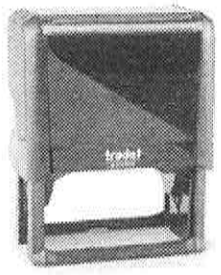
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3/6 - VAC BILL

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The Executive Director ensures operational excellence in animal care and services, financial stewardship, organizational sustainability, and community impact. This role is ultimately accountable for mission fulfillment as a no-kill shelter, fiscal health, fundraising success, staff leadership, and public representation of the organization. The Executive Director reports and is accountable to the Board of Directors.

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- Associate's degree or equivalent work experience and at least three (3) years of management experience.
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3/5-55 BILL

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If you would like to fill out a "Declaration of Intent and Oath of Candidacy For Trustee Candidate", please contact Deb Harrison .

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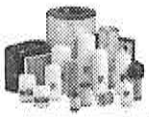
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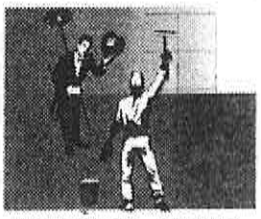
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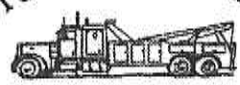
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