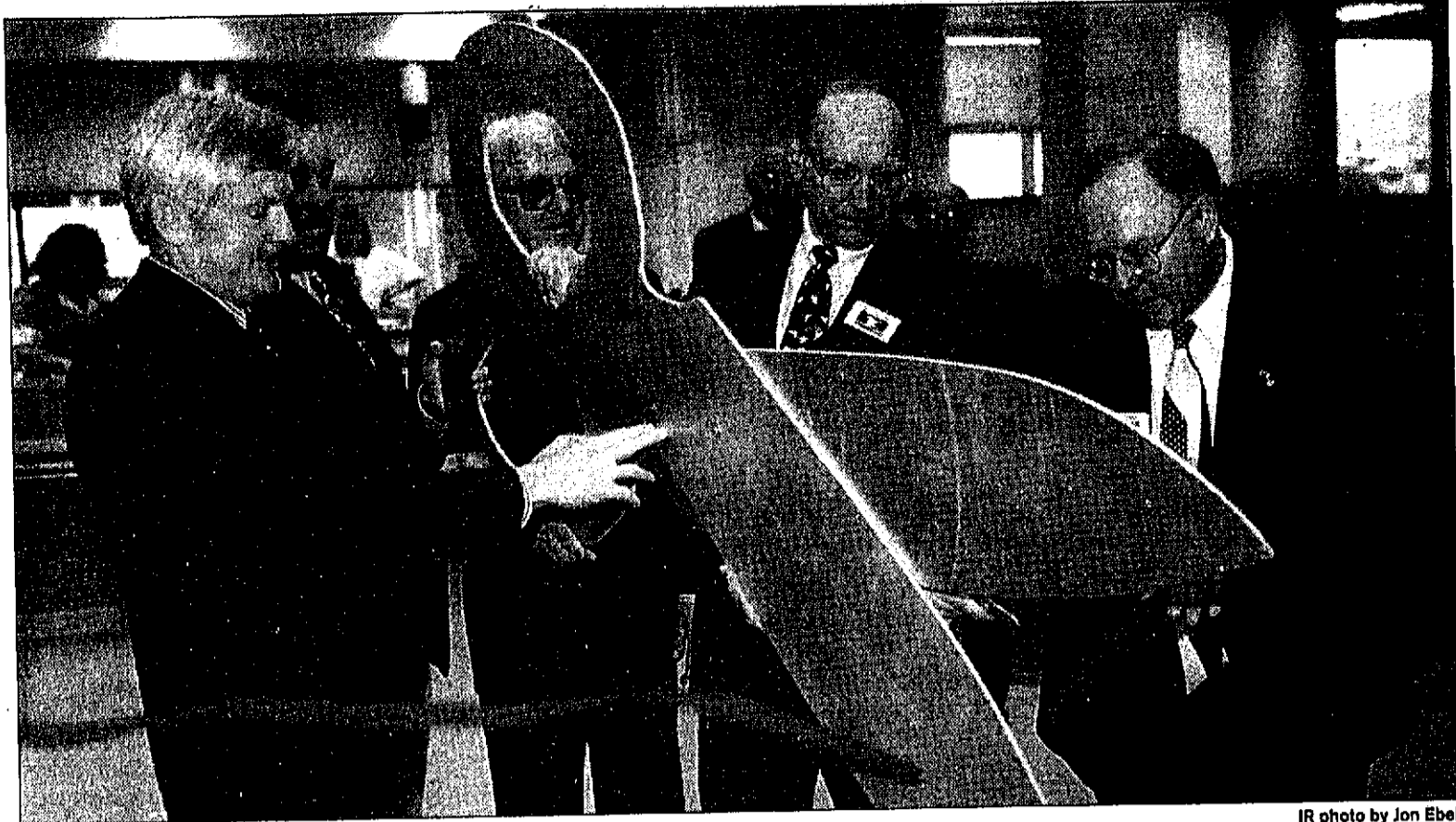


# Home

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## AMERICAN FEDERAL RIBBON CUTTING



IR photo by Jon Ebel

Officers at the new American Federal Savings Bank, located at 1400 Prospect, held a ribbon cutting ceremony Wednesday morning. Many local business leaders turned out for the event, which concluded with a tour of the brand new facility. Pictured, left to right, are Helena City Commissioner Tom McGree, Helena Independent Record Publisher Bruce Whittenberg, former bank presidents Bob Wallace and Bob Pennington and current bank president Larry Dreyer.

Shoes were the biggest item in the clothing budget, it was reported in 1903, although the sisters were able to buy them in large lots and didn't worry too much about sizes, for "there was always someone who could use them." Good management and a generous community kept costs amazingly low, a far cry from today's institutional costs. In 1903, the monthly cost per child at St. Joseph's was \$7.61.

Inevitably, changes began occurring in the Helena Valley. Extensive irrigation projects made possible by hydroelectric plants on the Missouri were making croplands increasingly productive. There were new water recreation facilities, burgeoning housing, and state-of-the-art dredging equipment was extracting gold from the Valley's gravels directly across North Montana Avenue from St. Joseph's.

**MORE IMPORTANTLY**, for this and other private institutions dedicated to the care of children, social and medical advances gradually diminished their need. Fewer mothers were dying in childbirth, and public agencies were taking over a greater share of care for needy children.

In October, 1935, a series of deadly earthquakes struck Helena and particularly the Helena Valley, severely damaging the complex that had nurtured so many children for so long. The nearly 300 boys and girls were first moved to various locations around Helena, including Northern Pacific Railroad, cars that also doubled as classrooms for high school students whose new building became an earthquake casualty. It was not long before St. Joseph's children, through the influence of U.S. Sen. James E. Murray, were moved to the spacious Boulder Hot Springs resort.

Repairs to St. Joseph's, completed in 1937, allowed the children to return. The sisters soon realized, however, that the need for their home was diminishing. As the 1940s approached, the school on the grounds was closed, and the remaining children began going to school in Helena by bus.

In 1959, just as the sisters determined to close the doors of St. Joseph's, Fidel Castro came to power in Cuba. Alarmed Cuban families sent their children in large numbers to this country for refuge, especially to Catholic institutions designed to care for children.

**FOR SEVERAL YEARS** in the early 1960s, the halls at St. Joseph's again rang with the sounds of youth, this time with a Spanish accent. There was Latin music and "fractured English" as the young Cubans were cared for by the white-clad "Seestaires" who were trying hard to learn the language of their new charges.

By the summer of 1965, residents at the home dwindled as

more and more of the Cuban youngsters were reunited with their families. It was then that Bishop Raymond Hunthausen, in concert with Mother Leo Frances Ryan of the Sisters of Charity in Leavenworth, decided to close the doors of St. Joseph's forever.

The land was sold to the Montana Power Company, and eventually the buildings were demolished and the land cleared of its aging trees. There was talk in the late 1970s that a shopping center to be known as Frontier Mall was planned, but official moratoriums on such developments effectively stopped any such plans.

**IN 1987**, veteran miner Al Ballard and his family, in association with Butte mining interests, opened a placer mining operation at the site, sluicing gravel native to the area and later trucking in ore from Grizzly Gulch. Although criticized in some quarters for their gravel-hauling activity and for despoiling these historic grounds, Ballard and his associates could

point to the fact that their operation, which ended in 1990, had effectively filled in much of a swamp-like area on the eastern edge of the property with the gravel they had won their.


When their St. Joseph's Home for Children closed in 1965, the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth went on to other assignments. But their presence in Helena and the Helena Valley in appreciable numbers and in the full habit of their order is still felt and

remembered.

When one considers the contributions these valiant women made to the welfare of children, it is important to go back once more to 1903 and the *Montana Daily Record*. In a statement that still resonates today, the reporter wrote, "The condition of these children is infinitely better than many children who have homes of their own, and who yet know the meaning of 'neglect and want'."

**VIVIAN PALADIN**, former editor of *MONTANA the Magazine of Western History*, lives in Helena and has written widely about Montana and Helena history and art.

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## DEATHS

### William Lewis

William James "Bill" Lewis, 83, of 309 S. California died at his home following an extended illness. He was born May 2, 1913, in Winifred, S.D. to the late Philip C. and Mary Ann Lewis.

Bill worked in logging, mining

and ranching in South Dakota, Colorado, Idaho and Montana. He was a resident of Montana since 1964, living in Stevensville, Harlowton and Helena. He loved being in the outdoors working, hunting or fishing.

He loved spending time with his family. Bill collected antiques, loved auctions and was a keen student of politics his entire life. His memory will be with his family any time they are in the great outdoors.

Mr. Lewis was preceded in death by an infant son, Richard.

Survivors include his wife, Virginia; son and daughter-in-law, David and Karen Lewis; daughter, Jo Ann Williams; three granddaughters and their husbands, Mike and Michele Fairclough, Jim and Blair Hanson, all of Helena and Bret and Charlene Richardson of Ronan, Mont.; two grandsons and their wives, Helen and Mike Williams of Siegelbach, Germany and Jim and Jessica Lewis of Modesto, Calif.; grandchildren, Alyssa, Maggie and Sage Fairclough; and great grandchildren, Megan and Brittnee Richardson of Ronan; a brother, Randall of Thompson Falls, Mont.; two sisters, Grace Roberts and Viola Hamman, both of Rapid City, S.D.

A celebration of life will be held in the spring at his favorite hunting spot on Grassy Mountain near Townsend.

Family prefuneral memorials be sent to Hospice of St. Peter's, 2312 Lockey Ave., Helena, Mont. 59601-9961 or to the First Presbyterian Church Building Fund, 535 N. Ewing, Helena, Mont. 59601.

Hagler-Anderson Mortuary was in charge of local arrangements.

## STATE DEATHS

- Anaconda — Edward Blodnick, 67.
- Bainville — Hilda S. Vannatta, 85.
- Billings — Walter D. Jones, 67.
- Butte — Catherine Casey, 80.
- Columbus — Carrie L. Alwine, 80; Greg G. Kline.
- Craig — David S. Sutton, 77.
- Cut Bank — Juleene R. McNichol, 81.
- Deer Lodge — Gordon Hultgren, 66.
- Fort Benton — Frank Anderson, 72.

## CITY DIARY

### TODAY IN HELENA

- 7:30 p.m. — City/County Trails to Trails meets in Room 309 of the City/County Bldg. Call 449-6488 for information.
- 4 p.m. — Joint City/County Commission meeting in Room 326 of City/County Bldg.
- 7:30 p.m. — The Baltimore Consort: Music of the Renaissance performs British, French and Italian music at the Helena Middle School. Call 443-0287 for ticket information.

### ORGANIZATIONS

**Search and Reunion Support Group for Adult Adoptees**, St. John's Building 25 S. Ewing, Library Conference Room. Call 449-3266 for information.

**Alcoholics Anonymous** Thursday meeting times. Call 443-0438. (C) closed meetings, (O) open meetings and (ns) non-smoking.

- 6:45 a.m. — (c), Jorgenson's Restaurant.
- 8:30 a.m. — Boulder Hot Springs, Main Lobby (C)(NS).
- Noon — (ns)(c), St. Peter's Episcopal Church.
- Noon — 621 N. Main.
- 5:30 p.m. — (c), 621 N. Main.
- 6:45 p.m. — 621 N. Main (o).
- 7 p.m. — Methodist Church, Lincoln, (o)(ns).
- 7 p.m. — (o)(NS), New Life Lutheran, 5980 N. Montana.
- 7:30 p.m. — FWP Building, Main Floor, 1420 E. 6th Ave. (NS)(C).
- 8 p.m. — (ns)(c), St. Paul's Methodist Church.
- 8 p.m. — (o), 621 N. Main.

**Al-Anon Family Group** meetings for Thursday.  
9:30 a.m. — Thursday Morning AFG, St. Paul's Methodist Church, 505 Logan (bride's room).  
8 p.m. — Plymouth Congregational Church, 400 S. Oakes

**Overeaters Anonymous** meeting at noon at St. Paul's Methodist Church Half Way Up Room, 505 Logan.

**TOPS** (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) will meet at 10 a.m. at St. Peter's Episcopal Church.

**OASIS** (The Organization of Adult Singles Into Socializing), 442-5479 or 449-7120.

This paper is read on the Radio Reading Service for people who are blind or otherwise can't read a newspaper. Free. Call 1-800-942-7323.

If you are suicidal or know someone who is, a staff member from Mental Health Services can help. Call this 24-hour number: 443-5353 if busy call 1-800-221-0106.

- For meetings times and locations call:
- Parents Anonymous — 442-0227
  - Narcotics Anonymous — 1-800-990-6262
  - Gamblers Anonymous — 449-8268
  - Overeaters Anonymous — 449-4943
  - Parents Without Partners — 443-1120 or 227-6173

## FUNERAL NOTICES

### THURSDAY

**GERMAN**, Elizabeth J., 89, of 1023 Billings Ave. Mass of the Resurrection will be Thurs. Mar. 6th, 11 a.m. from St. Helena Cathedral. Interment Services in Resurrection Cemetery. Family prefers memorials to St. Helena Cathedral, 530 N. Ewing, Helena, MT 59601 or to Home Health Care, 2525 Colonial Dr., Helena, MT 59601.

Hagler-Anderson Mortuary 442-8520

### FRIDAY

**TRENT**, Nellie B., age 88 of Helena. Memorial service will be conducted Friday at 10 a.m., at St. Paul's United Methodist Church.

Retz Funeral Home 442-1550

### SATURDAY

**JONES**, Mae C., age 91, of 7170 Green Meadow Dr. A celebration of Mae's life will be Sat. March 8th from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Neighborhood Center on Cruse Ave. Memorials may be given to the Shrine Hospital c/o Algeria Shrine Temple, P.O. Box 4879, Helena, MT 59604, or of the donor's choice.

Hagler-Anderson Mortuary 442-8520

### MONDAY

**CAHILL**, Wilda D. age 76, of 811 Hoback. Viewing hours Sunday, March 9th, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Vigil service scheduled for 7 p.m. Sunday at Retz Funeral Home. Funeral Mass Monday, March 10th at 10 a.m. at St. Helena Cathedral. Memorials suggested to Carroll College or an organization of donor's choice.

Retz Funeral Home 442-1550

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**Notice of Canyon Creek Fire District Election**

The Canyon Creek Fire District will hold its annual election on April 1, 1997. Three trustees will be elected for three year terms.

Any resident and all owners of real property in the district who are registered to vote may vote in this election. Property owners must present proof of an interest in the property at the polls. Anyone who lives in Birdseye but whose property is in the Canyon Creek Fire District must vote at the Canyon Creek School.

Information on absentee ballots is available from:  
**Constance Horder, Kettle Gulch, Canyon Creek, MT 59633, 368-2222. Written requests for absentee ballots must be received no later than noon, March 31, 1997, or an absentee ballot cannot be issued.**

On April 1, the polls will be open from Noon to 8:00 p.m. at the Canyon Creek School.

**Constance Horder, Deputy Election Administrator**

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL SCHOOL ELECTION**  
of Kessler School District No. 2  
Lewis and Clark County, Montana for the  
**Election of One (1) Trustee for a three (3) year term,**  
will be held on Tuesday, April 1, 1997 at the Kessler School. The polls will be open between the hours of 12:00 noon & 8:00 p.m.

A qualified registered elector, who will be absent from the county or physically incapacitated & unable to go to the polls on the day of election, may request an "Application for Absentee Voter's ballot" from the school district clerk's office located at:  
2420 Chateau Street, Helena, MT 59601

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