

On the Road

On May 6, 2009, around 1300 hours, Trooper Dan Amundson stopped a black 1998 Ford SUV bearing California license plate for speeding eastbound on I-90 near mm 273 in Broadwater County. The occupants made furtive gestures while vehicle was coming to stop. Furthermore, the occupants gave conflicting stories and were not familiar with each other.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was contacted and spoke with subjects by phone. The agent requested that two of the vehicle occupants be detained for suspicion of not being in the U.S. legally.

Permission to search the vehicle was requested and signed a written consent was given. No drugs were detected, but a bi-fold wallet with no identification contained \$1,347 currency. Under the right front seat was a receipt for cashing a \$1,232.27 check at National Quick Cash in Butte at 1216 hours on May 6, 2009.

Trooper Braun contacted National Quick Cash in Butte and determined that one of the vehicle occupants had cashed the check using a California ID card, presenting himself as the subject named on the check. The remaining vehicle occupants were questioned about their identities and activities, and two additional subjects were subsequently arrested.



One of the subjects was expertly interviewed by Trooper Meskiman and confided that the vehicle occupants were involved in a check cashing ring and had just cashed a check in Butte. That subject admitted that additional checks were concealed in her bra.

All subjects were arrested and transported to the Broadwater County detention center. At the jail, 17 U.S. Treasury Tax Refund checks in various names were located in the female's underwear totaling \$27,922. Also located in her bra were 18 California ID cards or driver licenses with her picture and various associated names that corresponded to the checks. Also present in the underwear were 13 California ID cards or driver licenses with one of the male's picture and various names associated with the checks.

One male had \$661 cash on his person, another had \$1800, another had \$2568, and another had \$2002, while the last male subject admitted ownership of wallet with \$1,347. The female admitted she was going to be paid \$1000 for her role in the check cashing trip. It is still under investigation as to if the checks were stolen or are counterfeit.

All persons, cash, checks, and evidence were turned over to ICE agents for possible federal charges of aggravated identity theft, conspiracy, and transportation of stolen monetary instruments. The vehicle was seized and impounded.

☆☆☆

At approximately 0022 hours on February 20, 2009, a 1995 Pontiac Grand Am was southbound on Montana secondary Highway 451 near milepost 13 when the driver drifted off the roadway to the right. The driver overcorrected and left the roadway to the left,



where it went down an embankment and through a fence. The vehicle then vaulted an irrigation ditch and rolled, during which time the unrestrained right rear passenger was ejected and suffered fatal injuries. Two other passengers were injured and transported to a Billings hospital, while the driver fled the scene, only to be captured at a nearby residence. Speed and alcohol were factors in this crash, which was investigated by Trooper Mark Olsen (MHP 323) and Rick Starks (MHP 309), with assistance from Trooper Tony Beehler (MHP 172).

☆☆☆

On March 18, 2009, Trooper Tony Beehler (MHP 172) and Trooper Jason Grover (MHP 232) assisted with a safety presentation at the Montana Holiday Inn Trade Center in Billings. Troopers



more ►

Montana Trooper

ON THE ROAD *continued*



provided the use of the seat belt convincer and provided instruction for a driving course.

The Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), formally FHA, sponsored the program. The program director estimated 1200 students attended the presentation. Numerous activities pertaining to traffic safety were additionally present. Commercial carriers provided a truck trailer outlining the blind spots and other safety concerns with commercial vehicles. The Montana Department of Transportation provided use of traffic cones for the event, while the Billings Police Department demonstrated alcohol impairment with goggles.

The driving course was a simple "S" curve coned course. Underriner Motors provided a driver education car for the event. The students drove the course first without any distractions. The second attempt on the course was negotiated while utilizing a cell phone with an emphasis on texting while driving. Some students were able to negotiate the course rather well, while others failed miserably. Adults attempting the course had more difficulty than some of the students. It was apparent students are familiar with texting and using a cell phone more efficiently than most adults. It was still evident, however, that cell phone use while driving put divided attention skills to the test and is not a safe practice. The car was consequently retired with scuffs on both sides from the cones.

☆☆☆



Pictured are Troopers Josh Giddings, Cherie Lofton, Brett Charvat, and Dave Oliverson assisting with a two vehicle, eight injury crash on Interstate 90, mile-post 301, near Bozeman, on June 25, 2009. Photos by Sergeant Steve Wisniewski.

☆☆☆

On March 1, 2009, Bozeman troopers assisted with evacuations and site security as a result of a huge explosion and fire on Main Street in downtown Bozeman, which took the life of one person.



☆☆☆

Early in the evening of April 7, 2009, a 1980 Ford Bronco was east-bound on Goodluck Road near Lodge Grass when the driver slowly drifted off the right side of the roadway. The vehicle dug into the field and struck an approach. The vehicle then rolled, and two of the three unrestrained male occupants were ejected. One of the passengers died at the scene, while the driver died later at a local hospital. Alcohol use was believed to be a factor in this fatal crash investigated by Trooper Joe Coughlin (MHP 234), with assistance from Trooper Tony Beehler (MHP 172) and Trooper Rick Starks (MHP 309).



☆☆☆

On April 9, 2009, a single vehicle, double fatality crash occurred on US Highway 87 North, just south of Big Sandy. The driver was traveling at a high rate of speed and was under the influence of drugs and alcohol. The driver of the vehicle entered a corner and failed to maintain control of the vehicle, resulting in the vehicle rolling over. The driver and left rear passenger

more ►

Montana Trooper

ON THE ROAD *continued*



tance from Trooper Jeffery Martin (MHP 212) and Chris Baker (MHP 331).

☆☆☆

In January of 2009, Trooper Robert Hooper became stuck in the interstate median while still in field training. He tried to keep it quiet by calling in for a tow himself, but a DOT snow plow driver spotted him and called the incident into county dispatch. Lucky for

him, the deputy that responded had a camera. As luck would have it, history repeated itself, as noted in the second picture.

☆☆☆

Trooper Patrick McCarthy submitted these two photos as examples of obstructed windshields he came



were not wearing their seatbelts, resulting in the ejection of both. Fortunately, the right front passenger was wearing her seatbelt and was released from the hospital a few days later. The female indicated that prior to the crash, the two male passengers had been taunting her for wearing her seatbelt. This fatal crash was investigated by Trooper David DeLaitre (MHP 269) with assis-



Inter-District Memorial Day CPU

Sgt. Bender organized a CPU for rarely patrolled US Highway 2 between Kalispell and East Glacier on May 22, 2009, in advance of Memorial Day. Sgt. Bender, Troopers Melton and Duram met up with Sgt. Lavin, and Troopers Barcus and LeRette. It was a beautiful sunny day in NW Montana. Lunch was had at the Half-Way House restaurant, meeting up with retired Trooper Bob Marshall. Excellent buffalo burgers found there, by the way. After a filling lunch, it was decided that the fine occasion should be recorded with a snapshot at the Silver Staircase (milepost 188). Sgt. Lavin worked for several minutes setting up the camera across the roadway on the guardrail, using small pebbles to be sure it was straight. Trooper Duram then blurted out, "Hey Sarge, you need a tripod?" I thanked him for not advising me earlier, and we got some pictures. All this fun, and yes, we did make a bunch of stops and kept the public safe!



more >

Montana Trooper

ON THE ROAD *continued*

across in the course of his patrol this past winter in the Missoula area. A suitable caption might be, "You've got to be kidding," but feel free to insert your own caption.

☆☆☆

On June 4, 2009, a Mitsubishi passenger car was northbound on 12 Mile Road near Shepherd when the driver crested a hill and lost control of his vehicle, first drifting right and then overcorrecting to the left, crossing the center line of the two lane roadway. The driver began to overcorrect back to the right when it struck a southbound truck and trailer head on. The unrestrained driver was fully ejected and suffered fatal injuries, while the restrained passenger in the Mitsubishi remained inside the vehicle and suffered serious injuries. The restrained driver and passenger of the truck were uninjured in this fatal crash investigated by Trooper Darvin Mees (MHP 304), with assistance from Troopers Dell Aman (MHP 158) and Brian Sampson (MHP 290), as well as Sgt. Scott Ayers (MHP 131).



☆☆☆

On May 6, 2009, at approximately 2300 hours, a 1994 Volvo was traveling westbound in the eastbound lanes of Interstate 90 near Laurel when the female driver crested a hill and rounded a curve. At the same time, two commercial vehicles were eastbound, occupying both eastbound lanes of traffic. The driver of one of the commercial vehicles was unable to see the vehicle traveling the wrong way and unable to take evasive maneuvers, with the two vehicles strik-

ing head on in the left hand eastbound lane. The Volvo was dragged several hundred feet and burst into flames, killing the female driver on impact. The driver and passenger of the commercial vehicle were uninjured. Alcohol and drugs were factors in this fatal crash investigated by Trooper Justin Moran (MHP 305), with assistance from Troopers Dell Aman (MHP 158), Jason Grover (MHP 232), and Rick Starks (MHP 309).



☆☆☆

On May 12, 2009, at approximately 0705 hours, a 2008 Nissan Maxima was northbound at a high rate of speed on 88th Street West outside Billings in Yellowstone when the roadway transitioned from pavement to dirt and gravel. The driver lost control, with the vehicle traveling off the right side of the roadway and rolling, coming to rest on its wheels. The unrestrained female driver was fully ejected and died at the scene from her injuries. Speed and alcohol were contributing factors to this crash, which was investigated by Trooper Buck O'Neill (MHP 278), with assistance from Troopers Dell Aman (MHP 158) and Barry Mitchell (MHP 226).



☆☆☆

On April 21, 2009, at approximately 0530 hours, this vehicle was heading west on East Edgewood Drive in Whitefish. The driver fell asleep and drifted off the south side of the road. Once off the road, the vehicle struck a privately owned fence. The photos speak for themselves as to how lucky the driver is to be alive. Had he been sitting upright instead of slumped over on his right side, he probably would have been killed.



☆☆☆



Trooper Tammy Perkins (MHP 334) spotted this vehicle and precarious load in Ennis this past winter, noting the American ingenuity it took to pull this off.

☆☆☆

more ➤

Traffic Stop Leads to Drug Charges

By BECKY SHAW — *The Gazette Staff*
Published on Tuesday, June 23, 2009.
Reprinted with permission.

A Montana Highway Patrol trooper who stopped a vehicle because its license plate was difficult to see found \$6,000 and several stashes of marijuana in the car.

The result of Trooper Shane Warehime's stop was that Daryl Lynn Big Hair, 27, has been charged with felony criminal possession of drugs with intent to distribute and misdemeanor charges of criminal possession of drug paraphernalia, driving while his license was suspended and failure to show proof of insurance.

He is being held on \$15,000 bond and is expected to enter a plea Thursday in District Court.

He is also being held on \$875 bond for warrants issued by Hardin City Court. The vehicle, money, other items and the suspected drugs were taken by a DEA agent.

Big Hair was driving a black Nissan Pathfinder south

on the Zoo Drive overpass Friday and was eventually arrested on the traffic allegations.

During a search of the Pathfinder, Warehime found a large plastic sack with a green leafy substance, suspected to be marijuana, in the center console.

Two backpacks found during the search held more suspected drugs and paraphernalia, authorities said.

Big Hair admitted to lying to troopers and allowed them to make another search of the vehicle and backpacks, police said, and they found more cash and suspected marijuana.

They also found a laptop computer with memory sticks and memory chips and a digital scale with suspected marijuana residue on it along with a ball of green leafy substance suspected to be drugs, authorities said.

Big Hair told the trooper that he had smoked marijuana earlier in the day and that he uses the scale to ensure he does not get "ripped off" during buys, police said.

On January 22, 2009, a trooper stopped a 2008 Dodge truck for speeding eastbound on Interstate 90, near milepost 22, in Mineral County. The vehicle occupants were from Kalispell and were reportedly traveling from Washington to Kalispell. The stories of the vehicle occupants didn't match, and the trooper asked for consent to search the vehicle, which was granted in writing. While the trooper was requesting back-up and running criminal histories, he saw something black tossed out of the window of the truck and land in the snow bank. A weapons search of the driver revealed a metal spoon with white residue, which the driver claimed to have used to crush Oxycotin. A search of the vehicle revealed 21 syringes. A review of the black case thrown from the vehicle revealed multiple baggies with white residue. On the way to the jail, the female passenger denied knowing it was cocaine in the bag she'd thrown out, but the trooper had not told her what was in it. Total drugs seized were 132 grams of cocaine and 84.5 grams of methamphetamine. Cash found on the vehicle occupants totaled \$563 US currency.

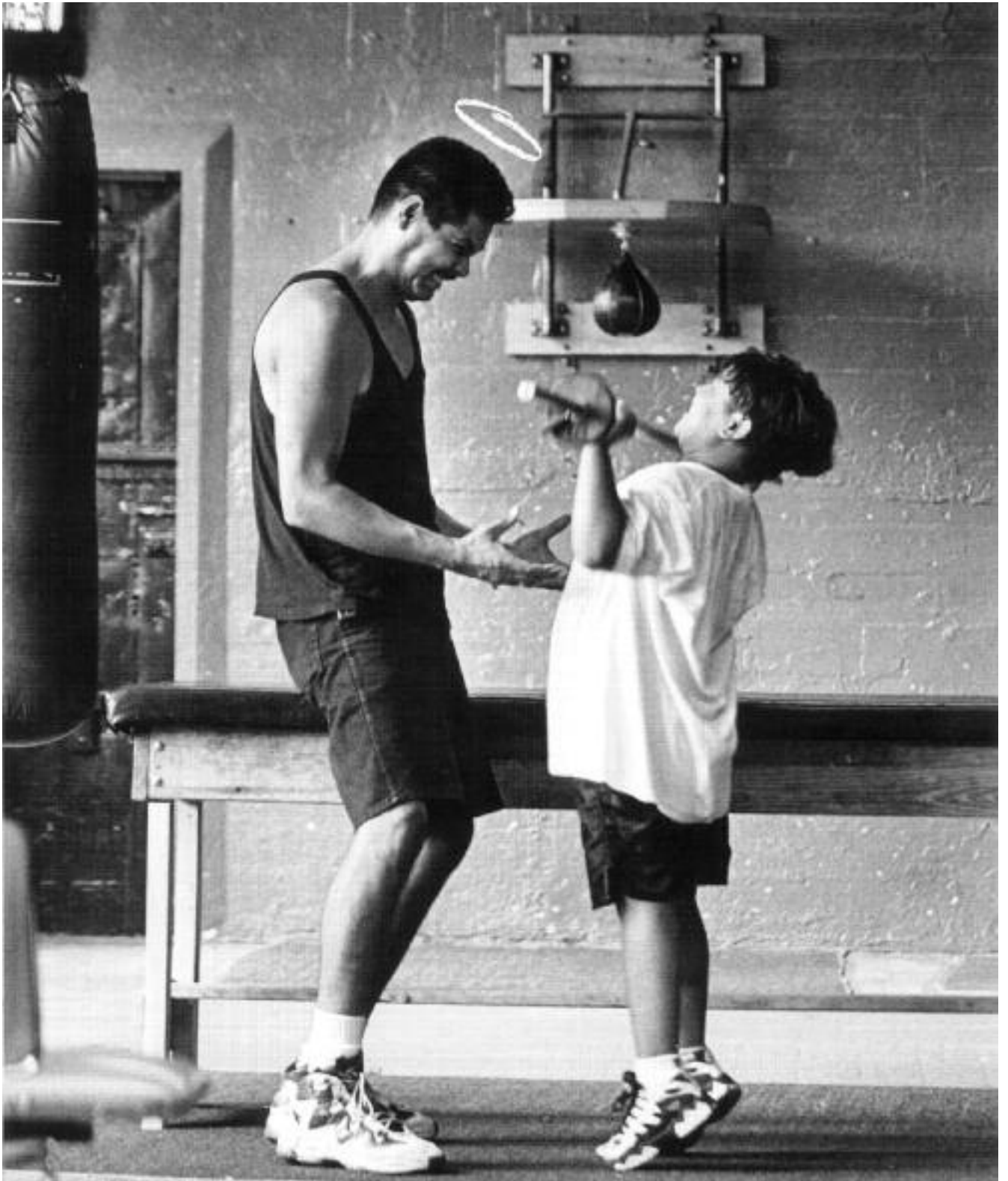
On February 10, 2009, at 2204 hours, a trooper investigated a traffic crash involving a 1999 Chevrolet Tahoe with Washington registration which had been traveling eastbound on Montana Highway in Missoula County. The driver was a resident of Washington, and a bystander reported to the trooper that the driver had hidden some items nearby after the crash. The trooper located a duffel bag, which the driver denied ownership of. Since he denied ownership, the bag was searched, at which time five Ziploc bags of marijuana were discovered. Imprints of the driver's shoes matched those leading to the location the bag was found at, and he had a large amount of currency on his person. A search warrant was obtained for the vehicle which revealed some trace marijuana, as well as an electronic scale. The total seizure was 5 lbs of marijuana, 1 electronic scale, 1 marijuana pipe, and \$3,806 in US Currency.

On March 5, 2009, at 0650 hours, a trooper stopped a 1993 Chevrolet Cavalier with Washington license plates for speeding that was traveling eastbound on Interstate 90 near milepost 134 in Custer County. The driver indi-

cated she was traveling from Washington to North Dakota, and there were discrepancies with regard to the registration of the vehicle. Her story and the male passenger's story did not agree, and there were indicators of drug trafficking in sight inside the vehicle. A subsequent check revealed the vehicle occupants to have a prior drug history. The vehicle was subsequently impounded and a search warrant was obtained, which revealed 1 pound of marijuana, 1.5 ounces of crystal methamphetamine, and \$150 in counterfeit US currency.

On April 19, 2009, at approximately 2327 hours, on Interstate 90 near milepost 273 in Broadwater County, a trooper stopped a 2009 Chevrolet Impala for speeding. The driver, an Oregon resident, indicated he was traveling from Oregon to Minnesota. Inside the vehicle were indicators of possible drug trafficking activity, and the details of the driver's story were suspicious. The trooper asked for consent to search the vehicle, and consent was granted. When the trooper looked in the trunk, he noted two duffel bags with three five gallon plastic paint cans. Each can contained

more ▶



DO GOOD. MENTOR A CHILD. CALL 1-877-BE A MENTOR.*

To be a mentor, you don't have to be perfect. You just have to be yourself which, by the way, is pretty good.

*Toll-free call.

**Save the Children**
A NETWORK OF SUPPORT FOR U.S. CHILDREN

Ad
Council

Montana Trooper

ON THE ROAD *continued*

a bale of raw marijuana. During the search, the driver kept attempting to make a phone call. When he was placed in custody, the driver asked, "Do you have mercy for the widow's son?" The total seizure was 11 lbs, 1 oz of marijuana.

On April 22, 2009, at approximately 1806 hours, on Interstate 94 near milepost 131 westbound in Custer County, Trooper Muri stopped a 2003 Chevrolet Blazer for a registration violation. The driver indicated he was traveling to Missoula. The driver's story appeared to be suspicious, and the trooper subsequently asked for consent to search the vehicle, which was given. Upon opening the vehicle, the trooper smelled raw marijuana and subsequently located a plastic bag with four bundles of cash totaling \$29,524. The driver was arrested, the vehicle impounded, and the money seized.

On April 30, 2009, at approximately 1629 hours, a trooper stopped a 2001 Ford truck with California license plates for speeding eastbound on Interstate 94, near milepost 190, in Prairie County. The driver indicated she was traveling from California to North Dakota, and

the trooper noted the rear bumper appeared to be larger than normal, plus the rear cargo box appeared to have been modified. The trooper asked for consent to search, which was granted, and the trooper noted the truck had been tampered with. A K-9 also alerted to the vehicle, and the truck box was subsequently removed at a local body shop, which revealed a hidden compartment with packages wrapped in green plastic wrap. After a search warrant was executed, 28 lbs. of marijuana were removed from the compartment.

☆☆☆

On March 17, 2009, an elderly male was eastbound on Old Highway 10 about 4 miles east of Columbus, when, for an undetermined reason, he drove off the left side of the roadway, where the vehicle, a 1991 Oldsmobile, vaulted into a ravine. Despite being restrained, the extreme severity of the crash caused fatal injuries to the driver in this crash investigated by Trooper Brenda Timm (MHP 202) with assistance from Sergeant JV Moody (MHP 155).



☆☆☆

In the early hours of May 17, 2009, Trooper Mark Wilfore was in pursuit of a vehicle on Birch Creek Road on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation when a cow ran onto the roadway in front of his patrol vehicle, resulting in substantial damage to his patrol vehicle.



☆☆☆

In March of 2009, a male driver was eastbound on U.S. 2 in Columbia Heights when a Montana Highway Patrol trooper with the Strategic Traffic Enforcement Team noticed the pickup truck had expired license plates and initiated a traffic stop.

As the truck pulled off the road, the trooper noticed the male driver pull a rifle from near the back window. The truck then crossed a field, where it stopped after running into a fence.

Because the driver was slumped over and out of sight, the trooper called for backup before approaching the truck. Deputies with the Flathead County SWAT team

responded with an armored vehicle, and Highway Patrol troopers later found the driver dead in the front seat.

The apparent suicide is still under investigation, but the driver had recently had lost his job and experienced a death in the family.

The driver also had a misdemeanor warrant out of Columbia Falls and had been drinking before the shooting occurred.

Officers found the man's pickup truck with the doors locked, windows rolled up, and no holes from bullets fired from outside the vehicle. A .22-caliber rifle was recovered from the cab. □

FINAL PATROL

Deceased Members of the Montana State Highway Patrol



TROOPER MICHAEL WARREN HAYNES

Trooper Michael Warren Haynes, 28, passed away Friday, March 27, 2009, at Kalispell Regional Medical Center as the result of an automobile accident that occurred Monday morning, March 23, 2009, while on duty south of Kalispell.

Mike was born July 7, 1980, in Westlake, Calif., to John and Melody Haynes. He was raised in Sylmar, Calif., until his teens, when they moved to Kalispell. He attended schools in the Flathead Valley, graduating from Flathead High School in 2000.

He enlisted in the Army National Guard after high school, where he served with C Company 1-163rd Infantry Battalion out of Missoula in Operation Iraqi Freedom from December 2004 to November 2005.

Mike worked in guest services at Hume Lake Christian Camp in California where he met Tawny. They were married March 15, 2004, in Kalispell. Mike and Tawny attended Faith Alliance Church in Kalispell.

Mike attended the Montana Highway Patrol Recruit Academy starting on April 9, 2006, and was sworn in as a trooper on August 10,

2006.

He enjoyed video games, shooting, and playing with his children.

He is survived by his wife, Tawny, of Kalispell; his daughter, 3 1/2-year-old Taryn; and his son, 16-month-old Elias; his parents, John and Melody Haynes; his brother, Matthew, and wife, Christina Haynes; his sister, Joanna, and husband, Jamison Wing; grandfather, Mark Lilley; and a host of aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews and nieces.

Funeral services were held at 1 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, 2009, at the Christian Center Assembly of God Church, 107 Summit Ridge, in Kalispell. Burial services were at Glacier Memorial Gardens, with military honors by the Montana Army National Guard. The Montana Highway Patrol performed the "last call" at the graveside.

A benefit fund is set up at First Interstate Bank, and in lieu of flowers, donations can also be made to the Montana Hope Project.

You are invited to go to www.Buffalohillfh.com to leave condolences. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home is caring for the family.

more ➤

continued



CAPTAIN BODLEY B. VACURA

MISSOULA – Bodley B. Vacura, 97, passed away at his daughter's home on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2009.

Bodley was born on Jan. 21, 1912, in Camas Prairie to Annie and Louis Vacura. Bodley graduated from Plains High School. Bodley would marry Helen Wells in 1936 and they spent 56 wonderful years together dancing, playing bridge and golfing. Bodley served honorably in World War II and saw action in Italy, France and Germany; he fought valiantly in the Battle of the Bulge and was stationed aboard ship en route to the Pacific Theater to fight against Japan when the war ended.

He graduated with the second graduating class of the Montana Highway Patrol in 1937. Bodley worked in Columbus and Anaconda; he served as captain in Helena and was district commander of the Patrol in Great Falls. Bodley finally retired from the patrol 1963. The family moved to Missoula in 1961. He worked with the Missoula Sheriff's office for a time after retirement from the Highway Patrol.

Bodley had many business interests in Missoula; he owned the first automatic car wash in Missoula, had an interest in an auto parts store, and was involved in VW ice with his son Tom. As part of that partnership, Bodley mentored many young men and made many friends and business associates.

He was past president of the local VFW, a member of Grizzly Scholarship Association; past board member of the retired Highway Patrol Association, where he was instrumental in restructuring the Montana Highway Patrol retirement system. He was an avid Grizzly basketball and football fan,

attending basketball games until he was 96 years old. After retirement, he and his wife Helen traveled extensively in the states and overseas.

Bodley lived a long, varied, interesting life with many accomplishments; the most important being his relationships with his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Bodley is survived by daughter, Collette (Richard) Johnson, and son, Tom of Missoula; three grandchildren, Lisa (Scott) Sterneckert of Westlake, Ohio, Andrea (Jim) Meckes of Avon, Ohio, and Ken (Shelly) Johnson of Missoula; six great-grandchildren, Cody and Mackenzie Meckes, Ava and Liam Johnson, Connor and Amanda Sterneckert. In addition, he is survived by sisters, Levina Noll of Fairbanks, Alaska, Ramona (Glenn) Larson of Missoula, Roxy Brothers of Kalispell; and brother, Joe (Florence) of Kalispell. Bodley is further survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

Bodley was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Helen; great-granddaughter, Cloe Sterneckert; sisters, Edith, Gertie and Florence; and his brothers, Ed, Clarence, Wesley, Albert, John and Jerry.

Instead of flowers, please make donations to the Association of Montana Troopers charity: Montana Hope Project, P.O. Box 5927, Helena, MT 59604.

Funeral Mass was celebrated on Thursday, Feb. 26, 2009, at 11 a.m. at St. Anthony Catholic Church, 217 Tremont St., Missoula. A luncheon followed the Mass in the church hall; internment followed the luncheon at Old St. Mary's Cemetery at 2 p.m. with military honors. Sunset Memorial Funeral Home assisted the family with arrangements. □

BRONCO
OILFIELD SERVICES

369 Blairtown Road • Rock Springs, WY 82901

BOB PINTER
Sales

Office: (307) 362-5106
Fax: (307) 362-9706
Cellular: (307) 354-8277
Email: rpinter@brncoservices.com

ISO 9001:2000
SAFETY PAYS IN EVERY WAY

D.A.R.E.

TO KEEP KIDS OFF DRUGS

hansers
Quality of Automotive Services



24 Hour Emergency Response

Towing & Recovery
Air Cushion Recovery
8 to 50 Ton Capabilities
Traffic Incident Management
Over 60 Pieces of Specialized Equipment.

Heavy Duty Diesel Repair
State of the Art Repair Facility
125 ft. Pull Through Bays
ASE Master Certified

Emergency Roadside Service
National Tire Accounts
Out of Fuel Service
Belts, Hoses, Electrical, Brakes

Remediation
Emergency Spill Response
Project Management
HAZWOPER Certified
Soil Excavation, Testing & Disposal
Reporting To Regulatory Agencies

800-345-1754 or 406-248-7795
hansers.com

Billings, Columbus, Big Timber, Livingston, Hardin
Central Dispatch: 430 S. Billings Blvd., Billings, MT 59101

Dedicated to
service excellence . . .



. . . committed to our local communities.

NorthWestern
Energy

Dedicated to Serving You

(888) 467-2669

www.northwesternenergy.com



CMG
Construction Inc.

Specializing in Site Work Construction

6513 Trade Center Avenue
Billings, MT 59101

(406) 655-1892 office
(406) 294-5411 fax