

Health



Genesis House, a home for the mentally ill, faces a budget crisis

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■ Time stops for tournaments, says Rial Cummings, Page D1

TUESDAY

# Missoulian

Today's weather



COLD  
Chance of flurries  
High 39° Low 11°  
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FEBRUARY 20, 2001

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## EPA to crack down on arsenic levels

New policy may bring more attention to cleanup at Milltown Dam

By SHERRY DEVLIN of the Missoulian

Mystery writers have known for years: Enough arsenic can kill you. Now scientists are writing their own precautionary tale. If there's arsenic in your drinking water—even at very low levels—you are at increased risk of cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and neurological trouble. "Ideally," said environmental

scientist Mary Swickard, "you want zero." That is why the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency soon will tighten its restriction of arsenic in the nation's drinking water, replacing a standard based on arsenic's poisonous properties to one based on its potential to cause cancer. "The scientific community has been fairly outspoken," said Swickard, who works in the EPA's regional office in Denver. "The

old standard was not protective of public health. It put people at significant risk. So on March 23, the EPA will replace its long-standing 50 parts-per-billion limit with a rule that prohibits arsenic concentrations above 10 parts per billion in U.S. public water supplies. An estimated 5 percent of the nation's community water systems will have to take corrective action, further treating the water delivered to 11 million people.

But one of the most unusual effects of the new rule will occur six miles upstream from Missoula, at the confluence of the Blackfoot and Clark Fork rivers, where an estimated 2,100 tons of arsenic fill the reservoir behind Milltown Dam. The byproduct of copper mining and smelting farther upstream—in Butte and Anaconda—the arsenic washed into the reservoir during a flood in 1908 and has since

contaminated the underground aquifer that supplies drinking water for Milltown and Bonner. When discovered by a county sanitarian in 1981, the arsenic pollution eventually led to the designation of Milltown Reservoir as a federal Superfund cleanup site, the first in Montana. Thirty-seven homes have since been provided with alternative—clean—sources of drinking water.

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### Sharing a slurp



As long as the sun was out and his owners, Nick Holloway and Landee Rollins, were enjoying some ice cream Monday, Pinot, their dog, decided he wasn't about to be left out on the treats.

■ Energy deregulation

## Bill tries to avoid drastic price jumps

SB243 allows MPC to buy five-year supply of power

By CHARLES S. JOHNSON Missoulian State Bureau

HELENA — The Senate on Monday approved the Legislature's leading energy bill, a measure that would set up the framework for Montana Power Co. to buy electricity for 288,000 customers at predictable rates from mid-2002 to mid-2007. Senate Bill 243, sponsored by Sen. Royal Johnson, R-Billings, gained debate stage approval by a 33-17 vote, largely along party lines, and faces final Senate approval, probably Tuesday. Most Republicans voted for it, while most Democrats opposed it. The much-amended bill then would proceed to the House, where senators believe it likely will face additional amendments. SB243 represents the Legislature's main attempt to date to address the next stage of utility deregulation in Montana.



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■ Education

## Stock investment hailed as plan to increase funding

By ERIN P. BILLINGS Missoulian State Bureau

HELENA — Republican Secretary of State Bob Brown unveiled a plan Monday to boost funding for Montana's K-12 schools and colleges and universities by asking voters to more aggressively invest state money in stocks. The plan, widely hailed by lawmakers as one way to bail out Montana's struggling school districts, would call for change in the Montana Constitution to allow the state to invest state education trust fund money in capital stocks. Brown estimated that the proposal, to be introduced as a bill by Senate Majority Leader Fred Thomas, R-Stevensville, could generate as much as \$15 million to \$20 million more for education during the next biennium.

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## House votes to shoot down licensing rule

There are many, many, many states not in compliance with this law, and none of them have had their funding withheld. There have been no funds cut as a result of this in any state or territory.

—Jeff Laszloffy, R-Laurel

Applications for hunting and fishing would no longer require Social Security numbers

By ERICKA SCHENCK SMITH Missoulian State Bureau

HELENA — The House voted 94-6 Monday to support the most sweeping of three bills to eliminate the requirement that hunters and anglers divulge their Social Security numbers when applying for licenses. Jeff Laszloffy, R-Laurel, the sponsor of House Bill 282, said hunters and anglers are forced to put themselves at risk for identity theft when they write their Social Security numbers, birth dates and names on applications for hunting and fishing licenses. Those three pieces of

information are all a criminal needs to fraudulently apply for a credit card, he said. Laszloffy called the applications "one-stop shopping" for identity thieves. The federal government compels states to collect Social Security numbers on recreational licenses as part of a nationwide effort to locate parents who don't pay child support. States that refuse to follow the mandate risk losing federal grants for welfare and child support enforcement. Montana stands to lose nearly \$57 million a year, but Laszloffy said he doesn't believe that would occur. "There are many, many, many states not in compliance with this law, and none of them have had their funding withheld," he said. "There

have been no funds cut as a result of this in any state or territory." Besides, Laszloffy said, the system isn't even working yet. In the year since the law went into effect, no one has been caught, because Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the Child Support Enforcement Division don't have an automated system to match missing parents to license applicants. Laszloffy's bill was amended Monday to go into effect March 1. Two other bills, SB262 and HB388 also would eliminate the Social Security number requirement — but only if the federal government agrees not to punish the state for doing so. SB262 passed the Senate 47-1 and was referred to the House Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee. That same committee tabled HB388 last week.

## Suspect named in 1963 Montana murders

Woman believes late ex-husband responsible; authorities reopen case

Associated Press

SPOKANE — Authorities are reopening the investigation of an unsolved, 1963 double murder in northwestern Montana because a woman has named her late ex-husband as a suspect. The bodies of Richard and Alice Easton were found Feb. 19, 1963, at their Paradise Lodge resort on McGregor Lake near Kalispell. Arlene LaPierre, a 59-year-old Californian, believes her ex-husband, buried last Friday, was responsible for the deaths. Kenneth Lloyd Pendleton, a

notorious bank robber and escape artist, recently was found beaten to death near Edmonton, Alberta. He died at 59 and was buried in his hometown of Ferndale. LaPierre lived in Montana with Pendleton and their daughter when the Eastons' bodies were found. She said Pendleton "returned to our cabin one day covered with blood." In an interview with The Spokesman-Review newspaper last week, she said when she asked him what happened, he said: "I hit a deer. Don't ask any more questions."

"He took his bloody clothes off, took them outside and burned them," LaPierre said. "That's the last time we talked about it." She was afraid to tell anyone about her ex-husband's activities that fatal day until she learned earlier this month that Pendleton, also 59, was dead. "We're reopening this cold case, based on this information, and will be doing follow-up interviews as soon as possible," Flathead County sheriff's detective Phil Meredith said of LaPierre's disclosures.

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*'I fell in love with him, and that's when the hell started. I was held hostage by him for three years or more, usually in backwoods cabins with no phone and no way to get out.'*  
—Arlene LaPierre, believes late ex-husband murdered couple in 1963

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