

Dexter R. Vail, 81

Dexter R. Vail, 81, passed away Monday, July 18, 2011, in Kalispell.

Dexter was born Dec. 22, 1929, in Flint, Mich., the son of Donald and Dorothy (Carey) Vail.

Dexter grew up in Cheyenne, Wyo., where he met and married his wife Ilene Merrill.

Dexter was an honorably discharged U.S. Navy veteran. He enjoyed golfing and bowling and was very active in both sports in the Kalispell area.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Donald and Dorothy Vail.

Dexter is survived by his children, Dawnlee Vail and

husband Mike Laughlin, Barbara Vail and husband Robert Ketchum, Robin and Alex Ancheta, and Casey and Cathy Vail; sisters, Doris Vail and Donna Hellwig; grandchildren, Kori, Justin, Christina and Karena; and great-grandchildren, Rylee, Shalyn, Elijah and Eliot.

Private family services were held, and a gathering for friends and family took place July 21.

You are also encouraged to visit the website, www.buffalohillfh.com, to leave notes of condolence for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory is caring for the family.

James 'Jim' Valov, 60

James "Jim" Valov, 60, of Columbia Falls, died unexpectedly Aug. 8, 2011, in Seattle.

He is survived by his wife, Natalie Valov, and daughters, Michelle Kropp and Jamie Nedved

of Columbia Falls.

Services will be held at noon, Saturday, Sept. 10, at Fairview Cemetery in Columbia Falls, with a celebration of life to follow.

A full obituary will follow.

David Earl VanDort, 71

David Earl VanDort, 71, passed away Monday, Dec. 12, 2011, in Kalispell.

Dave was born to Earl and Betty (Johnson) VanDort July 28, 1940, in Holland, Mich.

Dave spent four years in the U.S. Navy and while there, he received his high school diploma. After his honorable discharge from the Navy, he went to work in his dad's furnace business, Ford Heating. Dave continued working in the sheet metal business until he retired.

Dave enjoyed hunting and fishing, and loved riding one of his many motorcycles. He also loved the outdoors and taking walks to look for mushrooms.



Dave was preceded in death by his grandparents; both parents; nephew, Gene VanDort; and numerous aunts and uncles.

He is survived by two brothers, Gene and girlfriend Teri, and Jon and his wife Penny, of Kalispell; sister, Delores Whyte, of Eureka; son, Tony, of Great Falls; daughter, Shelley Gill, of Washington; four grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews. He is also survived by special niece Janet VanDort Hansen.

A celebration of Dave's life will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 17, at Buffalo Hill Funeral Home. A luncheon will follow at the Eagles Lodge, in the basement.

Friends are encouraged to visit the website, www.buffalohillfh.com, to leave notes of condolence for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory is caring for the family.

Ellen Marie 'Punky' Van Riper, 67

Ellen Marie "Punky" Van Riper, 67, of Kalispell passed away June 27, 2011, after a long and courageous battle with cancer.



Ellen was born in Kalispell on May 16, 1944, to Earl Howard Ames and Dorothy (O'Brien) Ames. She attended Flathead County schools and developed many lifelong friendships during her 45-year working career as a waitress and bartender in Kalispell and Spokane.

She especially enjoyed listening to Irish and country music, celebrating St. Patrick's Day in Butte with her friends, caring for her pets, and flower gardening at the family home in Kalispell where she resided for many years. Her love of animals was evidenced by her faithful support of the Humane Society.

She was preceded in

death by her parents, Earl and Dorothy Ames; her brother, Richard E. Ames; her husband, Raymond Van Riper Jr.; and long-time friend and companion, George King.

Ellen is survived by her sister and brother-in-law, Patricia and Dan McFall, of Corning, Calif.; and nieces, Ronda Ames and Rita Wickham of Libby, and Tammy Koehler of Medford, Ore.

A memorial celebration of Ellen's life will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, July 23, at the Kalispell Eagles.

The family suggests that any donations be made to Home Options Hospice, 430 Windward Way, Suite 101, Kalispell, MT 59901; the Humane Society of the Northwest, P.O. Box 221, Kalispell, MT 59903; or the Salvation Army, 110 Bountiful Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901.

Johnson-Gloschat Funeral Home is caring for Ellen's family. You are invited to go to www.jgfumeralhome.com to offer condolences and sign Ellen's guest book.

Teresa Raye Veltkamp, 39

Teresa Raye Veltkamp, 39, passed away on July 22, 2011, from a brain aneurysm.



Teresa was born on June 27, 1972, in Bozeman. She spent her childhood in Manhattan and her later years in Missoula, Ovando, Polson and most recently, Helena. Teresa graduated from Manhattan High School in 1990, and earned her Bachelor of Arts in elementary education from the University of Montana in 2003.

She taught at Ovando Elementary School and Cherry Valley Elementary in Polson before joining the Montana Office of Public Instruction's Indian Education Division as an Indian Education for All implementation specialist in 2008. Teresa was passionate about her work and her life.

She married Jake Massman on Nov. 12, 2010, and their son Lucas was born six weeks prematurely, just prior to her death.

Teresa gave generously of her time and took care of her loved ones, and she was a loyal and loving friend. She was so proud when she became an auntie to Caleb and Lucy, and everyone knew she would be a wonderful mother. Teresa was cherished by her mother and sisters, who were nourished by her strength and pragmatism.

Her students and families in Ovando and Polson can attest to her exceptional skill as a teacher and her love for all her pupils. She was passionate about educating Montanans about the history, culture and diversity of Montana's Native people and was loved, honored and respected throughout Indian Country.

Teresa was perpetually late, disorganized and infuriatingly bossy. She loved to travel Montana and the world, to hike and backpack, cook and bake. She helped her niece Lucy enter this

world and was at her sister's bedside after nephew Caleb's complicated birth. Teresa was an integral part of every important event in the lives of her loved ones. She and her mother Karen raised each other up, taught each other how to live and were bonded by a love that transcends this life.

When Teresa and her husband Jake found each other for the second time, they knew they were meant to spend their lives together and wasted no time marrying and beginning the family Teresa always wanted. Teresa had never been happier — married to the love of her life, living in her beautiful new home, anticipating the birth of her first child and working in a job where she had an impact on thousands of people.

Teresa loved and was loved by her family and friends, who are too numerous to name.

She is survived by her husband, Jake Massman; newborn son, Lucas Massman; mothers and fathers, Karen and Ken Manley, and Glenn and SeAnne Veltkamp; grandmothers, Carol Morris and Dolly Swank; grandfather, Donald Swank; sisters, Rita Manley and Amy Veltkamp; brothers, Jacob and Leonard Veltkamp; nephew and niece, Caleb and Lucy Liszak; brother-in-law, Taj Liszak; mother-in-law, Claudia Massman; sister-in-law, Tasha Massman; sister of her heart, Erin Lipkind; and goddaughter, Ariana Lipkind. She also leaves behind pets, Simone, Kitinka, and Buster the fish.

Our hearts are heavy as we learn how to live without our beloved Teresa.

A memorial service honoring Teresa's life will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday, July 26, at Spring Meadow Lake in Helena.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial fund has been set up at the Missoula Federal Credit Union to provide for Teresa and Jake's son. For more information, call Amy Veltkamp at 239-6019 or Erin Lipkind at 218-0186.

Vaughn 'Bill' William Vincent, 76

Vaughn "Bill" William Vincent was born May 22, 1934, to Bill and Hazel Vincent of Thompson Falls. He



passed away Jan. 15, 2011, in Libby, surrounded by family and friends.

Bill was raised in a timber family in Thompson Falls and Belknap. During his junior year of high school his family moved to Yreka, Calif., where he started a long career of heavy equipment operation.

He married Julia Kendall of Oakland, Ore., in 1953 while working on the Highway 99 project. They moved back to Montana in 1958.

After years of working for Bache Brothers in Libby, and a short stint as a ranch foreman of a Bloss Ranch in Planada, Calif., Bill and Julie started Vincent Logging and operated that road building, development and logging company for over 30 years.

Bill was passionate about both his work and his play and he loved to compete in both. His mastery of the art of heavy-equipment operation is legendary.

He also excelled at western Montana O-Mok-Sees and served as an early president of the Libby Saddle Club. He bred and raced thoroughbred and quarter horses, was a licensed pilot, loved to hunt,

fish, ride his ATVs, play competitive pool and shoot trap.

He passed away after suffering a fatal heart attack while shooting trap at the Libby Shooting Gun Range — with his boots on, gunpowder on his hands, and enjoying family and friends.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents; his wife of 42 years, Julie; his second wife, Loretta; and one sister, Echo (Vincent) Johnson.

Bill is survived by his four boys, Will and Susie, Bruce and Patti Jo, and Scott and Hassey of Libby, and Steve and Sheryle of Trout Creek; 14 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; sister, Patti Coe, of Plains; and sister, Robin Kendall, and her partner, Fred, of Libby; a ton of other family, and his beloved partner, Claudia Stephens.

As Bill stood at a family wedding this summer, surrounded by nearly one hundred family (many of them under three feet tall) and a couple hundred friends, he said he was awed at "what two silly kids from the 1950s had built by falling in love."

"Here, here, to a good life well lived."

Services will be at 2 p.m. Friday, Jan. 20, at the Libby Christian Church with the Rev. Phil Alspaw presiding. A reception will follow after graveside services, at the VFW in Libby.

The family asks that donations be made to the Libby Volunteer Ambulance and St. John Hospital Foundation.

Roger Lyall Vick, 68

Roger Lyall Vick, 68, died Sept. 4, 2011, from a short battle with cancer.

He had worked for Elgin Trucking, and was retired from UPS.

He is survived by his wife, Renee Vick;

and children, Darrin Vick, Shannon Day, Chad Fincher and Heidi Neether.

Services and a celebration of life will be at 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10, at the Elliston School.

Minnie Gertrude (Diboll) Vinson, 88

Minnie Gertrude (Diboll) Vinson, 88, passed away on Saturday, Feb. 26, 2011, at Immanuel Lutheran Home, her happy home for 11 years, with the loving care of the devoted staff and the kindness of Hospice. Her family was able to have many meaningful and joyful visits just before and up to her final days.

Minnie G, as her family and friends called her, was born April 10, 1922, in San Diego to Jason and Mary Lou Diboll. The family lived on a ranch in the desert near the Salton Sea where her family had the phone at the lowest elevation in the U.S. Minnie G loved spending summers with her grandparents in San Diego.

After graduating as valedictorian of her class at Calipatria High School, Minnie G continued her education at San Diego State, graduating with honors in English and vocal music. She received her elementary teaching credential and began her teaching career in La Jolla, Calif., with a class of 45 third and fourth graders.

At a USO dance hosted by her sorority, Minnie G met Paul Garrett Vinson, a young Marine stationed at Camp Pendleton. A year later they were married, on Oct. 4, 1944, just before Paul was sent overseas to Okinawa.

After the war, Paul and Minnie G started their family and moved to the Los Angeles suburbs where Paul worked as an accountant and became the comptroller of Von's Grocery Company, while Minnie G continued the teaching career that brought her such joy (and the Golden Apple Award).

The family loved boating, camping, water-skiing, going to the beach, and car trips all over the country. Dining and dancing and plays and concerts were also a big hit with the family. Paul and Minnie G had a happy and fun-filled life together for 30 years until Paul died of cancer at the age of 51.

Minnie G continued teaching while filling her life with new activities. She joined the church choir and the board of deacons at Arcadia Presbyterian Church, became a member of a City of Hope auxiliary, and traveled

the world with her friends Dorothy and Mary Jane. Season tickets to the L.A. Philharmonic and box seats at the Hollywood Bowl were favorite ways to get together with friends and enjoy the classical music she loved so much. The most fun was spending time with her twin grandsons.

In 1999, Minnie G moved to Buffalo Hill Terrace to be closer to her daughter and son-in-law who had moved to Montana. She was welcomed into the membership of First Presbyterian Church, joined the bell choir, and bought season tickets to the Glacier Symphony and was ready to start a new chapter in life when she suffered a stroke and became a resident of Immanuel Lutheran Home. There she was cared for and included in all the many activities at her new home including being resident council president for a few years.

Despite her handicaps, her life there was full and satisfying among her new friends; the residents and the wonderful staff that makes life worth living. She was a warm generous, loving, happy lady who took what life dealt her, came up smiling, and shared her sunniness with everyone around her.

Minnie G was preceded in death by her parents, Jason and Mary Lou Diboll; her husband, Paul G. Vinson; and her sister, Stella Louise Mitchell.

She is survived by her son, Charles Vinson, and his wife, Lynda, of Ventura, Calif.; daughter, Mary Fitzsimon, and her husband, Thomas, of Condon; grandsons, Thomas Fitzsimon III, and his wife Amy of Elk Grove, Calif., and Paul Fitzsimon of Bozeman; brother, Alfred Diboll, and his wife, Bonnie, of Macon, Ga.; brother-in-law, William Vinson, and his wife, Luan, of Pawley's Island, S.C.; and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of her life will be held at noon on Thursday, March 3, at Immanuel Lutheran Home, Kalispell.

Memorials in Minnie G's name may be sent to Immanuel Lutheran Home, 185 Crestline Avenue, Kalispell, MT 59901; or to First Presbyterian Church, 540 S. Main Street, Kalispell, MT 59901.

Ruth (Voorhees) Voelker, 83

Ruth (Voorhees) Voelker, 83, formerly of Kalispell, died Aug. 19, 2011, in Lakewood, Colo.

She is survived by her

three children.

A private interment will be held on Saturday, Sept. 3, at Shepherd of the Hills Presbyterian Church in Lakewood.

Doris B. Voermans, 100

Doris B. Voermans, 100, passed away on March 6, 2011, at the Immanuel Lutheran Home in Kalispell.



She was born on Oct. 26, 1910, in Plentywood, the daughter of John and Grace Sindt.

As a young child she moved to Whitefish, where she lived out her life until moving into the Immanuel Lutheran Home in Kalispell, two years ago.

On Nov. 10, 1926, Doris married Joseph A. Voermans. They owned and operated the Batavia Dairy east of Whitefish until 1955, when they sold it and moved into town.

Doris was active in many organizations including the W.O.T.M., Fortnightly Club, American Legion Auxiliary, Royal Neighbors, Navy Mothers and Catholic Women. Her hobbies included reading and

playing cards.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Joe; sons, Jack and Jake; brother, Jack Sindt; sister, Marjorie Parnell; and grandson, Paul Brash.

Doris is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Joe and Jean Voermans of Columbia Falls; grandchildren, Judy and Dru Willey of Mesquite, Nev., Jennifer and Clark Wheeler, and Jake Voermans of Whitefish, and Vance Brash of Columbia Falls; a niece, Jacquie, and Ted Cuffe, of Whitefish; six great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren; plus many more nieces and nephews.

There will be a visitation for Doris from 3 to 5 p.m. on Thursday March 10, at Austin Funeral Home in Whitefish. A funeral Mass will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday March 11, at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Whitefish. Interment will be private.

Arrangements are entrusted to Austin Funeral Home.

Carl John Volkman, 46

Carl John Volkman, 46, passed away at North Valley Hospital on Sunday, Sept. 4, 2011.

He was born on April 26, 1965, to Ervin and Linda Volkman in Wicomico, Md.

Carl was a hardworking man in the logging and excavating industry and loved his work. His true love, however, was his family. After being a single father for a number of years, he met Francine and married her on Sept. 3, 2006, at Flathead River Ranch. Together they have lovingly raised five children.

Carl will always be remembered by friends and family as a truly honorable man who always had a positive outlook on life. You would often hear him answer that things are "wonderful" to most any question. He was a devoted, faithful father, husband and the best friend anyone could ask for.

Some of Carl's other interests included boating, fishing, camping, hunting and four-wheeling. He loved the little things in life and really enjoyed spending time with his family and friends. Fam-



ily was Carl's number one priority.

Carl was a strong man in many ways. Physically, he was a champion arm wrestler, expert axe/hatchet thrower, skeet sharpshooter and he competed in many Logger Day competitions. Even though Carl had great strength, he had amazing self-control and was a big "teddy bear." However, that didn't mean he would not come to the aid of anyone in need. He would fight for those he loved. Carl's life was strength under control in all areas. He was the strongest man we have ever known and he used it only for good.

Carl was preceded in death by his mother, Linda Josephine Kinner.

He is survived by his wife, Francine; his five children, Karli, Cody, Tyler, Joshua and Jacob, all of Whitefish; his father, Ervin Volkman, of Mosinee, Wis.; and his brother, Bryan Volkman, of Lolo.

A memorial service for Carl will be held at 2 p.m., Sept. 12, at Austin Funeral Home in Whitefish.

Arrangements are entrusted to Austin Funeral Home. You are invited to go to www.austinflh.com to offer condolences and view Carl's tribute wall.

Reba LuAnna Barnes Vondal, 70

Reba LuAnna Barnes Vondal, 70, passed away July 20, 2011, at her home surrounded by family and friends.



She was born to Vic and Connie Barnes in Colville, Wash., on Dec. 10, 1940. Reba graduated in Colville and worked in the family floral shop.

She married Dayle Vondal on Aug. 9, 1958. Their life took them to various places in the Northwest.

Reba resided in Fortine for 25 years. While living there, she was active in many volunteer activities, including at the local school, election board, community bookmobile, member of the Extension Homemakers. She was also very involved in the Fortine Community Church.

Retiring to Happy Valley, she continued her church activities. She loved to do crafts, gardening, cooking and collecting. But her treasured accomplishment was her family and friends.

She was a 25-year breast cancer survivor but did not win the battle with lung cancer.

Reba was preceded in death

by her parents, brother and mother- and father-in-law.

She is survived by her husband, Dayle, of Whitefish two daughters, Susan and Roy Truman of Kalispell, and Jeanne and Jim Swanson of Bigfork; brother, Riley Barnes, of Mesa, Ariz.; grandchildren, Jake and Nikki Truman and Katrina Truman of Kalispell, and Dylan Swanson of LaComb, Alberta; great-granddaughter, Willow Truman, and a great-grandson on the way; and sisters-in-law, neighbors and friends. She also leaves behind the granddogs!

"We have surrendered a great lady to a greater place in heaven. We shall miss her dearly but rejoice in her journey."

A celebration of Reba's life will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, July 30, at the True Life Church, 600 W. Seventh St., Whitefish.

The family suggests memorial contributions to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 1002, Kalispell, MT 59903; or to the Gideons, P.O. Box 1305, Kalispell, MT 59903.

Friends are encouraged to visit the website, www.buffalohillfh.com, to leave notes of condolence for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory is caring for the family.

Peter 'Pete' Frank Votapka, 23

A friend to everyone, people he knew and those he never met, Peter "Pete" Frank Votapka was born 10 weeks prematurely in Spokane on Feb. 17, 1988. Before he was two years old he had a multitude of surgeries but he was a fighter for a better life throughout his short time. He was willing to help at home or with friends, whether it was clearing brush or fixing a problem computer. He had many answers on how to solve the problems of the world and put those into action, not just ideas or words. Pete volunteered at food drives, raising money for the band, and other projects.



He drowned on July 28, 2011, in the Kootenai River, giving his life to save another's.

Pete had a soft and generous heart for those less fortunate and fought to correct injustices done to any. Faces lit up whenever he entered a room. He lived life to the fullest and had little patience for those who talked but did not act.

He was known for his wicked sense of humor and careful observation. On a trip to Washington, D.C., with his parents at age eight, he noticed homeless people sleeping on the building heat grates. He quipped, "Who are these people anyway? Did they used to be Congressmen?"

Pete was an Eagle Scout with a Silver Palm, and a Bronze Palm. As an Eagle Scout he was selected to give the annual report to the governor. He was also elected into the Order of the Arrow. He helped with younger people in scouts for many camp outs and activities.

Music was a passion of Pete's. He played the trumpet throughout middle and high school, and especially enjoyed Pep Band, even playing with the Loggers when he came home for college breaks. He was selected for the 2005 National Jamboree Band, where he got to shake President Bush's

hand. He played in the Montana Tech Pep Band in college for two years. His love of music and information technology led him to the KMSM radio station at Tech, where he had a regular weekly DJ show and converted the radio station to online streaming for listeners around the world to enjoy. He was a trouble-shooter for the staff and an important part of their fund-raising. Pete enjoyed being a chef at many of his friends' gatherings.

Cyber security was another passion. He competed in the National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition as a member of Montana Tech's team, where they placed seventh in the nation, beating major universities in the nation. Pete graduated from Montana Tech in May with dual degrees, a bachelor of science in network technology (cyber security) with a minor in medical informatics, and an associate of applied science in web development and administration. Pete was ready to make his mark on the world!

Pete is survived by his mother, Jenny, father, Frank, and brother, Ryan of Libby; his maternal grandmother, Elva Blaz of Anaconda; and paternal grandmother, Betty Votapka of Oceanside, Calif. He is also survived by his very special friend, Kammi McClain; several aunts and uncles; and cousins from both sides of his family, as well as so many people he helped and his friends.

He was preceded in death by his grandfathers, Bill Blaz and Carl Votapka.

Services will be held at 11 a.m. on Aug. 6, at the Libby Christian Church. Internment will be at a later date in Butte.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Peter Votapka Automation System Fund, KMSM Radio, 1300 W. Park, Butte, MT 59701, or the Boy Scouts of America Melita Island Camp Committee, c/o Chris Roberts, 1534 Tamarack St., Missoula, MT 59802, or the Shriners Hospitals for Children.

Arrangements are by Schnackenberg & Nelson Funeral Home in Libby.