

Fred Nelson Christian, 69

Our friend, Fred Christian, 69, passed away in his home in Yuma, Arizona, on Nov. 28, 2023, among some of his many friends.

He is survived by his brother, Brad; and his ex-wife, Jennifer.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Mark; but survived by Mark's children, Kathryn (Brian), Joseph, and Jack (Pamela); and Mark's grandchildren, Alexandra, Deacon, Calvin, Sydney, Lauren, and Reagan.

He was born in California. He then moved with his parents to North Dakota. His family then moved to Minnesota, land of 10,000 lakes, and he would have loved to have dropped a fishing line in every one of them.

He spent four years in the Navy then worked on the railroad in Minnesota, as a diesel mechanic. He obtained a nursing degree in Minnesota, and moved to Montana, where he worked at what was then Kalispell Regional Hospital. He met his future wife, Jennifer at the hospital, married, then divorced, and they remained friends until Fred's death.

He worked at Kalispell Regional Hospital first on the medical surgical floor, then as house supervisor. He had the great gift of making people laugh under stressful situations. He was well known for his witty one liners and silly political and sometimes risqué jokes. He was often the life of the party and a welcoming host. He made great long lasting friendships wherever he went and valued those friendships until his death. He cultivated those friendships with everyone from hospital staff to adminis-



tration. He was a great handyman and would use his skills to benefit others and volunteer his time generously.

After retiring he bought a modest house in International Falls, and also bought a modest house in Yuma, Arizona. That way Fred could fish all summer in Rainy Lake, and spend all winter in sunny Yuma. His circle of friends grew to include people in those areas also, and he stayed in touch year round with his friends in the Flathead, International Falls, and Yuma.

He passed away from a glioblastoma, as did his brother Mark, and he was well aware of his fate. He wanted to die at his home in Yuma, so his friends set up a hospital bed in his living room and he welcomed all into his house, at his bedside until his death. He maintained a witty sense of humor until he could speak no more.

With great sadness we reflect on his death, but he lit up the lives of those who were lucky enough to meet him.

Thank you Fred, peace be with you and we will love you always.

A celebration of Fred's life will be held in Yuma, Arizona; International Falls, Minnesota; and in Columbia Falls at Fred Head Lake and pond, that Fred built. Dates to be announced.

Vern Clairmont, 69

Vern Leroy Clairmont, 69, of Ronan, died on Tuesday, July 11, 2023, after a yearlong battle with pancreatic cancer, surrounded by his family.

While he had the strongest of hearts for his family, friends, community and tribe, he had an even stronger heart which refused to give up in his final hours.

He was a kind, generous and loving husband, father and papa. He will forever be remembered for his patience, generosity, kindness, humor and larger-than-life smile.

He was born in St. Ignatius and raised on the original Clairmont allotment. Growing up he helped his grandpa and dad on their cattle ranch.

He graduated from Ronan High School in 1972 where he met his wife, Cyndy. They married in 1973 and raised four amazing children, Shanna, Jason, Jeff and Mandy.

In 1975, he began his career with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes at



Kicking Horse Job Corp. Shortly after, he was recruited to the Finance Office

at CSKT, eventually becoming the Director of Finance Management.

He dedicated his life to the Tribes, not only taking pride in being a tribal member but treating it as a responsibility to give back and provide for the Tribe's future.

After nearly 45 years working for CSKT, he retired and then started Raven Consulting with his sons, Jason and Jeff.

He wanted to continue using his experience and knowledge to assist tribes and their entities with their financial, accounting and regulatory compliance.

He was an avid car and sports enthusiast, tribal historian, hunter, horse rider, coach and tinkerer around his and Cyndy's home at the base of the Mission Mountains.

One of the many things he instilled into his wife and kids was a do-it-yourself mentality. From building an addition on their prior home in Pablo, to constructing a shop on the Ronan property with his sons for his tools and toys, as well as helping Cyndy with her wood working projects.

He also enjoyed traveling to his kids' homes to assist with their many projects. He had a big heart and would drop everything to help family and friends.

He also took great pride in and loved his five grandchildren, Cooper, Keston, Addy, Mason and Azlyn. He enjoyed every moment he was able to spend with the grandkids as they grew up.

In addition to his career at CSKT and starting his own consulting business, he also served on various boards and committees. These included the Pablo Baseball Association, Kwataqnuq Resort and Casino, Gray Wolf Peak Casino, Eagle

Bank and St. Luke's Hospital.

He asked for little but gave a lot.

He is survived by his wife, Cyndy; four kids, Shanna (Kyle) Kalispell, Jason (Jimmi) Lake Stevens, Jeff (Genevieve) Kalispell, Mandy (Roth) Liberty Lake; five grandchildren, Cooper (20), Keston (20), Addy (18), Mason (17) and Azlyn (14). He is also survived by his mother, Nancy; five brothers and three sisters.

A memorial service to honor Vern will be at 2 p.m. Monday, July 17, at the Joe McDonald Health and Fitness Center on Salish Kootenai College Campus in Pablo.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the CSKT's Bison Range. Memories and condolences may be sent to the family at www.lakefuneralhomeandcremation.com.

Arrangements are under the care of The Lake Funeral Home and Crematory.

Randy Sheffer Clancy, 69

Randy Sheffer died after a heroic fight with cancer on April 22, 2023. He was born Jan. 25, 1954 in Idaho Falls, Idaho. The son of Jack and Jean Sheffer.

Randy graduated from Skyline High School, class of 1972. Following graduation, he attended Montana State University, and Utah State University on a well-deserved football scholarship. After working in construction he had an accident and went back to school for respiratory therapy. His



last place of employment was at Helena Hospital in Montana, where he saved many lives as a respiratory therapist.

He is pre-deceased by his sister Jackie Chauner and wife Becky. Surviving are his Parents, Jack and Jean, his brother and sister-in-law, Mike and Rosie Sheffer, his sister's husband Ron Chauner,

daughter, Lacey, and her husband, Topher, and four grandchildren, Adeline, Royal, Laurel and Leighton, and his stepdaughter Tanya Hartman, and her husband Ace, and their 2 children, Makena and Mazzy.

Randy loved and cherished his family. He expressed pride and joy for his sister and his parents. Often he was thoughtful about their needs and generous with his care. He bragged about his daughter, her husband, and four

grandchildren without skipping a beat. Randy was never more animated when bragging about their time together and apart, especially when he recalled teaching them sports and boasting their many accomplishments.

Randy had no enemies. His friends made in Idaho Falls, where he grew up, remain so and plentiful. Later he met a plethora of equally intimate friends through his enthusiasm for life. Football, short and long, motorcycle adventures, marathons, extended,

long distance backpacks in the Bob Marshall Wilderness and elsewhere, water and snow skiing (a daredevil), boating, fishing, ice-skating, scuba diving, camping and hilarious humor are just some of what drew people into Randy's circle.

He kept in touch with and welcomed in new family and friends effortlessly and liberally. He is described by them as an endurance athlete, intimate friend, always "up", positive and ready to go, tireless, having an

unbelievable strength of will, supportive, like a brother (taking younger classmates under his wing and sticking up for underdogs), kind, fun, loving, mischievous, an avid reader, animal lover (he raised chickens to feed the bears, lol).

To paraphrase a friend's statement... The unique bond Randy fostered, by sharing the wonder of effort and endurance in life on this earth, has given us some of our best memories. He will be missed and forever loved.

A. Barry Clark, 80

A. Barry Clark, also affectionately known as "ABC" or "AB," passed away peacefully at his home in Kalispell on April 21, 2022, at the age of 80. Barry was born in Evanston, Illinois in 1942 and set out on his own at a young age. During Barry's illustrious life, he took on many occupations, including a stint in New York City as a "rag merchant" in the clothing and fashion industry, which undoubtedly helped develop the eccentric and vibrant style he was recognized for.

Barry decided to make the Flathead Valley his home after visiting on a sightseeing trip with his beloved Aunt Emilie in the late 1970s. It was then Barry joined Pacific Power and Light, eventually acquired by CenturyLink, and he quickly became an office communication systems expert and was well known as the "phone man" who could fix any problem. During his time at PPL, Barry would save the old communication systems he uninstalled to gift to young people to disassemble and build new creations. Barry was a steadfast supporter of the youth in his life, notably the children of his many friends, and relished in asking thought-provoking questions of youngsters.

Barry enjoyed several hobbies during his life, including a passion for speedwalking and bicycle riding, and possessed an insatiable curiosity, love of education, and penchant for current events. But perhaps Barry's greatest hobby of all was gastronomy. As an avid



foodie, "grape juice" aficionado, and lover of stimulating conversation, Barry

was a constant fixture in the fine dining scene in the Flathead Valley and surrounding areas. Barry often greeted restaurant staff by name and always remembered details about the personal and professional lives of the artisans at his favorite haunts, and was known to present a particularly appreciated chef with a bottle of fine wine. Barry lived generously and loved to share dining experiences with his friends, to teach the art of slowing down and properly enjoying a beautiful meal, and never missed an opportunity to impart his culinary knowledge or encourage his dining companions to try something new.

Barry was preceded in death by his aunt, Emilie Weinmann. Barry was a loyal and devoted companion, and is survived by countless friends and chosen family across the United States.

Barry will be remembered for his boisterous nature, colorful attire, quick wit, trademark red hair and beard, and his zest for life. A celebration of Barry's life will occur on Monday, May 22 in honor of his 81st birthday at 4 p.m. at the Meadow Lake Bar and Grille in Columbia Falls. Please bring your favorite stories of Barry's life to share as we remember our magnanimous and deeply loved friend.

Scott Clarke, 75

Scott Allen Clarke, 75, of Missoula, passed away on Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023 at Community Medical Center. Even after being diagnosed with cancer and Parkinson's, he showed a strong determination to fight to the end.

He was born May 20, 1947, in Helena, to Martin "Cookie" and Vera Clarke. He had two older siblings, Sue and Keith and one younger sister, Marti. Growing up, he had an extended family close by, including grandmothers, who were a big part of his life. Scott graduated from Helena High School in 1965, as a good student who excelled as a runner. He enjoyed the mountains nearby, was an avid lifelong skier, loved dogs, and enjoyed summer fun at the family cabin on Canyon Ferry Lake.

Scott graduated from Rocky Mountain College in 1969 with a degree in business and economics. During his college years he made lifelong friends in Jim "City" Johnson, and John "Dude" Dudis. He later attended Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington, obtaining a Master's degree in public administration, in 1977.

During his employment in Helena, he met Carol Johnston, and they were married on Aug. 10, 1974. They were lifelong partners, having two children, Kevin and Stacy. Due to his work with the Montana Job Service, the family relocated to Libby, then briefly back



to Helena, then to Butte, before settling down in Kalispell in 1987.

Aside from his work in Kalispell, Scott was very involved in Flathead Valley soccer programs, not only as a parent of players but also as a coach and referee. He also, like his father, enjoyed golfing, and would go out on weekends with his kids.

Later, he also worked for Head Start non-profit in both Kalispell and Idaho, having relocated to Liberty Lake, Washington. In 2006, they moved to Austin, Texas, where he found work with the IRS, enjoyed the music scene, warm weather and breakfast tacos. His work for the IRS brought them back to Montana in 2010 and he retired in Missoula.

Scott spent his retire-

ment enjoying concerts from his favorite music groups, and traveling, often to Cabo San Lucas, and Hawaii, and of course to see his kids in Seattle.

Scott was preceded in death by his parents and his two older siblings. He is survived by his wife Carol, Missoula; two children, son Kevin (Sophie Ceneray) and daughter Stacy (Jesse Bommarito) of Seattle; his sister Marti (Kit) Johnson of Helena; and numerous extended family members and many close friends; who love and miss him.

A celebration of Scott's life will be held at a later time for family and friends to share memories and stories.

Arrangements are under the care of Sunset Memorial Funeral Home and Crematory in Missoula.

Stephen Clawson, 67



Stephen Paul Clawson, 67, passed away unexpectedly with his loving family by his side on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022, from complications due to open heart surgery.

Steve was born on Nov. 12, 1955, in Great Falls to Twila (Bergh) and Keith Clawson. He and his twin sister Kayce were born prematurely and not expected to live. He weighed 3 lbs., 14 oz. When Steve reached his adult height of 6'4", his mother wished their pediatrician could see him!

The family moved to Havre in 1956, where Steve grew up. He graduated from Havre High School in 1974. Steve was active in football and basketball early on in high school, but he gave them up for speech and debate. This decision served him well throughout his life. He was also on the golf team, having taken up the game at the age of eight. He loved the game and played his entire life, teaching Nancy and his children. Although he was a very good golfer, he enjoyed playing with everyone of all skill levels. Patient and kind, he liked giving pointers. His favorite place on earth was Buffalo Hill Golf Club, where he had so many fond memories of playing with his children.

Steve met Nancy McNair during their sophomore year of high school. They were married on July 7, 1979, at St. Jude's Thaddeus Catholic Church in Havre. Steve and Nancy shared 43 precious years together and were blessed with three children: Keith, David, and Lindsay.

Family meant everything to Steve. Steve and Nancy were a team in every sense of the word. It's been said that while Steve never bragged about his family, he was very proud of who they

were, and his face lit up whenever he spoke of them.

Steve attended the University of Montana his freshman year and went on to graduate from Montana State University-Northern in 1979 with a bachelor of science degree in business administration and education.

His 34-year banking career began at Citizen's Bank in Havre, while he was still in college. He was hired in the loan collection department and was employed there for the next six years. He was an assistant vice president of retail banking when he left in 1984 to pursue an opportunity with Wyoming National Bank in Gillette, Wyoming.

Steve held several positions in retail and business banking at Wyoming National Bank before being named community banking president in 1991.

Another promotion took Steve to Bozeman in 1995, where he became the community banking president for Norwest-Bozeman and Livingston.

In 1999, Steve accepted the position of community banking president for Wells Fargo - Kalispell. During his tenure in Kalispell, he oversaw the expansion of another bank location in Kalispell. He was named community banking district manager in 2010, being responsible for 11 banks across nine communities, including Havre.

Steve announced his retirement from banking in April of 2012, effective December 2012; although, he did return temporarily to Wells Fargo in 2014 to help out as a senior relationship manager.

Steve never intended

to stay retired, and he took his time searching for a new career. That opportunity presented itself in Missoula in 2015 when Steve was hired by NorthWestern Energy as the community relations manager for the Western Montana Service Area, which included 12 communities. Steve was a perfect fit! He loved his job, the people he worked with, and his community. He often joked that he might never retire!

Steve was loved by everyone who knew him. He was a genuinely kind and caring person. He was a big man with a big laugh and an even bigger heart, and his presence was felt every time he entered a room. Steve was smart and a good listener and problem solver, always seeing the bigger picture. He was happy and had a positive attitude and a great sense of humor. He was a wonderful friend, mentor, and boss. But most of all, he was the best husband and father anyone could have ever had.

Not many can say they made a difference in every community they lived in, but that was Steve. Although his career was about community involvement, he would have been involved on his own, a legacy passed on to him by his dad. Steve served on countless boards and organizations. He was the president of his homeowners' association. He was a Rotarian and received the Paul Harris Fellow Award. Steve was a 2005 graduate of the inaugural class of Leadership Montana. He was a past chairman of the board of both the Missoula and Kalispell Chambers of Commerce. Steve was the co-chair of the Missoula Chamber Governmental Affairs committee and was part

of the Missoula Chamber Ambassadors. Steve had a long history of involvement in PACs and Community Affairs and served as the secretary of the NorthWestern Energy Montana Employee PAC.

Steve loved spending time with his family. He and Nancy enjoyed everyday life, and they did everything together. Steve was an avid reader, especially of history. He liked to watch all sports, especially golf, football, and college basketball. He enjoyed live Grizzly football and basketball games. He listened to rock, jazz, and country music. Besides playing golf, Steve enjoyed walking, biking, cooking, watching classic movies, and following politics. He loved all of the dogs in his life.

Steve was preceded in death by his parents Keith and Twila Clawson, in-laws Mac and Margaret McNair, and cousin Keith Clawson. He is survived by his wife Nancy; sons Keith and David and daughter Lindsay, all of Kalispell; sister Kayce Grimsrud and Chris Flohr of Virginia; sister Nan and Kirk Miller of Helena; brother-in-law Dean McNair of Billings; several nieces, nephews, and cousins; and numerous friends.

Memorial services will be held in both Missoula and Kalispell in the spring of 2023.

Memorials may be made to: The Keith Clawson Memorial Scholarship @ MSU-Northern, P.O. Box 1691, Havre, MT 59501 Attn: Marla; or Habitat for Humanity of Missoula, P.O. Box 7181, Missoula, MT 59807 Attn: Heather.

Cremation has taken place, arrangements are under the care of Garden City Funeral Home and Crematory, Missoula.

James 'Jim' J. Cole Sr., 91

James "Jim" J. Cole Sr., 91, of Kalispell, passed away May 21, 2023, from natural



causes. He was born into the family of Ralph and Violet Cole, April 6, 1932, in Charlo, the seventh of eight children.

The family moved to Pablo when he was a toddler. He attended Pablo Elementary and Polson High School. In high school he played the clarinet and was on the track team where he set a state record in the low hurdles.

While growing up in Pablo, his best friend was his younger brother Frank. They had a lifetime of fun and adventures. One of his most notable accomplishments was as a young teenager. He sat down at his mom's piano and taught himself how to play classical music. He was very gifted. He began lessons with the Dean of Music at the University of Montana from 8-12th grade.

In 1952-56 he served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean Conflict. He and his brother, Frank, were on the USS Stembel DD644 Destroyer.

In December 1953 he returned home to Pablo to marry his childhood friend and sweetheart Lora (Houle) Cole. They

returned to San Diego and began their 69 year marriage. Their first son, Jim jr., was born in San Diego, December of 1954.

When Jim was discharged from the Navy, they returned home to Montana and moved to Missoula. A second son, Kenny, and two daughters, Patty and Sue, joined the family over the next six years.

Jim worked many jobs before joining the Missoula Police Department in 1959. He once again joined his brother Frank, this time in law enforcement. He was employed with the MPD from 1959-1975. After retiring as a lieutenant from MPD, he worked at Stone Container and Cole Campers.

Jim loved to go camping and years of memories were made with uncles, aunts and cousins. Jim and Lora, Frank and Helen, and Evelyn and Earl spent many summers fishing, camping, traveling and touring the country. Their favorite camping place was Apgar in Glacier National Park. Jim and Lora were blessed to live on Flathead Lake. He, along with the

help of many family members, built "the cabin" which was their home for 30 years. Swimming, boating, fishing, barbecues, holidays and birthdays were more fun at the cabin!

Jim was preceded in death by his son, Kenneth; his parents, Ralph and Violet; siblings, Bob, Ralph, Art, Evelyn, Dorothy, Charles and Frank. Jim is survived by his wife, Lora (Houle) Cole; son, Jim Jr. (Brenda); daughters, Patty (Ken) Louden, and Susan (Ron) Reiman; grandchildren, Nicholas (Jaa) Cole, Kyle Cole, Gregōry (Sarah) Louden, Carrie (Dave) Fennessy, Kevin (Amelia) Louden, Jill (Ryan) Thomas, Meagan Reiman, Stephanie (Nathan) Knox, and Cole (Hannah) Reiman; 11 great-grandchildren, Alex, Tyler, Michael, Conner, Dillon, Ryan, Brinkley, Kenton, Silas, Leo and Hattie.

A memorial service will be held May 30 at 11 a.m. at Johnson-Gloschat Funeral Home, 525 S. Main with a reception to follow at Central Bible Church, 902 1st Ave. E.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a gift to the NWMT Veteran's Food Pantry, 1349 Highway 2 E., Evergreen.

Arrangements are under the care of Johnson-Gloschat Funeral Home in Kalispell.

Leo Cornelius Coleman, 89

Leo Cornelius Coleman, 89, of Kalispell passed away peacefully on Feb. 3, 2023.

Leo was born in Everett, Mass., on April 6, 1933 to Leo and Grace Coleman, and was raised in Revere, Mass. Leo graduated from Immaculate Conception High School in Revere, Mass. in 1951.

Leo served in Korea with the Air Force from 1953 to 1957 in communications and continued his service at Edwards

Air Force base in California until 1961.

Leo loved his family and had many passions. He was a deeply passionate patriot and loved his country. He adored animals ... especially dogs, so much so that he started a



dog walking service in his retirement years to help others who were unable to do so. Leo also loved deep sea fishing. He especially enjoyed fishing with his children and grandchildren. Leo had many stories about his experiences which people loved to hear.

Leo is survived by his daughter, Teresa Thorp (George) of Kalispell; son, Paul Coleman (Cindy) of Bakersfield, Calif.; son, John Davis (Carrie) of

Battle Ground, Wash.; as well as seven grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the humane society or the ASPCA.

Friends are encouraged to visit our website at www.buffalohillfh.com to leave notes of condolences for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory caring for the family.

Gertrude Combs, 98

Gertrude "Trudy" Combs went to "sleep" peacefully from natural causes at the age of 98, in Kalispell.

She was born to Charles Royal and Ruby (Ruth) Tupper Swanson in 1925 near Liberty Bond, Washington. Myrtle Leona Gertrude "Gerti" was born at home and delivered by her father, the seventh of eight children.

While attending high school in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, she met Wilbur "Doyle" Combs who wooed her with notes in class. After moving to Lebanon, Oregon, where she graduated, she changed her name to "Trudy" during her senior year.

The courtship letters continued and she married Doyle in 1944 in San Diego, California, where he was stationed in the Navy. They enjoyed many happy years living in Oregon, Alaska and Montana.

She loved life and action including roller skating, tap dancing, tumbling, tennis, puzzles, scrabble, pinochle and music. Music was always a big part of her life, and she loved to perform and sing in crazy costumes.

There were many gatherings around the piano singing and playing old time favorites and spiritual songs which she also played at the Kingdom Hall for many years.



She loved her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, and spent time with them painting, cooking, riding bikes, feeding ducks, playing dress-up and card games.

In later years, she also took up oil painting like her mother and painted 50 oil paintings on canvas and saws, many as gifts for friends and family. She was always very friendly and would share her "life story" with any who would listen.

Trudy and Doyle enjoyed traveling on many road trips including New York, California, Florida and Alaska, plus trips to Hawaii.

She was dearly loved and will be missed by all that knew her.

She was preceded in death by all her siblings, and her husband of 73 years, Doyle.

She is survived by her children, Shirley Roberts, Larry Combs and Charlotte Campbell; grandchildren, Eric Jones, Aaron Combs, Rachael Campbell Quijada, Stacey Jones Kovalak, Briana Combs Moore, Brice Campbell, Heather Jones Westphal, Ashley Campbell, Lesliegh Campbell McDaniel; and great-grandchildren.

Her greatest love was for Jehovah God and his son, Jesus Christ, and her deep personal study of the Bible convinced her of the resurrection hope and promise of living again on Earth in a restored paradise foretold in Psalm 37:29, Revelation 21:3,4 and many other verses.

She was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses on April 23, 1950, and enjoyed volunteering many hours of her time sharing this good news with others through door-to-door preaching and Bible studies.

Shannyn Christensen Austin Alcantara, Ryker Jones, Jaxson Jones, Logan Alcantara, Kolbie Moore, Tucker Westphal, Tristan Westphal and Mateo Quijada.

Trudy and her family truly appreciated all the phone calls, letters and love and the excellent loving care from so many at Wel Life Assisted Living and Heritage Place.

Memorial services will be held at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 12, at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1414 South Woodland Avenue, Kalispell.

Maxine Nelson Conway, 90

Maxine Nelson Conway, 90, passed away on Aug. 5, 2023, at Logan Health in Whitefish. She was born in Missoula, on Feb. 13, 1933, to Alfred Nelson and Hazel Owen Nelson.

She is survived by her husband, Richard (Dick) Conway of Whitefish; children, Debra Adair (Tm), Richard "Butch" Conway (Tracy) and Jennifer Speer (Bill); her sister, Dolores McLean; grandchildren, Daniel and Christopher Adair, Trista Speer Noble, Nora Speer, Tiffany Rose and Adrianna Churchill; as well as 11 great-grandchildren.

Dick and Max met at Missoula County High



72 years.

After completing his education in Seattle and working for Boeing, they moved back home to Montana and opened Radio Shack in Kalispell. With Max's assistance, it became one of the top Radio Shack stores in the Northwest. She was named top salesperson throughout the time they were in business.

She enjoyed flying with Dick in their Cherokee

School and married after graduation when Dick enlisted in the Air Force. They were married for

airplane and became proficient at crosswind landings. They traveled extensively and enjoyed Mexico particularly. She had a special affinity for the people and culture of Mexico and was warmly received wherever she went.

In her short 90 years she lived a life of love, adventure and joy. She was loved by all who had the pleasure of knowing her and will be deeply missed. Friends are encouraged to visit our website at www.buffalohillfh.com to leave notes of condolences for the family. Buffalo Hill Funeral Home and Crematory is caring for the family.

Sally Cooper, 76

Sally Elizabeth Anna Cooper, 76, of Dove Creek, Colorado, died in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Dec. 11, 2023.

She was born Dec. 2, 1947, in Great Falls, Montana, to Erwin and Beatrice Woesnor.

She attended Flathead High School, and later, Flathead Valley Community College.

She married the love of her life, Leslie Cooper, Oct. 22, 1966.

She helped run a successful farm in the

Flathead, and later, businesses, and worked for many years at Somers Elementary School.

After selling the farm, Sally and her husband moved to their adopted home of Dovecreek, Colorado, to retire.

She is survived by her son, Ian; grandson, Sean; her sister, Kathy; and nephews, nieces, in-laws, and many friends.

A celebration of life will be held in late June, in Dove Creek.

Therese Corbett, 97

Therese M. (Biesen) Corbett, 97 of Polson, passed away peacefully on Dec. 9, 2023, at the St. Joseph Assisted Living Facility in Polson.

She was born in Spokane, Washington, on Feb. 8, 1926, to Henry and Mary Alice (Barrett) Biesen. She was raised in Addy, Washington, attending area schools through high school. She enrolled at the Sacred Heart School of Nursing in 1945 as part of a Second World War program to train nurses for possible military service, graduating in 1948.

In September 1950, Therese was married to John C. Corbett in Libby. John's law enforcement career included jobs with the Montana Highway Patrol and the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, which necessitated moves to several locations in Montana including Hardin, Dixon, Polson and Havre.

Her career included nursing work in a doctor's office, several hospitals, clinics and the Lake County Home Health Program. John and Therese raised their family in the various communities where John served as a law enforcement officer. John and Therese retired to Polson in 1974, enjoying many years in their lakeside home on the west shore of Flathead Lake and



later in the home they had built in Polson overlooking the lake.

She enjoyed reading, playing cards (especially bridge), crossword puzzles, swimming and camping. John and Therese often hosted out of town guests at their Polson area homes. She had many friends and always had a story, joke, or anecdote to share. Her strong faith in God and active prayer life were evident to all who knew her.

She is survived by daughters, Dana (Oscar) and Cindy (Ken); son, Timothy (Laura); along with eight grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, John; and her daughter, Libby.

A service will be held at 2 p.m. on Jan. 5, 2024, at the Lake Funeral Home, 101 Sixth Ave. E., Polson.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Hospice or the charity of your choice. Messages of condolences may be shared with the family online at www.lakefuneralhomeandcremation.com.

Arrangements are under the care of The Lake Funeral Home and Crematory.

Alyvia Rae Cornett, 21

+ Alyvia Rae Cornett, 21, of Bigfork, passed away peacefully with family by her side Monday, July 3, at Logan Health in Kalispell. She was born Feb. 13, 2002, to Ralph and Teresa Cornett, in Kalispell.

While Alyvia had Prader-Willi Syndrome, it was not who she was. She experienced the world through a child's heart, filled with curiosity, love, kindness and a deep caring for all animals and babies, especially cats.

She grew up loving to sing, dance, listen to music, fish, hunt and tickle the unsuspected.

Growing older, she



became a typical feisty teenager, keeping all on their toes with Halloween costume ideas, mood swings and food cravings.

One of her most cherished qualities was her

special ability to look into your eyes, see past all your walls, and speak insightful wisdom beyond her years that left many with little choice but to strengthen

their faith in God.

That was truly what she was a gift from God, always spreading a message of joy, honesty and a call to follow our heart.

She has won several medals in the regional Special Olympics as a team member of the Bigfork Blaze team. You would find her dashing across the winter landscape in snowshoes giving it her all until the finish line. She celebrated all her joys so everyone could see.

She graduated Bigfork High School in 2021, with the senior class that voted her homecoming queen. Now our queen sits adorned next to our heavenly King.

She is survived by her mother, Teresa McClellan; her father, Ralph A. Cornett; her siblings, Sam Cornett, Crystal (Chris) Mjelde and Alexa Cornett; her grandparents, Arliss Morgan, Ralph S. and Asenath Cornett. Several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews and cousins; countless friends and a community that loved and supported her very much.

Alyvia's celebration of life will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday July 15, at Crossroads Church, followed by a reception at Swan River Hall. In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Crossroads Church "Cross Fund."

Mike Wayne Cotton, 74

Mike Wayne Cotton, 74, passed away on Nov. 19, 2023, at Logan Health Medical Center.

He was born in Kalispell, Montana, on June 23, 1949, to Donna (Lynch) and Elvin Morrow. Elvin died in a boating accident when Mike was very young. A year or so later Donna remarried Don Cotton and the family moved to Helena to a ranch where Mike was raised.

He loved horses, car racing and many other such sports throughout his lifetime. He worked with his dad moving houses and during his lifetime he worked as a logger, and at the Columbia Falls



Aluminum Co. for 32 years, retiring when they closed the

plant. While he worked in the pot lines and eventually was a millwright, he worked hard at every job he did.

At a young age he joined the Marines and served in Vietnam.

Later in life he and Edna enjoyed taking their motorhome to Gray Wolf Casino and staying the night or two, one year he hit a jackpot and he smiled for weeks.

He was a prankster and a jokester and had many sayings that would make people laugh. He

had a talent for being able to fix things and TJ nicknamed him MacGyver Mike. We also called him the horse whisperer because of his talent for working with horses.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Donna; dad, Don; brother, Tim; and several favorite aunts and uncles.

He is survived by his wife, Edna of 30 years; son, Jesse and wife Pam; and two grandchildren Michael and Britney. He is also survived by a grandson, Tim Cotton; two stepdaughters, TJ Martinson (Tom Mousel), Deb and Mark Donning; and three other stepchildren and their families;

sister, Diana (Mike) Hall; and Colleen (Chris) Young and their families and several cousins.

He had a strong love for family and a life until dementia started taking his spirit a few years ago and then his life on Nov. 19, 2023,

He and Uncle Jess are together again fishing and having fish fry's in Heaven. Michael will be cremated, and military funeral be held in the spring.

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

Richard Charles Cowan Jr, 75



Richard Charles Cowan Jr., 75, passed away on Oct. 23, 2022, after a long battle with MDS. He spent his last moments at

home with his wife and best friend, Barbara, and his faithful companion, Annie. Rick loved fishing and camping, and absolutely anything to do with cars and basketball.

Rick was born in Shelby, Montana, on Nov. 27, 1947, to Richard (Dick) and Virginia (Jennie) Cowan. He grew up in Whitefish, Montana, doing all the things Montana boys love to do: fishing, hunting, playing with his pet skunk,

Spunky, and riding his gray mare Dolly. Rick and Dolly were faithful participants in the Gala Days Parade every summer when they weren't off fishing. Rick hiked, hunted, and fished all around Glacier Park, and spent his winters skiing on Big Mountain.

When Rick wasn't fishing, he was working on cars and motorcycles with his dad, taking his childhood naps on a mechanics' creeper.

Rick loved cars so much that he built many hot rods for himself and his friends, eventually founding the Glacier Street Rod Association so he could share his passion with other hot rod enthusiasts.

Although Montana was his true home, Rick spent his later years hiking and fishing in the Smoky Mountains. He and his wife Barbara traveled to Montana and many other states in their camper with their three

dogs. When they weren't camping, they were cheering on the University of Kentucky basketball teams.

Rick is survived by his wife, Barbara Hunter, his sister Sherry Baker, his daughters Karen Barr (Gregory Zuckert), Kori Knight (Clarence Knight), Katie Wiles (Blake Wiles), and Ashly Cowan, his step-daughter Diana York (Tommy York), his nephew Rob Baker (Kirstin Baker), nine grandchild-

ren and a large extended family.

Rick was preceded in death by his parents Dick and Jennie Cowan, and his granddaughter Brooke Davison.

There will be a Celebration of Life on Sunday, June 25, at the Village Greens Community Center, from 1-3 p.m. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the MDS Foundation or your favorite animal charity.

Arthur Crandall, 94

Arthur Vondal Crandall of Kalispell, died peacefully in his sleep surrounded by his children in his home on Dec. 30, 2022. He was 94 years old.

Art was born April 8, 1928 in Watertown, South Dakota and lived in several places throughout his childhood including Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Tupper Lake, New York. His father, William Greene Crandall, was a thoracic surgeon and his mother was a nurse. He had one brother, William Crandall.

Following in his father's footsteps, Art began his military service in the Navy signing up near the end of World War II at the age of 17. He was honorably discharged in 1949.

He met the love of his life, Betty Detten, in 1951 while attending Rockhurst College in



Kansas City, Missouri. After a storybook courtship and romance, they were

married Sept. 8, 1951 in St. Francis, Texas. They lived together for 52 wonderful years.

Art enlisted in the Air Force in 1951, during the Korean War and moved to Cocoa Beach, Florida. He was honorably discharged in 1953 and moved his new family to Denver, Colorado where he completed his undergraduate degree in business administration at Regis College. The family of four relocated to St. Louis, Missouri and where he received his Master of Business Administration in Hospital Administration from Washington

University.

Art's first job took the family to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Following that, he pursued many job opportunities in Texas including Edinburg, Austin, Port Arthur, Galveston and Houston. Art and Betty moved their 8 children to Missoula, Montana in 1967. After 9 years in Montana, Art took his final hospital administration job in Santa Rosa, California. In 1982 he opened a photo finishing business to pursue his lifelong passion of photography.

In retirement, Art moved with Betty to Rollins, Montana and built their dream home on Flathead Lake in 1993. Art and Betty nurtured their children through school, Catholic faith, and sports. They organized many reunions for their children, 21 grandkids

and 20 great-grandkids.

For the past 19 years Art's ministry in the Catholic Church with Sunday readings was an important priority. He also had season tickets to watch his favorite football team, the University of Montana Grizzlies.

Art is survived by 7 children: Michelle Dauenhauer, Roxanne Baker, Bill Crandall, Rob Crandall, Mimi Lampert, Beth Deterding, Yvonne Petrunin.

Art was preceded in death by his wife Betty in 2004, his son 'Lil Arthur in 1961, his daughter Arlyne 2005, and his brother William in 2021.

A Catholic rosary will be prayed on Thursday morning Jan. 5 at 10 a.m. at Johnson-Gloschat Funeral Home. A funeral mass will be said at St. Matthew's Church on the same day at 1 p.m.

Carol Creelman, 86

Carol Ann Creelman passed away Friday afternoon, March



24, 2023, at her home in Bigfork with loving family by her side. Carol was born May 31, 1936, in Missoula to Alta and Harold Herman. Alta was from Gardiner and Harold was from Twodot. Carol fondly remembered her childhood in Missoula, which included many friends and family. She spent time at the Mercantile where her mother worked for decades. Her childhood included many adventures at the scout camp at Seeley Lake, camping at her neighbor's property on Finley Point long before it was developed, catching fish all day long, canoeing — including swamping one out with a friend after much effort, and sleeping under the stars.

She loved talking about the “good old days” with likeminded friends and acquaintances. In 1958, Carol earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education, with honors, from the University of Montana, which was Montana State University at the time.

Carol then married the boy next door, James D. Creelman from Red Deer, Alberta. James was renting a room from a neighbor while he attended the university. After graduating, Jim, Carol and their daughter Camie

moved to Calgary, Alberta where Jim's career as an oilman flourished and Carol began her teaching career of many years. While in Alberta, twin sons Clay and John were born. The family lived in Alberta, Illinois, Connecticut, London, England and Texas.

With all the moving, there was always an underlying promise that Carol and Jim would move back to Montana, which in 1989, they did, landing in Bigfork. With all the changes life brings, Carol had a love and devotion to family and friends that never faltered. Carol was married to James for 53 years until he passed away in January 2011.

Some people attribute her Montana roots being responsible for her humble and caring characteristics. She could go on a cross country road trip with a friend and they would be even better friends afterward.

Carol loved puzzles — she would complete a Sunday New York Times crossword puzzle in ink. Her activities in Bigfork included golf, P.E.O., family and friends.

Even with major health issues and dementia, Carol still cared for others and never lost her great sense of humor.

There will be no formal memorial service. Goodbye Carol Ann. We miss you dearly. God Bless.

Arrangements are in the care of Johnson-Gloschat Funeral Home.

Francis Melvin Crompton, 96

In loving memory of Francis Melvin Crompton (Mel) of Lakeside.

Mel was born Nov. 26, 1926 in Salt Lake City, Utah to Jane Boulton Crompton and Francis Fielding Crompton. He spent his early years living in Salt Lake City and graduated from West High School in 1944. He joined the Merchant Marines shortly after high school and was a Morse Code radio operator on several Liberty ships. Mel saw active duty and was honorably discharged at the end of World War II.

Mel was an academic and intellectual who enthusiastically encouraged his children to further their education. He was a great example. In 1950 Mel graduated from the University of Utah having completed an undergraduate degree in civil engineering in three years. He worked for the Utah Department of Health and then the U.S. Public Health Service in Boston.

It was in Boston that he met the love of his life Beverly Thorpe Hinkelman. They were married Nov. 26, 1953 in Bristol, Connecticut. In 1954 he went on to obtain his master's degree in sanitary engi-

neering from Harvard University. After graduation Mel continued working for the U.S. government, rising through the ranks and eventually retiring in 1975 as director of engineering for the National Flood Insurance Program.

Determined to keep busy after retirement he briefly taught college physics and in 1981 moved to Red Deer, Alberta where he worked as an engineer with Alberta Environment. In 1991 he officially retired from engineering and he and Bev moved south to enjoy beautiful Lakeside.

Mel was an extremely hard worker and had a passion for building or remodeling homes. He was an accomplished craftsman and enjoyed



performing all of the work himself. Over the years, he and Bev worked together to build eight single-family homes in Ohio,

Michigan, Maryland, Ontario and Montana. Their dream home was their last house overlooking Flathead Lake in Lakeside.

On a personal level, Mel was known for his quick wit and dry sense of humor, his determination and love for adventure. Mel and Bev enjoyed many hours together researching their genealogy in the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. This hobby took them on adventures to Poland, England and Germany.

Mel will be dearly missed and is survived by his four children Catherine (Matt), David (Rosanne), Samuel (Anna), and Leslie; six grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren and extended family in Utah and Maryland.

He was predeceased by Beverly, his wife of 50 years.

The family will be holding a private service in honor of Mel. The family also wishes to extend their humble gratitude to all the staff at Brendan House for their angelic care. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to the charity of your choice or to Logan Health - Brendan House at www.logan.org/foundation/make-a-donation.

Arrangements are under the care of Johnson-Gloschat Funeral Home.

Claudia Dilys Cunningham (Nowicki)

Claudia Dilys Cunningham (Nowicki), born 1958, passed peacefully on April 24, 2023, in Missoula.

Survived by husband, Robert; daughter, Madeline; siblings, Michael, Julia and Joan; four nieces and one nephew.

Claudia was an advocate, devoted wife, mother, friend and author of "Biting Back: A No-Nonsense, No-Garlic



Guide to Facing the Personal Vampires in Your Life," published by Llewellyn Books in

2010.

Claudia will be dearly missed for her bright, beautiful spirit and deep connections with loved ones.

James 'Jim' Broughton Curtis, 84

James "Jim" Broughton Curtis was born on May 29, 1938. We imagine that he smiled and welcomed the world with his deep, hypnotic radio-sounding voice, "Wonderful!" He uttered that same optimistic word, just days before his passing on Feb. 1, 2023.

Jim had fond memories of his Minneapolis childhood, despite his father, Ralph's passing when Jim was just six years old. Jim and his older brother, Jack, surrounded the family Christmas tree with gifts for their mother, Ellen, every year. They may have been poor, but they were rich in love and created magical memories.

Jim's flair for business in the service industry was initiated as a young boy. He ran the soda fountain at a drugstore. Jim had a passion for helping and serving people, always striking up a "wonder-

ful" conversation. He eventually opened his own restaurant, the "Pizza Plaza" in Minneapolis before moving to Montana in the 60s. As an avid fisherman, the mountain lakes were calling his name.

Jim became a business partner in the Viking Lodge in Whitefish, where the Lodge at Whitefish Lake currently stands. His brag book and an article in the Flathead Beacon highlighted the 25-plus foot, flocked Christmas tree that brought visitors from across the Northwest and Canada to witness the 1000-plus glass bulbed splendor.

Jim's entrepreneurship and partnerships bloomed for decades in the Flathead Valley. Tunnel Creek Undevelopment



Corporation, Glacier Wilderness Resort, 1889 Territorial Restaurant and Café Al Dente held a big piece of Jim's heart long after his departure from those ventures.

Jim was able to step back from the owner and managerial role, when he joined the family-run, Meadow Lake Resort. Jim took pride in his concierge position and helped many couples and families have the best vacation of their lives. He booked their fishing trips, horseback rides, theater performances and many more amazing activities the Flathead Valley offers. He kept a large three-ring binder that is bulging with comment cards from guests, raving about Jim's impeccable service.

A few years ago, Jim suffered a stroke, which shook his world but not his love of people. Jim spent his final years still enjoying the things he loved most, his faith-

ful pup Tira (named after his favorite dessert, tiramisu), theater performances, a rich glass of merlot, a chance at the machines at the local casino, keeping up with current events on the news and embracing his long-lasting friendships.

Jim is preceded in death by his father and mother, Ralph and Ellen Curtis. He is survived by his brother Jack Curtis of Minneapolis; nephew Jeffrey (Julie) and their children Jack and Samantha of Rogers, Minnesota; niece, Jody Curtis Petter (Joe) and their children, Allison, and twin boys, Andrew and Aiden of Apple Valley, Minnesota.

A celebration of life will be held at Buffalo Hill Funeral Home in Kalispell on Friday, Feb.10 at 1 p.m. A reception will follow at The Springs in Whitefish.

Halden Curtiss, 85

Halden Curtiss passed over into heaven on Sunday, Jan. 22, 2023, surrounded by his wife Pauline and 11 of his children and grandchildren. He was a beloved father, friend, mentor and pastor to so many. Hal's story is best told by those whose lives he touched. His story is etched into their hearts and his influence will echo well beyond the next generation. Most who knew him have at least one story of how Hal was there for them at some critical point.

Hal was born in Erie, Pennsylvania in 1937, and first fell in love with Montana when stationed at Malmstrom Air Force base in the '50s. He returned to Montana in 1969 to pastor the Little Brown Church in Bigfork after getting broken in as a pastor by small coal mining communities in Maryland and West Virginia. He remained in the Flathead Valley throughout his years as a pastor, retiring from CrossRoads in Bigfork in 2012. He remained engaged beyond Bigfork as well. He was a teacher and board member with YWAM (Youth With A Mission Arkansas) and worked with various other Christian and community organizations. Hal had an adventurous, passionate side that led to his involvement in El Salvador in the '80s and to establishing a wilderness leadership school in the '90s, called Eastgate.



He became close with the elders of the Blackfeet in Browning, a chaplain with the Bandidos and loved his friends at Kung Fu. After retiring, he became an EMT and worked with the Bigfork Fire Department. Around the campfire, he was renowned for his bear stories and stories of the Old West.

Hal was preceded in death by his two brothers, Richard and Tom; and his first-born son David, who died at 6 years of age. He is survived by his wife Pauline and his three children: Halden, Christine, and Jonathan, along with their spouses and a crew of grandkids. When he passed, after all the hugs and kisses goodbye, his son Halden told him not to worry about anything here and to go be with David and he went immediately. He always longed to see David again and so many others.

A memorial service in Bigfork will be announced at a future date, likely sometime in the spring or summer. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Hal Curtiss Aces after school memorial fund in Bigfork. Cards may be sent to Pauline and the family at 18654 Morris Rd. Conneautville, PA. 16406.