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Hound takes long road home

By CAROLE LOGE
Of The Gazette Staff

In the best dog stories there's one thing you can count on: a happy ending.

No matter what obstacle is put in her way, Lassie's gonna come home.

Following that tradition, a Billings Irish Wolfhound came back to his owner of two years, Karen McPherson, this week.

The pair was inseparable — until the dog wandered away from his home on North 30th St. last week.

The valuable dog was found by a Jackson Hole, Wyo., man who was staying at a Billings motel.

Inclutant to unnecessarily turn loose a good thing, the man called the City Animal Shelter and reported that he had the dog and planned to keep it until and unless an owner turned up.

By the time Ms. McPherson learned that her dog was in town, the man wasn't — he was en route to Jackson.

"I did not give that gentleman authority to take the dog out of town," Jim Nixon, Superintendant of Animal Control, said Thursday.

Nixon, at his own expense, drove to Butte on Monday to pick up the dog.

He made a series of complicated arrangements with the Jackson dog lover (who had meanwhile made a trip to Canada in preparation for a move there, and returned to Jackson for the rest of his belongings. The dog went along on all journeys.)

The wolfhound was to have spent the evening in the Silver Bow County Jail at one point in the proceedings. Instead, Nixon met the Canadian-bound man in Butte Monday, picked up the dog and started back.

"My alternator went out in Big Timber — it shorted out and was giving the battery a full charge," said the dog warden, to whom "wolfhound" was by then becomming an ugly word.

He had to drive from Big Timber to Billings with the headlights on bright, the dome light and air conditioner on and both the radio and eight-track system playing, to avoid burning up the battery.

The wolfhound, unaware of the turmoil he had caused, slept through it all. He spent the night at the Animal Shelter and was reunited with his owner Tuesday.

"Next time," Nixon vowed, I am almost going to insist that the animal be brought to the pound."

Now when Nixon figures out what to do with the strong-smelling billy goat his wardens collected from a local refinery recently, his troubles will be over — at least until the next unusual case crops up.

Karen romps with her dog who was returned to her after being taken to Wyoming and Canada

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Lawyer hints Close lying

By KATHLEEN MERRYMAN
Of The Gazette Staff

Robert Close is trying to deal his way off death row and he's deperate enough to give the county attorney any story, true or not, that will keep him from the gallows, attorney Robert L. Stephens Jr. argued Friday in District Court.

If the jury believes Robert, Stephens' client, David Close, may take the younger man's place on the gallows.

Both men — Robert is David's nephew — were charged with the July 9, 1974, kidnaping, murder and robbery of Oklahoma carnival promoter Billy Joe Hill here. On June 10, 22-year-old Robert was sentenced to hang for his part in the crime. David, 42, is trying to prove he had no hand in the bludgeon slaying.

In a surprise move on the eve of the trial, Robert offered to testify that his uncle had masterminded the plot and struck the fatal blow against Hill. In return he asked the court to recommend that his death sentence be commuted and that his 140-year prison term be reduced to 50 years. He also demanded immunity from prosecution for any prior perjuries.

District Judge Robert H. Wilson granted the immunity and told Close he was unable to promise anything on the sentence adjustments.

Friday Stephens attempted to discredit the young man's testimony, producing records of his previous interviews with law enforcement officers and the testimony in his own trial.

"Do you recall the first time you were questioned regarding participation in this crime?" Stephens demanded.

Robert responded that he had talked with Deputy Charles Skillen of Yellowstone County Sheriff's Department about a month after the crime. He had told the deputy that perhaps he had been drinking with Billy Joe Hill, but that he couldn't remember.

He was later questioned by Skillen and an officer of the Amarillo, Tex., police department while being held there on armed robbery charges. In Amarillo he told Skillen he had been drinking with Hill but had left him passed out in his car.

Robert was acquitted of the armed robbery charges and returned to Billings, where

(More on Close, Page 12A)

Navy wants to salvage plane from North Sea

(C) New York Times

WASHINGTON — The Navy announced Friday that it will attempt to recover an F14 fighter plane that along with its highly secret Phoenix weapons system was lost over the side of the Carrier John F. Kennedy in an accident in the North Sea on Tuesday.

Navy officials insisted that the recovery attempt was dictated by a desire to salvage the plane to try to rebuild it, and more importantly to try to determine what caused the costly accident.

But another factor entering into the Navy decision was to prevent the $18 million plane, one of the most sophisticated in the American arsenal, from being recovered by the Soviet Union.

"We are not in a great contest with the Soviets," one Navy official observed, "but we would just as soon not leave the plane lying around on the bottom for them to pick up if they want and can."

Should the Soviets recover the plane, it would be an intelligence windfall for them comparable to the one that Japan, and indirectly the United States, came by when a defecting Soviet pilot recently flew a MIG25 Foxbat to Japan.

With its long-ranging Phoenix missiles, the swept-wing F14 is regarded as possibly the only American plane currently capable of shooting down the MIG25 at extremely high altitudes. In its electronic and computer equipment, including the Phoenix system, however, the F14 is believed to be far more sophisticated than the Soviet plane.

The F14's computerized fire control system is capable of simultaneously tracking and firing the Phoenix missiles, which have a 100-mile range, at six different targets.

One of the $500,000 Phoenix missiles was on the plane when, apparently, a stuck throttle caused it to roll over the side of the carrier.

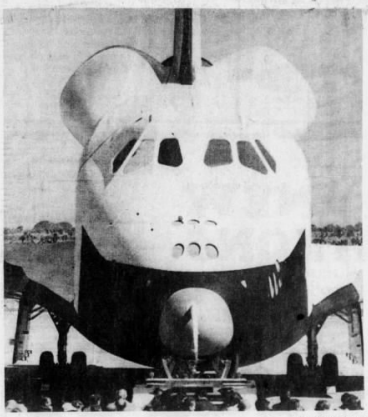
Should the Soviet Union recover the plane, therefore, it would learn not only how the Phoenix system works but also important information on other secret aspects of the plane, such as a computer system that places the interceptor in the best possible position for an attack.

Within the Navy, it is accepted that the Soviet Union knows fairly precisely the location of the plane, which is resting in 1,890 feet of water 75 miles northwest of Scotland.

A Soviet Kresta-class cruiser and a small electronic intelligence ship, shadowing a North Atlantic Treaty Organization naval maneuver, were four to seven miles away from the carrier when the accident occurred and presumably noted the location where the plane sank.

Since then the Soviet ships have moved northward with the NATO naval force, and the nearest So-

(More on Tomcat, Page 12A)



United Press International

Some thought frontal view of Enterprise resembled Mickey Mouse

Court rejects explanation of initiative

By ARTHUR HUTCHINSON
Of The Gazette State Bureau

HELENA — A Helena district judge Friday threw out a revised explanation to voters of an initiative that would restrict nuclear power facilities in Montana.

Dist. Judge Gordon R. Bennett ordered that voters in the Nov. 2 election must be inislative approval before a nuclear power plant could be built in Montana.

The ruling rejected an explanation that Atty. Gen. Robert L. Woodahl issued Tuesday describing the initiative as a ban on building nuclear facilities until Congress removes present liability restrictions and their safety is proven beyond doubt.

Bennett's order directed Secretary of State Frank Murray to restore the original language of the attorney general's explanation to the official ballot, or appear on Wednesday and explain why he has not.

The version issued Tuesday had been revised from Woodahl's original explanation which said legislative approval would be required before a nuclear power plant could be built.

Presumably Woodahl, as chief legal officer of the state and the official required by law to write the explanation, will represent Murray in court and defend the change in language. Woodahl could not be reached for comment Friday.

JoAnn Woodgerd, chief deputy secretary of state, said on Friday that counties must begin printing the ballots next week or they will not be available in time for absentee voters who live long distances from Montana.

In addition, she said, the voter pamphlet sent to all voters listing the arguments for and against all ballot issues must be sent to printers by Monday if it is to be distributed to voters before the election.

(More on Court, Page 12A)

Charges reinstated against Carden

HELENA (AP) — The Montana Supreme Court granted prosecutors' requests on Friday and reinstated 28 felony counts against James J. Carden, former administrator of the state Workers Compensation Division.

The decision means Carden will face 33 counts in his trial, scheduled to begin Sept. 28.

Only five counts — all involving bribery — were left last month after District Court Judge Robert Wilson of Billings dismissed 38 counts against Carden.

Most of those dismissed alleged embezzlement by a public official.

The Supreme Court agreed with prosecutors at a hearing on Thursday that 10 of those 38 could properly be dismissed.

The court's ruling gave no reasons for the decision and said a formal opinion would be issued later. The court said it issued its decision quickly to give all parties as much notice as possible because the trial date was so near.

Wade Dahood, Carden's lawyer, argued in Thursday's hearing that the original complaint contained 118 charges against Carden, but none that accused him of taking any money for himself.

Two of the counts, Dahood said, contended that Carden accepted suits of clothing from then-Sen. Lake McKeon of Anaconda at Christmas in 1971 and 1972, Dahood said.

"This is a prosecution that should never have been started, because there was absolutely no criminality," Carden's lawyer argued. Dahood himself is under indictment by a grand jury investigating past operations of the Workers Compensation Division.

In an apparent reference to his own case, Dahood told the high court, "This lawyer lives under a cloud because he wouldn't enter a plea of guilty for his client (Carden)."

Deputy Atty. Gen. Jock O. Anderson told the court that the wholesale dismissal of the embezzlement charges indicated that Judge Wilson had misunderstood the prosecution's supporting affidavit.

NASA unveils space shuttle

PALMDALE, Calif. (UPI) — The first space shuttle, a squat craft resembling a regular airliner was unveiled Friday and hailed as the forerunner of a transportation system that will take "ordinary" people out of this world.

About 1,500 people, including NASA and government VIPs attended the 'roll-out' ceremony to see the shuttle 'Enterprise.' A drum roll sounded as theship was tugged by tractor from a huge hangar of Rockwell International Corp. in the Mojave Desert.

The shuttle, which will make its first orbital flights in the early 1980s, is a half rocket-half plane which has the capability of making more than 100 round trips and, acting as a bus and truck, landing on solid ground instead of splashing in the ocean.

Dr. James C. Fletcher, NASA director, said the occasion marked the beginning of a new era — "the evolution of men in space — not just astronauts and cosmonauts but all people."

"It is the beginning of a system of space transportation in which we will enter the environment of space permanently.

"The shuttle will still require astronauts as pilots but any ordinary passenger can qualify with normal good health and NASA doctors have not set any age limit."

Sen. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., a member of the Senate Aeronautics and Space Sciences Committee, predicted that the $40 billion which Congress has appropriated for the overall space program would turn out to be its best investment in U.S. history.

"We have made a better deal for America than the purchase of Alaska and — I might add — of Southern Arizona," Goldwater said.

William F. Rockwell Jr., board chairman of Rockwell International, said the country was about to embark "on one of the most exciting chapters in American history, productive use of space."

He saw manufacturing facilities engaged in productivity that "can only be achieved in the unique environment of space."

THE BUZZ

School's in session and The Buzz is back — Page 14A

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Cooler

Cooler and windy Saturday and Sunday. Highs Saturday 60s to 70s. Lows at night 35 to 45. Highs Sunday 55 to 65.

Horse gets full funeral

NEWPORT, Tenn. (UPI) — Setting Sun will be buried, with full funeral honors, Sunday afternoon in the barnyard that was his final home.

The big chestnut Tennessee Walking Horse, owned by industrialist M.M. Bullard, died Tuesday of a kidney ailment. He was 24.

"He was the age equivalent of about a 125-year-old man," Bullard said of the horse whose career included 150 championships in 160 shows. "He was reserve champion once in his career."

Setting Sun's last appearance in competition was at Mont-

(More on Horse, Page 12A)

Police named wrong victim

An error in a police document caused an error in a story in Friday's Gazette reporting that $16,419 worth of stolen checks found in a garbage can belonged to the Billings Public Auction Yards.

The checks, in fact, belonged to the Billings Livestock Commission Co.

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