

# Hungry Horse News

All photos by Mel Ruder unless otherwise indicated. 31st YEAR, NO. 25 COLUMBIA FALLS, MONTANA 59912 THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 1977



**BURLINGTON NORTHERN CREWS** worked through Saturday night into Sunday repairing mainline five miles east

of West Glacier where 22 freight cars had derailed at 12:35 p.m. Saturday. Across Flathead's Middle Fork is Glacier Park. Please see pages 4,5.

## BN Reopens Main Line in 24 Hours

**WEST GLACIER** — Burlington Northern mainline service was interrupted 24 hours Saturday and Sunday by derailed 22 freight cars five miles east of West Glacier in Belton Canyon.

Westbound Minneapolis to Seattle Freight No. 197 had started through Tunnel 3.7 when the emergency brakes stopped the train. The crew found 22 cars off the track. It was 12:35 p.m. Saturday.

About 1,000 feet of track including the section in the short tunnel had to be replaced. Cars remained upright except for one carrying coal that dumped a small part of its load near the tunnel entrance.

Tom Sloan, assistant superintendent of BN's Montana division based in Havre, said seven of the derailed cars were loaded and the rest empty. Full cars were carrying tissue paper, veneer, auto parts, general merchandise as well as the coal car, and one tank car with syrup, but with no spill. There wasn't evidence of cargo damage.

**Big dozers were called in from Canyon Logging and Royal Logging.**

The work force mobilized and were on the job through the night. Derailed cars had to be shunted out of the way, damaged rails and ties removed, grade replaced, new ties laid down followed by spiking. First men went ahead putting in spikes on every fourth tie gauging the track to 56 1/2 inches between rails. Next came the spike driving machine.

Saturday evening's west-bound Empire Builder was rerouted through Great Falls and Missoula. Sunday morning's eastbound Empire Builder went through by 1 p.m. Sunday, and the busy line was once again carrying 18 to 20 freight trains and two passenger trains daily. Old Jim Hill had built the most economical line through the northern Rockies for hauling freight.

John Willard, Billings, BN public relations representative, Wednesday said to cause for the derailment has been announced. Not confirmed was the cause being a broken rail.

As railroad wrecks go, this was less damaging and expensive than those the Flathead knew in the early 1970s. A fortunate development was fewer wrecks in recent years.

Saturday's derailment took place at the same Tunnel 3.7 that on Feb. 12, 1971 saw 57 freight cars pile up with \$700,000 damage. It was eastbound freight 88 carrying canned salmon, plywood, lumber and aluminum. Nineteen of those 57 cars were scrapped in what is considered the most damaging freight car pileup this area has known.

The Hungry Horse News presented a number of railroad wreck pictures in the early 1970s, and running a railroad seemed an especially hard way to make a buck. Fortunately this area hasn't had a major

Tunnel 3.8 about four miles east of West Glacier.

Sept. 18, 1971 was the date of the million dollar head-on collision on the west edge of West Glacier with one train crew death and one critical injury and a cross-cross of hatched freight cars.

## Welfare Fraud Crackdown In Flathead

**Flathead County Attorney Patrick M. Springer is cracking down on welfare fraud and has filed 15 such cases in justice court this week.**

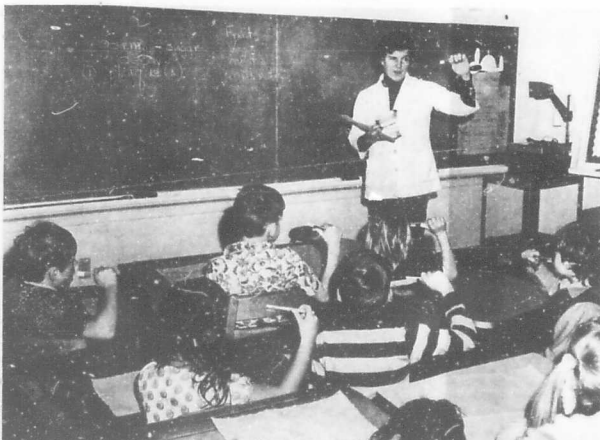
Intense investigation led to the filing of cases. Flathead County special investigator Wilbur Walter and two investigators from the Missoula Department of Revenue conducted the investigation.

Springer said this is part of a continuing crackdown on welfare fraud and non-support in the county.

Anyone having information concerning such fraud is asked to contact Walter through the county attorney's office or the Flathead County Crime Check.

Information brought forward will be kept strictly confidential and Springer noted prosecution of

(continued on back page)



**COLUMBIA FALLS SECOND GRADERS** had session on dental health Friday

with Mrs. R. D. Buchanan, dental hygienist, and wife of local physician. See story, photos page 3.



**FITTING EMBLEMS** for a school with 96 per cent of its 170 students of Indian descent is a poster with books and mortarboard hat with "Big Medicine," and Indian princess drawing, and the

American flag. Blackfeet Indian girls are Kathy Calf Boss #218, Pamela Demmert and Elaine Spotted Eagle. For photo of kindergarten class please see pages 6.

## To Decide Yes or No On Paving Streets

by Keith Klingenberg

**Property owners note: The Special Improvement District (SID) for paving city streets will go into effect unless you protest it.**

City council members voted Monday evening to proceed with plans for the SID. Mayor Ray Barnhart said the only fair way is to let the taxpayers make up their minds.

City Attorney James A. Cumming explained steps that are necessary before the paving project would become reality and property owners would start paying.

Council members must pass a resolution of intention to create the SID. In this resolution, the district must be described, all costs must be described and a procedure for protest established. This means a time and date will be set for public hearing to listen to property owners opposed to the SID.

Cumming said City Engineer Dave Stahly will have a new total cost figure ready by the time the city council meets Feb. 7 to pass the resolution creating the SID.

Latest construction cost estimate for the project is \$4,733,000. This figure was based on material costs and prices in September, 1976. There is

agreement the figure now will be higher, though no one is sure how much.

This \$4,733,000 figure was based on installing storm sewers, curbs and paved streets citywide.

Letters will be mailed to individual property owners detailing their exact cost per year and informing them of the right to protest.

Cumming said written protest is necessary. There will be a public hearing where persons protesting can be heard, but a written protest is needed for legal purposes.

Under state law, the SID will automatically be approved, unless 50 per cent or more of the property owners formally protest it.

Cumming said property owners could begin receiving their letters sometime in mid February. Other estimates of when these letters might be sent range up to three months.

Columbia Falls has approximately 1,500 individual property owners. The SID was originally figured on 2,000 lots size 50' by 125'.

Here is how SID costs are figured. Total SID cost is divided by the total square footage of property in the district. This gives a cost per square foot.

Property owners then pay how many square feet they own. The more property a person owns, the more his vote will count in deciding whether or not the SID will be approved.

An option is available to property owners. They can pay the total SID cost at once and avoid some interest charges, or they can split payments into 20 installments to be paid over a 20 year period.

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## Olson Heads Falls Chamber

**Darrel V. Olson was elected president of the Columbia Falls Chamber of Commerce Tuesday succeeding Roger Elliott.**

Olson is chairman of the Glacier National Bank, and Elliott, a CPA.

Other officers elected were: M. G. (Sonny) Hansen of Moody's, first vice president; David Anderson, Bank of Columbia Falls, second vice president; and Ray Wicks CPA re-elected secretary-treasurer.

New directors are Harry Cheff of Canyon Logging and Carl F. O'Neil of Western Building Center, with holdover directors: Mrs. Jeanne Squires of the Hairport, Ron Perry of Plum Creek Lumber Co., and Don Schrock, Insurance of Columbia Falls. Elliott also becomes a director.

Program at the January meeting held at the Brass Lanterns saw Elliott and Wicks review part of the new federal tax reform act.

Outgoing President Elliott thanked chamber members for their "fine cooperation" during the past year.



**DARREL V. OLSON.**