

# Officials ask locals to take trash all the way to the landfill



HANNAH POTES/Gazette Staff  
A couple unloads trash at Billings Regional Landfill on Saturday. Landfill employees have had to pick up fallen refuse from South Billings Boulevard dropped by locals unloading their trash.

By MIKE FERGUSON  
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A continuing and somewhat messy lingering effect of the May 18 hailstorm is the daily unsightliness alongside South Billings Boulevard. Vester Wilson, the city's solid-waste superintendent, said that with increased use at the city's landfill has come a noticeable amount of trash that's not making it all the way to the city-owned facility. Whether the refuse is not tied down properly or the driver is going too fast, so much trash blows or is thrown off trucks that a landfill employee must spend two to six hours each day cleaning up South Billings Boulevard in the vicinity of the landfill.

"It's not uncommon to get two pickup loads in a day," Wilson said. "We'd rather see the waste material in the landfill than on the side of the road." The problem is not necessarily caused by or even exacerbated by all the roofing work that has gone on since the storm, Wilson said. Building materials are placed in a different landfill section from where other refuse goes. And most building material — drywall, lumber, etc. — is too heavy to be blown out of the truck or to slide off in transit. But officials say the sheer volume of landfill-bound traffic has contributed to the misplaced trash situation along South Billings Boulevard. Vern Heisler, the city's deputy public works director, noted that 17,622

private vehicles crossed the landfill's upper scale during the month of June. A year ago in June, that figure was 10,700 vehicles. The difference represents a 65 percent increase this year. "That number caught my attention," Wilson said. "It's a lot of vehicles." Put another way, the landfill is filling up slightly faster as a result of the hailstorm — by about 5,000 tons per month. During an average month, 25,000 tons of refuse are taken to the landfill. The increase won't hasten the closing of any of the three landfill cells currently in use, Wilson said. He expects the three cells have 11 or 12 more years of life.

Please see Landfill, B5

## CROSS-COUNTRY FOR A CAUSE



Illinois resident David Kuhn, who is losing his vision as a result of being hit by a drunken driver, runs the track at West High in Billings Sunday. Kuhn is running across the United States to raise awareness of cystic fibrosis, a disease his granddaughter has.  
HANNAH POTES/Gazette Staff photos

### Blind man running 11,000 miles to fight cystic fibrosis stops in Billings

By SEAN PLEMMONS  
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No matter where David Kuhn runs, he can't see what's ahead of him — or, at least, not much of it. Kuhn is blind. He sees next to nothing. He can see shadows around him of people and shapes. He can make out the white lines on different tracks he runs, but that's about it. He was hit by a drunken driver more than 30 years ago in a crash, which left him with irreversible damage to his eyes. Since then, he has slowly gone blind. But it doesn't stop him. Kuhn, 62, is on a mission. He is running around the country to raise awareness of cystic fibrosis. "I want to try and make a little difference for those fighting the disease," said Kuhn, whose granddaughter has the disease. "I want to raise half a million dollars for the cause." Kuhn plans to run 11,000 miles by the time his journey is over. Along the way he is stopping in cities in perimeter states all around the country, running with a goal of 20 miles a day in each city he stops in. After about a week of running in one city, Kuhn takes a Greyhound bus to the next city. On Wednesday, Kuhn was

running laps around the West High School track. Kuhn, who is from DeKalb, Ill., started his journey in Seattle. He plans to hit four corners of the country, making stops in Bangor, Maine; Jacksonville, Fla.; and San Diego before heading back to Seattle. He has a 20-mile-a-day goal so he can keep on schedule. Word of mouth among different running clubs has drummed up most of his support. Kuhn is a mason from DeKalb Lodge 144, and he said support from other masons in each city has helped as well. Kuhn's run manager, Renee Kopulos, said members of different communities help to support Kuhn in his journey. "On the first day in a new city, David doesn't really know anyone," Kopulos said. "But he just runs with it." Kopulos helps to organize Kuhn's day-to-day activities to know where he will be staying, who he will be running with and what the next move will be. In some cities, including Billings, Kuhn was provided with complimentary hotel rooms by different hotels supporting his cause. "I keep in contact with David

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"I am just a scared grandpa. The average life expectancy of someone with cystic fibrosis is 35. I want my granddaughter to at least meet that."

— David Kuhn  
cross-country runner

## NDO, other items on Monday's council agenda

By MIKE FERGUSON  
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In addition to further work on the language of the proposed non-discrimination ordinance, Monday's Billings City Council work session, which begins at 5:30 p.m. in council chambers at city hall, includes other important considerations: ■ An update on the proposed public safety mill levy, which Mayor Tom Hanel prefers to call the "family safety mill levy, because it's about the safety of our families and all residents of Billings." Assistant City Administrator Bruce McCandless said a staff report on the proposed levy would be available Monday. ■ A discussion on a proposed annexation as part of the Exposition Gateway Infrastructure Plan. According to a report by City Administrator Tina Volek, the cost to extend stormwater, water and sewer services to the county property, which is near MetraPark, is \$3.1 million. Funding sources totaling about \$1.1 million have been

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### CELEBRATE COMMUNITY

## Walk, run aimed at helping Yellowstone County veterans

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Billings serves as ground zero for a wealth of athletic events that support women's causes, sick children, cancer and more. But there hasn't been a run or walk dedicated to helping military veterans — until now. On Aug. 24, Billings will for the first time serve as home base for the Montana Warrior Run at Swords Park. The inaugural event will feature two courses, a 5K run/walk and an 8 1/2-mile Warrior Run. The 5K is a relatively easy course both amateur and experienced runners and walkers can navigate. The

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