



James W. "Jim" Lenhardt

January 1, 1944 - July 23, 2010

BILLINGS, MONTANA: James "Jim" Wilbur Lenhardt, age 65, formerly of Glendive, passed away at St. Vincent's Hospital, on July 23, 2010, with his family by his side. A Life Tribute Service will be held at 2:00 P.M. on Tuesday, July 27, 2010 at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Glendive with Celebrant Sandy Silha officiating. Silvernale-Silha Funeral Home of Glendive has been entrusted with the arrangements. Jim was born Nov. 15, 1944, to Wilbur and Martha Lenhardt in Laurel. The second oldest of seven siblings, Jim was always looked up to as the one who could solve any problem. Although at the time he didn't know it, Jim met his future bride through mutual friends at Laurel High School. Jim married Maurine Spaulding (Southworth) on Jan. 24, 1963, in Idaho Falls, Idaho. They were blessed with three sons. Jim attended Eastern Montana College as a part-time student for two years then went on to the University of Montana to finish his degree in Accounting. Jim was a very driven man who wanted what was best for his family so decided to obtain his CPA license and became a very successful businessman who owned his own CPA firm in Glendive. Jim's greatest passion, which is shared by his sons, was to be in the great outdoors fishing and hunting. Thanksgiving was always celebrated in Glendive as Jim's boys and their families would gather for their annual deer, turkey and pheasant hunts. From Fort Peck to Kersey Lake to fishing excursions in Canada, Jim always loved to share these experiences with his family and friends. He would be the first one to say "let's take my boat" or "I'll take care of planning that." Another passion Jim exuded was his

Grizzly pride. Being an Alumni of the U of M, Jim was one of the many true blue Griz fans. If he wasn't able to attend the game, you could be sure to hear yelling up and down the block in Glendive on game day. Everyone who knew Jim not only saw an amazing friend but a person who could find the humor in any situation. A prime example of his great humor was one evening he and some friends and family (around 20 people) were out for dinner. The majority of people were ordering steaks and the overwhelmed waitress was a little stressed and frazzled. After asking everyone "how would you like that cooked" she came to Jim who ordered the chicken which she promptly asked "how would you like that cooked"; he sat there for a moment and responded "preferably plucked" which relaxed the waitress and gave the table a good laugh. His sense of humor and quick wit became his trade mark which was sought out by many people. He inspired so many people in so many ways. To his son's he inspired how a husband and father could and should be; to his friends he inspired the true meaning of friendship – he could always be counted on to be there when someone was in need; to his family he inspired caring and unconditional love; and to his wife he inspired to build and share an amazing legacy. Jim loved his family very much but had a special place in his heart for his grandchildren. Known as Grampa Beast, Grampa Jimmy or Grampa Jim you could be sure to find him surrounded by his grandkids. He was the fun Grampa that took them fishing, hunting, to the movies, out for an ice cream; whatever the grandkids wanted to do, he was up for it. His family will miss their rock and mentor and his son's will miss their best friend. He is survived by his wife Maurine; children Curt (Jacqui) Lenhardt of Indian Springs, Nev., Brian (Tracy) Lenhardt of Billings, Chad (Kendra) Lenhardt of Helena; grandchildren Brittney Storfa of Butte, Taylor Storfa of Bozeman, Shane and Autumn Lenhardt of Indian Springs, Nev., Grace and Parker Lenhardt of Helena; siblings Jackie (Terry) Fink of Laurel, Nancy Berger of Billings, Cheryl (Lyle) Rodgers of Powell, Wyo., Terry Lenhardt of Laurel, Susan (Greg) Batt of Laurel, Tim (DeAnn) Lenhardt of Billings, Tom Lenhardt of Salt Lake City, Utah; mother-in-law, Cleo Levy of Glendive; sister-in-law,

Bonnie Burton of Plains; and many loving nieces and nephews. Jim was preceded in death by his father, Wilbur Lenhardt; mother, Martha Lenhardt; and brother-in-law, Dennis Berger. Remembrances and condolences may be shared with the family at: www.silvernale-silhafuneralhome.com James "Jim" Wilbur Lenhardt Life Tribute Service Sacred Heart Church Glendive, Montana July 27, 2010 Entrance Song: "Wind Beneath My Wings" (Family will enter; Chad as urnbearer) Welcome: Master of Ceremonies Reading: Elaine Deines (friend) Lyle Rodgers (brother-in-law) Video Tribute Eulogy: Celebrant

Sometimes there are people in our life whose presence makes everything a bit more fun, a bit more exciting. They bring an element of surprise, an enjoyment of the here and now, an upbeat attitude that can't help but lift our spirits. And with all of that they bring a caring, an honesty, a stability that makes them the person you go to for advice and support, because they are always there for you. James "Jim" Wilbur Lenhardt was such a person. Jim was born and raised in Laurel, Montana, in a large family with seven siblings. They grew up in a two bedroom house that had a basement with a dirt floor and one bedroom. When Jim would invite his friends to sleep overnight, his sister Nancy would remark, "what are you thinking, we are crowded as it is." The family grew even larger when three of Jim's aunts came to live with them after their mother died. Aunt Joyce Adams says of Jim and his siblings that they were more like brothers and sisters than nieces and nephews. They had great times growing up. There were always chores to do, but then came play time. With all those kids, Joyce says they always had enough to play most any game. Another aunt and Jim's godmother, Hannah Kautz, would babysit the Lenhardt kids along with her own kids, and both Hannah and Joyce remember when Jim was young and didn't get his way, he would cry and hold his breath, sometimes going into convulsions. Joyce said all the kids would be blamed for doing something to Jim. Aunt Hannah was inclined to make the other kids just give Jim what he wanted just so he wouldn't do this. Jim knew how to get his way. Jim and Maureen met while they were in high school, Jim lived in Laurel,

Montana, and Maureen lived in Park City, Montana. Maureen ended up moving to Laurel and attending Laurel high school her junior and senior years. She and Jim became acquainted and began dating. When Maureen was eighteen she could get married without parental consent, but Jim, could not marry without parental consent until he was 21. Jim's father was against them marrying so young. Jim and Maureen went to the library, and looked up what states it was legal to marry in at their age, and eloped to Idaho and were wed. The early years were tough financially, as Jim worked various jobs in various locations as he struggled with work, family and school in his quest to become an accountant. Jim was the first in his family to earn a college degree. But Jim knew that to do the best for his young family he needed more, and he obtained his certified public accounting license. Jim worked at an accounting firm in Great Falls for a few years. During this time his parents died and Jim became the mentor and father figure for his younger siblings, as they looked to him for advice, support and encouragement. Jim was always to go to guy for all of he and Maureen's family. When his mother-in-law, Cleo, moved to Glendive from California, Jim and Maureen helped her start her life here and looked after her. A favorite outing was to Wibaux for dinner. Jim would order Cleo's cocktails for her, a little Windsor and water. He made sure she had a good time, always saw to it her needs were met, and affectionately called her "Granny". Jim became number one in her heart. Jim's main accomplishment and his pride and joy was his family. During their 47 plus years of marriage, Jim and Maureen were not just husband and wife, they were best friends; they were a team that worked well together and did everything together. They loved to dance, jitterbug, waltz, polka. Jim loved to sing and entertain and Maureen loved him to do that. The one thing Maureen bowed out of was boating; she did not like the water. They worked well together in the kitchen, and in their home, in the yard and in raising their family. Jim was a hard worker, often termed by family as a workaholic. Jim came to Glendive during the oil boom in the early 80's, becoming a partner in an accounting firm, and continuing on to become a successful businessman in our community. He

loved his work and he especially enjoyed his clients, many who became friends. Jim did all of his family's taxes over the years, and even if they wanted to cheat, he wouldn't let them; his name was on the return too. Jim was community minded, serving on many boards, and being involved in many organizations over the years, using his skills and energy to make a difference. If his sons were involved, Jim was involved, he was a giver. He never let someone else carry the load alone. Because of these traits, Jim had a difficult time retiring, it was hard for him to let go. But Jim and Maureen had a retirement plan. Maureen was going to become a greeter at Wal-mart, and Jim was going to be the French fry man at McDonald's. Jim figured there could be no stress if all he had to do was dump! Jim and Maureen had three sons, Curt, Brian, and Chad. He entertained them with his love of music. He had a small guitar he would strum as he sang "Smokey the Bear" or made up goofy songs. He would entertain the kids with his own brand of magic tricks. Jim would climb on the refrigerator and act like a monkey to entertain the kids. Curt suffered stitches in his head from being the bull with Jim the bullfighter. Jim waved the towel he was using as a cape, and Curt charged right into the nightstand. Jim liked to dress up in costumes, just because. He might dress all in red or wear a rainbow wig to a wedding. Jim and his brother, Tim, were the sumo wrestlers at family gatherings. Nephew Jeff remembers the jolly man in red, ho, ho, hoing around the neighborhood at Christmas, and then stopping at the house to pass out gifts from his big sack to all the kids. And Jim wasn't above playing jokes on the kids. Nephew Sean was a master of rubbing his Uncle Jim's feet after a long day of work, with the promise of receiving the change in Jim's pocket...all six cents of it. Jim introduced his sons to his love of the outdoors, boating, fishing and hunting. Included in these memorable times were family, cousins, uncles, aunts, and friends. You see, Jim did these things, but he did not necessarily do them right. That is what made the experiences exciting, and fun. A favorite memory for Curt was the early days of camping when he was just a youngster. The first time out with the tent near Missoula, there Jim was, setting up the tent in the car's headlights because it

was dark. On the fishing trips to Kersey Lake, Curt remembers listening to music. Jim loved to sing, and he always had the radio on to sing along with. Brian's favorite memories are of the hunting trips. He remembers a deer hunt with Jim and his brothers, where after a buck was spotted, Jim shot and shot and shot until finally the gun was empty, and the deer hadn't moved or been hit. The boys decided to load Jim up in the pick-up, telling him that it just wasn't that buck's day to die, but they would try to find Jim another buck that would run into his bullets. At the annual fishing trip to Kersey Lake near Yellowstone, Jim's brother-in-law, Lyle Rodgers, tells how Jim always claimed the highest bed because he was afraid of mice. Everyone would laugh and tell Jim that being high wouldn't stop the mice but Jim would reply that was why he had a pistol, so he could shoot them. Lyle says Jim's only flaw was that he was a Laker fan. They could put up with Jim being a Griz fan but Lyle, and brothers, Tim and Terry, were all Celtics fans. Grandson Shane thought that Grandpa being a Laker fan was okay, as he, Grandpa, Curt, and Chad went to a Laker game and Grandpa bought Shane a Kobe Bryant jersey. Grandpa Jim had a soft spot for his grandchildren. He had a patience with them that he reserved for no one else. Jim was mellow and loving. He picked up the name "Grandpa Beast" from granddaughter Gracie. Jim would call Gracie a little beast and in turn, the reply was that she was the "best from the West and Grandpa was the Beast from the East." But Grandpa Beast attended Gracie parties, dressed in appropriate attire for a tea party. He would attend dance recitals and watch Shane perform ballet and jazz; he would have a fun day at Geyser Park in Billings, delighting Autumn on the bumper boats, breaking the rules and getting her and himself wet, and sinking holes in one on the mini golf course. Grandpa Beast was always good for ice cream at Baskins Robbins and would teach the granddaughters songs like, "Old Man Lucas had a lot of mucus coming from his nose...". The older granddaughters, Brittney and Taylor could count on grandpa sending \$50 each month to them in college for beer and cigarettes. Grandpa and Grandma always showed up for

the important stuff like birthdays and holidays. Watching movies with popcorn and cookies was a favorite. Jim had a special place in his heart for his grandchildren. Jim's daughters-in-law all developed a special place in their hearts for Jim. As Jacquie put it, you had to take a crash course in Jim. Jacquie got hers when she first met Jim and Maureen in an airport as they all traveled to Italy to spend time with Curt and see a bit of Europe. Jim could be explosive and brutally honest when frustrated, and you never knew what would fly out of his mouth. Tracy learned to give it right back, and when Jim would stay with Tracy and Brian in Billings while he did school audits, Tracy had rules for him to follow as he would supervise her cooking. Jim loved to cook. He knew his way around a kitchen, and had no qualms about finding his way around yours. And more than loving to cook, Jim loved to eat. That made him a pleasure to cook for because he truly appreciated food, and he let you know it. Often he wore his food; it would be hanging from his face or clinging to his shirt. Family often teased him that if his shirt wasn't stained, it be a new shirt. He went after food as he did most things in life, with energy and enthusiasm. Jim was always up for fun with family and friends, and he was always willing to do the planning. But Jim didn't spend time on details, and things seldom went smoothly. It might be a flat tire on the way an adventure, and not having a jack or even tools to fix it. It might be forgetting the fishing poles for the annual fishing trip to Canada, or forgetting to put the plug in the boat before you left the dock. And don't let Jim handle a knife or the lures, or he would have them embedded in his hand. Whatever the misdeed was, long, loud arguments would ensue because as Brian puts it, Jim was a "right fighter". He loved to argue right or wrong. And oh, you didn't want to be the one who was wrong...there would be no mercy. You would hear about it forever. There were no good sports in the Lenhardt family. As good as he was about dishing it out, Jim could take it! He loved a good joke, even if it was on him. Jim knew how to laugh at himself. He truly enjoyed the give and take when he engaged you in the "right fighting." And when it was over, it was over, no hard feelings, everyone had their say. If there was any anger directed at

you, it was for your own good. If it was just good old “right fighting” it was probably because he liked you and that was Jim’s way of interacting with you. He had fun with it and would allow you to do the same. Jim had a great sense of humor. He might appear gruff, but given time the twinkle would appear in his eye, the crooked grin would play at the edges of his mouth, and the one liners would show up, featuring his wry wit. He could make the ordinary amazingly fun. Jim had a delightful perspective on life that could bring a smile to faces young and old. A friend who had coffee with Jim every morning, Joe Fabian, loved to argue with Jim. A good start was that Jim was an ardent Griz fan and Joe was a blue and gold Bobcat. But as Joe says, whatever they would “right fight” about, they told the truth no matter how far they stretched it, and what they said to each other stayed with each other. Joe respected Jim as a businessman, admired Jim as someone who did what he said he would do, and knew just what a big heart Jim had. Jim was a great friend! Mike Iba was one of those clients who became a friend, a lunch buddy with Jim just because they enjoyed each others’ BS. Mike affectionately called Jim his “short, fat, little buddy.” Jim had several nicknames. Harpo, Artie, Jim-Bop, and Jim called himself, “Fat Jimmy.” Another friend, Gene Burton, loved the practical jokes Jim and he would play on each other. Gene had a friend from Yakima, Washington call Jim with a story about Jim’s son who was living in Yakima at the time. After getting Jim all riled up, the friend told Jim it was an April Fool’s joke from Gene. Gene will continue to look over his shoulder for Jim’s payback, it always comes. Jim was many things to many people during his life. He was loved for his sense of humor, his generosity, his honesty. He and Maureen left a legacy of good examples on marriage and parenting, the benefits of hard work, and on how to enjoy life by enjoying the people in your life. Sure, at times he could be abrasive, but it was because he cared and just as importantly, he wanted you to care. Son Chad tells that when he was wrestling, the only voice he ever heard was that of Jim’s. Jim was loud, vocal, out there, and you were very aware of his presence wherever he was. He would be your head cheerleader, your antagonist, your mentor, your leader,

your rock, all tempered with his wonderful sense of humor, and his loving and caring heart. In turn, he will always be loved and respected by all who knew him. That loud voice you've been hearing is not just in your ear, it is in your hearts and Jim's voice will always remain there as you carry Jim with you throughout your life. Jim Lenhardt will be greatly missed. Let us now listen to one of the songs the family has chosen to honor Jim with. Song: "We Are Family" Reading: Kevin McGovern & Kay Wynne A special friend of Jim's and of his family, Kay Wynne, has written some words about Jim to share with you. Time for Sharing: We will take a few minutes for those of you who wish to share a memory or thoughts about Jim at this time. Please come to the microphone so all may hear, and also please introduce yourself. Rosemary Bunting will start us out. (Sharing) Conclusion of sharing: In visiting with family and friends by phone and e-mail, the following are thoughts they would like to share. Jim's sister Susan would like to thank Jim for giving her away at her wedding and for his continued support and love, and for always being at her side throughout her life. Susan has many funny and good memories and will miss Jim so very much. Susan prays the Lord is with Jim and his family. She says, "Thank you, Jim, for being you." Sister Nancy e-mailed: Aunt Joyce included in her e-mail: And finally, 7 year old grandson, Shane, wrote Grandma Maureen this letter when he heard about Grandpa's death. The letter was delivered by the newly acquired stuffed squirrel that Autumn had just received. Autumn wanted to share her new friend with Grandma and hoped it would comfort her. Shane's letter read's: "Dear Grandma, I fill bad for you Tell grandpa I love him so much Please write a letter bock We will go to the graveyard with you soon Love Shane To Grandma Closing: During the busyness of our lives, we don't always dwell on how important the people in our life are to us. Today we honor Jim Lenhardt with our thoughts, our memories. Today we recognize the importance of a life well lived, the touch a good man had on our lives and on our hearts. There is no finer tribute to Jim than the number of people who came here today to remember him. When

someone dies, a hole is left in our hearts. When someone larger than life dies, the hole seems even bigger and harder to fill. Jim was a presence, a reminder of the joys of an exuberant life. We thank him for sharing that experience with us. Maureen, Curt, Brian, Chad and all of Jim's family, as your friends and community, we grieve with you and we grieve for you. No one was ready to be done with Jim yet. As you said, Maureen, "there was more fish to fry." We have shared many memories. Let us continue to tell Jim's story and share it with his family, today and in the coming days and weeks. Let Maureen and the family know what a significant impact Jim had on your life. The stories Jim's life created will keep his memory and his presence alive long into future generations. "To live on in the hearts of those we leave behind is not to die." (Thomas Campbell) Jim Lenhardt touched many lives. And just as each fingerprint is unique, so is the touch Jim has left on our lives. As you are ushered from your seats, you are invited to come forward and leave your fingerprints on Jim's urn to remain, blend together and forever signify the impact his wonderful life has made upon our hearts. Your print is that of friendship in honor of Jim's life and to the belief "that a life shared is a life to never be forgotten. Let us close Jim Lenhardt's life tribute service with a prayer from Kay Wynne. Prayer: Kay Wynne Song: "Old Time Rock and Roll" & Handprint ceremony

Tribute Wall



“ *James W. "Jim" Lenhardt*

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