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## **Spirited cow wins hearts after fleeing Montana slaughterhouse**

**By The Associated Press**

GREAT FALLS, Mont. – A spirited cow that jumped a slaughterhouse gate and evaded capture for six hours has drawn clemency pleas and may not be doomed, after all.

Appeals to spare the life of the 1,200-pound heifer came from across the nation after she fled Mickey's Packing Plant on Thursday. She had several near-death experiences before walking into a makeshift pen and then a stock trailer.

She was nearly struck by road and rail traffic, she almost drowned while crossing the Missouri River and she refused to be subdued by three tranquilizer darts.

The manager of Mickey's Packing Plant said the animal he dubbed "Molly B." probably will be spared the killing floor. Employees at Mickey's voted 10-1 to keep her alive.

"At this point, I have no desire to slaughter her," manager Del Morris said. "If the owner insists, I'll have to tell him to take her somewhere else."

Morris said the owner is willing to sell Molly B., who remained at the packing plant after her capture, but wants more than the estimated \$1,140 she is worth slaughtered. Morris declined to specify the new price, saying he wanted to confirm it Monday.

"We've had a lot of people show a lot of interest in the animal and its welfare," he said. "I don't think it's over. I think as days go by we'll be getting more calls."

Marie Bednar of Virginia Beach, Va., read the cow's story on a vegan Web site.

"That's not a dumb animal," Bednar said. "I hope it opens some peoples' eyes."

Francis James, a member of the board for Pig's Peace Animal Sanctuary in Stanwood, Wash., said there are "definitely people in Seattle wanting to buy the cow. Hopefully we can find the cow a home here in Seattle."

Another sanctuary, Pasado's Safe Haven in Sultan, Wash., also is interested in giving Molly B. a home.

"We're just interested in her ending up someplace safe," volunteer Larry Brothers said.

Missoula resident Annie Garde said she, too, wants to save the heifer.

"If they want to take up a collection to pay someone to keep the cow alive, I'd be more than happy to contribute," Garde said. "I probably won't become a vegetarian because of it, but it probably deserves to live. When one breaks out of the pack, it's so touching."

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