



Gazette photos/JAMES WOODCOCK

Some of the 66 kids who turned out for the Missoula Children's Theater audition for Snow White show their stuff.

# CASTING CALL FOR KIDS

■ Missoula Children's Theatre recruits young actors for Friday play

By **CHRISTENE MEYERS**  
Of The Gazette Staff

The world of greasepaint and fantasy land lured 66 kids from the usual summertime diversions as the Missoula Children's Theatre held auditions for "Snow White" Monday in Billings.

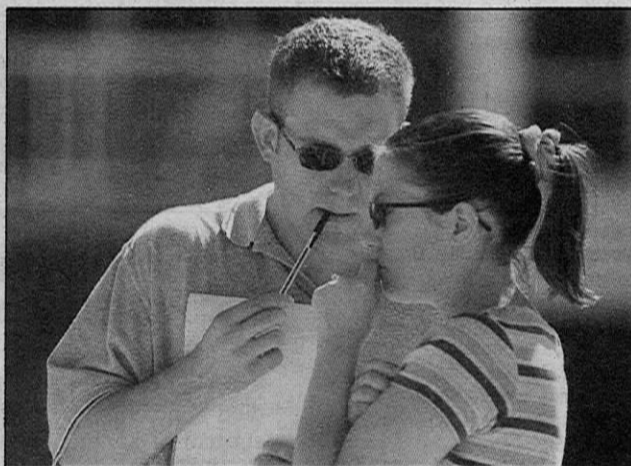
By 10 a.m., mothers and dads began arriving on the Town Square at St. John's Lutheran Home. All eyes were on the prize — a part in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" to be staged this Friday in a free performance at St. John's.

The MCT makes an annual pilgrimage through Billings, whipping together a show in five days and teaching kids some quick, constructive lessons in teamwork, discipline and on work ethic.

More than a dozen schools were represented. Ages ranged from grade-schoolers to junior high students.

MCT troupers Anne Sisson and Daniel Rezac rounded up the kids, established law and order and began having them read lines. An hour later, the roles were being cast. By noon the rehearsal schedule was established.

Castle Rock student Kelsey Legate won the title role



Anne Sisson and Daniel Rezac compare notes while watching auditions for Snow White. The play will be held Friday on the Town Square at St. John's Lutheran Home.

the stage for their assigned parts — bats, frogs, fish, birds, henchmen, the king and, of course, the dwarfs — their friends and parents patted them and cheered them on.

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and was already at work on her lines by the time she left with her mother, Diane.

"It's my first big part," she said, "but I have played a damsel in distress. This is going to be fun."

Mrs. Legate said her daughter was having a busy week, with a rabbit and a ceramics project entered in the fair. "But we'll work around things," she said, "because this is so important."

Mrs. Legate saw the notice in the paper and asked if her daughter might be interested. "I was delighted that she was because this kind of project builds commitment and teaches kids responsibility."

As the kids rose to take

## Casting

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"We try to use as many people as we can," said MCT's Daniel Rezac. "It's tough to get rejected for a part when you're a kid, but sometimes it just isn't possible to use everyone and we encourage the kids to come out next year."

Mother Marilyn Hanley brought two children to the auditions, 14-year-old Kathleen, from Billings Central High School, and 12-year-old Theresa, from Rimrock School.

"It's a big asset in their lives to work with the children's theater," said Hanley, whose older children are alumnus of "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Little Red Riding Hood" and "Johnny Appleseed." Hanley praised the MCT for "exposing the kids to other kids and other talent, helping them learn to work together and boosting their self esteem."

Will James student Katie Singer was happy to be chosen one of sev-

eral assistant directors. She had come not knowing if she would get a part, "but this will be fun. I get to help keep the younger kids under control."

Shannon Powers of West High, soon to be 15, said the project would be "good experience if we do more plays."

And Allyn Harris, a recent transplant from Charleston, S.C., said she came to the audition because she missed her theater and musical activity in Charleston.

Rezac, who has a bachelor's degree in psychology, said his background serves him well working with the 48,000 young people in 49 states this season.

The kids fill in the rest of the parts of the story and help with backstage chores in the musical adaptation to which the public is welcome Friday at 7 p.m. at St. John's.

The hectic schedule includes rehearsals today and Wednesday, a dress rehearsal and final dress rehearsal Friday, the same day as the performance.