

Great Falls Rising

Monthly Newsletter

October 2021

Welcome to the second monthly newsletter from Great Falls Rising. We hope you are enjoying the information we send and find it educational, informative, humorous and important.

The city election is coming soon. Ballots are being sent out on October 18th and election day is Tuesday, November 2nd. Elected to office will be mayor, two city commissioners and members of all nine neighborhood councils.

There have been two candidate forums. Here is information from KGPR, Great Falls' local public radio station, as to how to listen to the second forum, held September 28th: Go to the home page www.kgpr.org and find Podcasts there, then click on candidate forum. Thanks to Richard Liebert and KGPR for being the only recording media present.

If you haven't yet registered to vote, here are details on what to do: You must register to vote by Monday noon before the election at the Cascade County Election Office (325 2nd Ave. North). This is the close of late registration. A voter at the polls need to present a Montana driver's license, a Montana ID card, a military ID, a tribal picture ID. a passport or a concealed weapons permit are now the only single form of ID accepted. You cannot use a voter registration card anymore. If you don't have one of the IDs above, then you need to produce two items that prove where you live, such as a utility bill, bank statement, car title, etc. Student IDs also cannot be used anymore.

Many of us remember the 1972 state constitutional convention as a watershed for the state of Montana as to the importance of environmental protection and personal protections. Recently Montana Environmental Information Center honored those remaining with the award of "Conservationists of the Year." Six of the original 100 delegates were present in Helena to receive the award. Our own Great Falls' Arlyne Reichert was among those present.

Along with a substantial declaration of rights, it included the words "The state and each person shall maintain and improve a clean and healthful environment in Montana for present and future generations." Arlyne noted that they decided to sit alphabetically so as not to give in to partisanship. Wise idea, indeed. We thank these visionaries.

Big Sky 55+ is a strong voice to engage Montanans 55 and older to advocate for forward thinking policies such as health care and economic security for all. We encourage Progressive people 55+ to stay engaged in our communities and state political arena. Check out the website www.bigsky55.org .

October's Great Falls Rising Gathering is in the planning stages. We will be having a forum of leaders from our city's youth advocacy programs. In this time when so many of our young people are living with the stress of pandemic and distancing from their friends, we thought this would be a good time for area residents to hear from our panel of experts. Stay tuned.

Interview with Keaton Sunchild: "I ran for office as a senior in high school to help ensure that everyone has a voice. After the rewarding experience of running for office, I knew that I had to continue working to give a voice to the voiceless and ensure that we all have a seat at the table - not just those who can buy their way in. I currently work as the Political Director for Western Native Voice, and through my work across Indian Country in Montana and other western states, I have gained an even deeper appreciation for the hard work that goes on in communities that are often forgotten. But above all, what I have learned is that we need more people,

specifically young people, to step up and once again bend the arc of history towards a better day.”

On Tuesday, Sept. 21, NorthWestern Energy submitted a request to withdraw its application for the Laurel gas plant to the Public Service Commission (PSC), citing supply line issues. Hours later, NorthWestern revealed its intention to move forward building the Laurel gas plant without pre-approval from the PSC. The Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC) opposes an unusual Montana law that allows NorthWestern to seek pre-approval from the PSC when it wants to build a new electricity generating plant. Pre-approval allows the utility to shift all of the financial costs and risks of new generation assets from its shareholders to its customers before a new plant gets built. MEIC has long argued that NorthWestern should do as other utilities in the country must: Bear the risk of building a new generation asset and only seek approval from regulators to pass those costs to customers after the plant is built – when the costs are known and risks are more certain.

October is Breast Cancer and Domestic Violence Awareness Months...two issues that affect men and women. Be there for a friend going through either or both of these problems.

And we end this month's newsletter with this:

A woman was flying from Seattle to San Francisco. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would re-board in 50 minutes.

Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind. The man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Seeing Eye dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight.

He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said “Kathy, we are in Sacramento for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?” The blind lady replied, “No thanks, but maybe Buddy would like to stretch his legs.”

Picture this:

All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses. People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

True story... Have a great day and remember...

THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY APPEAR.

A day without laughter is a day wasted!

Thanks for being with Great Falls Rising. More events coming!