

Great Falls Rising

Monthly Newsletter

December 2021

“The holiday season is a perfect time to reflect on our blessings and seek out ways to make life better for those around us.” ~Anonymous

GFR DECEMBER VIRTUAL GATHERING: Curious why the New York Times sent a reporter and award-winning photographer to Great Falls and published a full-page cover story in their paper revealing conspiracy theories spreading across town? Love a good story about Montana’s rich heritage? If so, then plan to attend the December 7th virtual Great Falls Rising Gathering at 6:30 pm via ZOOM for an update on the Big Sky Country National Heritage Area project. Learn a bit about the process, the players, and the evolving story to create the FIRST National Heritage Area in Montana. If you live or work in an historic building or treasure trips to places like the St. Peter’s Mission, Ursuline Centre, Fort Shaw with your kiddos or visiting relatives, you will want to know more about Big Sky Country National Heritage Area, Inc. Join Bill Bronson and Jane Weber as they unravel the true facts about this honorable endeavor and answer your questions. You will hear the real truth and nothing but the truth.

Zoom Link:

Great Falls Rising is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.
Topic: Update on Big Sky Country National Heritage Area Project
Time: Dec 7, 2021 06:30 PM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/7172412967>

Meeting ID: 717 241 2967

One tap mobile

+16699009128,,7172412967# US (San Jose)

+12532158782,,7172412967# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 717 241 2967

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/j/7172412967>

You can help by sending a letter supporting the Big Sky Country NHA effort. Just mail your letter to: BSCNHA, PO Box 1323, Great Falls, MT 59403. If you want to do more, please consider a tax-deductible contribution to this effort. Visit the website www.bigskycountrynha.org for more information or contact Jane Weber, BSCNHA Chair at jwebers5@msn.com

MONTANA PUBLIC RADIO: They have an opening for a reporter (Media Programmer) in Great Falls. The deadline to apply is December 19th. For further information, go to the link below:

https://university-montana-hr.silkroad.com/epostings/index.cfm?fuseaction=app.jobinfo&jobid=3049&company_id=16254&version=1&source=ONLINE&JobOwner=992276&startflag=1

INVITATION TO JUDGE: The Electric City Invitational Speech and Debate Tournament is looking for judges for the event on December 10th and 11th.

On Friday, December 10th, Speech Rounds are at 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm at Great Falls High School. Debate Rounds are at 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm at CMR High School. On Saturday, December 11th, Speech Rounds are at 8:30 am, 10:30 am, 2:30 pm and 4:30 pm at Great Falls High School. Debate Rounds are at 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm, 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm at CMR High School.

Registration options are:

Email: electriccityjudgerecruiting@gmail.com

Click Link to Register: [2021-2022 Judge Recruitment \(google.com\)](#)

HOLIDAY DEALS FOR HEALTH INSURANCE: Guest column in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle by Olivia Riutta, *Director of Population Health at the Montana Primary Care Association*. “Due to a new federal law, health care coverage on the Marketplace is more affordable than ever. Now, four out of five Montanans can get health insurance for \$10 a month.” Read the article here:

[Guest column: Holiday deals for health insurance, too | Guest Columns | bozemandailychronicle.com](#)

COVER GREAT FALLS: Talking about healthcare, the Great Falls Public Library, Montana Primary Care Association and Montana Women Vote are having a FREE community event. Open enrollment through the Healthcare Marketplace is upon us, and they want Great Falls to be insured for 2022. Specialized staff will be available to help enroll folks for healthcare coverage or schedule an appointment for another day in the coming weeks. There will be refreshments, food, and community resources available from local organizations. Win door prizes from local businesses.

Date: December 15th, 2021, 1:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Where: Great Falls Public Library, 301 2nd Ave. North, Great Falls

Questions? E-mail Hannah at Montana Women Vote,
hannah@montanawomenvote.org

CITY COMMISSION HAPPENINGS: From Commissioner Mary Sheehy-Moe, "The most significant project for the commission over the next several months will be the allocation of American Rescue Plan Act funds. A draft application for funds was posted for public comment in October, and final application will be posted soon. The Commission has tentatively identified the following City projects that meet criteria for ARPA funding: updating the Mansfield Theater, providing security measures for parking garages, improving security and expanding virtual participation in Commission chambers and City courts, among others. The Commission is encouraging non-profits and other community groups to apply for ARPA funds that will address needs that have become apparent during the pandemic and urges citizens to visit the city website (greatfallsmt.net) to find the ARPA application."

JANUARY GFR VIRTUAL GATHERING: Save the date for the first gathering of 2022, on Thursday, January 27th. It will feature GFPS Superintendent Tom Moore and Chair of KEY (Kids Education YES) Jamie Marshall who will give a general update of happenings at GFPS to include how the ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) funds are being spent. Please put this important program on your calendar.

'TIS THE SEASON: In this season of giving, there are many opportunities to purchase gifts for people in need, volunteer for opportunities through the United Way (see below), give to Shop with a Cop (GFPPA.ORG; click on donate), find giving trees at the elementary schools and many churches, or just look around your neighborhood for leaf raking, shoveling, rides or other opportunities that may pop up. Tis the season and ENJOY!

December 2021

31 Days of Volunteer Opportunities

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			¹ Serve as a bell ringer or in a Salvation Army food bank 453-0391	² Drive young people get to the Alliance for Youth Resource Center 781-6823	³ Volunteer with set up or clean up at the Annual Downtown Christmas Stroll 453-6151	⁴ Socialize the animals or clean kennels at the Maclean Animal Adoption Center 727-7387
⁵ Clean the snow off of another car's windshield on your street or parking lot	⁶ Help local homeless families as a shuttle driver with Family Promise 564-5267	⁷ Call your area school and donate items they need for their student pantries	⁸ Help out families by serving in the F.I.S.H. Food Pantry 452-3474	⁹ Wrap gifts to raise funds for the Children's Receiving Home 231-9029 gfcrrhgiftwrap@gmail.com	¹⁰ Serve as a judge at local high school speech and debate event	¹¹ Sign up to help with the Toys for Tots donation event! 781-8527
¹² Give blood at the Great Falls Clinic Blood Drive to help the Red Cross meet need 771-3107	¹³ Organize a food drive in your neighborhood for a local food pantry	¹⁴ Volunteer at the St. Vincent Thrift Store and help stock shelves and serve customers 761-0870	¹⁵ Sign up to help Meals on Wheels deliver holiday meals 454-6993	¹⁶ Join Family Promise's volunteer team and help families in need at the Day Center 564-5267	¹⁷ Start a Little Free Library book exchange for your neighborhood	¹⁸ Mail holiday and thank you cards to local medical workers at hospitals and clinics
¹⁹ Fill a need with My Neighbor in Need to help a local family 750-2542	²⁰ Prepare a meal or help clean at the YWCA Mercy Home Shelter 452-1315	²¹ Write holiday cards for senior living residents	²² Join the Red Cross as a Transportation Specialist and deliver blood (800)733-2767	²³ Donate food to the Great Falls Community Food Bank to restock shelves 452-9029	²⁴ Go caroling with friends to fundraise for a local charity of your choice	²⁵ Give rides to the Danny Berg Christmas Dinner or deliver meals 788-3211
²⁶ Shovel the sidewalk of an elderly or busy neighbor	²⁷ Celebrate local history as a docent at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center 727-8733	²⁸ Sign up to volunteer weekly in a local elementary school classroom 727-3400	²⁹ Help build homes for local families with Habitat for Humanity 590-0636	³⁰ Start the new year as a Big Brother or Big Sister to a local Little 204-0108	³¹ Cook and serve meals every Friday with St. Ann's Soup Kitchen 453-2873	

For those of you who would like to help distribute food baskets to families and individuals in need, please call the United Way at 406-727-3400. Thanks for helping during our holiday season.

VACCINE MANDATE PROTEST RALLY: On Sunday, November 28th, there were simultaneous rallies in ten Montana cities, organized by the Montana Mises Caucus, a Libertarian organization protesting the vaccine mandate for healthcare workers. Melissa Smith attended the Great Falls rally. Some of the things she heard from protesters as she calmly conversed with them to learn more of how they felt:

“There is no pandemic – it’s manufactured.”

“More people die from getting the COVID vaccine than from COVID itself.”

“We’re all going to die someday.”

“Your car kills, so don’t you dare drive your car!”

“I don’t believe in COVID, but I have natural immunity because I had COVID.”

“Healthcare workers have never brought COVID-19 into health care facilities.”

“You should be so grateful that I’m out here for your freedom.”

To read the full account of her attendance, visit her blogpost at [A First-hand Account of the November 2021 Vaccine Mandate Protest Rally in Great Falls \(melissasmith4mt.com\)](https://melissasmith4mt.com/2021/11/28/a-first-hand-account-of-the-november-2021-vaccine-mandate-protest-rally-in-great-falls/)

Quotes to ponder during the Holiday Season:

"The moral arc of the universe is long, but it is bent toward justice...(and that)...truth crushed to the earth will rise again." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing this. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well." Bishop Ken Untener

"Let us teach ourselves and others that politics can be not only the art of the possible, especially if this means the art of speculation, calculation, intrigue, secret deals and pragmatic maneuvering, but that it can even be the art of improving ourselves and the world." Vaclav Havel

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Maya Angelou

"Many people will walk in and out of your life, but only true friends will leave footprints on your heart." Eleanor Roosevelt

Please stay safe and healthy. Get vaccinated for your health and the health of our community. We're all in this together and together we can conquer COVID - only if enough of us are vaccinated.

Happy Holidays to All!