

Great Falls Rising *Monthly Newsletter*

March 2022

MARCH IS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH: Great Falls Rising will be highlighting women of distinction during the month, starting with the nineteen women of the 1972 Montana Constitutional Convention. Stay tuned!



REMEMBERING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1972

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION: Great Falls Rising is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the 1972 constitutional convention during this whole year of 2022. We began with our program February 23rd when we invited nine speakers to re-live what happened in Helena with the total reconstruction of the Montana constitution. We will be highlighting various aspects of the convention.

As Arlyne Reichert stated in a talk at MSU-COT (now Great Falls College-MSU), on Constitution Day in 2009, “the nineteen women delegates came from every walk of life. We represented teachers, farm and urban wives, journalists, businesswomen, there was a judge and former mayor. Many of the delegates were members of the League of Women Voters (LWV). For many years, the League had advocated a new Montana constitution, and we spent much time studying various sections that should be changed. After visiting the legislature session after session, we realized that the primary problem was the secrecy involved in passing laws. In those days every committee would break into ‘executive session,’ which meant keep everyone, including the press, out when voting on issues. During the entire constitutional convention the theme was ‘open meeting.’ Unlike the partisan legislature, we did not have caucuses. One LWV member who inspired the constitutional convention, but was not a delegate herself, was Marjorie Brown who was the chief researcher for the League of Women Voters. She later became Dean of the Montana Law School.”

Stay tuned for more Convention notes and upcoming events. You can view the entire presentation of the Great Falls Rising event on February 23rd here: [Great Falls Rising - The Need, Construction, and Implementation of the 1972 Montana Constitution - YouTube.](#)

TO MAKE A BETTER PLACE for this and future generations

COMPILED BY DOROTHY BRADLEY

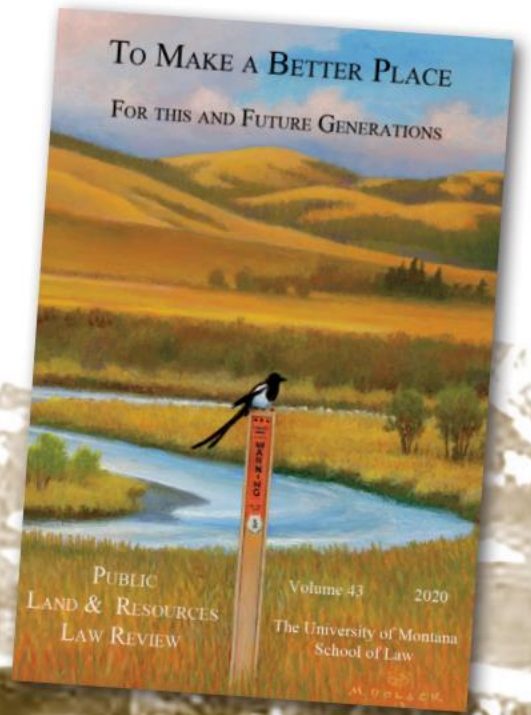
Featuring the writings of 23 Montana
political & environmental leaders
of the 1970s

*"If progressive history happens in pulses,
the years 1965 to 1980 were a sustained
beam of light."*

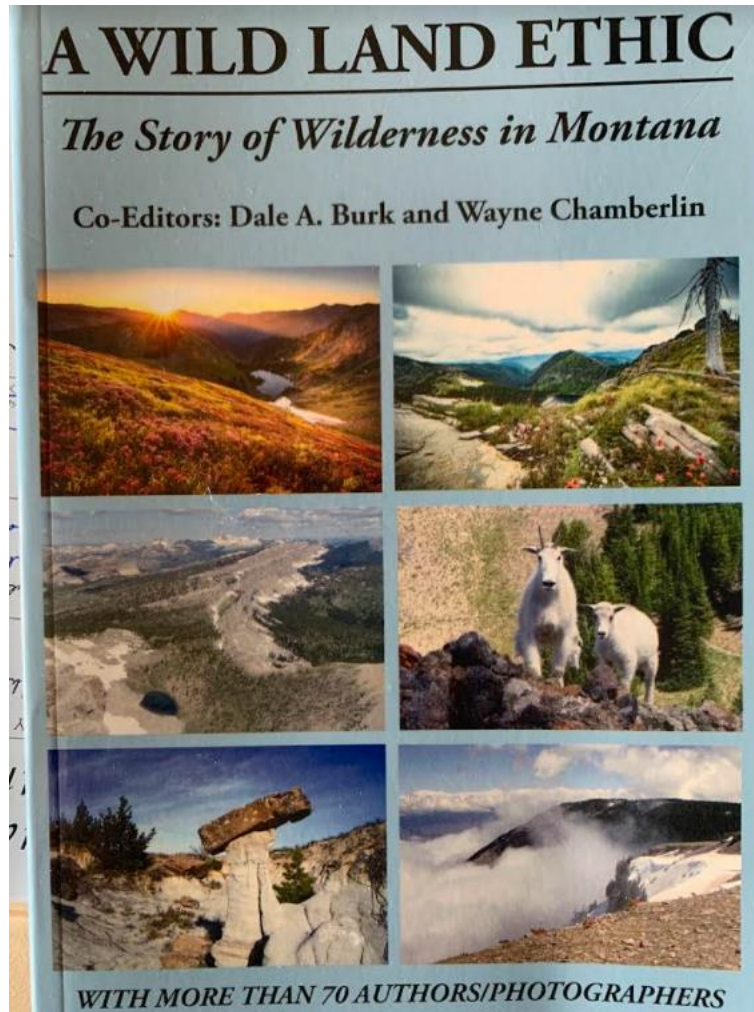
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A WILD LAND ETHIC: A book that was prompted by the words “clean and healthful environment.” It can be found at Cassiopeia Books in downtown Great Falls.



IS DEMOCRACY AROUND THE WORLD THREATENED BY RUSSIA’S ATTACK ON UKRAINE? GENEVA/SYDNEY (Reuters) 2/26 - In a sea of blue and yellow flags and banners smeared with blood red handprints, protesters around the world showed support for Ukraine on Saturday and called on governments to do more to help Kyiv, punish Russia and avoid a broader conflict.

Several hundred people marched through heavy rain in Sydney chanting “Ukraine will prevail”, while protesters in Tokyo called for Russia to be expelled from the United Nations Security Council for the assault on its neighbor. Thousands of people also took to the streets in Europe, with protesters - including many Ukrainians living abroad - in London, Nicosia, Berlin, Athens, Helsinki, Madrid and Milan draping themselves in flags and holding “stop the war” placards. A rally that organizers estimated to number 20,000 people was held in the Swiss capital of Bern. The Ukrainian flag flew over the seat of the city council.

Around 1,000 people protested outside the Russian embassy in Romanian capital Bucharest, expressing anger at Russian President Vladimir Putin for what they saw as an unprovoked attack on Ukraine. They chanted “Putin the assassin”.

Great Falls Rising asks, “Where is our protest?”

Want to show your support for Ukraine? Join the “In Defense of Democracy – Rally for Ukraine” event in Great Falls on Thursday, **March 3rd**, Noon until 1:00 pm, at the corner of 10th Avenue and 9th Street South. Meet at the southeast corner.

WHAT MONTANA POLITICIANS ARE SAYING ABOUT RUSSIA’S INVASION OF UKRAINE: *From the Montana Free Press, by Eric Dietrich.* Sens. Tester, Daines criticize Russian President Vladimir Putin. Gov. Gianforte said he’s praying for the safety of the Ukrainian people. Rep. Rosendale said the U.S. “has no legal or moral obligation” to be involved in the conflict.

Montana’s elected officials reacted late Wednesday and early Thursday [to the ongoing invasion of Ukraine by Russia](#).

U.S. SEN. JON TESTER: In [a tweet](#) posted Thursday morning: “Vladimir Putin single-handedly started an unprovoked war that makes the world less safe,” wrote Tester, a Democrat. “I stand in solidarity with the people of

Ukraine and with every freedom-loving democracy in condemning Russia's illegal military actions. The United States will continue to support the security and stability of our NATO and European allies in the face of these acts of war."

U.S. SEN. STEVE DAINES: In [a Twitter thread](#) posted Thursday morning: "I'm praying for the people of Ukraine and condemn Putin's outrageous attack on their sovereignty and independence," Daines wrote. Daines, a Republican, also criticized President Joe Biden's energy policy. "Putin is a thug, and he has been empowered and emboldened by Biden's disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan and his approval of Russia's Nord Stream 2 pipeline while killing America's Keystone XL pipeline," Daines wrote, adding "The skyrocketing price of oil and resulting inflation are stark reminders of the importance of increasing, not decreasing, made in America energy. I do not support sending American troops to Ukraine," Daines also wrote.

U.S. REP. MATT ROSENDALE: In [a tweet](#) Thursday afternoon, Rosendale said the Ukrainian situation was less urgent than securing the U.S. border with Mexico: "Now that Russia has begun their invasion of Ukraine, cries from war hawks on both sides of the aisle continue to grow louder to spill American blood and treasure in this conflict," he wrote. "The United States has no legal or moral obligation to come to the aid of either side in this foreign conflict," he also wrote. "In talking to folks across Montana, they are much more concerned with stopping the invasion taking place in our country by millions of illegal aliens than (sic) they are the invasion of an Eastern European Country." In [an Instagram post](#) last week, Rosendale previously argued that the U.S. should prioritize securing its border with Mexico over intervening in a potential conflict between Russia and Ukraine. "We must gain operational control over our southern border before we send military and financial aid to secure the borders of an Eastern European country thousands of miles away," he wrote.

GOV. GREG GIANFORTE: In [a Facebook post](#) at 9:40 p.m. Wednesday: "Tonight we pray for the safety of the sovereign, freedom-loving people of Ukraine. May God bless, watch over, and protect them." Gianforte's office also issued a statement Thursday: "Putin's unprovoked invasion of the sovereign, democratic Ukraine is an egregious act of war," the governor said. "Montana stands with the freedom-loving people of Ukraine and

continues to pray for their safety. The United States and our democratic allies should respond immediately with sweeping, strict, comprehensive sanctions against Russia.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

BINGO TO BENEFIT VETERANS: A special BINGO event will be held at the Elks Lodge, 500 1st Avenue South, on Saturday, **March 5th**, to benefit American Legion Post 3 and the veteran’s programs it supports. Food will be available for purchase from 4 to 5 pm, and BINGO starts at 5 pm. Open to all!

GREAT FALLS FIRE RESCUE CITIZENS ACADEMY: Great Falls Fire Rescue is accepting applications for our Spring Citizens Academy! Classes will take place Thursday evenings from **March 24th through May 12th**. Email: gffr.office@greatfallsmt.net for an application. Deadline to submit applications is **March 11th**. Seats are limited, so get your applications in soon!

DEADLINE FOR CANDIDATES TO FILE FOR OFFICE APPROACHING: For House Districts, Senate Districts, Public Service Commission, County Attorney, Cascade County Sheriff and several other countywide races is **March 14th**. Further information, see [Elections in Great Falls for 2022: Everything You Need to Know – Great Falls Rising \(greatfallsrisingmt.org\)](http://greatfallsrisingmt.org).

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY TO HOST 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE 1972 MONTANA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION: Former U.S. Ambassador to China Max Baucus, former Montana Gov. Marc Racicot, former state Superintendent of Public Instruction Denise Juneau, 1972 Montana Constitutional Convention delegate Mae Nan Ellingson and longtime state political journalist Charles S. Johnson will gather at Montana State University on **March 22nd** for a

panel discussion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Montana's Constitutional Convention. This event is free and open to the public and will also be live streamed by MSU on YouTube and recorded for later viewing online. For information, see [MSU to host celebration of 1972 Constitutional Convention \(montanafreepress.org\)](https://montanafreepress.org).

YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE, SAVE IT OR LOSE IT: Voting Rights Experts to Speak at Helena Chapter of League of Women Voters Webinar on Protecting Montanans Right to Vote; co-sponsored by Lewis and Clark Public Library, Tuesday, **March 29th** at 7 pm. "Montana Constitution Celebrates 50 Years -- Your Right to Vote -- Save It or Lose It!"

Four speakers with extensive and varied expertise on voting rights will address current Montana threats: **Jeremy Johnson**, chair of Political Science and International Relations at Carroll College, **Mike Meloy**, a Helena-based trial practice attorney focusing on Constitutional issues, **Alex Rate** is the Legal Director at ACLU of Montana, **Keaton Sunchild** is the Political Director for Western Native Voice. The speakers will specifically address current legal challenges to laws passed by the 2021 Montana Legislature that ended same day voter registration, prevent ballot collecting, restrict political campaign activities on campuses and changes to voter ID laws. To sign up for the zoom webinar, use this link: <https://lclibrary.libcal.com/event/8780546> and an invitation will be emailed to you.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TONIGHT: President Biden will give his first State of the Union address at 7 pm MST. We hope you will all tune in to this important update of current events in our country and our world.

FINALLY, A LOOK AT LAWSUITS ON LEGISLATION STILL PENDING: Mike Dennison provides an update, [A dozen lawsuits challenging GOP laws in Montana still alive \(ktvh.com\)](https://ktvh.com). Mike is retiring soon and we all give thanks to him for accurate and timely reporting.