

Great Falls Rising Monthly Newsletter February 2023

We are celebrating a number of events in February, including Black History Month, Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day. To commemorate them, we have copied this message of kindness and hope:

Hurt people hurt others, but luckily, Healed people heal others. Safe people shelter others. Free spirits free others, and Enlightened people illuminate others.
~ @theoraclereadsu

Be the one to heal, shelter, free and illuminate our community of friends.

RALLY FOR THE MONTANA CONSTITUTION: For more than half a century, Montana's Constitution has faithfully protected our freedoms, rights, and people; it secures what makes Montana special.

But a handful of lawmakers have already proposed 54 constitutional amendments this legislature. That's almost twice as many amendments as our Constitution has seen in its entire history – and this is only the third week of the legislature! These proposals include rolling back our right to a clean and healthful environment and attacks on our courts, privacy and democracy, among other things.

We have a plan and a path to successfully defend our Constitution. But we can't succeed if we're not vocal – we need to let our legislators know that Montanans love and celebrate our Constitution and encourage them to do the right thing. Come rally with us!

Great Falls Rising will be going. We'll meet in the Paris Gibson Square parking lot at **9:30 am on Wednesday, February 1st** to carpool. We'll return to Great

Falls shortly after the rally. We hope to have a large representation from our Great Falls constitution supporters.

Wednesday, February 1st

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Indoors at the Helena Capitol Rotunda (1301 E 6th Ave, Helena)

We want to make sure as many people as possible can make it to Helena on Wednesday, February 1st to show their support for the Montana Constitution!

WHAT IS TRENDING AT THE MONTANA LEGISLATURE: Great Falls Senators leading the charge to bring back smoking in public. SB 205 has been introduced by:

Senator Jeremy Trebas from Great Falls

Senator Daniel Emrich from Great Falls

Representative Daniel Zolnikov from Billings

Representative Mike Hopkins from Missoula

Senator Chris Friedel from Billings

This bill will dismantle our Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA). It will provide businesses the freedom to opt out of the CIAA. Doing so will expose customers entering these businesses to secondhand smoke. There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke; even brief exposure can cause serious health problems and be deadly (CDC). It will put employees at risk for secondhand smoke exposure.

The bill would allow minors into establishments at times when smoking isn't allowed in them. But this would expose kids to thirdhand smoke. People are exposed to the chemicals in thirdhand smoke when they touch contaminated surfaces or breathe in the gases that thirdhand smoke may release (Mayo Clinic). It undermines the CIAA protections Montanans have had for more than a decade and forces workers to make a choice between their own health or a paycheck in a time when cost of living expenses in many Montana communities are high.

It burdens county health departments with licensing smoking establishments, creating a new bureaucracy and contrary to what health departments are charged to do---protect health level.

There is no safe level of tobacco smoke exposure. Completely eliminating smoking is the only way to fully protect people who do not smoke from secondhand smoke exposure (CDC). It would allow businesses to allow marijuana smoking.

Contact ALL of our elected officials in Helena NOW. The hearing for this bill is **Thursday, February 2nd**. It's crunch time!

2023 Great Falls & Cascade County
Montana Legislators & how to contact them:

Rep. Fred Anderson HD20 406.868.3815 fred.anderson@legmt.gov
Rep. Ed Buttrey HD21 ed.buttrey@legmt.gov
Rep. Steven Galloway HD24 406.750-4723 galloway4mt@gmail.com
Rep. Steve Gist HD25 406.231.4050 steve.gist@legmt.gov
Rep. Scot Kerns HD23 406.351.0154 Scot.Kerns@legmt.gov
Rep. Russ Miner HD19 406.899.4514 Russel.Miner@legmt.gov
Rep. George Nikolakakos HD26 george.nikolakakos@legmt.gov
Rep. Lola Sheldon-Galloway HD22 406.750.4721 lola.sheldon-galloway@legmt.gov

Sen. Daniel Emrich SD11 406.781.3955 daniel.emrich@legmt.gov
Sen. Steve Fitzpatrick SD10 406.750.6764 steve.fitzpatrick@legmt.gov
Sen. Wendy McKamey SD12 406.868.5006 wendy.mckamey@legmt.gov
Sen. Jeremy Trebas SD13 406.899.5445 jeremy.trebas@legmt.gov

Tips for effectively contacting your legislators, visit [Contacting Legislators - Montana State Legislature \(mt.gov\)](https://legmt.gov/contacting-legislators).

During session, you can also send faxes to:
House 406.444.4825
Senate 406.444.4875

BLACK HERITAGE EVENING: Celebrating African American Culture, History & Cuisine. The Great Falls Public Library is hosting a special event celebrating Black History Month and the Heritage of Great Falls' African American community on **Thursday, February 2nd**, at 6:00 pm. The program features African American culture, history, and cuisine.

This free program, open to the public, is co-sponsored by the Alma Smith Jacobs Foundation, a non-profit promoting education, and the Great Falls Public Library. The program will feature several speakers, a debut of a documentary film about the life of Alma Smith Jacobs, music and a sampling of Soul Food. Where: Cordingley Room Great Falls Public Library. For more information, visit [Black Heritage Evening | Facebook](#).

GFPS COMMUNITY FORUM SERIES: Great Falls Public Schools will be hosting three upcoming community forums on youth wellness, legislative issues and the school budget. The community is invited. These will be held on **February 2nd, March 9th and April 13th**. Finally, there will be open houses in May to invite the public to visit our great schools. The first Community Forum:

What: Youth Wellness
Date: **Thursday, February 2nd**
Time: 6:00 – 7:30 PM
Where: University of Providence
University Center, 2nd Floor
1301 20th St. South

An overview of the issues currently facing youth in our community along with a panel of stakeholders that will share data and discuss what is currently being done by the school District and its partners to address the challenges. The audience will be encouraged to interact with the panel throughout the session.

MEIC LEGISLATIVE ROADSHOW: Join the folks from the Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC) to get the latest news (be it good or bad) from the 2023 Legislative Session. Bring your questions and comments about bills that impact our clean air, clean water, livable communities, and energy concerns in Montana.

There will be free beverages for all to enjoy.

We'll see you at the:

Darkhorse Hall at the Celtic Cowboy
118 1st Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59401

Thursday, Feb. 2nd, 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Share this event on Facebook: [Legislative Roadshow: Great Falls | Facebook](#)

WINTER TRAIL DAYS: Get Fit Great Falls' Winter Trails Day is coming up on **Saturday, February 4th**. Many of you have participated in the past and, besides being instructional, it's a lot of fun. It's a time to snowshoe and xc ski at Silver Crest, best trails in MT. You **MUST** register for either or both. Bighorn will be there to lend xc ski equipment (which you need to sign up for at their store in Great Falls), and the snowshoes are available in great quantity. It's a family affair and hot beverages and cookies will be awaiting your arrival.

Silver Crest is at the Winter Recreation Area on HWY 89, a couple miles north of Showdown. For more information and link to register, visit [Hikes – Winter – Get Fit Great Falls](#).

HOUSED GREAT FALLS: Housed Great Falls (HGF) is a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit that aims to provide missing scaffolding in Great Falls to unhoused and unsheltered community members. Their long term goal is a transitional housing community, with the Cold Weather Drop In Center as an immediate response to a need in our community.

The Cold Weather Drop In Center is a safe, evening space for people who are experiencing homelessness or are stranded during the cold winter months. When temperatures are forecast to be a 'feels like' 25 or lower, the center will be open between 5:00 and 9:30 PM. Overnight service at the Rescue Mission opens at 10:00 PM. The Drop In is being hosted by the First United Methodist Church (FUMC) and is being organized by volunteers from Housed Great Falls (HGF) and relies on volunteers from the community to open. The main meal is provided by volunteers, with additional snacks and beverages provided by HGF and FUMC. They only open if they have a minimum of three volunteers to maintain a

safe environment, so volunteers are never working alone. A volunteer familiar with the Drop-In or a member of HGF can orient you to the responsibilities of helping for a night (or partial shifts; the first or second half of the evening if that is all you are able to do).

For more information, to **sign up for a shift**, and to read their *Cold Weather Drop In Guide*, visit [Keep Our Residents Warm with Housed Great Falls – Great Falls Rising \(greatfallsrisingmt.org\)](http://Keep Our Residents Warm with Housed Great Falls – Great Falls Rising (greatfallsrisingmt.org)).

SUPPORT THE MONTANA CONSTITUTION: The non-partisan League of Women Voters of Montana is hosting an online signature drive to allow Montanans of every stripe to register their support for the Montana Constitution.

The link below takes you right to the League's site for the online signature drive. Click on it and after reading the brief but thorough explanation, you can register yourself as a **Supporter of the Montana Constitution**. Please take the brief time to do that now. Each member of your family/household or office needs to sign separately.

[Show your Support for our Montana Constitution | MyLO \(lww.org\)](http://Show your Support for our Montana Constitution | MyLO (lww.org))

We would like to have as many signatures as possible as fast as we can get them.

BROADWAY IN GREAT FALLS: America's favorite blonde, Elle Woods, is ready to prove who's in charge (again). The ultimate Broadway tribute to girl power, Legally Blonde will take you from the UCLA sorority house to the Harvard halls of justice with its coming-of-age story.

Based on the iconic movie, Legally Blonde follows the transformation of Elle Woods as she tackles stereotypes, sexism, snobbery and scandal in pursuit of her dreams, and proves, contrary to dated bias, that you can be both legally blonde AND the smartest person in the room. Get tickets here: [Broadway in Great Falls \(gfsymphony.org\)](http://Broadway in Great Falls (gfsymphony.org))

Where: Mansfield Theater
When: **February 8th**
Time: 7:30 PM

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS WEBINAR SERIES: “Freedom of the Press and the Public’s Right to Know Under the Montana Constitution” is the title of a webinar at 6:30 p.m. **Thursday, February 9th**. Sign up for the webinar at <https://tinyurl.com/ffrytf5c>.

Moderated by retired Montana Supreme Court Justice Jim Nelson, the program features panelists Darrell Ehrlick, editor-in-chief of the Daily Montanan, and Billings constitutional trial lawyer Martha Sheehy.

Co-sponsored by the Montana League of Women Voters of the Helena Area and Lewis & Clark Library, this webinar is part of a series of LWV programs on the Montana Constitution. For more information, visit [Freedom of the Press and the Public’s Right to Know Under the Montana Constitution - LibCal - Lewis & Clark Library](#)

GFPS HIGH SCHOOL ART SHOW: Please join us at the Dark Horse (lower level Celtic Cowboy) on Thursday, **February 9th** ~ open house: 4:00 - 6:00 PM for a High School Art Show (three high schools). The Great Falls Chamber of Commerce will also be hosting Business After Hours in the Celtic Cowboy. Stop in for a few appetizers!

Thanks to a student from Great Falls High School for creating this postcard design.




the great falls area
chamber
of commerce

Join Us
for two events under one roof!

Great Falls Public Schools, Celtic
Cowboy and GF Chamber of
Commerce are hosting an evening
for you

**THURSDAY,
FEBRUARY 9TH**
4-6 pm

High School Art Reception
and Chamber of Commerce
Business After Hours

 Celtic Cowboy
Dark Horse Hall
Lower Level
118 1st Avenue S



THE ELECTRON: A new resource at KGPR, Great Falls Public Radio, featuring every known event happening in Great Falls in February. Spread the word, the old "Hot Ticket" concept is back and better than ever! Visit [KGPR Radio | TheElectron](#).

WILD MONTANA PHOTO CONTEST: Our annual photo contest opens on Wednesday, **February 1st**, and closes Sunday, **March 12th**, at midnight. We want to see your best shots of Montana's wild public lands and waters.

Does your family enjoy hunting in the Flathead National Forest, fishing at Canyon Ferry State Park, or hiking the Terry Badlands? Have you backpacked through the Bob Marshall Wilderness, or had a remarkable wildlife encounter? Do you find sanctuary in wild places, or do they hold a special significance for you

culturally or spiritually? Share your photos with Wild Montana and Wild Montana Action Fund for a chance to win prizes! Visit [Picture Wild Montana – Wild Montana](#).

GREAT FALLS HISTORY MUSEUM: A Day at the Ozark with Historian Ken Robinson.

- **Saturday, February 11th**
- 1:00 - 2:00 PM
- The History Museum, 422 2nd St. South

There's just something about the Ozark Club! At a time in the 1940s and 50s when Jim Crow discrimination held an iron grip on Great Falls and throughout Montana, Leo Lamar and his unique Ozark Club broke racial barriers. Leo saw an opening in World War II Great Falls, and the door to the Ozark opened to interracial patrons. ***"Everyone was Welcome" at the Ozark Club.*** Whites and blacks, young and old, rich and poor, climbed the narrow, dark stairs to the upper floor of the Ozark. LaMar's strategy for success rested on an exceptional entertainment package anchored by a remarkable house band, the Ozark Boys.

The Ozark Club story had faded over the fifty years before Phil Aaberg, Chris Morris, and Ken Robison brought a series of exciting Nights at the Ozark to The History Museum. From 2007 to 2009, a series of seven exciting Nights at the Ozark with prominent national Black Jazz Bands lit up Montana's cold nights. The crowd brought their vibrant memories with them—and the O'Club sprang back to life.

Now it's been another fifteen years, and before memories faded once more, Ken Robison and The History Museum will bring the Ozark back. Join us **Second Saturday, February 11th**, 1:00 pm at The History Museum, listen to some of the original jazz and fascinating stories from the O-Club; bring and share your memories of the original Ozark or the Nights at the Ozark Club. Let's bring the Ozark Club back to life! For more information, visit [Events — The History Museum \(greatfallshistorymuseum.org\)](#).

RALLY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You're invited to join folks from across the state at the State Capitol in Helena for the [2023 Rally for Public Lands](#).

Together, we'll say loud and clear that we WILL hold elected officials accountable if they try to sell out public lands, waters, and wildlife to corporations and wealthy landowners at the expense of everyday Montanans.

2023 Rally for Public Lands
Thursday, February 23rd
Noon–1:00 pm
Montana Capitol Rotunda, Helena

Montana state lawmakers are at it again, threatening public land access, funding for conservation programs, and our constitutional right to clean air, clean water, and healthy public lands. We've seen bills targeting our constitution, paving the way for motorized e-bikes on non-motorized trails, and attacking programs we depend on to protect public access and wildlife habitat.

It's time for us to unite and show our elected officials that we won't tolerate ANY attacks on the lands, waters, wildlife, and outdoor way of life we love.

Over 2,000 people attended the last in-person rally in 2021, and we're counting on you to help beat that number this year. RSVP here: [Home - Rally for Public Lands](#).

And last, but not least...

Follow, Follow, Follow, Follow, Follow the MT Leg

Some of many Progressive Groups Who are Following Legislation that you also may want to Follow...

Forward Montana - "What the Helena"
<https://secure.everyaction.com/oBLD5R0-70yAbaYtJnNXbQ2>

MEIC (Montana Environmental Information Center)

Thursdays at 4:30 Legislative Updates
<https://www.facebook.com/MTEIC/events/>

Northern Plains Resource Council
<https://northernplains.org/bill-tracker/>

MT NOW (National Organization for Women)
<https://www.facebook.com/MontanaNOW>

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
https://www.backcountryhunters.org/2022_policy_roundup

Public Policy Institute of the Rockies
<https://www.publicpolicyinstituteoftherockies.com/>

Montana Women Vote
<http://www.montanawomenvote.org/>

Friends of the Montana Constitution
<https://montanaconstitution.org/>

MHRN (Montana Human Rights Network)
https://secure.everyaction.com/M_c7gReHuUeyaQ4QXqQ3NA2

Elk Camp at the Capitol
<https://www.montanaelk.org/elk-camp>

Montanans Organized for Education
<https://www.mofeactionfund.org/>

Planned Parenthood Action
<https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/>

Watch and Listen to the 2023 Session
<https://leg.mt.gov/audio-video/>

Call the Legislature
Leave up to Three Messages for Law Makers
406-444-3064
<https://leg.mt.gov/web-messaging/>