

Great Falls Rising Monthly Newsletter

January 2023



Great Falls Rising wishes for everyone a healthy, safe, and productive new year. You will be hearing a lot from us about the upcoming legislative schedules and activities. We know it will lack a progressive touch, so we hope that we all can pay attention to what's happening, especially to our wonderful Montana state constitution.

It's likely that some of you have read MEIC's December newsletter. This excerpt from Anne Hedges' article about the looming threats from MT's 2023 legislative session:

“While most of Montana’s cities will retain legislative delegations that are willing to protect the environment from greed-fueled corporate interests, the same cannot be said of Great Falls. What was once a bastion of legislative conservation champions has completely degraded; some of whom led the charge last session against Montanans’ right to a clean and healthful environment and other constitutional protections. This session, we are likely to see an emboldened anti-environmental delegation from Great Falls. If you’re an MEIC member in Great Falls, we’ve got your back and we will work with you to make sure your voice is heard.”

- **Official Legislature website:** <https://leg.mt.gov/>
- **Find and watch a hearing:** [http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0240w\\$cmte.startup?P_SESS=20231](http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0240w$cmte.startup?P_SESS=20231)
- **Contact Legislators and Committees:**
 - Phone messages between 7:30 am and 5 pm: 406-444-4800
 - Website messages: <https://leg.mt.gov/web-messaging/>
 - Mailing addresses:
 - Montana Senate, P.O. Box 200500, Helena, MT 59620
 - Montana House of Representatives, P.O. Box 200400, Helena, MT 59620
- **Contact the Governor's Office:**
 - Governor's Telephone: (406) 444-3111
 - Email: governor@mt.gov
 - Website: governor.mt.gov/contact
- **Current session calendar** (as of 12/27/2022): <https://leg.mt.gov/content/committees/administration/legislative-council/2021-22/2023-Session-Calendar.pdf>
 - Find the latest calendar here: <https://leg.mt.gov/session/>
- **Look up a bill:** [http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0203w\\$.startup?P_SESS=20231](http://laws.leg.mt.gov/legprd/law0203w$.startup?P_SESS=20231)

JANUARY 6TH VIGIL: It's that time again to never forget. This year the vigil will be indoors, but weather permitting we will gather along 5th Avenue between 1st Avenue North and Central for a brief candlelight moment of silence.

Friday, January 6th, 2022, 6:00 pm
Luna Cafe - 9 Fifth Street North
Great Falls, Montana

Tentative Agenda:
Welcome

Words from Faith Leaders
Open Mic
Candlelight Moment of Silence
Prayer
Adjourn

Please mark your calendars and please attend and spread the word.

JANUARY 6TH SELECT COMMITTEE FINAL REPORT: House Report 117-000, Final Report of the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol, can be viewed and/or downloaded here: [Report_FinalReport_Jan6SelectCommittee.pdf \(house.gov\)](https://www.house.gov/committees/select/Jan6SelectCommittee.pdf).

GREAT FALLS SYMPHONY: Presenting JOURNEYS - appearing on Saturday, **January 21st at 7:30 pm**. Chamber orchestra and voice highlight music about human interactions with nature while looking back in time. Mezzo-soprano Kimberly James lends rich and resonant tone on *Songs of a Wayfarer* and *Four Songs*.

The Chinook Winds will be performing "Windward," two contemporary works performed by ten musicians, and a partita that highlights music from 18th and 19th century courts, on Friday, **January 6th at 7 pm** at The Newberry (downtown) and Sunday, **January 8th at 2 pm** at First Congregational Church UCC.

For more detailed information about the upcoming concerts for the Great Falls Symphony go to gfsymphony.org.

GREAT FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD MEETINGS: The GFPS Board of Trustees meetings are typically held the 2nd and 4th Mondays of most months. These are public meetings. Agendas and supporting information are always posted the Thursday afternoon prior to the Board meetings. The next Board meeting is on **January 9th, 5:30 pm** in the Aspen Room at the District

Offices Building, 1100 4th Street South, with the agenda posted on **January 5th**. Important Board information can be found here: [About / Overview \(gfps.k12.mt.us\)](https://gfps.k12.mt.us).

CITY OF GREAT FALLS/CASCADE COUNTY COMMISSIONS: As a reminder, the Great Falls City Commission meets on the first and third Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm at the Civic Center, and the Cascade County Commission meets on the second and fourth Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am at the Court House Annex, 325 2nd Ave. North. Participate in our local governments if you can, it is important to have our voices heard.

HOUSED GREAT FALLS: The 'Housed Great Falls' group has organized a Cold Weather Drop-In where community members can get a hot meal and get out of the elements during chilly evenings hosted at the First United Methodist Church. To volunteer please sign up via this link: [Housed Great Falls Cold Weather Drop-In — Signup Sheet | SignUp.com](#).

Long term, Housed Great Falls is launching its plans to build a Pallet shelter community in Great Falls, MT. We will be raising funds to acquire at least 1/3 acre of land, 20 single occupancy shelters, service office, bathroom, shower and laundry, and community center. We are hopeful in raising \$1.5 million project startup funds, and \$400,000 in yearly operating expenses. Each individual shelter will cost \$13,000 post upgrades of electricity, heat, AC, insulation, and shipping. Individuals served will include our unhoused and unsheltered community members in Great Falls!

Follow Housed Great Falls on Facebook for updates and how you can get involved. Tax deductible donations can be sent to PO Box 3592, Great Falls, MT 59403 or you can donate via gofundme: [Fundraiser by Morgan Yegerlehner : Build Pallet shelter community \(gofundme.com\)](#).

Check out 'Pallet' to get an idea about what this could look like: [Pallet Shelter for Homeless | Helping Homeless People](#).

FRENCH CONNECTION AT THE LEWIS & CLARK INTERPRETIVE CENTER:

Artist and Historian Ron Ukrainetz explores the personal lives of Toussaint Charbonneau and Francois Labiche, and the roles they played as vital members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition during his “French Connection” program at **7:00 pm on January 10th** at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center theater. Ukrainetz considers how the outcome may have been entirely different had they not been selected to accompany the expedition.

Both Labiche and Charbonneau were influential members in the exploration of the northwest under the direction of Captains Lewis and Clark.

Ukrinetz is a professional artist and a member of the Lewis and Clark Honor Guard. He has a passion for early history and is widely known for his portrayals of both Toussaint Charbonneau and Francois Labiche, according to an interpretive center release.

The program is a free presentation sponsored by the Portage Route Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, as part of the Ida Johnson lecture series. For more information contact the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center at 406-727-8733.

GREAT FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY: An Evening with Jamie Ford, **January 10th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm**, in the Cordingley Room at the library, 301 2nd Ave. North. A delightful evening with bestselling author Jamie Ford as he talks about his latest book and the life of a writer.

Jamie Ford is the New York Times bestselling author of *The Many Daughters of Afong Moy*, *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*, *Love and Other Consolation Prizes*, and *Songs of Willow Frost*. His latest novel, *The Many Daughters of Afong Moy*, was named #1 IndieNext list pick for August 2022.

CASCADE COUNTY SHERIFF/CORONER’S OFFICE: The 2023 Sheriff's Office Citizens' Academy is coming up soon. The Academy is held on Thursdays February 2nd through April 6th, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm, plus one Saturday 9:00 am

to 5:00 pm. The application Deadline is **January 18th**: [2023 Cascade County Sheriff's Office Citizens' Academy Application \(cascadecountymt.gov\)](https://cascadecountymt.gov/2023-Cascade-County-Sheriff-s-Office-Citizens-Academy-Application).

GREAT FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS JOB FAIR: Join GFPS for their January Job Fair on **January 25th from 3:00 to 5:00 pm** at the Paris Gibson Education Center, 2400 Central Avenue. They are looking to hire teacher aides, food service workers, Para educators, substitutes and more. Current openings are always found here: [Human Resources / Employment Landing Page \(gfps.k12.mt.us\)](https://gfps.k12.mt.us/human-resources/employment-landing-page). Big Sky Bus Lines needs bus drivers as well. You can contact them at 454-1283 for more information.

PARIS GIBSON SQUARE: A Thoughtful Response returns to The Square! Join us on **January 26th at 5:30 pm** for a reception with refreshments, followed by an in-depth discussion of two pieces of art in the current exhibition, Object # and two music compositions performed by the Great Falls Symphony's Cascade String Quartet in response to the visual art.

Tickets for this evening of art, music, and discourse are available now! \$15 for active Museum Members (anyone can join and support The Square!), \$20 for non-members. Get your tickets using the button below or purchase them through the Gift Shop at 406.727.8255 or 1400 1st Ave North. For more information, visit here: [Join Us for an Evening of Art & Music! \(constantcontact.com\)](https://constantcontact.com/join-us-for-an-evening-of-art-music).