

Great Falls Rising

Monthly Newsletter

September 2023

Summer is flying by and we're now looking at kids back in school, the end of many vacations, and a new start for Great Falls Rising's in-person programs. We are also anticipating city elections. You will see below that there is a lot going on. Read on.

Why Labor Day? Observed each year on the first Monday in September, Labor Day is at heart a celebration of the hard-won achievements of America's labor movement and a recognition of what workers have contributed to the nation's prosperity. Labor Day became a national holiday in 1894 when President Grover Cleveland signed it into law. (Great Falls Tribune 9/4/23)

DATES FOR SEPTEMBER

Thursday, **September 7th** from 5:00 – 7:00 PM. Kickoff for United Way of Cascade County at City Motors.

Thursday, **September 7th** at 6:00 PM at Cassiopeia Books, come hear author Ken Robison discuss and read from his new book, *Historic Tales of Fort Benton*. Facebook event here: [Meet Ken Robison, author of Historic Tales of Fort Benton | Facebook](#).

Saturday, **September 9th** at 1:00 PM at The History Museum, *Order Without Law: Vigilante Tales of Old Fort Benton*.

Tuesday, **September 12th** at 6:00 PM at the Great Falls Public Library, Cordingley Room. In collaboration with Cassiopeia Books, Marc Johnson will discuss his new book *'Mansfield and Dirksen: Bi-Partisan Giants of the Senate.'*

Tuesday, **September 19th** from Noon to 2:00 PM, and Friday, **September 29th** from 4:00 – 6:00 PM at the Great Falls Public Library - Clinics sponsored by Great Falls Rising to assist residents with their property tax rebate applications.

Friday, **September 15th** - Robert Harrison Discussion and Exhibition Reception at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art.

Friday **September 15th** - Jazz Night at The History Museum. Doors open at 6:30 PM.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, **September 15th, 16th and 17th** - Glacier Two Medicine Alliance annual Fall Gathering at Glacier Park Lodge in East Glacier.

Saturday, **September 16th** – Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC) 50th anniversary celebration in Victor, MT.

Wednesday, **September 27th** at 6:00 PM - Great Falls Rising sponsors a panel on the homeless (unhoused) situation in Great Falls in the Parish Hall of the Church of the Incarnation, 600 3rd Ave. North.

PARIS GIBSON SQUARE MUSEUM OF ART: ‘Kites’ on view at the downtown Urban Art Project through **September 5th**. All works were created in the Senior Art Class at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art. This free program has been meeting almost every Tuesday from 1:00 – 3:00 PM for the past decade.

Making kites became a practical application of drawing within the theme of spring through a variety of materials including reused bedsheets, marshmallow roasting sticks, and leather fixings. The process involved sewing and fabricating to create original works with the tension and integrity of the kite form. Whether they fly or not is still up for determination. This window is sponsored by Carol and Bill Bronson - Thank you for your support!

Included artists:

Lori Anderson

Jeanne Anderson

Sue Ashley

Rachel Benson

Dava Cameron
Rick Christensen
Jean Curtis
Sandy Gurnsey
Michele Habel
Linda Lay
Deb Martin
Dan Price
Beth Regennitter
Susan Suppola

PROPERTY TAX REBATE CLINICS: If you have questions about the Montana Property Tax Rebate or would like assistance in claiming your rebate, come to the Property Tax Rebate Clinic! Trained volunteers will be here to assist you.

Event Dates: Tuesday, **September 19th**, Noon to 2:00 PM, and Friday, **September 29th**, 4:00 to 6:00 PM (on-line filing only).

Where: Great Falls Public Library, Cordingley Room (basement)

To be eligible for the refund: Be a Montana Taxpayer who paid property taxes in 2022. Owned a Montana residence for at least seven months. Lived in this Montana residence for at least seven months. Had property taxes billed for this residence. Paid the property taxes for this residence.

The last day to file for a rebate is: OCTOBER 1, 2023.

What to Bring: Your letter from the Governor. Your geo code (we can help find that on cadastral.mt.gov). Your physical address to which the rebate check will be sent. The amount of property taxes paid in 2022. The names and Social Security Numbers for yourself and/or spouse/dependents living at your primary residence (as reflected on your MT 2022 individual income tax form or your federal income tax form). The Letter ID located at the beginning of the Governor's letter. We will help with on-line filing and will also have paper forms for those property owners who do not wish to file on line.

This program is brought to you in partnership with Great Falls Rising and the Great Falls Public Library.

ARTS ON FIRE: Save the date and mark your calendars. Arts on Fire returns **September 9th** from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art. Join us for art activities for all ages; an art and craft vendor market; musical, dance, and theatre performances; root beer floats; and more!

This is a FREE event; no tickets required! Do not respond to anyone claiming to have tickets for sale. Do not respond to anyone claiming to vendor openings. Contact the museum directly at 406.727.8255 with questions. Facebook event here: [12th Annual Arts on Fire Festival | Facebook](#). Full schedule of performances and demos coming soon!

- FREE Art Activities
- FREE Artist Demonstrations
- FREE Root Beer Floats (while supplies last)
- FREE Museum Gallery Admission (the museum is free year-round)
- Artist Alley (vendor list below)
- Food Trucks
- Pottery Sale
- Musical, dance, and theatrical performances throughout the day

Thank you to these fine sponsors for helping us make Arts on Fire possible for the community! D.A. Davidson, Montana Credit Union, NonStop Local Great Falls ABC FOX, KRTV, Bison Ford, Meadow Gold, Pepsi of Great Falls, Great Falls Symphony and Chinook Winds, Kelly's Signs & Design, STARadio, Sletten Construction

2023 Artist Alley Vendor List:

Danielle Lozon- Danielle's Art Creations (pour paintings)

Colleen Johnson & Jimmie Henry- Pottery

Bruce Vasser- Lathe-turned woodworking

Micky & Amber Luse- Jewelry

John Lee- Photography

Steven Carlyle Smith- Paintings

Kay Feist- Pottery

Micah Rauch- Drawings, Paintings, & Illustrations, stickers, prints

Mary Fry- Pottery

Kathy Sundstrom- Trees of Life, Suncatchers, crystal jewelry

Ebbie Hansen- Rocken Zen Rodeo Design & Fotografix

Karen & Ted Gray- Welded sculptures & sewn goods
Christina Yung- Paintings
Alee Tyler- Pottery
Jake Duty- Pottery
Niki Greene & Paige Stewart- On the Rise Sourdough & The Loaded Bobbin
(baked goods and sewn goods)
Susan Casey- Twisted Soul Candy twisted metal jewelry
M'lynda Elliott & Shawn Fossen- Pottery
Lori Stiffler- FairMontana Pottery
Kristina Smith- Get Wild Girl Art & Photography
John Hartsoe- Once Upon a Stump turned wooden bowls

COMMUNITY CLEANUP EVENT: Sunday, **September 10th** at 1:00 PM. Due to an uptick in NeoNazi activity in Great Falls, an event is being organized to clean up our community and spread messages of acceptance and love.

In recent weeks, the hate group known as White Lives Matter has vandalized several areas of the city, posting stickers with racist messages on street signs, utility boxes, and art installments. Volunteers have been removing these stickers as we find them, but more are being located each day.

Who is White Lives Matter?

One of many NeoNazi groups in Montana, this hate group preaches white supremacy, holocaust denial, and the murder of Jewish and LGBTQ+ people. They utilize stickers and flyers to spread their hateful messages to both intimidate community members and recruit new members. Recently, the group boasted about putting up around 200 stickers throughout Great Falls. These have primarily been found in the downtown area and surrounding residential neighborhoods. In response to this vandalism, we are organizing an afternoon to locate and remove any remaining stickers, and to chalk the sidewalks downtown with positive messages. Our community will not tolerate hate or allow our neighbors to be threatened. Instead, we will come together in solidarity to reclaim our downtown space.

What To Bring:

Gloves

Trash Bags
Paint Scraper
Good Off Graffiti (Available at Aces Hardware)
Chalk

We will have some supplies available but encourage folks to pitch in what they can! We will begin by assigning teams to specific streets to locate any remaining stickers and clean up any litter we find while out. After cleanup, we will meet on the 100 block of Central to create chalk art down Central Avenue. Facebook event here: [Reject Hate: Community Cleanup Day | Facebook](#).

If you would like to donate supplies for the Community Cleanup event, you can drop donations off at First United Methodist Church, Monday - Thursday from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. We can accept gloves, Good Off Graffiti remover (available at Ace's Hardware), trash bags, paint scrapers, and chalk.

Thank you to those that have reached out to help and the folks at First Methodist for helping us gather supplies! First Methodist is located at 610 2nd Ave North.

PUBLIC SAFETY MEASURES IN GREAT FALLS: Over the next approximately six weeks, there will be public town hall meetings at each of Great Falls' neighborhood councils meetings. Information on the current state of public safety from the Great Falls Police Department, Great Falls Fire Rescue, city attorney's office and Municipal Court will be shared, and the impacts of the passage or failure of the levy will be explained. The **November 7th** ballot will have a \$21.17 million public safety infrastructure bond and a \$10.7 million public safety operations levy.

- Neighborhood Council 1: 7:00 PM, **September 12th** at Meadowlark School library, 2204 Fox Farm Road
- Neighborhood Council 2: 5:30 PM, **September 13th** at West Elementary School library, 1205 1st Ave. N.W.
- Neighborhood Council 8: 6:00 PM, **September 21st** at the Great Falls Prerelease Center Women's Annex, 1019 15th St. North
- Neighborhood Council 4: 6:30 PM, **September 28th** at Heritage Baptist Church, 900 52nd St. North

- Neighborhood Council 6: 6:30 PM, **October 4th** at Sunnyside School library, 1800 19th St. South
- Neighborhood Council 3: 6:30 PM, **October 5th** at Riverview School music room, 100 Smelter Ave. N.W.
- Neighborhood Council 7: 7:00 PM, **October 9th** at the Civic Center, Gibson Room, 2 Park Drive South
- Neighborhood Council 9: 7:00 PM, **October 12th** at First Church of Nazarene, 1727 2nd Ave. South, parking lot entrance
- Neighborhood Council 5: 7:00 PM, **October 16th** at the Great Falls Clinic Specialty Center conference room, 3000 15th Ave. South

Also, there is a public safety Townhall on Monday, **September 18th** at 6:00 PM in The Mansfield Theatre/Civic Center.

PRESERVATION CASCADE ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE: To be held on **September 18th**, 7:00 PM, Great Falls Civic Center, Gibson Room, 2 Park Drive South.

You are invited to a very special Annual Meeting. COVID precautions kept our group from having in-person annual meetings for the past few years, so this event will be a reunion and celebration of all we've managed to accomplish. It will be wonderful to see you again!

After a brief business meeting, Bruce Pollington from Rivers Edge Trail will lead a discussion about the long-awaited integration of the Historic ARCH Bridge with the Trail. After decades of hard work and dedication, our dream has come true: the ARCH Bridge is now open all the way across the Missouri River. Award winning author and consummate storyteller Richard Bird Baker will be portraying his great-grandfather George Washington Bird. Richard will take us back to 1920 when Architect George Shanley designed our Historic Bridge. We are very grateful to everyone who supported saving and restoring the unique Bridge. This is an important gathering to assure the ARCH Bridge will be enjoyed, cared for, and appreciated as a symbol of Great Falls for many decades to come.

Please attend to celebrate the bridge. This event is free and refreshments will be

served. There will also be an opportunity to pay annual dues and make donations. Suggested dues to join the society are \$30 per person/\$50 per family. Donations are tax deductible & welcome in any amount. Mail your name, address and contact information to: Preservation Cascade, 1409 Fourth Ave. South, Great Falls MT 59405 (406), 452-5492. Website: [Preservation Cascade, Inc. \(montanas-archbridge.org\)](http://Preservation Cascade, Inc. (montanas-archbridge.org)). Facebook: [Great Falls Historic 10th Street Bridge](#). Your contact information is never shared. Please make checks payable to Preservation Cascade, Inc.

NORTHWESTERN ENERGY: This is a good report from Ellis Juhlin, our Northcentral Montana reporter for Montana Public radio. [NorthWestern Energy plan raises questions about climate change and renewables | Montana Public Radio \(mtpr.org\)](#).

NEWS ABOUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING: The workforce housing development community appreciates the passage of House Bill 819 by the 2023 legislature. The bill provided loan and grant funding for apartment construction and homeowner purchase assistance. As always, the devil is in the details, so HB 819's implementation will determine the effectiveness in creating homes and apartments for working families, seniors and Montanans with disabilities.

What is needed next? One, passage of a state housing tax credit to match with the federal housing tax credit. Each year, 12 to 15 Montana communities apply for Federal tax credits (which provide funding for construction); but only 4 or 5 cities and towns are awarded tax credits, because of limited federal tax credits available. With a state housing tax credit, more apartments could be built, so more Montana communities could have workforce housing. The loans in HB 819 are helpful; but grant funding created by a state tax credit is also needed to create more homes and apartments.

Secondly, the homebuyer assistance must encourage permanently affordable housing by creating land trust homes. Land trust homes means that the land is

owned by a non-profit, funded by public and private monies; the home is deeded to the homeowner. When the land trust homeowner wishes to sell, they share their equity with the next buyer which reduces the purchase price, thereby creating permanently affordable homeownership opportunities. The subsidy stays with the home forever, maximizing the value of the subsidy far into the future.

COMING UP IN OCTOBER

PROPERTY TAX RALLY: Heads up for a rally on property taxes October 2nd in Helena. We'll be arranging carpools. Stay tuned!!!

MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE FORUM: On Thursday, October 26th at 6:00 PM, the Electric is hosting the candidate forum for city offices-mayor, commissioner and Municipal Judge at the Great Falls Public Library. All candidates are invited to participate. Facebook event here: [City Candidate Forum | Facebook](#).

Have you checked your voter registration lately. The Cascade County Elections office has been checking and clearing the voter rolls. Go to [Voter Portal \(mt.gov\)](#) to ensure you are registered (or get registered). Absentee ballots for the municipal election are due to be mailed between **October 18th** and **October 23rd**.

The Peace of Wild Things

By [Wendell Berry](#)

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought

of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.