

Great Falls Rising Monthly Newsletter

April 2024

Welcome to the Great Falls Rising April newsletter. We'll keep you up-to-date on what's happening in Great Falls, and this is no joke.

Please be sure to register to vote. If you aren't sure if you're registered, call the County Election office at (406) 454-6803. You can also check the Montana Secretary of State's [Voter Registration Page](#). This is a big election year, and our American Democracy allows all citizens over 18 the right, privilege and responsibility to vote in all elections. **Your vote counts**, and don't let anyone convince you otherwise. It's also a secret ballot whether you are in a voting booth or filling out a mail-in ballot.

So, what's happening in Great Falls and Cascade County?

What's coming up?

Tuesday, April 2nd - City Commission Work Session **5:00 pm**, agenda [here](#); City Commission Meeting **7:00 pm**, agenda [here](#).

Monday, April 8th – Great Falls Public Schools Board of Trustees Meeting, **5:30 pm**. Agenda will be posted here when the date nears: [Agendas & Minutes / Agendas & Meetings \(gfps.k12.mt.us\)](#).

Tuesday, April 9th – Cascade County Commission Meeting, **9:30 am**. Agenda can be found here as the date nears: [Agenda Center • Cascade County, MT • CivicEngage \(cascadecountymt.gov\)](#).

Tuesday, April 16th - City Commission Special Work Session, **4:00 pm**, agenda [here](#); City Commission Work Session **5:00 pm**, agenda [here](#); City Commission Meeting **7:00 pm**, agenda [here](#).

Monday, April 22nd – Great Falls Public Schools Board of Trustees Meeting, **5:30 pm**. Agenda will be posted here when the date nears: [Agendas & Minutes / Agendas & Meetings \(gfps.k12.mt.us\)](https://gfps.k12.mt.us/Agendas%20%26%20Meetings).

Tuesday, April 23rd – Cascade County Commission Meeting, **9:30 am**. Agenda can be found here as the date nears: [Agenda Center • Cascade County, MT • CivicEngage \(cascadecountymt.gov\)](https://cascadecountymt.gov/AgendaCenter%20%26%20CascadeCountyMT%20CivicEngage).

GROWTH POLICY COMMITTEE: The City of Great Falls is kicking off the updating process for the Growth Policy Plan. Your voices will be the driving force behind creating the roadmap for the future, shaping decisions and regulations to reflect our shared values and aspirations.

The City of Great Falls is currently seeking applications from interested citizens to serve on its Growth Policy Steering Committee. Applications are **due by 5:00 pm on April 12, 2024**. Please submit the online [application](#) if you are interested.

The Steering Committee will be:

- Comprised of a diverse group of representatives from business, industry, agriculture, environment, development, public health/medical, higher education, and members of the community.
- Created to provide feedback and input throughout the process, start to finish.
- Serve as a communication channel for each member's area of expertise and/or representative group.

NO MORE VIOLENCE WEEK: April 8th through the 12th. This is the first year that No More Violence Week is partnering with the statewide Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Conference for daytime trainings. PLEASE DO [register](#) for the CAN Conference if you plan to attend daytime sessions! *When you register using the NoMore Violence Week registration option is selected, the fee will be waived.*

The concluding celebration for Threads of Connection and NoMore Violence Week will be held on **Friday, April 12th** at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art from **5:30 to 7:00 pm**. More than 700 quilt squares have been created by community members sharing their commitment to prevention of violence and made into quilts that will be on display.

No More Violence was founded in 2015 by Dr. Cherie McKeever and students at Great Falls College-MSU in response to an increased recognition of violence against children and families in our community. A week of awareness events was their coordinated response to "do something" positive. These initial efforts have grown into a tremendous legacy of what is now known as No More Violence Week. Today, No More Violence Week occurs during the month of April in Great Falls, Montana, and includes a full week of free training, awareness building activities, and community events for all ages. Through partnerships with more than 20 community organizations, this week addresses challenging topics - child abuse, intimate partner violence, family violence, trauma, human trafficking, missing and murdered indigenous people, addiction, suicide, mental health, isolation and more - in a spirit of collaboration, partnership, growth, hope and unity. For more information: [NoMore Violence Week - April 8th - April 12th 2024 \(allianceforyouth.org\)](https://allianceforyouth.org).

NO SMALL MATTER: Tuesday, April 9th, 6:00 to 8:00 pm, Heritage Inn, 1700 Fox Farm Rd. Join United Way for a FREE viewing of the documentary *No Small Matter*, followed by a panel discussion featuring local experts in early childhood. *No Small Matter* is the first feature documentary to explore the most overlooked, underestimated, and powerful force for change in America today: early childhood education. The film lays out the overwhelming evidence for the importance of the first five years and reveals how our failure to act on that evidence has resulted in an everyday crisis for American families and a slow-motion catastrophe for the country. This event is free and open to all.

SCOTTISH RITE SPAGHETTI DINNER: Thursday, April 11th, 5:00 to 8:00 pm, Scottish Rite Building, 1304 13th St. S. The 20th Annual Scottish Rite Language Clinic Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser will raise funds to support free speech and language therapy to area preschool children. The event includes a silent auction, 50/50, \$3,000 travel raffle, and dinner. Tickets are \$15.

MUSEUM SHOWCASE: The Sunday Sampler is a staple for this community where folks roam freely through the halls of the Great Falls Public Library, specific presentations are given, and we all invite the public to participate in our growing museum culture. It is also important to show the community how many locations are participating in the Sunday Sampler. The Museum Showcase will be on **Thursday, April 11th** from **6:00 to 8:00 pm** on the first and second floors of the Great Falls Public Library. Booths from the participating Museums will be accessible to the public for two hours during this event. The Library will provide some light food and beverage for this event. Facebook event here: [Museum Showcase | Facebook](#). See greatfallsmuseums.com for more information and the full list of museums.

GREAT FALLS LIBRARY EVENTS: Whether you're looking for children's programs, adult events, storytelling, documentaries, etc. you can find the information at: [All Upcoming Events | Great Falls, MT Public Library \(greatfallslibrary.org\)](http://greatfallslibrary.org).

GREAT FALLS SYMPHONY: Presenting Reborn with Chinook Winds: Music of Dvorak and Prokofiev on **Friday, April 19th** at **7:00 pm** at The Newberry, and **Sunday, April 21st** at **2:00 pm** at First Congregational Church UCC.

Entire Symphony presenting **Beethoven 9** on **Saturday, April 27th at 7:30 pm** in the Mansfield Theater. Get tickets here: [23-24 Great Falls Symphony Season \(gfsymphony.org\)](http://23-24.GreatFallsSymphonySeason(gfsymphony.org).).

GREAT FALLS THEATER COMPANY: Great Falls Theatre Company at University of Providence presents Steel Magnolias! Shows on **April 18th at 7:30 pm, April 19th at 7:30 pm, April 20th at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm**. [TICKETS](#) available now.

MONTANA FITNESS & HEALTH EXPO: Montana Fitness & Health Expo will be a two-day event that will take place from **April 20th and 21st** at the Montana ExpoPark in the Exhibition Hall. The expo is centered around promoting health and fitness in our community and will feature vendors whose products or services support health/fitness. Facebook event here: [Montana Fitness & Health Expo \(facebook.com\)](#).

GFPS MUSIC AND ARTS: This past month has been filled with plenty of opportunities to observe our student's artistic talents and musical abilities throughout the community. Stay informed on activities through the end of the school year here: [Fine Arts / Overview \(gfps.k12.mt.us\)](#),

GREAT FALLS ANIMAL SHELTER: City of Great Falls Animal Shelter Barking Lot Event - **April 27th, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm**. Join us for a tail-wagging good time at the City of Great Falls Animal Shelter Barking Lot Event at 1010 25th Ave NE, Great Falls, MT, will transform into a pet lover's paradise. "New to You" Sale:

Explore treasures at our "new to you" sale, featuring pet-related items that will delight both you and your furry friends. Adoptable Dog Showcase: Meet your future canine companion at our adoptable dog showcase. Our friendly dogs are ready to steal your heart and find their forever homes. Cat Viewing: For cat enthusiasts, we have a special cat viewing area where you can spend quality time with our charming feline friends. Adoption Specials: Don't miss out on exclusive adoption specials! Take this opportunity to welcome a new member into your family. Bring your family, friends, and fellow animal lovers to this paw-sitively delightful event. Let's create happy tails and forever homes together! Facebook event here: [GFAS Barking Lot Event | Facebook](#).

VOLUNTEER GREAT FALLS: Volunteer Great Falls is a great resource to find volunteer opportunities from local organizations. No ads, no opportunities that aren't local, and fully searchable. Check out [United Way of Cascade County \(galaxydigital.com\)](#) for opportunities.

EARTH DAY: Every year on **April 22nd**, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970. Let's take a look at the last half-century of mobilization for action.

The Origins of Earth Day

In the decades leading up to the first, Americans were consuming vast amounts of leaded gas through massive and inefficient automobiles. Industry belched out smoke and sludge with little fear of the consequences from either the law or bad press. Air pollution was commonly accepted as the smell of prosperity. Until this point, mainstream America remained largely oblivious to environmental concerns and how a polluted environment threatens human health.

However, the stage was set for change with the publication of Rachel Carson's New York Times bestseller *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book represented a watershed moment, selling more than 500,000 copies in 24 countries as it raised

public awareness and concern for living organisms, the environment and the inextricable links between pollution and public health.

Senator Gaylord Nelson, the junior senator from Wisconsin, had long been concerned about the deteriorating environment in the United States. Then in January 1969, he and many others witnessed the ravages of a massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. Inspired by the student anti-war movement, Senator Nelson wanted to infuse the energy of student anti-war protests with an emerging public consciousness about air and water pollution. Senator Nelson announced the idea for a teach-in on college campuses to the national media, and persuaded Pete McCloskey, a conservation-minded Republican Congressman, to serve as his co-chair.

Senator Gaylord Nelson recruited Denis Hayes, a young activist, to organize the campus teach-ins and to scale the idea to a broader public, and they chose April 22, a weekday falling between Spring Break and Final Exams, to maximize the greatest student participation.

First Earth Day, 1970

Recognizing its potential to inspire all Americans, Hayes built a national staff of 85 to promote events across the land and the effort soon broadened to include a wide range of organizations, faith groups, and others. They changed the name to Earth Day, which immediately sparked national media attention, and caught on across the country. Earth Day inspired 20 million Americans — at the time, 10% of the total population of the United States — to take to the streets, parks and auditoriums to demonstrate against the impacts of 150 years of industrial development which had left a growing legacy of serious human health impacts. (From [Earth Day: The Official Site | EARTHDAY.ORG](https://www.earthday.org/)).