

Great Falls Rising Monthly Newsletter

May 2026

May is the fifth month of the year, and if you're Greek, it is named for fertility and growth; if you prefer Latin, our older generations will be honored. May Day is a time of Maypole dances and hanging flower baskets. May 5th is Cinco de Mayo, a fun time for all at Mexican restaurants. On May 10th, we celebrate all the Moms in our lives. Memorial Day, the last Monday in May, is a time to honor those who have given their lives serving our great country. Let's not forget our graduates, both high school and college who are celebrating the completion of their studies. Congratulations to all!

Since there has been and will be discussion about the Montana State Constitution, now 54 years old, Great Falls Rising is doing a monthly series on the history of Montana's constitution. We hope you'll enjoy learning about this very interesting legal document.

Chapter 1 came out on April 6th. If you missed it, please check the Great Falls Rising website: [The Montana Constitution: Chapter One – Great Falls Rising](#).

Chapter 2 - Montana's Constitution

Montana's 1972 Constitutional Convention was born from a desperate need to escape the "Copper Collar." For nearly a century, Montana's original 1889 constitution effectively functioned as a corporate charter for the Anaconda Copper Mining Company.

By the mid-20th century, Montana's government was a fragmented, inefficient apparatus characterized by a weak executive branch and a legislature that met

for only 60 calendar days every two years—a structure easily manipulated by industrial lobbyists.

The impetus for change began in the late 1960s, and formed a perfect storm of grassroots activism and legal necessity. The U.S. Supreme Court's "one man, one vote" ruling forced a redistricting that broke the stranglehold of rural interests. Simultaneously, a new, progressive environmental movement and a generation of "Young Turks" in the Democratic and Republican parties began demanding transparency and fiscal reform. In 1970, Montana voters overwhelmingly approved a call for a Constitutional Convention.

The resulting 1972 document was a progressive masterpiece. It replaced the bloated 1889 version of Montana's Constitution with a streamlined, readable document. The executive branch was reorganized, modernized and strengthened. The legislature was also strengthened and given more time to do its work. The Board of Regents, Board of Public Education, and local school boards were also given special constitutional recognition and authority, effectively making them new and additional branches of government.

Most significantly, it enshrined revolutionary rights to Montanans, including the "right to a clean and healthful environment", extensive personal privacy rights, and a "right to know", guaranteeing public access to all government proceedings.

Uniquely, the 100 delegates were all ordinary citizens; sitting politicians were barred from serving. Many had served in some public office in the past, and knew very well the need for change. The delegates selected to go to Helena were seated alphabetically, which eliminated any kind of "our party/their party" factions from forming over the Convention, and helped ensure the 1972 Constitution was not a product of political insiders, but a bold declaration of popular sovereignty that transformed Montana from a corporate fiefdom into a modern, transparent democracy.

Next month - Who were the delegates to the convention? How did they get there?

Reminder on the primary election coming up...

The Primary election is coming up soon. Late Registration begins on May 5th. Voter registration forms **postmarked by May 4th and received by May 7th are accepted for regular registration** per 13-2-301(3) MCA. The voter does not

need to appear at the election office. **The Elections Office only collects the mail once a day as the post office only sorts and places the mail in their mailbox by 10:00 am every morning.**

During late registration, those wishing to register or change their voter information and vote in this federal election may only do so **before 5:00 pm on Friday before the election (May 29th), Saturday before the election (May 30th), or before noon on election day (June 2nd)**. To vote in the election, late registrants must obtain their ballot in person from the location designated by the county election administrator. 13-2-304 MCA and SB490. Per the law change, the election office will not be processing any late registrations on **June 1st** the day before the election. We will only be re-issuing absentee ballots that day.

The election office will be **open for registration on Saturday, May 30th from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm**. That is the last day to register before election day. Always include checking the Montana Secretary of State's [Voter Registration Page](#). **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 in April?

Tuesday, May 5th - City Commission Work Session **5:30 pm**, City Commission Meeting **7:00 pm**. Agendas will be posted [here](#) when the date nears

Monday, May 11th – Great Falls Public Schools Board of Trustees Meeting, **5:30 pm**. Agenda will be posted here when the date nears: [Agendas & Meetings - Great Falls Public Schools](#).

Tuesday, May 12th – 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, May 19th - City Commission Work Session **5:30 pm**; City Commission Meeting **7:00 pm**. Agendas will be posted [here](#) when the date nears.

Monday, May 25th – Great Falls Public Schools Board of Trustees Meeting, **5:30 pm**. Agenda will be posted here when the date nears: [Agendas & Meetings - Great Falls Public Schools](#).

Tuesday, May 26th – Cascade County Commission Meeting, **9:30 am**. Agenda can be found here as the date nears: [Agenda Center • Cascade County, MT • CivicEngage \(cascadecountymt.gov\)](#).

What else is happening in Great Falls?

Signatures are being collected at Luna Coffee, 9 5th St. N, every Tuesday from 4-6 pm and at the library every Thursday from 4–6 pm for I-194, TEI/MT Plan for Dark Money; other is CI-132 to keep Montana Courts Non-Partisan. Plus, there will be a drive thru event on May 16th at the Labor Temple. Y'all come.

Tuesday, May 5

Celtic Pub Trivia at Celtic Cowboy

Poet Gwendolyn Gunn Launch Party at Cassiopeia Books

Thursday, May 7

Joyce Manor at The Newberry

Armchair Traveler: The Galapagos at Great Falls Public Library

Mothers Day Weekend Celebration at Borries Supper Club

Friday, May 8

Montana State University graduation

MT Country Night - Tanner Laws Band - Radio Ranch - Jordan Lane at The Newberry

Cash and Company at Celtic Cowboy

Joel Corda at Sip 'n Dip Lounge

The Art & Legacy of Walter Piehl, Jr. at Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art.

Saturday, May 9

University of Montana graduation

GF College-MSU graduation

Carroll College graduation

Great Falls Symphony Presents: Daniel Black at The Mansfield Theater

The Pub Crawlers at Elevation 3330

Preservation & Legacy Awards at The History Museum
Joel Corda at Sip 'n Dip Lounge

Sunday, May 10 - **HAPPY MOTHERS DAY**
Mothers Day Weekend Celebration at Borries Supper Club
Mothers Day Beignet Bar at Celtic Cowboy

Tuesday, May 12
Celtic Pub Trivia at Celtic Cowboy
Family Tailgate BBQ Tour at Mansfield Events Center

Wednesday, May 13
Author Laurie Stevens at Cassiopeia Books

Thursday, May 14
Montana Constitution Roadshow at Great Falls Public Library;

Probate, deeds, tax law etc. Randy Knowles; 1:30 - 3:30 pm; Ursuline Academy
(2nd floor, gold room)
RSVP Jeannie 406-590-4388

Friday, May 15
Ryan Johnson at Celtic Cowboy
Joel Corda at Sip 'n Dip Lounge
Bloom Art Auction at The Newberry

Saturday, May 16
The Greatest Dam Mimosa Showdown - all over downtown
T. Buckley Trio at Belt Performing Arts Center
Great Falls Electrics at University of Providence
Joel Corda at Sip 'n Dip Lounge
Alice's Wonderland Adventure at The Mansfield Theater
Maiden Montana Tournament at Warden Park and Wadsworth Park

Tuesday, May 19
Voyagers Opening Day at Voyager Stadium
Brewhaha at Mighty Mo
Trivia at Celtic Cowboy

Wednesday, May 20

A Taste of Ireland at The Mansfield Theater

Thursday, May 21

Song Writer Night at KellerGeist

Friday, May 22

TUSK at The Mansfield Theater

Memorial Special at Electric City Speedway

The Lucky Valentines at Celtic Cowboy

Treasure State Cutting Show at 406 Arena

Joel Corda at Sip 'n Dip Lounge

Saturday, May 23

Joel Corda at Sip 'n Dip Lounge

Monday, May 25 Memorial Day

Ceremony at 1 pm at Montana Veterans Memorial; Flyover, band, chorus, and more. Broadcast live on KGPR 89.9 FM, streaming (will be podcasted); also live on Montana Veterans Memorial Facebook

Friday, May 29

Badger Creek at Celtic Cowboy

Saturday, May 30

Jamie Wolf at The Newberry

Sunday, May 31

CMR High School graduation in the 4 Seasons Arena at noon

Great Falls High School graduation in 4 Seasons Arena at 4 pm

Tribute to Mary Moore at 2 p.m. in Mansfield Theater

Kickin' Asphalt Half Marathon at Elk's Riverside Park