

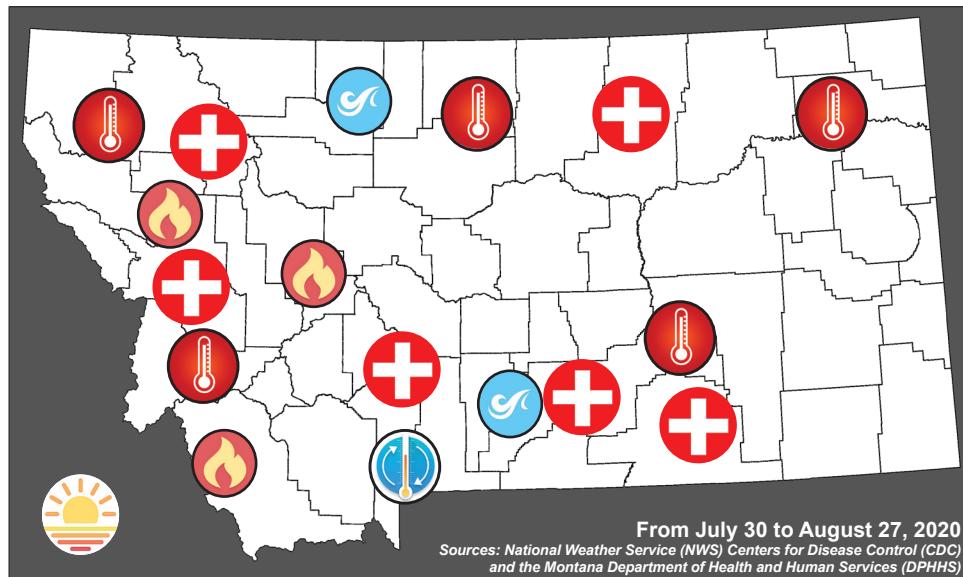
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High and Low Temperatures Across the State

The highest temperatures reported during the recording period were 103 at Libby Dam on Aug. 1, 103 degrees at Jordan Airport on Aug. 17, and 103 degrees in Wolf Point Airport on Aug. 18 and 19. Also, high temps of 102 degrees on Aug. 12, 22 and 23 at Wolf Point Airport and 101 degrees at Thompson Falls on July 31 were recorded. High temperature records were broken across the state on Aug. 17. Missoula hit 100 degrees (record of 99 in 2008), Livingston recorded 97 degrees (record of 95 in 2016), Billings hit 100 degrees (record of 99 in 1970), Bozeman reached 98 degrees (record of 96 on 1964), Cut Bank recorded 97 degrees (record of 93 in 2001), Great Falls reported 99 degrees (record of 98 in 1919), Havre recorded 101 degrees (99 in 2001) and 100 degrees reported in Helena (record of 98 in 2001). The lowest temperatures recorded during the period were 30 degrees at West Yellowstone on August 15, and 31 degrees at Loma on Aug. 8. While not "official" NWS observations, Gates Park in the Bob Marshall Wilderness got down to 24 degrees, and Elk Park station dropped to 22 degrees on Aug. 14.

Stormy Weather

Severe thunderstorms pounded the state in the first week of August with high winds, hail and lightning. On Aug. 3, severe thunderstorms producing 1" hail and 60 mph winds moved through Montana and a wind gust of 75 mph was recorded at the Livingston airport. Severe Thunderstorm Warnings were issued across Montana on August 6 when over 160 cloud-to-ground lightning strikes occurred from west of Darby towards Ovando. On Aug. 7, 64 mph gusts were recorded at East Glacier weather station and sleet was reported at Logan Pass in Glacier National Park. By mid-month, severe thunderstorms were reported across the state with half-dollar to ping-pong-ball-sized sized hail, frequent lightning and brief heavy rain through the last week of the month, prompting severe thunderstorm warnings across various counties. On Aug. 25, wind gusts of 62 mph were recorded in Dillon.

Continuing COVID-19 Health Emergency

Businesses and establishments remain under "Phase II" of the Governor's COVID-19 response plan with continued restrictions. The governor's office, in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and the public health departments across the state advise all residents to wear non-medical masks when visiting any establishment where six feet or more of personal distancing is not possible, especially in counties where there is more than four cases and community spread. Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks are reopen with restrictions. As the virus continues to spread, The U.S. reported nearly 6 million infected cases and 183,000 related deaths. Montana reported 98 deaths by Aug. 27, with the highest number of infected cases in Yellowstone County/Billings (up from 950 to 1,864 with 847 cases active at press time), Gallatin County/Bozeman (up from 813 to 1,029), Big Horn (up from 271 to 609), Flathead (up from 58 to 539), and Missoula (up from 224 to 417), and a total number reported cases of 6,785 (up from 3,676 cases last reporting period) in the state. Approximately 238,260 individuals in the state have been tested for the virus. Visit dphhs.mt.gov for up-to-date information.

Signs of Wildfire Season

According to the North American Drought Monitor updated for June 2020, southern and eastern Montana was abnormally dry or moderately dry for the reporting period. Meteorological summer (June, July, and August) started off wet with climate sites across Montana seeing above normal precipitation during the month of June; however, both July and August-to-date had been dry. Fire activity in Montana started in early August with the Old Baldy Fire in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge forest. By Aug. 9, fire weather watches had been issued across Montana and portions of Idaho and soon the watches turned to red flag warnings and smoke from new fires and fires around the country were affecting air quality around the state. The Bear Creek Fire west of Dillon (nine miles east of Lemhi, Idaho) continued to grow as of Aug. 17, mapping 7,000 acres. By Aug. 20, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality issued warnings for air quality near Dillon. By Aug. 26, the Bear Creek Fire was at 70% containment and 11,590 acres.

Days Get Shorter

On Aug. 1, the National Weather Service in Great Falls reported the last sunset at or after 9 p.m. in Great Falls until May 2021, 290 days away. In Great Falls, the first day of August is 14 hours, 52 minutes long. The last day of the month is 13 hours, 20 minutes, so the length of the days gets one hour, 32 minutes shorter during the course of the month.

Sources: National Weather Service, CDC and Montana DPHHS.

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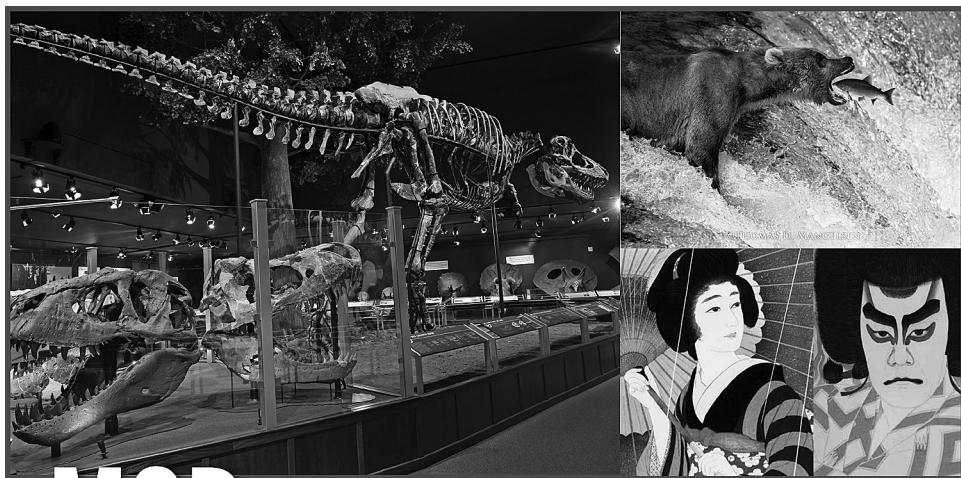
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ON THE COVER

The 2020 Montana History Conference includes Montana-pub trivia, behind-the-scenes-of-history tours, historic beers and brews, Shakespeare and more.

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END NOTES

Famous and Not Forgotten: Butte's most famous female impersonator charmed the world at the turn of the century.

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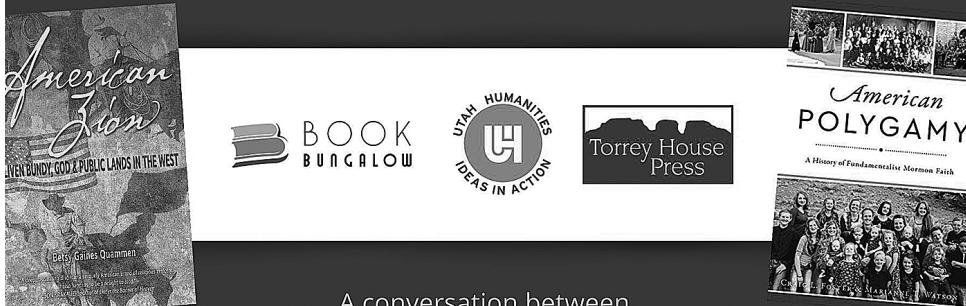


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ON THE COVER An autographed Stetson, illustrated by O. C. Seltzer, 1932, from the Montana Historical Society, (a Gift of John L. Fogarty), one of the many subjects of the presentation, "Appropriate, Curious, and Rare: Treasures from the Collection" at this month's Montana History Conference.

American Zions

Past and Contemporary Radical Mormonisms



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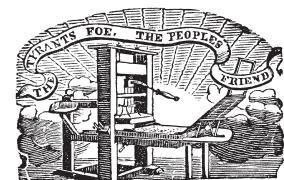
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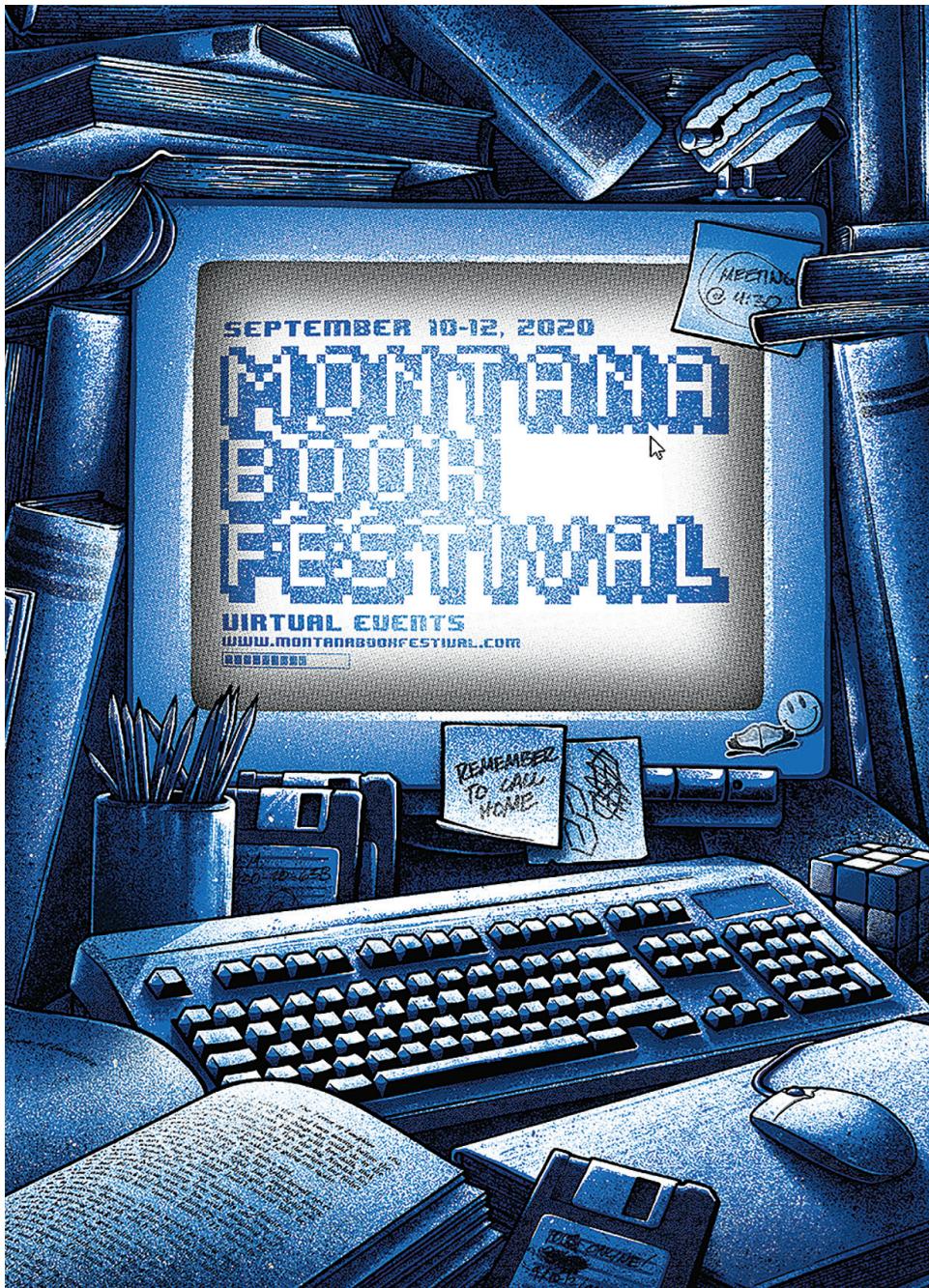


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Ochenski: Season of the Which



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Following a pandemic-plagued summer unlike any in recent memory, Montanans now roll into September, traditionally when school starts, the hordes of tourists go home, and cool nights follow the lovely days into Fall. Across our big and beautiful state the harvest is in full swing as our farms and gardens gladly give up the bounty of long warm days to fill pantries and freezers in preparation for the winter ahead.

On the political scene, however, it's anything but pastoral or reassuring. We are faced with choices that may well determine not only the fate of our state, but of the nation and ultimately, the planet. "Which side are you on boys" goes the old union organizing song from the 30s. And it rings true as ever today in our Season of the Which – which candidate, which party, which future do we chose?

On the national level, there is little mystery to the choices facing American voters in two short months. The Democrats have put forth former Vice-President Joe Biden as their presidential candidate and he picked Kamala Harris as his running mate. As the daughter of African-American and Asian-American parents, twice elected as California's Attorney General and the state's U.S. Senator since 2017, Biden's historic choice of Harris garnered high praise from the nation's ever-more diverse populace.

Contrast that with the Trump re-election campaign and its two old white guys ticket. Rather than embrace the diversity that made America the "melting pot," the Trump campaign has sought to stoke the racial divisions wracking the nation in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests against police brutality towards people of color. Indeed, Trump's campaign does just the opposite of bringing our populace together to face the daunting challenges of the climate crisis, a crashed economy, global pandemic, and tens of millions of citizens out of work, out of health care, and in fear of being out on the street.

While Trump and his minions are breaking their arms patting themselves on the back, the reality is that there are more than 183,000 Americans who are no longer alive to watch the spectacle, having died of coronavirus due to the Trump administration's horrific response.

While other nations brought the disease under control, Trump downplayed the seriousness of the pandemic, urged states to "liber-

ate" themselves from precautionary health measures such as sheltering in place and wearing masks in public. When the nation's infection and death rates soared, he blamed testing, not his own lack of knowledge and leadership – which only further allowed the pandemic to rage out of control.

Just as the climate catastrophe was dubbed a "Chinese hoax" by Trump, so was the coronavirus dubbed the "Chinese flu" by the most illiterate occupant of the Oval Office in memory. And just as he has failed miserably to address the existential challenges of an ever-warming climate, melting ice caps, acidifying oceans and superstorms, so too has he miserably failed the nation in its hour of greatest need as a thousand citizens die every day.

Closer to home, Montanans' election choices of "which" are perhaps less dramatic, but the consequences are no less dire. On one hand, you have Republican Trump puppet, Greg Gianforte, running for governor – a guy who thinks dinosaurs and humans existed at the same time, has little regard for the environment, and voted NO on the last bill in the US House of Representatives to bolster the Postal Service when coronavirus makes voting by mail not a choice, but a necessity for many.

His opponent, Democratic Lt. Gov. Mike Cooney, is certainly no rock star, but he does bring a long record of public service and experience to his guber-

natorial bid – and has never body-slammed a reporter for asking a simple question. Whereas Gianforte is willing to cripple the Postal Service to suppress voters from throwing Trump out of the White House, Cooney has pledged to fight to get the Postal Service – a lifeline for rural Montanans – what it needs to survive and thrive. As our state and nation face a highly uncertain future, the "which side are you on" choice this election season couldn't be clearer.

At the founding of the United States, citizens asked Benjamin Franklin: "What do we have, a republic or a monarchy?" Franklin replied: "A republic, if you can keep it."

It's obvious we have a president who acts as though we have a monarchy and he's the king. Just as obvious is the reality that to "keep" the republic we must reject this lawless authoritarian – and the political party that has allowed him to trample the Constitution – and choose democracy, civility, and a livable future for generations yet to come. ★

—GEORGE OCHENSKI

Whereas Greg Gianforte is willing to cripple the Postal Service to suppress voters from throwing Trump out of the White House, Mike Cooney has pledged to fight to get the Postal Service – a lifeline for rural Montanans – what it needs to survive and thrive. As our state and nation face a highly uncertain future, the "which side are you on" choice this election season couldn't be clearer.

BYGONE DAYS

Bygone Days are compiled from archives of Montana newspapers. Current years featured are 1896, 1936 and 1961. For daily Bygone Days, follow online at: @MontanaPress on Facebook.

**The Helena Independent
September 1, 1896**

"Bird's Harvest Festival. A Wandering Vagrant Who Helped Himself at the Salvation Army Table. The Salvation Army is in the midst of what is known as a 'harvest festival,' a scheme for raising revenue by which the people are asked for donation of all kinds of produce, which are then sold and the proceeds diverted into a fund for the good work in which the army is engaged. Among the donations received yesterday were three chickens given by Fred Munt and one chicken that Charles Hagemen had sent in. The chickens were alive and were to have been sold last evening. In the meantime, however, a stranger named Jack Bird happened to scent the fowls from the rear of the barracks. He laid his plans and found a way into the house when no one was there. He sold them and spent the money for liquor, a purpose far from the original intention of the donors. Policeman Bossler found Bird and secured evidence against him. The offender was locked up in the city prison. Last evening the sale, minus the poultry, went on. It was intended to have an auction, but Adj. Ayres, who is in charge of the post, said that he would not risk the construction of the law requiring a license of auctioneers and sold the articles at a private sale."

**Great Falls Weekly Tribune
September 4, 1896**

"A special dispatch received by the Tribune and published in Friday's issue, told of the discovery of a man and the remains of a team loaded with poles on the Riceville road, about eight miles from this place, the wagon and load burned up and the man and horses killed, apparently by lightning... Deputy Coroner Fitzgerald and a party at once started out to investigate the matter with the man who brought the news to town... When the party reached the place described they found little but a pile of ashes and three dead horses, partially burned and roasted. Among the ashes were the bones of a man partially consumed. The wagon was completely burned up, nothing being left but the iron work... The bolt must have been a powerful one to kill all three of the horses and the man at the same time and then set the wagon and load on fire. It is probably that the accident occurred about an hour or an hour and a half before the body was discovered by a passing team, as about that time there was a heavy thunder storm passing over that country."

**The Anaconda Standard
September 9, 1896**

"Death's Awful Work. Harvest of the Grim Reaper Among the Little Innocents. Six Funerals in One Day. Diphtheria and Other Dread Diseases—Hope That the Cold Weather Will Check Them—What the Doctors Say. The great death rate among children in Butte seems to be increasing and

there are about half a dozen funerals every day... Dr. McCrimmon reports cases of diphtheria in four families of county charges, but says all are getting along well. Dr. McCrimmon is also quoted as saying that in his opinion to the death rate among infants and little children was due to improper care and nursing, the milk bottle being responsible for a great deal of it."

**The Big Timber Pioneer
September 10, 1896**

"*Lewiston Tribune:* Now and then a good story is resurrected out of the legends that have been cherished for years among the mountain dwellers. Several years ago (no matter how many) Ben Morris, who was then a pioneer, took his brother, Dr. Morris, then a rank tenderfoot, to the Warm Springs country for a summer's outing. Dr. Morris had never fished any in those days and Ben undertook to instruct him. He provided Doc with a line about a foot and a half long, carefully hooked and baited it and explained that it was to be carried along the bank about a foot above water so that the fish would have no difficulty in seeing the bait and jumping for it. Doc started out and Ben and some of his co-conspirators followed along in the underbrush to watch the sport. Doc toiled away for about two hours, and conscientiously kept the hook 12 inches above water according to instructions. Strange to say, one or two erratic fish actually jumped out of the water and struck at the bait, so hungry and plentiful they were in those days. Doc was in high feather over the raises he was getting and was limbering up his back for a full day's work, when the spectators could retain their joy no longer and their loud, long, roars admonished him that something was wrong. It is not related what the doctor said when he fully understood the situation, but it is observed that to this day he becomes moody and impatient whenever the talk turns to fishing yarns."

**Thompson Falls Weekly Montanian
September 12, 1896**

"Put to Death by Tortures. Body of Curio Collector Found Near Portland. The body of James Hartley, collector of Indian relics and curios, was found by Henry Peterson on a small island in Deadman's lake. The position of the body, which was found in an old canoe, the hands and feet bound by withes of hazel and fastened to the stern of the ca-

noe, and a stick of hazel driven through the body below the breastbone, showed that Hartley had been put to death by cruel tortures which were inflicted on whites taken prisoners by Indians during the early history of the country. Hartley had been missing for over a year, but the body was in a comparatively good state of preservation. He was easily identified. Some such ending had often been predicted for Hartley, as he had been for years collecting Indian relics, and had probably robbed more Indian graves and scattered broadcast the remains of more Indians than any other one man. There is hardly an Indian burying ground in the northwest that he has not ransacked for curios."

**The Butte Montana Standard
September 18, 1936**

"Superstitious? An Unscientific Survey Is Made. Are you superstitious? Approximately 6,000 persons in Butte are—not just half way, but wholeheartedly, downright superstitious... In South Main street's one hundred block a workman repairing a sign had placed two stepladders across the sidewalk from building to curb. To go around passersby were compelled either to walk past parked cars or flatten themselves against the wall of the building... Out of 26 persons, four took the more troublesome and roundabout way. One fearless woman walked boldly under the ladder and then succumbed to her superstitions, retraced her steps and scraped her silk stockings against a car fender in staving off ill luck. Of the remaining 22, few walked boldly beneath the ladders. Most of them hesitate, debated changing their course and then, apparently in an optimistic mood or feeling that the worst had already happened to them, shrugged and went under the ladders. Above, the workman laughed quietly at 'the funny things people do.'"

**The Butte Montana Standard
September 18, 1896**

"Park Street Workmen Discover 'Pay Dirt.' Workmen repairing a sewer in front of the Y.M.C.A. preparatory to the paving of Park street yesterday struck 'pay dirt' in the form of a vein of silver-bearing lead. The strike was made at the corner of Washington street. The six-inch thick vein was formed of quartz, bearing lead and a fine trace of silver, it was said. The lead was covered by the sewer fill, but not before old-timers recalled that the cost of excavating for the Y.M.C.A. building was virtually paid for by the rich quality of gravel at the site..."

**The Butte Montana Standard
September 21, 1936**

"Buffalo Calves Broken To Drive. Martinsdale, Sept. 20—Two matched buffalo calves are being broken to harness at the Big Elk dude ranch near here. Courtland Du Rand, manager, said he planned to exhibit the calves in New York city in 1939."

**The Big Timber Pioneer
September 24, 1936**

"Dinosaur Hunt Is Fort Peck Lark. Periodic Expeditions Held Into Old Fossil Beds and Valuable 'Finds' Are Made. With lunch kit and water bag, and crowding into some 200 automobiles, nearly 1,000 of Fort Peck's populace swarmed the far reaches of the Dinosaur trail, on a recent planned expedition into these fields, in interested search of anything that resembled fossil remains of another age. Their searches were not in vain,



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as evidenced by hundreds of pounds of various fossil fragments that found their way into the private collections of Valley county and Fort Peck residents. Several valuable 'finds' were marked for future expeditions and left undisturbed. Work went forward with the careful excavation of the remains of a previously discovered 'duck bill' dinosaur which will eventually be added to the collection at the Fort Peck theater. The district engineer at Fort Peck had requested the public to refrain from disturbing the larger specimens without first consulting one of the accompanying paleontologists."

**The Helena Independent
September 26, 1961**

"A new area of 75 cabin sites is being opened on the east shore of Canyon Ferry Lake, Ashley Roberts, state parks director, told the Montana Highway Commission Monday. The State Highway Commission is ex-officio State Parks Commission. Roberts said that notices of the new area have been sent to 165 on the waiting list and from the response he anticipates that 50 to 60 will exercise options. The area is between Magpie Gulch and Little Hellgate Bay. Charge for the lease is \$25 per year and the lessee must promise to build within two years. The lots are 100 by 200 feet and are about 50 feet back from the lake shore. Value of all cabins in the Canyon Ferry area is about \$680,000 according to the county assessor's figures, Roberts told the commission. The area, he said, is building up faster than was anticipated. Value of boats owned in the area is \$100,000."

**The Butte Montana Standard
September 28, 1961**

"Water Well Brings in Natural Gas; Landowners Are Unhappy. A water well that struck natural gas and promised to set up Hill County's first natural gas field was reported Thursday. But there was no elation among the landowners. The Hildale Hutterite colony capped its well. They wanted water and will drill again. The colonists need water for household use and irrigation. Driller Pershing 'Bud' Jacobson said that initial tests indicate the discovery well showed 1,040,000 cubic feet of pure, dry natural gas when tested with a two-inch outlet. The new colony is 25 miles northeast of Havre in Hill County... The well was thus cemented in without trouble, but the amount found was surprising. The Hutterites, a religious sect, live apart from the world, and have their own schools, dress and customs."★

WHAT TO WEAR IN HATS

THE COMING SEASON.



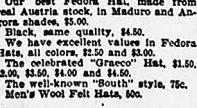
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MONTANA SPOTLIGHT

Lawn Alternative: Missoulians are Xeriscaping

To her delight, Autumn Berry walked out of her home this June to the gentle humming sound of bees pollinating a lavender bush by her front door.

In the fourth summer since Berry purchased her Missoula home, she says she's opted out of the traditional manicured greenery she inherited and instead raises plants native to Montana in her front yard – a technique called xeriscaping.

"I always wanted to xeriscape because I hate watering and mowing," Berry says. "The garden takes care of itself now."

DRY GARDENS

A xeriscape, the word is pronounced with a "z" sound and derived from Ancient Greek (*xērós*, "dry"), is a landscape style that requires little or no irrigation – the term is also loosely used to describe a native plant garden.

Berry grows lavender, tick weed, black-eyed susan, common yarrow, mountain-ash, spiraea, and much more. She knows her garden well and can readily identify each species.

"This summer we were camping up at Twin Lakes in the Bitterroot and saw spiraea (pictured at right) growing everywhere," Berry says, referring to one of the many plants growing in her own garden.

"It's wonderful to come home to that," she adds.

Berry's husband, Mike Huberman, laughed as he showcased a picture of their house pre-transformation. In the photo, the house sits neatly atop a grassy knoll in the same location.

"My back hurts just looking at this photo," Huberman says. "Getting the grass out was the worst!"

Their front yard now bursts with colorful flora: pinks, yellows, purples, and greens. Berry has planted everything in her garden herself aside from one elm tree that hovers sixty feet above the house. The garden's diversity is evident, though some traditional grass still pokes out between plants.



"If we had an apocalypse grass would still grow," Berry says.

Grass is largely unquestioned as the ideal estate accessory in mainstream American culture.

Marilyn Marler, University of Montana Natural Areas Specialist, says that the traditional landscapes of grass lawns were an invention of French Royalty and inspired by English manors.

"It's become a status of wealth in American culture," Marler says. "You expect it."

Marler says Americans have unknowingly formed a monoculture across the nation with their affinity for traditional lawns. This leads to ecosystem biodiversity loss.

"Lawn grass is the number one irrigated crop in the United States," Marler says. "It takes a lot of water, especially here in Montana where it's dry."

BACK TO NATURE

Marler says that prior to European contact, the plants thriving in Montana were already adapted to the dry climate. Reinstating those plants, not only increases biodiversity but supports local pollinator populations. IN addition, the hardiness of native plants gives them a higher survival rate without tons of water.

"Personally, I got tired of watering plants and mowing," Marler says. "I'd rather have birds and butterflies."

Sandy Perrin, a plant horticulturist at the Missoula County Weed District, says she's seen a growing number of Missoulians transform their yards over the past 10 years. Perrin says although a xeriscape takes less water and is less maintenance in the long run, it's not necessarily easy to start one.

"People don't realize you can't just plant native plants and turn your back away," Perrin says. "It's a process. You need to get things well-established in your yard before the xeriscape becomes true to efficiency."

As locals join the xeriscape bandwagon, plant businesses have blossomed in response.

Shiva Solaimanian, resident designer at a landscaping company called Reforestation in Missoula, says nearly every week the business gets a xeriscaping request. Only a few years ago similar requests came in only once or twice a month. "Most want to convert their lawns or help pollinators."

"We created a lifestyle that doesn't make sense to the West," Solaimanian said. "I don't understand why anyone wants an ugly lawn when they could have a mini thriving habitat with epic wildflowers."

Autumn Berry plants catmint as a filler perennial in her native wildflower garden outside her home in Missoula (below) and pictured in her Montana garden (at right) in mid-summer.



"As people's water bills go up, it's getting more concerning," says Gregory Monk, CEO and President of Nature's Enhancement Inc. "People sometimes get hundreds of dollars of bills per month and they could look at xeriscaping to save money. They could save hundreds of dollars or 65 percent on their water bills depending on the summer."



LOW-COST LANDSCAPE

Gregory Monk, CEO and President of Nature's Enhancement Inc., says he has also noticed an increase in inquiry, but for a different reason.

"As people's water bills go up, it's getting more concerning," Monk says. "People sometimes get hundreds of dollars of bills per month and they could look at xeriscaping to save money. They could save hundreds of dollars or 65 percent on their water bills depending on the summer."

Because of a prolific aquifer, Missoula has a good water availability outlook for the future but this is not the case universally across the state. Growing population in any area of Montana in combination with a changing climate can change what once might have been predictability in many locations.

"To ensure our high-quality waters remain, it is important that everyone considers their water consumption, use and impact," Elena Evans, hydrologist for the City of Missoula says. "Each individual should ask themselves if they can increase their water efficiency."

According to Evans, xeriscaping could decrease the amount of water that is being pulled out of the aquifer locally. In Missoula, the average metered consumption in winter months is around five million gallons of water per day. In July it peaks at around 21 million gallons per day. That spike is largely due to summer irrigation.

"Often, it's the bigger issues that seem the most pressing, but it's up to everyone to look at what they can do. One easy place to look is your backyard," Evans says. "★

—GENEVA ZOLTEK



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MONTANA HAPPY HOUR



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MONTANA BOOKS

Rez Gothic: Stephen Graham Jones

In the course of writing two dozen mind-blowing, skin-crawling novels in as many years, Blackfeet novelist Stephen Graham Jones has thrown open the question of which particular Stephen now owns the horror genre.

Whether he's crafting goosebump-raising teen hauntings like "Mapping the Interior," the horrors of a son who struggles to run his father's drive-thru urinal in "Flush" or the twisted coming-of-age mess of growing up in a werewolf family in "Mongrels," Stephen Jones repeatedly tags us with smackdab prose, wicked humor and nightmarish circumstances of real and imagined immortality.

In his latest wild ride, "The Only Good Indians," inspired by Jones' own annual Montana Blackfeet elk hunt, four Native American childhood buddies are hunted down by the Elk Head Woman, a demon bent on revenge for what transpired after their botched elk hunt 10 years earlier. This and other SGJ sleep deprivation tales carry the flag for *Rez Gothic*, a growing publishing niche which uses fantasy, science fiction and horror to focus on the very real racial inequalities referenced Jones' latest title.

Born and raised in Midland, Texas, the fun-loving Mr. Jones had a rough-and-tumble childhood that finds its way into most of his fiction. A 1994 Texas Tech grad who went on to earn a Masters from the University of North Texas and a Ph.D. from Florida State, he then taught at Texas Tech and the University of West Texas. His experimental literary approach to horror has landed him in the enviable position of both teaching and having his books being taught in lit classes before the age of 50. He and his wife, son and daughter reside in Boulder, Colorado where Jones teaches as the Ineva Reilly Baldwin Endowed Chair at the University of Colorado.

Montana Press: How did you first discover fiction?

Stephen Graham Jones: You know, I started about age 11, I guess. I always would read bean cans and soup cans and stuff. I just had to be reading. I lived with my grandparents a lot, and they always had copies of *Readers Digest*, and I would inhale those cover to cover. I just had to be reading, I don't know why.

MP: And novels?

Jones: I was over at one of my uncle's house one day in West Texas and he said, 'Hey, I notice you're always reading. Come with me.' And he took me down the hall to his linen closet, opened it up and that was his library. There were hundreds of books in there, all old adventure stuff, Conan the Barbarian and Louis L'Amour Westerns, and he said, 'You can take three of these books, and when you read those three, you can bring them back and get three more.'

I worked through his closet three books at a time like that, so I kind of cut my teeth on Westerns and action books. I didn't even discover horror for probably three more

years. The 1980s were the golden age for horror; everybody was trying to be Stephen King and I didn't even find him until I was probably 17. with 'Tommyknockers.'

MP: Do most of your students seem somewhat baffled to find a horror-writing lit prof?

Jones: Yeah, six years ago that was probably the case. The first day of class in my writing workshop, I always announce to the class, 'You're going to write one genre story in here, whether its horror or science fiction,' and I would usually have at least one but usually not more than three students stand up and walk out because they were like offended that I was going to make them go in the gutter like that. But the big sea change has been that in the last few years, the students come to class to *do* genre; that's all they want to do is write genre, whether it's horror or science fiction or fantasy or whatever. Now I probably attract the students who have that interest. Hardly any of them want to be Alice Munro or Raymond Carver anymore.

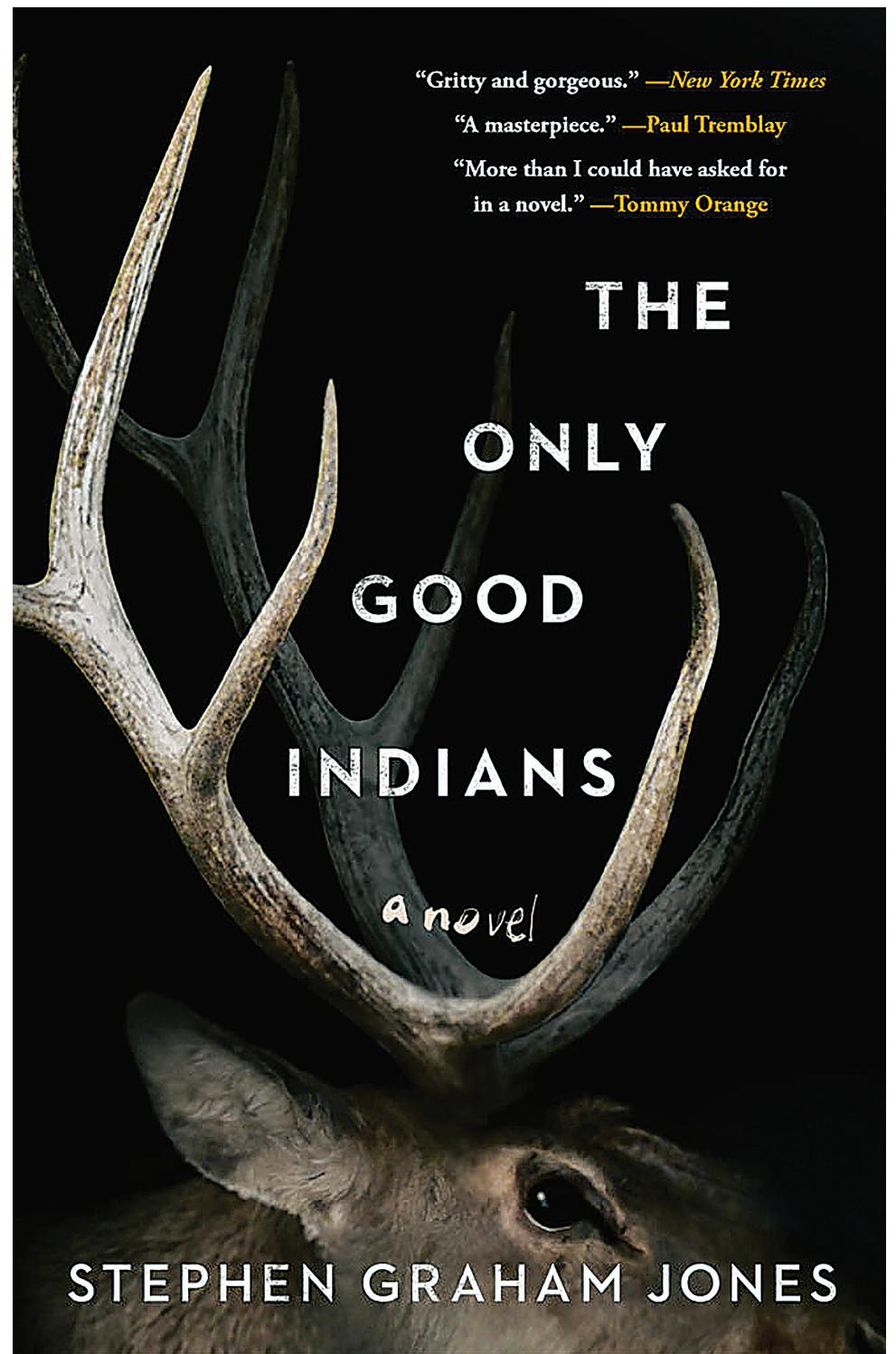
MP: Was teaching an easy transition for you?

Jones: (Laughs) No, I never wanted to teach. I mean, I grew up only wanting to be a farmer; I would lease a tractor and be a custom farmer. That's what you do if you don't have land. But just by a series of missteps, I ended up taking a semester in college and I just got hooked and just worked my way through. But all through grad school, everybody else was getting teaching experience and networking and trying to place papers and such, and I never did any of that because I always knew I was going to go back to manual labor once I got my degrees.

So when I graduated with my Ph.D. in 1998, I went back to the warehouse, I was working the warehouse in Texas, having a great time, but I hurt my back really bad. That meant I had to get a desk job, so I looked at the papers and ended up at a Texas Tech University library. At the library, I got talking with some of the faculty in the English department, and it turns out they had a job opening that paid better than the library, so I tried out to be a professor.

MP: "The Only Good Indians" literally throws the reader right into the evolving horror story of four Native elk hunters who have more than horns on their hands. How did you untap this horror story?

Jones: I've been hunting elk on the reservations since I was 12 or 13, so that's a draw. I think "The Only Good Indians" starts in two places, though. One, I guess a little more than two years ago, my wife and kids and me moved into a different rental house and this new living room we were in had this weird light that just would not behave; it just seemed to be under the control of switches that came on randomly all the time. So I was up there one day on a ladder trying to work on it and of course I had to turn the ceiling



fan off, and I looked under the ceiling fan blade and I thought, what if that flicker ray allows me to see something I shouldn't see. That's kind of where the premise came from.

The other place "The Only Good Indians" starts is in 2008, when I moved from West Texas up here to Colorado. I still had a lot of elk meat in the freezer from the previous year's hunt and I couldn't transport that much meat, so I had to go door-to-door just giving away packages of butcher-wrapped elk meat. And I felt so bad about that because when I take my elk, I'd done what I always do and told my wife we were going to use all of these, but then I didn't know what happened to that meat. Everybody I gave it to, up and down the street, maybe they ate it and maybe they didn't, you know, so maybe my promise wasn't good. That's kind of the core of where "The Only Good Indians" comes for me.

MP: Your annual elk hunts bring you to Montana's Blackfeet Reservation. Does it differ markedly from your Texas or Colorado hunting spots?

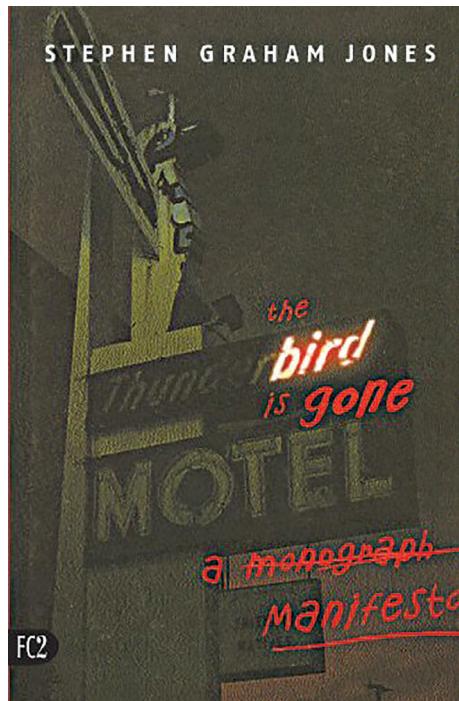
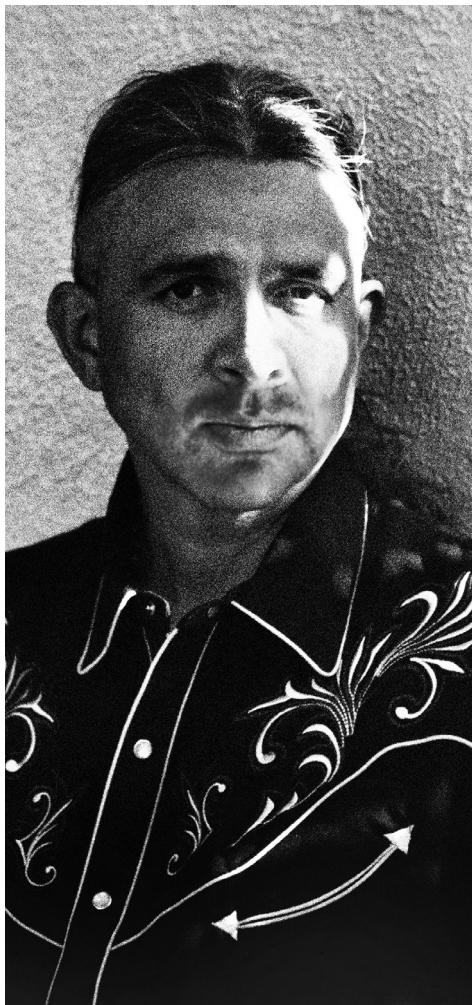
Jones: I've been enjoying it my whole life. Montana and Wyoming always stay the same. I usually go back in July for Indian Days for

the big powwow the third weekend in July, but with COVID, I didn't go back this year. Whether I'll go back in November to hunt, I'm not sure yet. I'm not sure if I'm hunting in Colorado or Montana this year.

MP: When it comes to publishing, your books came out on nearly as many different imprints. Has that posed a challenge as a budding, best-selling novelist?

Jones: As far as building an audience, I think you build an audience faster when you work with the same publisher to market your stuff. I've always helped publishers and that's been very intentional because the trick with publishing houses is that they always want me to basically publish the same book that I published last season, with just the variables changed. And I never want to do that. I always want to write all across the shelf: horror, science fiction, crime, literary, weird stuff. I want to do everything, and publishers never want me to do that; they always say, 'Well, we only do this, and we think you can only do this.' And so I would always do one book with them and then break it up and go somewhere else.

But the last two years, I've settled down to



doing mostly horror, and now that I'm with Simon & Schuster, they're cool with that; they want me to do horror. I think they'll let me spread out, too, if I want, but I think the next three books I have with them are horror, so I'll be doing that for a while. I'm totally happy to do that, as well. I've found a way to kind of satisfy my impulse to innovate but still deliver the content that I want that's close to my heart.

MP: Unlike the Stephen King era, the horror novels that you and others are writing today are really out there. Does it feel like fresh turf to you?

Jones: Yeah, I think that's the way you keep a genre vital. You have to take a lot of different forms. When every book has to be like stamped out and look exactly the same, then I think the genre quickly withers or freezes or starts to die. But a lot of the horror writers coming up now started out in the indie press, whereas in the Eighties, writers who were getting into the mass-market horror boom had to go immediately into the deep end, which is the commercial end, which is a lot of eyes and a lot of attention. That process can grind the corners off of a piece and make it look like all the other pieces.

A lot of us coming up now, we spent years publishing on the indie scene, and on the indie scene you kind of have more freedom; you have less eyes watching you and spend more time finding your voice and your mode and how you can do it. I think we kind of just feel those impulses and do things in our weird ways, even though we're on a larger stage now.

MP: What's your take on Rez Gothic, the industry phrase for Native American fiction? Is that a good buzz word for what you do?

Jones: Yeah, I think so. I didn't even know that was a term until somebody forwarded me a screen capture from Instagram.

Number one, it's a catchy term; that's the first requirement. I think it's descriptive in a good way. The marketplace and the corporate establishment want American Indian fiction to talk only about identity politics, issues of representation and history and tragedy and everything. They want it to be literary, and they want it to always be somewhat autobiographical. But that's really casting us as extras in a John Wayne movie; we're not those kind of Indians anymore, and I think we can run out and do horror and science fiction organically.

So things like Rez Gothic rising, I think that's wonderful. It just establishes that we can claim whatever field we want to; we can go to whatever bookshelves we want to and we don't need permission.

MP: Quick pivot to the racial reset currently underway in our country. It's not surprising that Native Americans are wrapped up in that in a very good way, given the recent Supreme Court ruling that half of Oklahoma, including Tulsa, belongs to Native Americans. How is that affecting your life and work?

Jones: I have a novel from 2002 or 2003 called "The Bird Is Gone," and in it, the tribes and nations exploit a legal loophole in the conservation law and make Indian Country out of the whole Great Plains, instead of just Oklahoma. So when the Oklahoma ruling came through, people were writing me to say that "The Bird Is Gone" is no longer fiction.

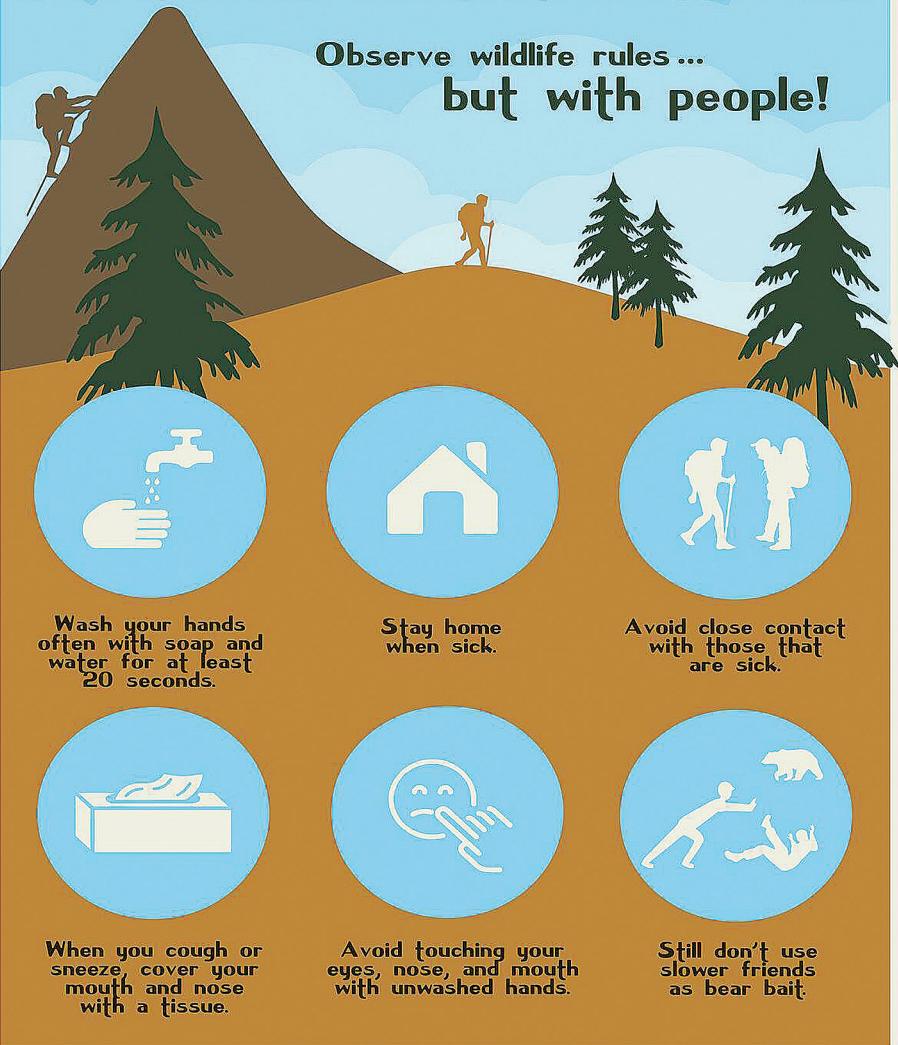
I'm so glad that this stuff is going on. I think if Indian America can just keep its eye on issues of sovereignty and repatriation and adherence to treaties, and not get too distracted on issues of representation and positive or negative representation, then we can get something done; we can move forward.

I feel like oftentimes we end up arguing about whether a singer wears a headdress at the Grammys or something like that. And yeah, they shouldn't be doing it, of course, but when everybody says they shouldn't be doing it, what have we really won, you know? It kind of makes us look like we're oversensitive or something. I think we should be focused on worrying about legal stuff, which is going to help us more in the long run. ★

—JAY MACDONALD

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The 2020 Montana History Conference will be held online over a two-month period and will include such broad offerings as Montana-based pub trivia, behind-the-scenes tours, tracing livestock brands and Montana's historic beers and brews.

"At a time when we are feeling uncertain about the present, it is important to remember that the past has much to teach us," says Kirby Lambert, conference organizer for the 47th annual (and first-ever virtual) Montana Historical Society History Conference.

All programs are free and will be offered live online. For most of the events, attendees will be given the chance to interact with the presenters. No registration is required (with the exception of the Montana History Pub Trivia Contest which does require pre-registration) and OPI renewal units will be provided for educators.

Free access to the conference is available through the website.

The website features more information about each session or activity and a schedule of times and dates. Users can click on the session title for the Zoom meeting link and join any one or more of the sessions.

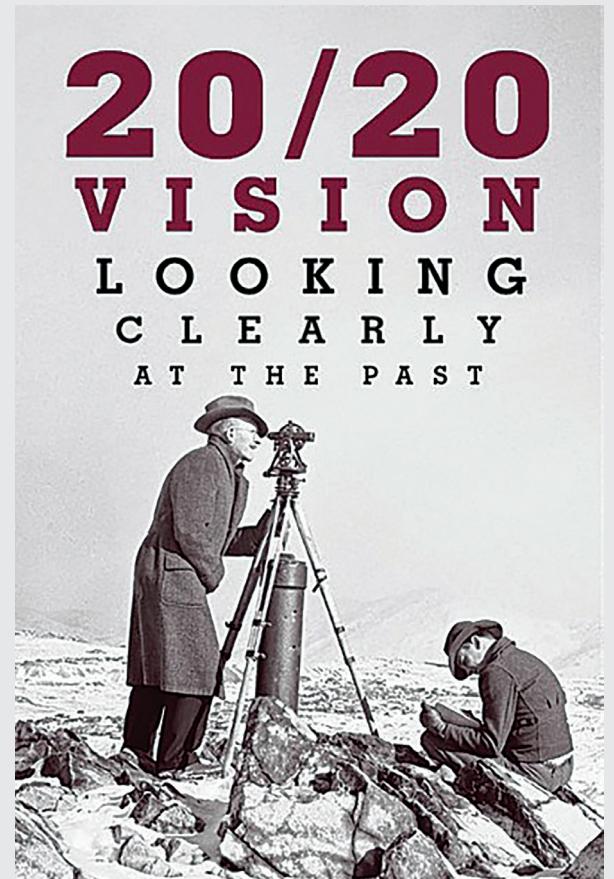
The Montana Historical Society conferences for the past six years are also available as recorded audio and video online at mhs.mt.gov/HistoryConferenceRecordings.

MHS will also be hosting discussions with Montana history teachers (and other teachers interested in integrating Montana history into their classes) on the third Tuesday of every month from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. The presentation on September 15 will be, "Introduction to Montana History Resources." OPI Renewal credits will be offered. More information is available on the conference web page.



47th ANNUAL MONTANA HISTORY CONFERENCE

mhs.mt.gov/education/ConferencesWorkshops/HistoryConference2020



GOOD BEER HERE: AN INTERACTIVE EXHIBIT TOUR

Anneliese Warhank and Steve Lozar, MHS
Thursday, September 3, 6:30 p.m.

Beer-history experts Anneliese Warhank and Steve Lozar will serve up a thirst-quenching tour of MHS's newest temporary exhibit, Good Beer Here. Learn about Montana's brewing history from the old-world beer of the 1850s, through Prohibition, to the emergence of contemporary, craft brewers. Discover where the Treasure State's first brewers set up shop and the methods they used to brew and transport beer. You'll get a chance to view equipment from one of the state's earliest breweries, Gilbert Brewing, which was established in Virginia City in 1863; objects from Helena's Kessler Brewery, one of the longest running breweries in the state; and vintage labels and contemporary paraphernalia from around the state.



MONTANA HISTORY PUB TRIVIA CONTEST

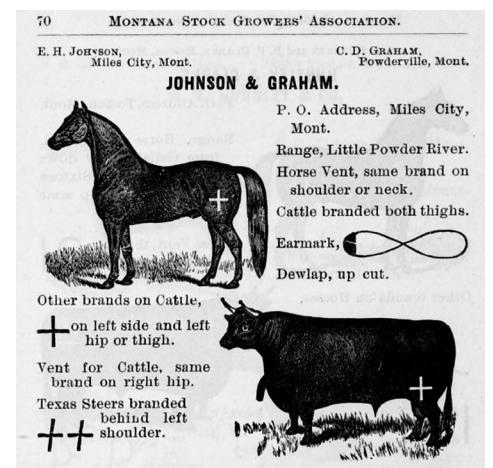
With Montana Historical Society Staff
Thursday, September 3, 8 p.m.

Teams are encouraged in this opportunity to demonstrate knowledge about Montana history and win prizes. HINT from MHS: Start brushing up now on beer history, general Montana history, women's history, and labor history. Since teams or individuals play online from home, it's strictly BYOB.

Register for the event on the conference website. The session will take place on a Zoom call.



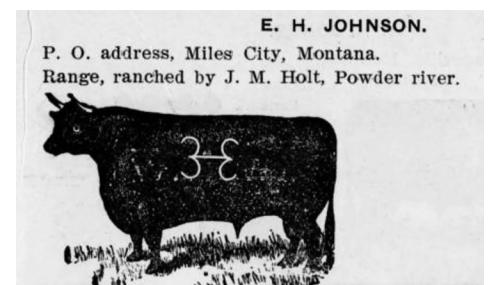
Calamity Jane and Teddy Blue Abbott enjoy a brew in Gilt Edge, Montana. Photo from www.mtmemory.org.



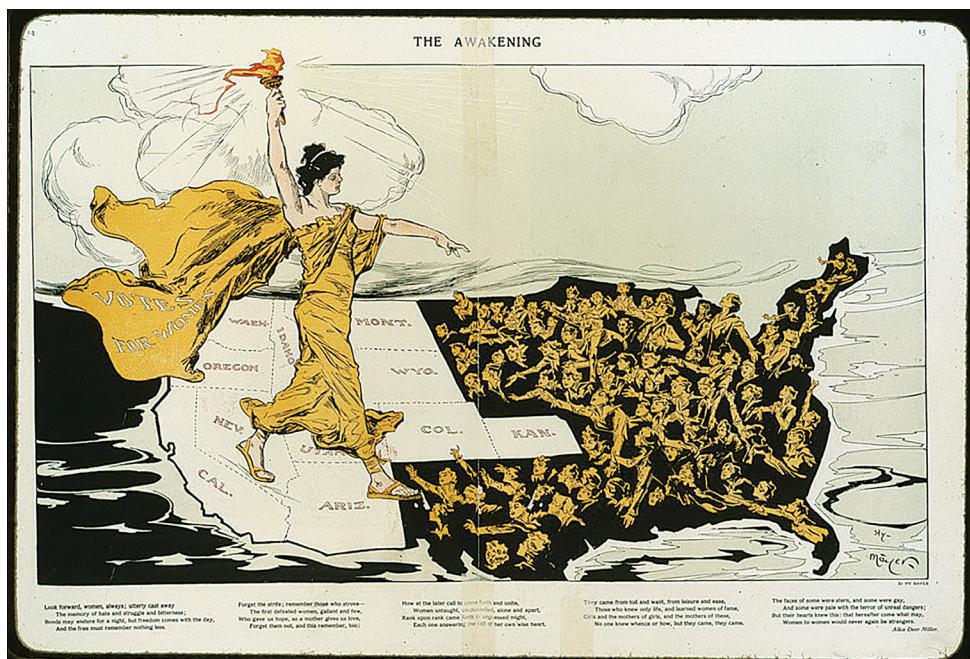
MAKING YOUR MARK: 145 YEARS OF RECORDING MONTANA BRANDS AND MARKS

Laura Tretter and Zoe Ann Stoltz, MHS
Thursday, September 10, 4 - 6 p.m.

Join MHS research center staff to learn how to do brand research using the "Livestock Brands" collection on the Montana Memory Project (mtmemory.org). Discover the wealth of information contained in this collection that covers the period 1873-2020 and learn tips and tricks to get the most out of a search.



Images for the E.H. Johnson brand out of Miles City from the "Brand Book of the Montana Stock Growers' Association" for 1890 (above) and 1910 (below).

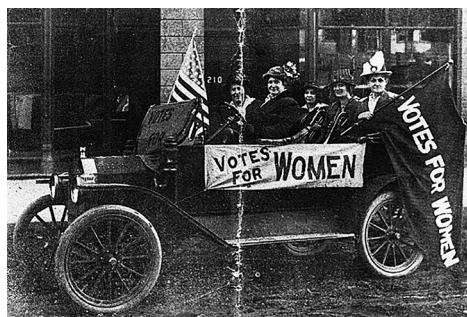


PICTURING POLITICAL POWER: IMAGES IN THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

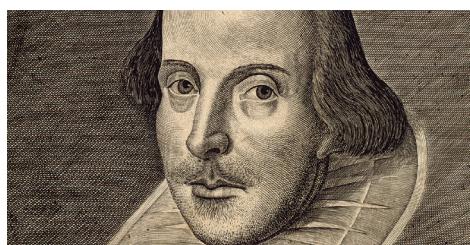
Dr. Allison K. Lange

Wentworth Institute of Technology
Thursday, September 10, 6:30 p.m.

For as long as women have battled for equitable political representation in America, those battles have been defined by images. Whether illustrations, engravings, photographs, or colorful chromolithograph posters, some of the pictures have been flattering, many have been condescending, and others downright incendiary. Dr. Allison K. Lange will explore the ways in which the images have drawn upon prevailing cultural ideas of women's perceived roles and abilities and often have been circulated with pointedly political objectives.



The 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote, was ratified 100 years ago on August 18, 1920. Montana. Montana suffragists campaign in 1914 (above). From MHS Photo Archives.



SHAKESPEARE IN MONTANA

Dr. Gretchen Minton

Montana State University
Thursday, September 17, 6:30 p.m.

When the French Diplomat Alexis de Tocqueville toured America in the 1831, he was surprised to find that "there is hardly a pioneer's hut which does not contain a few old volumes of Shakespeare." During the first decades in which white people explored and settled the Northern Rockies, Shakespeare was as popular as he was in other parts of America. Join Dr. Gretchen Minton as she examines how the Bard's words and works were carried throughout Montana Territory, where they were co-opted to speak for the readers' morality and aspirations.

THE GREAT SMALLPOX PANDEMIC OF 1779-1784

Dr. Colin Calloway

Dartmouth University
Thursday, September 24, 6:30 p.m.

Pandemics are nothing new in North America. In this talk, Dr. Colin Calloway will trace the smallpox epidemic that spread across the West, from Mexico to Canada, at the time of the American Revolution and consider its impact on the history of both Native America and the burgeoning United States.

FIELD TRIP



APPROPRIATE, CURIOUS, AND RARE: TREASURES FROM THE COLLECTION

With Montana Historical Society Staff
Saturday, September 26, 10:30 a.m.

In 1876, the eleven-year-old Historical Society of Montana published its collection policy, stating: "As this is the only cabinet of a permanent public society preserved for the whole Territory, it is hoped that whatever is appropriate, curious, and rare will be preserved therein." Join MHS staff as we bring you behind the scenes to learn more about some of our favorite gems that fulfill this mission. Learn the stories behind a few of the most intriguing artifacts in our collection and take the opportunity to ask questions about the material culture of Montana's past.

JIM BRIDGER'S HAWKEN RIFLE AND BINOCULARS C. 1850

Mountain man, guide, and scout Jim Bridger sold this Plains rifle (made about 1850 by St. Louis gun maker Samuel Hawken) to Pierre Chien for sixty-five dollars at Fort C. F. Smith in southern Montana Territory. Chien, who was an interpreter for the Crow tribe for thirty years, kept Bridger's Hawken until just before his death, when he gave it to frontier guide and scout J. I. Allen who, in turn, donated it to the Historical Society of Montana in 1910.



FORT BENTON WEATHER VANE, C. 1854

This sheet iron weathervane once topped the cupola of the blockhouse at Fort Benton, the uppermost fur trade post on the Missouri River. The company blacksmith likely crafted it about 1854. It can be seen in Granville Stuart's 1866 sketch of Fort Benton and, although battered by sharp shooters who used the weathervane for target practice, it served as a sign that "civilization" was encroaching.



A WILD LAND ETHIC

The Story of Wilderness in Montana

Co-Editors: Dale A. Burk and Wayne Chamberlin



A WILD LAND ETHIC: THE HISTORY OF WILDERNESS IN MONTANA

Wayne Chamberlin and Dale Burk
Saturday, September 12, 1:30 p.m.

Conservationists Wayne Chamberlin of Helena and Dale Burk of Stevensville will discuss their new book, "A Wild Land Ethic, The History of Wilderness in Montana." This book features the work of 40 different authors and 32 photographers and focuses on the history of the wilderness preservation movement in Montana. The work also covers wild land resources across the state from the proposed Scotchman Peaks area in northwestern Montana to the Pryor Mountains in the southeastern part of the state.

WE RECOMMEND...

STATEWIDE ENTERTAINMENT LISTINGS

Music, Performances and Events Outside and Online

The monthly calendar is a sampling of events and activities online across the state. All events listed are subject to change. Send updates to: info@montanapress.net.

PLEASE REACH OUT TO THE VENUE TO CONFIRM SHOW TIMES AND AND CURRENT REGULATIONS.



JESSICA EVE

Voted best Female Vocalist in the *Magic City Music Awards* in Billings two years in a row, Jessica Eve has featured videos uploaded on her Facebook site at the handle [@JessicaEveMTmusic](https://www.facebook.com/JessicaEveMTmusic).



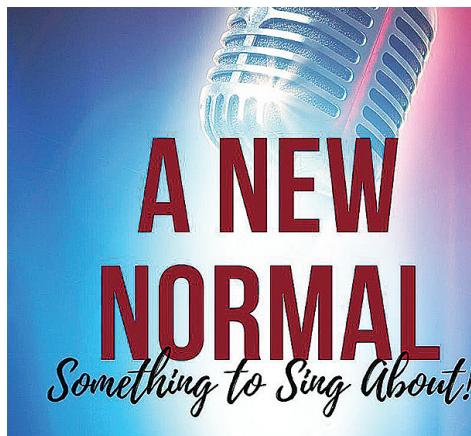
IN THE MUSIC BOX - ENEFRENS

Presenting new musical performances recorded in intimate spaces every week. On Sept. 3, metal band Enefrens takes the virtual stage. Tune in at 7 p.m. on Facebook at [@InTheMusicBox406](https://www.facebook.com/InTheMusicBox406).



DEAD SKY - SEPT. 3

Grateful Dead tribute band out of Bozeman featuring members of Pinky & The Floyd, MOTH, Kelly Nicholson Band, The Hooligans, The Dead Yellers, SlomoJoe Trio and more Live, streaming on Sept. 3 at 7 p.m. at the FB handle [@BigSkyArts](https://www.facebook.com/BigSkyArts).



A NEW NORMAL

A live-stream production partnership between the ZACC and Missoula's Community Media Resource (MCAT) on Sat., Sept. 5 at 7:30 p.m. Shows are streamed to the ZACC's Facebook, and from MCAT's YouTube and Local Live website. Check [@TheZACC](https://www.facebook.com/TheZACC) handle on Facebook for more information.



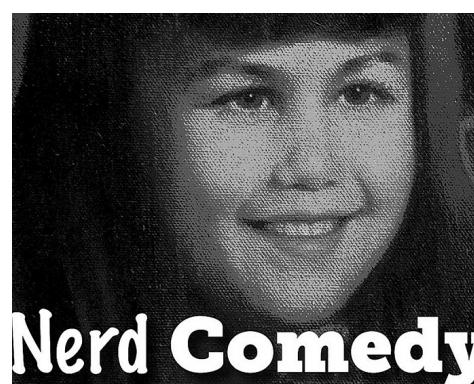
LITTLE JANE AND THE PISTOL WHIPS

Front woman, founder, and songwriter for Little Jane & the Pistol Whips, Ashly Holland possesses a vocal quality that can be smoky, sweet, warm, and inviting. A multi-instrumentalist, Holland backs her voice with acoustic guitar, fiddle, or accordion. She uploads music on her Facebook page at the handle [@LittleJaneandthePistolWhips](https://www.facebook.com/LittleJaneandthePistolWhips).



NIGHT OF DUELING PIANOS

A virtual experience to support Montana's Ronald McDonald House and keeping families with sick children close to care and resources. Fri., Sept. 18 - 7 p.m. Visit the event website to learn more: [Pianos.Givesmart.com](https://www.Pianos.Givesmart.com).



SOCIAL DISTANCE SESSIONS: NERD COMEDY NIGHT

Sat., Sept. 12 - 7:30 p.m.

No plans for a Saturday night? Us either, so join ZACC for a night of nerdy comedy and watch Missoula's funniest nerds showcase their comic stylings live-streamed from the ZACC Show Room. Hosted by Amy Smith and featuring locally known and generally funny comedians such as Lenny Peppers, Tim Miller, John Howard, James Johnson, Duane Raider, Abby Gillespie, Kyle McAfee, August Ainsley, Jordan Demander, Sarah Aswell, Zack Jarvis, Nathan St. Onge, Austin Valley, and Aaron Juhl. Check out [@TheZACC](https://www.facebook.com/TheZACC) handle on FB or [ZootownArts.org](https://www.ZootownArts.org).



BALL PARK MOVIES - MISSOULA

Classic movies Thursday nights at the Ogren Park ball field. Sept. 3 - "Labyrinth," Sept. 10 - "Grease," Sept. 17 - "Raiders of the Lost Ark," Sept. 24 - "Clueless." Info on FB [@TheRoxyTheater](https://www.facebook.com/TheRoxyTheater).

MONTANA HAPPY HOUR



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THURSDAY, SEPT. 17
John Floridis
Singer/Songwriter



THURSDAY, OCT. 15
Counting Coup
Rock & Roll



ONE YEAR LATER: TELL US SOMETHING SPINS A NEW STORY

Since 2011, Marc Moss has fostered the art of storytelling in Montana. From participating in an initial concept during a Missoula radio hour to heading a series of large-scale events across the state, Moss has encouraged participants to be a part of humankind's centuries-old tradition of sharing stories with one another. He recently spoke with *Montana Press* about his work with "Tell Us Something," a Montana-wide storytelling event based in Missoula.

Since the novel coronavirus pandemic started, Tell Us Something faced immediate effects and had to restructure and reimagine the storytelling event.

Montana Press: How is the Tell Us Something experience evolving with the changing times?

Marc Moss: Whew, good question! We're doing the best that we can. My initial response early on was denial before there were any reported cases in the tri-state area. Then disbelief, which gave way to depression. I am crawling out of that, summer and getting outside helps. Obviously we had to cancel all of our in-person events this year. That's a huge hit to our revenue stream, which is where we generate most of our income.

I still want to give people the opportunity to share their stories in a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment. I am still figuring out how to best do this.

We still want to provide educational opportunities to the public, and we still want to give people a chance to get their stories heard. So, in April, during the shelter-in-place order, I held the first-ever Tell Us Something storytelling intensive workshop. It was free, and seven people participated. I had a two-hour session in the morning with one group and another two-hour session in the afternoon with another group.

Four hours of Zoom a day for an entire week was exhausting. Still, I learned a lot, and the participants learned a lot too. Out of that came the first-ever live-streamed Tell Us Something storytelling event. Since then, I've hosted another five-week intensive workshop and co-taught (with Maribeth Rothwell) an intense two-hour a day, five-day long, tightened-up version of the workshop at the University of Montana through their Creative Pulse graduate program.



MP: After the first experience of virtual storytelling online in April, what were some of the challenges you faced? What were some of the triumphs?

Moss: The first challenge that comes to mind was likely transparent to most viewers. I always want Tell Us Something events to be as inclusive as possible. Because of that, maybe three years ago, I started hiring American Sign Language interpreters to provide interpretation of the stories for the live events in Missoula and Helena and Butte. Things need to be accessible. The more events that make them so, the more other events will do the same.

I saw, with a live-streamed event, an opportunity to experiment with how that inclusivity and accessibility can be done. I thought I could use the technology available to me to utilize Closed Captions instead of ASL. Zoom supports it, so I tried going that route. And the short version of that story was that it failed.

I tested it out with the person that was going to provide the CC service the morning of the event and things seemed to be working as expected. The night of the event, as the show started, the person we hired to provide CC was unable to make it work. In the moment I made the decision to pull the plug on it.

I later learned that CC is inaccurate and, to have it done right, expensive too. Having learned that, for the event in September, I've hired two ASL interpreters to interpret the show.

The other big challenge was raising revenue during the show in April. I advertised the show as being "free or pay what you want" and 800 people tuned in live to watch the live stream. None of them paid. The storytellers still all got paid, though some of them opted to gift that money right back to the organization. Since the live stream, an additional 500 people have watched the show for free. Part of it, I'm sure is that I made the focus of the evening, as I always do, the storytellers and their stories. I didn't hound people to donate. We need to find that balance.

MP: Were you still able to work with youth this summer in the storytelling camps? How were you able to manage this?

Moss: I was able to work with youth, though not in a way that I expected. I was scheduled, pre-COVID, to provide live in-person storytelling summer camp via the Zootown Arts Community Center (ZACC) summer camp series.

When the pandemic hit, everything was thrown into uncertainty. Once everything reopened, the ZACC gave summer camp instructors the option of teaching their camp outdoors in a socially distanced setting. Because that setting was a heavily used public park, I felt that all of the uncontrollable variables about people outside the camp not social distancing or wearing masks was too big of a factor to safely run the camp for the kids and for myself. So I opted out of providing that camp.

I was able to work with youth, along with 14 other teaching artists, providing asynchronous learning content through the SPARK! Arts Ignite Learning program. Anyone can access the content and the teachers are incredible (sparkartslearning.org/spark-creativity-at-home).

The teachers really shine in this experience, and you'll find lessons ranging from storytelling to dance to mindfulness exercises, ceramics instruction, stress management for parents, and theatre lessons. The content is really compelling and useful.

MP: How do you think our stories may change in the coming years, after facing a world distanced from one another for the foreseeable future? Will everyone have a "pandemic" story, for example, or do you think the experience will simply get woven in the stories of everyday life and become part of the fabric of our experience?

Moss: Everyone has a pandemic story, for sure. Right now, we are all experiencing a collective trauma. We've never experienced anything like this in our lifetimes. People are scrambling to pay their bills, to stay employed, to find child-care. They don't have the bandwidth to pitch their story to a storytelling pitch line.



In May, I thought that I would host a June storytelling event on the theme "Love in the Time of COVID." I encouraged people to pitch their story about how they were coping with COVID and the surprising beauty and moments of love that they are experiencing as a result of the, at the time, slower pace, the focus on what's really important. No one called the pitch line. People aren't ready. We are all still processing this global trauma.

People often process things through stories, and when they are ready to figure out how to tell their story, when they are ready to share their stories, Tell Us Something will be here.

Live in-person events seem impossible right now. As science finally solves the pandemic, with a vaccine, better guidelines, better education, and, for people, better compliance, we will begin to see live in-person performances open responsibly. I can't imagine what "going back to normal" looks like, or if it is even possible. We are all learning and navigating uncertainty as best as we can.

MP: What do you see for the future of Tell Us Something?

Moss: The next live streaming Tell Us Something event is scheduled for September 16, 2020. We are proud to feature storytellers who were engaged in an intensive week-long storytelling workshop and are live streaming 6 storytellers sharing their true personal stories.

The theme is a little looser than usual this time: "Come as You Are" and will feature ASL interpreters to accommodate our Deaf friends.

Storytelling begins at 6 p.m. and to get tickets and to learn more, you can visit tellsomething.org.

In the future, Tell Us Something will continue to host storytelling workshops and we will continue to host live storytelling events. They definitely look a lot different.

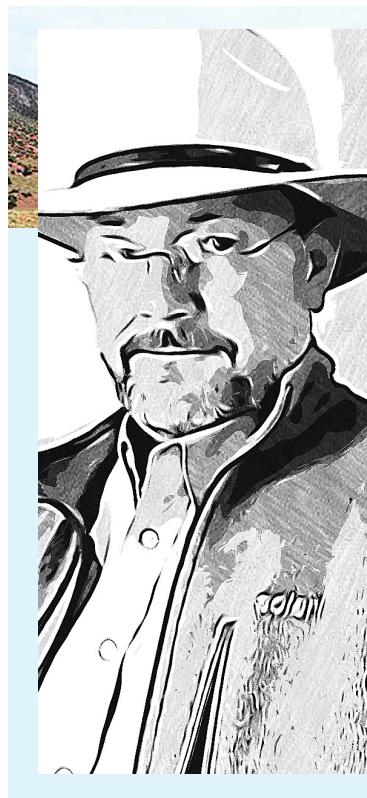
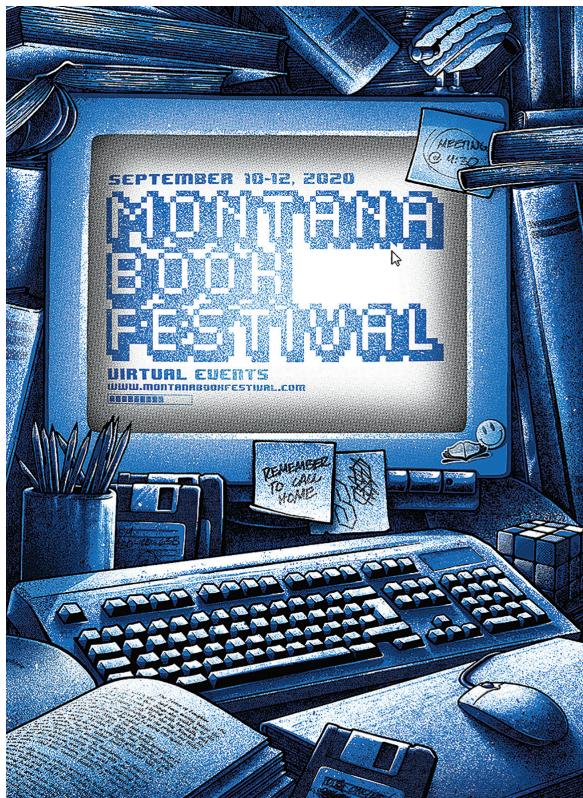
I also want people to know about the Tell Us Something podcast. We've had a podcast for 10 years, and people can find the archives at tellsomething.org.

During the time where we're unable to gather together in person, I realized that this is a real opportunity for people to gather together in a different way. I invited past Tell Us Something storytellers, to join me in conversation. A conversation about what they have been up to since they shared their story, what the experience of sharing their story was like for them, and give us some behind-the-scenes details about their story.

I'm thinking of it as a "Meet the Storytellers of Tell Us Something" series. Anyway, after the interview, I then play the story that they shared at Tell Us Something. It's been a really fun process, and it's been interesting learning how to conduct a conversation-style interview and logistically how to edit the audio of multiple people talking together. It's also been very rewarding hearing how important the experience of sharing their stories has been for people. People can find the podcast wherever they get their podcasts or stream episodes for free at tellsomething.org. ★

—REILLY NEILL

The next live, streaming Tell Us Something storytelling event is scheduled for September 16 at 6 p.m. and tickets and more information are available at tellsomething.org.



GERRY ROBINSON

The Montana Book Festival opens with greetings from author Gerry Robinson.

Raised at the heart of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation, Robinson grew up hearing fragmented stories about his ancestors. He then devoted nearly 20 years of his life to researching, traveling the country, and reaching back through time to reclaim his heritage.

Robinson is a published historical writer and member of Western Writers of America. His debut novel, "The Cheyenne Story: An Interpretation of Courage," the first installment of a three-volume series, is a presentation of Northern Cheyenne history shared by a member of the tribe and a direct descendant of those involved.

FILL IN THE _____ A LIVE LITERARY MASH-UP GAME

Thurs., Sept. 10 - 3 p.m.

With **Hank Green**, **Hugh Howey**, and **Gwendolyn N. Nix**
Moderated by **Jeremy N. Smith**

Hank Green is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of "An Absolutely Remarkable Thing." He's also the CEO of Complexly, a production company that creates educational content, including Crash Course and SciShow, prompting *The Washington Post* to name him "one of America's most popular science teachers." Hank and his brother, John, are also raising money to dramatically and systematically improve maternal health care in Sierra Leone, where, if trends continue, one in seventeen women will die in childbirth. You can join them at PIH.org/hankandjohn



Hugh Howey is the *New York Times* and *USA Today* best-selling author of "Wool," "Shift," "Dust," "Beacon 23," "Sand," and "Machine Learning." His works have been translated into more than forty languages and have sold more than three million copies worldwide. Hugh lives aboard Wayfinder, a fifty-foot catamaran that he is sailing around the world.

Gwendolyn N. Nix has been an editor, casting producer, scientist, and social media manager and always a writer. Her first fantasy novel *The "Falling Dawn"* debuted in 2018. Find her short fiction in "StarShip Sofa," "Where The Veil is Thin," and "The Sisterhood of the Blade." She lives in Missoula, Montana.

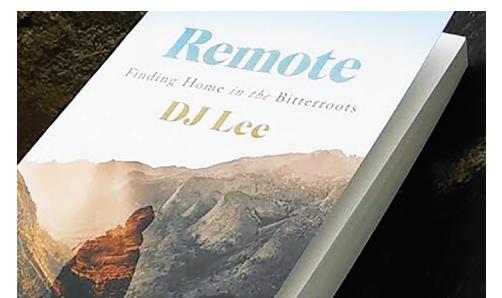
WHEN THE BITTERROOTS BECKON

Thurs., Sept. 10 - 5:30 p.m.

A Conversation with
Maxim Loskutoff and DJ Lee

Maxim Loskutoff is the critically acclaimed author of the story collection "Come West and See." His stories and essays have appeared in numerous periodicals, including the *New York Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Ploughshares*, and the *Southern Review*. He lives in western Montana.

DJ Lee holds an MFA in creative nonfiction and a PhD in 19th-century literature. She is Regents Professor of English at Washington State University, where she teaches creative writing and literature. Her creative work includes over thirty non-fiction pieces in magazines and anthologies and her hybrid memoir "Remote: Finding Home in the Bitterroots," which was named by the Pacific Northwest Bookseller's Association as one of seven of the most anticipated new books of 2020 and took first place in the Idaho Writer's Guild 2020 memoir category.



BOOK FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

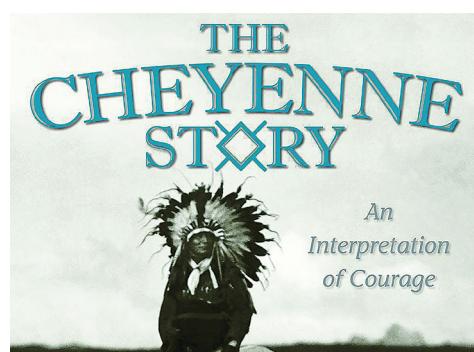
In response to the global health concerns around COVID-19 and the uncertainty about shifting safety regulations, the Montana Book Festival is pivoting to cyber space this year, hosting over 30 events with over 80 authors and speakers via virtual platforms from Thurs., Sept. 10 to 12, 2020.

Since 2015, the Montana Book Festival has made its home in the bookstores, bars and distilleries, art galleries, movie theaters, and other event spaces around Missoula, Montana. In 2020, all readings, panels, workshops as well as book and merchandise sales will take place online, available to anyone with Internet access.

Registration is required for all virtual events, though all events will be live-streamed and most can be attended free of charge. Select workshops, courses, and manuscript consultations can be attended for fees from \$30 to \$60. Visit montanabookfestival.com for regular updates about the virtual events schedule, author information, and registration details.

Fee-based writing workshops include offerings from Jory Mickelson (with special guests Susannah Nevison and Molly McCully Brown), Laura Munson, and Rachel Swearingen; a publishing course with Julie Stevenson; and manuscript consultations with Sarah Gerard.

The festival includes both recorded and pre-recorded events and opens with greetings from **Gerry Robinson**, author of "The Cheyenne Story," which was awarded the National Cowboy Museum's 2020 Western Heritage Award for Best Western Novel.



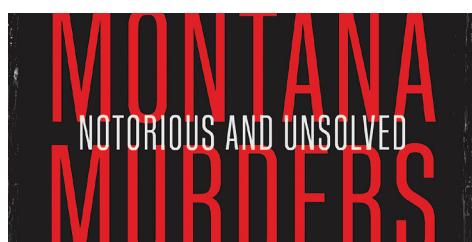
COOKING UP A COOKBOOK

Thurs., Sept. 10 - 10 a.m.

A Conversation with **Stella Fong** and **Lynn Donaldson-Vermillion**

Culinary instructor and author **Stella Fong** has cooking and Certified Wine Professional certifications from the Culinary Institute of America. Her articles have appeared in *Edible Bozeman*, *The Washington Post*, *Cooking Light*, and more. She is the author of "Historic Restaurants of Billings" and "Billings Food" and host of Yellowstone Public Radio's "Flavors Under the Big Sky."

Lynn Donaldson-Vermillion is a Livingston, Montana-based photojournalist and founder and creative director of the Montana food and travel blog TheLastBestPlates.com, her stories and images have been featured in *National Geographic Traveler*, *Saveur*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Food & Wine*, and more.



REAL AND IMAGINED: MURDER UNDER THE BIG SKY

Thurs., Sept. 10 - 12 p.m.

Featuring **Brian D'Ambrosio**, author of "Montana Murders: Notorious and Unsolved," **Kelly Suzanne Hartman**, author of "Murder Along the Yellowstone Trail," **Alice Henderson**, author of "A Solitude of Wolverines," **Keith McCafferty**, author of "The Bangtail Ghost," and **Russell Rowland**, author of "Cold Country," in a discussion of the different approaches from fiction and non-fiction writers about research into real-life murders and imagined crimes, how each writer has chosen to write about their subjects as well as how Montana plays a character in the stories told.



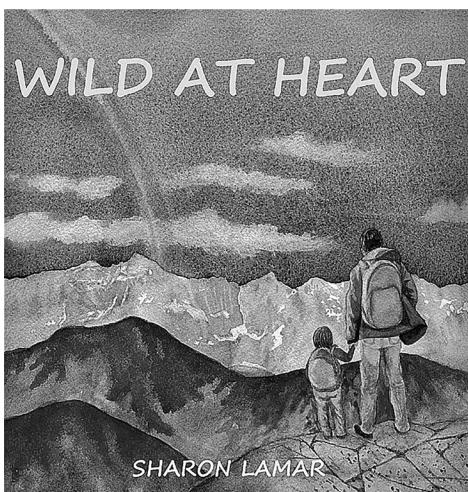
VISUAL STORYTELLING

Thurs., Sept. 10 - 1 p.m.

Presentations and Conversations with
Nicole Caputo and Alban Fischer,
moderated by poet **Heather Christle** and
fiction writer **Rachel Swearingen**

Nicole Caputo is an award-winning New York graphic designer specializing in book and book cover design. She is the Creative Director of Counterpoint Press and Catapult and is also co founder of She Designs Books, an organization that celebrates women in book design. Her former role was VP, Creative Director at Hachette Book Group. Awards include the ADC One Club Silver Cube, One Show, AIGA/NY, HOW International Design, PRINT Regional Design, the New York Book Show, the National Gold Ink Awards, London International Creative Competition and more.

Alban Fischer lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and serves as Graphic Designer for YesYes Books and Art Director of Sarabande Books. He has designed over 350 books, and worked with more than seventy organizations, including 826CHI, Alice James Books, The Believer, Bellevue Literary Press, Coffee House Press, and Verso. His work has been included in the AUPresses Book, Jacket, and Journal Show, selected for AIGA and Design Observer's 50 Books / 50 Covers, and has been recognized by *The Book Cover Archive*, *The Casual Optimist*, *Spine*, and *Print*. He is the founding editor of Trnsfr Books, and author of the poetry collection "Fake Moon."



WILD AT HEART

Fri., Sept. 11 - (Pre-recorded)
Presented by Sharon Lamar

Teacher-turned-children's book author and illustrator, **Sharon Lamar** encourages her readers to get outside and discover nature just as she did as a youngster exploring the open spaces on her family's farm. Her children's books reflect her belief in connecting children with nature and watercolor illustrations reflect the towering mountains, dazzling wildflowers and diverse wildlife of Montana. She and her husband, Steve, also an author, make their home in Swan Valley, Montana. Her children's books include: "Montana Moonshadows: A Trek in the Swan Valley Forest," "Mountain Wildflowers for Young Explorers: An A to Z Guide," and "Western Butterflies for Young Explorers: An A to Z Guide."



DEAR FRIEND: WRITING LETTERS, WRITING POEMS

Thurs., Sept. 11 - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

A workshop with **Jory Mickelson**, with appearances by poets **Susannah Nevison** and **Molly McCully Brown**.

The workshop explores how writing letters and writing poems can be intertwined. This informal writing workshop is designed for people who love to write letters or those curious about writing their own poems. Prompts will be provided and no experience is needed. *Registration/fee required.*

Jory Mickelson is the author of "Wilderness// Kingdom," the inaugural winner of the Evergreen Award Tour. Their poems have appeared in *Harvard Divinity Journal*, *diode*, *Jubilat*, *The Rumpus*, *Vinyl Poetry*, the



Mid-American Review, *Ninth Letter*, and others. They are the recipient of an Academy of American Poets Prize and have received fellowships from the Lambda Literary Foundation, and The Helene Wurlitzer Foundation of New Mexico. Originally from Montana, they now live Washington state.

(Continued on next page.)

IN & AROUND

ON NURTURING CONFIDENCE: POET MELISSA KWANSY

Montana Poet Laureate Melissa Kwansy likens poetry to confession, every poem involving the baring of select secrets. In her own work, poetry is the reality beneath the contrivance. Verse is a most revealing arrangement, all about honesty and authenticity.

Kwansy's advice to aspiring poets is clear-cut: for a poem to take form, the writer must first arrive at a place where he or she is fortified with individual suspicions, hungers, and personal memories and then face the feelings.

"Poetry is vulnerability," says Kwansy. "People think that there is something suspect in your identity if you do something like write or read poetry. We are afraid of feelings in our culture, or afraid of someone else revealing their feelings. But that's poetry's job. Yes, it might disrupt things. But when you have students of any age reading their poems, and crying, that's good stuff. It's okay to feel something; it is part of being a human being, and sharing feelings with other people. It's suspect because we are uncomfortable with it. It takes courage to read it aloud. Writing is expressing. And it's invigorating and healing to do so."

DISCOVERY OF MONTANA

Kwansy's long trajectory to the position of Poet Laureate of Montana was unexpected and escapist. Born in La Porte, Indiana, a small city rich in history and dotted with a mixture of agricultural and industrial usages, her parents were members of the city's Polish enclave, where they operated a bar catering to a hearty, mostly blue-collar crowd.

No one in her family attended college. Looking to her own future, she saw little available other than employment inside one of a number of cloudy, blackened buildings; the local Chef Boyardee plant, the large rubber factory, a hazy foundry here or a belching chimney of a plastics plant there.

During her senior year of high school, Kwansy worked the assembly line at a commercial airplane parts manufacturer; post-graduation, she was employed at another plastics factory, this time laying down the molds used to make five gallon containers. College became a vital goal, an alternative to an adulthood of the stark nine-to-five factories.

Her quest took her to the University of Montana in Missoula. Though UM has one of the most prominent and oldest writing programs in country, what counted most to Kwansy was that Missoula was great distance from the Midwest, and that the school offered the cheapest out-of-state tuition she could find almost anywhere in the country.

As it turned out, one of the city's most productive literary characters would soon become her creative writing professor.

Richard Hugo (1923-1982) became the perfect mentor for Kwansy. Finding discretion an unnecessary bore, Hugo never hesitated to declare his opinions of the poems he wrote and read. As with his own poetry, his commentaries were forthright, bluntness being a virtue he valued highly. One of the great hardscrabble poets of the Pacific Northwest, Hugo was a tremendous influence on a number of Montana poets and authors.

"Before meeting Richard Hugo," Kwansy recalls, "I had been writing poems since I was a freshman in high school, but I was not really showing them to anyone. I thought that it was a form of expression and beauty as a teenager.

"Richard and I had similar backgrounds. He grew up in White Center, Washington, in a working-class family, worked in the factories (he served as a bombardier in World War II), and that was kind of my background. I showed him my poems about working at the factory. He loved them. He talked to me about being a poet. I had no idea that that was even a vocational choice. Hugo taught me that poems could be about your life, that poems were not some grand philosophical project."

After obtaining an MFA in poetry and an MFA in literature from UM, she moved to Basin in 1977 and then relocated to San Francisco for 10 years before returning back to Montana. For the next 20 years she settled in Jefferson County near Helena before ultimately retreating back to Basin and the Elkhorn Mountains, where she resides today.

An instructor in the English Department at Carroll College, Kwansy is the author of six collections of poems, including "Pictograph," "Reading Novalis in Montana," and "The Nine Senses." In 2019, with Mandy Smoker Broaddus, she was elected poet laureate of Montana; their shared term ends in 2021.

One of Kwansy's goals as Poet Laureate of Montana – a position created by the state legislature in 2005 – is to reduce the anxiety and stigma often associated with the creation and pursuit of poetry. Poetry gives voice to longings, fears, and the shared experiences of life. Kwansy says she hopes to encourage everyone to experience the rhythm of poetry and be warmed by its revelations.

"You don't have to have a PhD to understand it. Oftentimes, people will have an experience where they have tried to interpret a poem and been told that they were all wrong. They've been subjected to that kind of attitude, that you either get it or you don't. That's kind of an elite sort of thing.

"You try to walk people through the idea that they've been exposed to poetry their whole lives. All forms of it. Lyrics of music are a form of verse, and so are prayers, which are perhaps the oldest form of poetry. Poetry is any type of language patterned in ways that make us excited."

INSPIRATION AND REVISION

Kwansy is a poet who likes to talk the lines out as she is transposing them. Speaking the poem aloud allows her to obtain the desired cadence and timing. Reciting the lines, she says, reduces repetition, while also minimizing the risk of a new poem sounding too similar to a previous one.

She's well aware of the tendency some poets have to retreat to the fantasy life of their minds. They move away from others. They seclude themselves. Kwansy prefers, however, to go in a different direction. She exchanges poems with fellow poets and friends, and regularly discusses them at length on the phone.

"I send them to people who I trust. Over the years I've been able to find the people who have been able to open up the form for me. I enjoy the feedback from others."

Revision is a pivotal part of the poetic process to Kwansy. She has never published a poem without extensively revising it. Thoughts, she says, develop over time, and she must spend ample time re-evaluating and re-shaping them.

"I don't often read from earlier work. Usually, it's the mostly current poems. But as Poet

Laureate, I feel the need to share work across the spectrum to show who I am and where I've been. Sometimes I will take a line out when I'm reading. But once it's published – there it is. In the end, there is too much to do, other than get stuck revising something forever."

Poetry is intrinsically motivational for her, Kwansy says. It expresses her as not only a record and an offering but also a blessing and a barometer.

"I never denigrate the old work, because to do so seems sacrilegious to me. Though I am more confident now and I have greater faith in poetry, faith that poetry will come to me. I respect that process and respect the art."

Kwansy says that at her most productive times she is highly sensitive and reactive to personal stimuli. Instead of fearing being engulfed, enmeshed, and controlled by what emerges – a baffling feeling, a tricky emotion, a thorny recall – she is well-practiced in the art of coping with openness.

"Hiding is not satisfying to life. What would be the point? If you are hiding, you are not going to write a very good poem, and why would you want to be hiding from yourself? Or hiding from what's being revealed to you as you are writing the poem?"

"If you are scared, it's not going to be a very good poem. Poetry is an endeavor that really is a way of consciousness and being in the world, and it takes over all aspects of your life. The poet needs time staring out the window, taking a walk, contemplative time. With poetry, you are honing all kinds of things, senses, intuition, perceptual abilities."

EYES WIDE OPEN

Melissa Kwansy is convinced that every individual has some poetic impulse, an inclination to be watered and fed. In her opinion, very little separates a notable poet who has been published to great acclaim from an ordinary teenager who is struggling to sort out an overabundance of stimuli in their head.

"Only some will make the effort to interpret what their feelings seem to be saying. Living with your eyes wide open is something poets strive for. I've always believed that everyone has the human capability of imagining and seeing things that aren't there, like memories or dreams. In the arts, you develop that imagination and exercise it and hone that ability. Successful poets work hard at having their eyes open more."

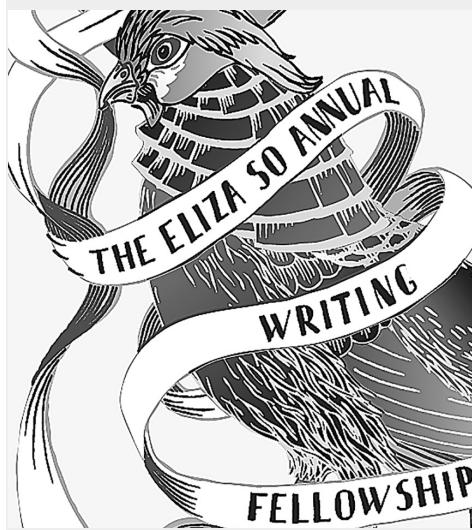
Optimistic is a word that Kwansy repeatedly uses when she discusses the present state of poetry in Montana and elsewhere. As one of the two state Poet Laureates over the next 15 months, expect her to nurturing a similar sense of confidence in others.

"There are more people reading poetry now than in recent years," she says. "There is a huge jump in the number of people buying poetry books and attending readings. People are finding that poetry gives them something important. That poetry provides them with a life full of feelings, values, and dreams, and a voice for their interior lives." ★

—BRAIN D'AMBROSIO

Melissa Kwansy and M.L. Smoker present "A Virtual Poetry Tour" on Sat., Sept. 12 at the Montana Book Festival. Watch free online at www.montanabookfestival.org

BOOK FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS



ELIZA SO FELLOWSHIP READING

Thurs., Sept. 11 - 3 p.m.

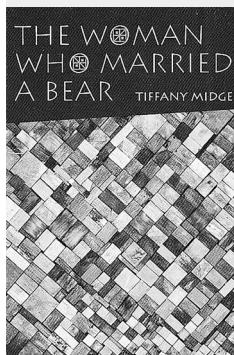
Presented by Tiffany Midge

The Eliza So Fellowship is dedicated to serving underrepresented writers working to complete a full-length book manuscript. The fellowship is a month-long residency in Missoula awarded annually to a Native American writer. Founding sponsor Submittable, an online platform for various submissions, named the fellowship for the mother of its funder, an immigrant from Hong Kong. In past years, the fellowship has supported US immigrant writers and Native American writers. Previous fellows include Lehua Taitano (2019), Alan Pelaez Lopez (2019), Paul Tran (2018), Sheree Winslow (2018), and Melissa Sipin (2017).

In 2020, the Eliza So Fellowship was awarded to **Tiffany Midge**, as well as finalists **Chelsea Hicks** and **Shaina Nez**, and runners-up, **Cassandra Lopez** and **Ruby Murray**.



Tiffany Midge is a citizen of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and was “raised by wolves” in the Pacific Northwest. A former humor columnist for *Indian Country Today*, she



taught writing and composition for Northwest Indian College, and served as poet laureate for Moscow, Idaho. Her books include “The Woman Who Married a Bear” (winner of the *Kenyon Review* Earthworks Prize for Indigenous Poetry and a Western

Heritage Award), and “Outlaws, Renegades and Saints: Diary of a Mixed-Up Halfbreed” (winner of the Diane Decorah Memorial Poetry Award). Her writing has appeared in *McSweeney’s*, the *Offing*, *Waxwing*, *World Literature Today*, *Lit Hub*, *First American Art Magazine*, and more.

Her humor memoir is “Bury My Heart at Chuck E. Cheese’s.”

A VIRTUAL POETRY TOUR

Sat., Sept. 12 - (Pre-recorded)

Presented by Montana Poets Laureate
Melissa Kwasny and M.L. Smoker

Melissa Kwasny is the author of six books of poetry, most recently “Where Outside the Body is the Soul Today” and “Pictograph,” as well as a collection of prose writings, “Earth Recitals: Essays on Image and Vision.” She is the editor of “Toward the Open Field: Poets on the Art of Poetry 1800–1950” and co-editor, with M.L. Smoker, of the anthology “I Go to the Ruined Place: Contemporary Poets in Defense of Global Human Rights.” Recently published by Trinity University Press, “Putting on the Dog: The Animal Origins of What We Wear” is her first book of investigative nonfiction.

Mandy Smoker Broaddus (M.L. Smoker) belongs to the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes of the Fort Peck Reservation in north-eastern Montana. She is a graduate of Pepperdine University and the University of Montana. She also attended UCLA and the University of Colorado. Smoker Broaddus currently works for Education Northwest as a Practice Expert in Indian Education. Her current work focuses on the work of equity and inclusion for Native education in the Pacific Northwest. She was formerly the Director of Indian Education for the Montana Office of Public Instruction.

GROUNDING: A SENATOR'S LESSONS ON WINNING BACK RURAL AMERICA.

Sat., Sept. 12 - 7 p.m.

A Conversation with Senator Jon Tester and Pearl Jam’s Jeff Ament

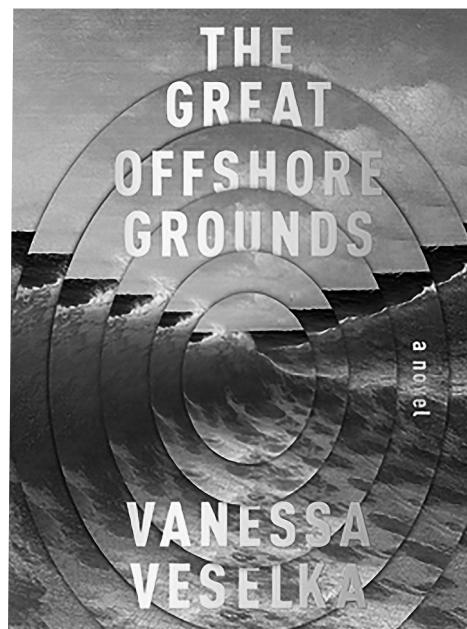
Jon Tester is a third-generation farmer and a U.S. senator representing Montana. A former elementary school music teacher, he served on his local school board before running for and serving two terms in the Montana Senate. He and his wife, Sharla, operate the same farm near Big Sandy, Montana homesteaded by Tester’s grandparents more than a century ago. The Testers raise organic wheat, barley, safflower, lentils, millet, alfalfa hay, and peas. First elected to the Senate in 2006, Tester serves on the Appropriations, Commerce, Indian Affairs, and Banking Committees. He is also the ranking member of the Veterans’ Affairs Committee.

Jeff Ament, also from Big Sandy, Montana, is an American musician and songwriter who is best known as the bassist of the American rock band Pearl Jam, which he co-founded alongside Eddie Vedder. He is known particularly for playing with the fretless bass, upright bass and twelve-string bass guitars. Ament was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of Pearl Jam on April 7, 2017. He was also recognized as one of the top hard rock/metal bassists of all time by Loudwire in 2016, placing at #52 on the list.

Visit montanabookfestival.com



For the full conference schedule, regular updates about the virtual events, author



BOOKS IN COMMON

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VANESSA VESELKA & PETER GEYE

Tues., Sept 1 - 7:30 p.m.

Two prize-winning authors in conversation. Vanessa’s newest book “The Great Offshore Grounds” is a cross-country novel that subverts a long tradition of family narratives and casts new light on national, individual, and collective mythologies. Peter’s new book “Northernmost” is an ode to the spirit of adventure and the vagaries of loss and love, braiding together stories of love and survival.



JANE KIRKPATRICK & GREG NOKES

Thurs., Sept. 3 - 7:30 p.m.

Kirkpatrick will discuss her new book “Something Worth Doing” with fellow writer Greg Nokes. Tackling the early women’s suffrage movement in Oregon and based on a true story, the book is the story of a woman’s conflicts with society and herself. Kirkpatrick is the New York Times bestselling and award-winning author of more than 30 books.

Greg Nokes is no stranger to pioneer history, having studied the stories of marginalized communities during westward expansion. Nokes is the author of “Breaking Chains: Slavery on Trial in the Oregon Territory.”

MONTANA BOOK EVENTS

JANET FOX & ROSANNE PARRY

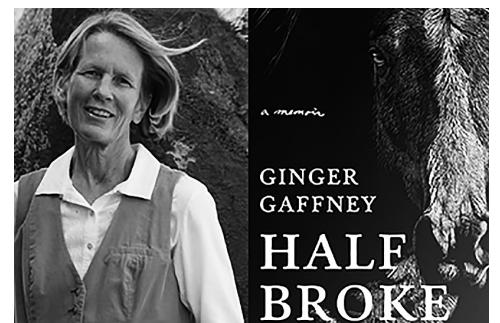
Thurs., Sept. 10 - 7:30 p.m.

Author Fox will be sharing her new book in the Rookskill Castle universe, “Artifact Hunters,” about a young WWII refugee named Isaac on an Indian Jones-style adventure through time. Fox is a former high school English teacher who lives with her family in Bozeman. Rosanne Parry is diving deep with another animal adventure perfect for fans of her bestselling “A Wolf Called Wander with A Whale of the Wild,” a new tale to be released on Sept. 1: “A Whale of the Wild.”

JASON DIAMOND & ANDI ZEISLER

Thurs., Sept. 17 - 7:30 p.m.

A conversation about Diamond’s new book “The Sprawl” about modern suburbia.



GINGER GAFFNEY & PAM HOUSTON

Thurs., Sept. 24 - 7:30 p.m.

A conversation about Gaffney’s memoir “Half Broke,” about retraining the troubled horses at an alternative prison ranch in New Mexico.

SENATOR JON TESTER

Wed., Sept. 16, 2020 - 6 p.m.

Senator Jon Tester in a discussion of his new book “Grounding: A Senator’s Lessons on Winning Back Rural America.” Online at www.countrybookshelf.com.

AMERICAN ZIONS

Sat. Sept. 19 - 4 p.m.

Betsy Gaines Quammen, author of *American Zion: Cliven Bundy, God, & Public Lands in the West*, joins American Polygamy authors Craig L. Foster, and Marianne T. Watson for a discussion on the culture surrounding the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Register for the online event at www.thebookbungalow.com.



WE RECOMMEND...

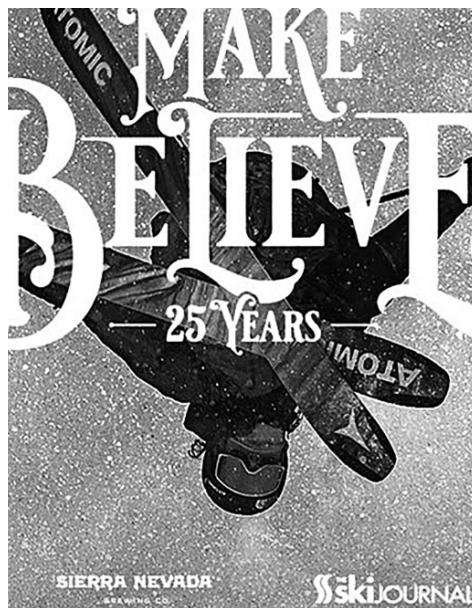
STATEWIDE ENTERTAINMENT LISTINGS

Music, Performances and Events Outside and Online



GEOLOGY TOUR BY CAR - MISSOULA -

Sept. 17 and 24 - Get an extra-special view of the geological process shaping the local landscape with geologist Bruce Baty. Two classes: one driving, one hiking, will cover major topics such as Glacial Lake Missoula, faulting, river bed dynamics, erosion, and more. Information and discussion will connect the classes and provide foundational understanding of the fascinating geology in Missoula. More info: MontanaNaturalist.org.



MAKE BELIEVE - BOZEMAN

Join Teton Gravity Research at the Starlite Drive-In Theatre Montana as they bring their new ski and snowboard film, "Make Believe," to the big-screen. Thurs., Sept. 24 at 6 p.m. Visit FB handle [@TetonGravityResearch](https://www.facebook.com/TetonGravityResearch) for more info.

MONTANA ARTS UPDATE

First Friday Art Walks

continue to be postponed throughout the state, but many locations are offering both in-person and online alternatives for Montanans to support the arts throughout September.

MISSOULA With traditional performances on hold for the moment, local musical theatre enthusiasts are coming together for a new format: small casts and virtual shows. ZACC Social Distance Sessions presents "A New Normal: Something to Sing About!" presented by local Missoula actors and musicians, audiences can tune in for; solos, duets, trios, and small groups. ZACC Social Distance Sessions are streaming live from the ZACC Show Room in Partnership with Missoula's Community Media Resource (MCAT) Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. through Facebook, MCAT's YouTube Channel and locally live. Visit ZootownArts.org for more information.

Additional information about Missoula arts events being held throughout the month of August can be found at ArtsMissoula.org.

BUTTE Butte Elevated is a community organization that offers arts and events updates, Covid-19 updates and a visitors guide at their website butteelevated.com. They can also be followed on Facebook at [@Butte.Elevated](https://www.facebook.com/Butte.Elevated).

HELENA The Helena Public Arts Committee promotes community awareness of and involvement in providing public art in Helena. Their website at HelenaPublicArts.com provides links to a variety of local arts organizations, as well as ways to support these organizations and a map and pictures of public art installations in and around Helena.

BOZEMAN Due to public health concerns, the Art Walks Board decided to cancel the Art Walk Series. Check out the Gallatin Art Crossings interactive map for locations of public art. More arts and events information available at DowntownBozeman.org



GREAT FALLS

The ArtsFest in Great Falls in late August left a lasting legacy on the outdoor spaces (pictured above and below). Artists installed public murals at several locations: 101 Central Avenue; 15 5th Street North; 509 1st Avenue North; 17 7th Street South; 504 Central Avenue; and a community mural, sponsored by NeighborWorks Great Falls and AARP at 612 1st Avenue South. For additional information about arts and activities in Great Falls, visit VisitGreatFallsMontana.org.

The C.M. Russell Museum's auction and sale will proceed on Sept. 12 using online auction platforms with telephone and absentee bidding available. The First Strike Auction will begin at 10 a.m., followed by the Russell Sale at 1 p.m. Event organizers are formulating a way to bring crowd favorite Art in Action to participants. More information about the online auction can be found at CMrussell.org.

BILLINGS Artwalk Downtown Billings is held every other month, and will not be held in September. For more information about the art walks, visit ArtWalkBillings.com or follow them on Facebook [@BillingsArtWalk](https://www.facebook.com/BillingsArtWalk).

Billings365.com and Better Off in Billings partnered together to showcase local arts and events found throughout the city. Visitors who go to Billings365.com/artandculture can discover the local artwork in various locations around town, take a tour of historic buildings and enjoy a walk through museums. The businesses also can be followed on Facebook [@betteroffinbillings](https://www.facebook.com/betteroffinbillings)



WIMING UP FOR AIR
Narrative Feature | USA

Single mom Anna Russell, a ceramic artist, discovers that her 16-year-old son, a star college athlete and academic star is unraveling, she must act quickly to avoid tragedy. In denial and further her out of reach, Stan suddenly disappears. Anna must find her way through a journey that highlights the importance of mental health, athletics vs. academic excellence and what it takes to be a devoted parent.

Director: Robert Cicchin
Director: Roger Rapoport

DAWN IN
Narrative Short

Dawn refuses to let "Fun Uncle Nate," is the loss of a loved one dynamic, to on

Director: Runyara
16 min

BZN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The Third Annual BZN International Film Festival is underway through Sept. 5. The online event celebrates independent filmmaking, creative expression, and emerging and established voices. The films will be complemented by a slate of interviews, and exclusive BZN-created content. Enjoy the selections and special events virtually at BozemanFilmCelebration.com.

VIRTUAL AUTHOR EVENT

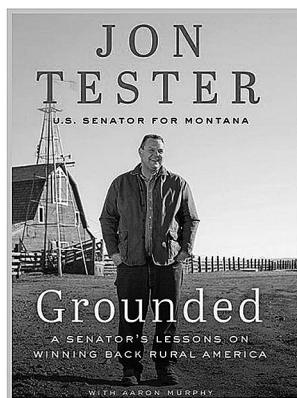
Senator Jon Tester

for

**Grounded: A Senator's Lessons on
Winning Back Rural America**

In Conversation with Sarah Vowell

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH AT 6PM
Tickets at www.countrybookshelf.com



END NOTES

FAMOUS AND NOT FORGOTTEN: VAUDEVILLIAN JULIAN ELTINGE

“Women went into ecstasy about him,” the comedian W.C. Fields once remarked about Julian Eltinge. “Men went into the smoking room.”

The buzz of 1900s Broadway and a gender bender of silent films, long-forgotten actor and drag queen Julian Eltinge was especially popular in Butte, where he accepted his first theater position as an usher at the old John Maguire Opera House at Butte.

During a two day engagement in Butte at the height of his popularity, Eltinge noted that he was first bitten by the showbiz bug while he and his friends hung around the Caplice Hall (a dance hall and performance theater in Butte).

“My first ambitions to mix in the theatrical game were registered then,” later acknowledged Eltinge.

Fanciful Origin Stories

A native of Newtonville, Massachusetts, Eltinge was born William “Bill”

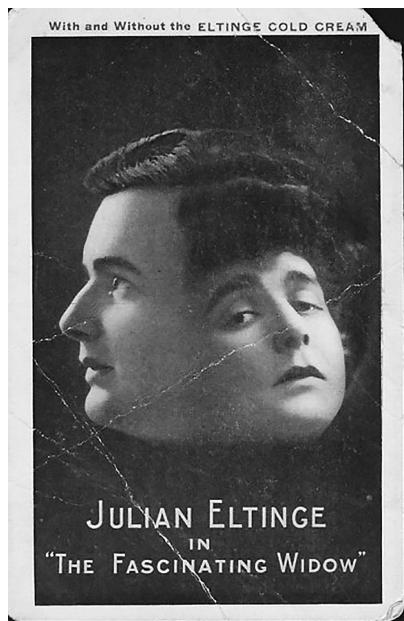
Julian Dalton on May 14, 1881, the only child of Michael and Julia (Baker)

Dalton — so reads the date on his birth certificate, not the May 14, 1883 date he gave out during his life. He claimed that he arrived in Butte as a boy of seven, which would be 1888 which may be why no Dalton listings appear in the Butte city directories for 1885–86.

John Dalton begins appearing in Butte city directories starting in 1888, was listed in 1890 as a barber for E.M. Kunze and C.M. Joyce, and appeared from 1893 to 1898 as a teamster and driver for Johnston and Borthwick.

The entire family appears to have lived in Los Angeles and San Francisco in 1891 and 1892. Etta M. Dalton, listed in the mid-1890s as a lady clerk in Hennessy’s Department Store, is most likely Julian’s mother, born Julietta Baker at Lowell, Massachusetts.

Eltinge told reporters that his father had come to Butte “because of mining interests,” and another time he said that the father “worked as a clerk in W.A. Clark’s bank.” Throughout his career, he would tell snippets of the truth to the press or seemingly fabricate grand sagas about his childhood. What is known to be factual is that the Dalton family periodically made its home in Butte, where the young Bill Dalton attended the old Broadway



School. His best friend and classmate was a boy named Will Eltinge.

The origin of the name “Julian Eltinge” was told by R.J. Barton, Eltinge’s manager. “Mr. Eltinge’s real, every-day name is William Julian Dalton,” Barton said. “It was through another Butte boy that his present stage designation was chosen. At school ‘Billy’ Dalton’s best friend and chum was Will Eltinge, who later became a clerk in Clark’s bank. When Billy Dalton went on the stage he took his own middle name and the last name of his chum, the result being a name quite satisfactory as theatrical title — Julian Eltinge.

“The other night while our show was in Spokane we had dinner with the real Will Eltinge,” Barton explained.

Destined for Glory

When the Daltons left Butte, they headed for Boston, where they finally settled. According to several reports, a Boston dance teacher named Mrs. Wyman encouraged Eltinge to work toward becoming a female impersonator after she caught him mimicking the female students. By 1904, Eltinge had made his first Broadway stage appearance as a female impersonator, and only two years later, Eltinge was



delighting international audiences at London’s Palace Theatre. Soon after, he gave a royal command performance at Windsor Castle for King Edward VII.

His first performance back in his former hometown of Butte was on January 22, 1910, when he served as the opening act to Scottish vaudevillian Harry Lauder. It was reported in the Butte Evening News that Eltinge, as he stepped off the train, was “met by a large delegation of personal friends.”

Although Lauder received the lion’s share of the publicity, the News noted that “Eltinge, the Butte boy, in feminine characterizations, was also highly appreciated. He took his wig off when he had finished and made a little speech in which he told the size of his corsets.”

Also in 1912, Eltinge returned to Butte for a three-day engagement of “The Fascinating Widow.” The Butte Inter Mountain praised his performance at the

Broadway Theater: “Whatever your opinion in general of merry widows, there is one, the merriest widow of them all, you can’t afford to miss.”

The *Butte Miner* expressed this view: “Eltinge carries a dual role, unique in the history of the drama, and so difficult that it is very probable that he is the one man in the world to do it full justice.”

The following year, Eltinge again played “The Fascinating Widow” in Butte. The *Butte Miner* noted that Eltinge had “lost none of his cleverness as a female impersonator and the play has lost none of its charm.”

Eltinge continued to perform on the stage in such plays as “The Crinoline Girl” and “Cousin Lucy.” Additionally, Eltinge had minor roles in such silent films as “An Adventuress in 1914,” which also featured a then un-



known Rudolph Valentino; “How Molly Malone Made Good” in 1915; and “Seven Chances” with Buster Keaton (1925).

Eltinge returned to Butte’s Broadway Theater in 1919. During the performance, he introduced a new tune titled “The Cute Little Beaut from Butte, Montana.” The show was called “a glorified vaudeville of the type that Butte theater-goers have few chances to witness... laughter was unrestrained through most of the numbers.”

Eltinge continued to perform on stage and in films throughout the 1920s and early 1930s. Unfortunately, his audiences grew smaller, and his popularity dissipated. During this period of his life, he spent much of his time at his California ranch, where his mother, Julia, resided.

He died in New York City on March 7, 1941. “Julian Eltinge, as virile as anybody virile, contributed to the gaiety of nations by playing fascinating widows more fascinatingly than if fascinating real widows played them,” the actress Ruth Gordon wrote in *The New York Times* on August 31, 1969. ★

—BRIAN D’AMBROSIO



WE RECOMMEND...

STATEWIDE ENTERTAINMENT LISTINGS

Music, Performances and Events Outside and Online

RESOUNDING RESOLVE

A virtual festival where Music meets Mission.

RED ANTS PANTS FESTIVAL SAVE THE DATE - SEPT. 24!

Coming to a YouTube channel near you: "Resounding Resolve: Where Music Meets Mission" is a virtual celebration of Montana's spirit, grit, and resolve. This musical collaboration celebrates "Big hearts under the big sky in true Montana style." Red Ants Pants Music Festival is bringing the fiddles, Montana Nonprofit Association will bring the can-do attitude and Montana's Association of Fundraising Professionals will bring a big dose of Montana thank you to the party.

Thurs., Sept. 24, 6:30 p.m.

Check out the website or FB handle for the lineup.

@RedAntsPantsMusicFestival
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KIRK'S GROCERY- BILLINGS

Bring a chair, soak in the pure Minnesota Ave. air, and listen to live music or poetry at Kirk's Grocery in Billings where poetry jams, comedy shows and musical acts will perform outdoors. Masks and social distancing are encouraged.

Check out FB handle @KirksGrocery for event updates.

The monthly calendar is a sampling of events and activities online across the state. Please send updates to: info@montanapress.net.

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Running or Not
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Clueless
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24
OGREN PARK AT ALLEGIANCE FIELD
Centerfield Cinema MISSOULA



ARIES (March 21-April 19): "A new idea is rarely born like Venus attended by graces. More commonly it's modeled of baling wire and acne. More commonly it wheezes and tips over." Those words were written by Aries author Marge Piercy, who has been a fount of good new ideas in the course of her career. I regard her as an expert in generating wheezy, fragile breakthroughs and ultimately turning them into shiny, solid beacons of revelation. Your assignment in the coming weeks, Aries, is to do as Piercy has done so well.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): "Every day I discover even more beautiful things," said painter Claude Monet. "It is intoxicating me, and I want to paint it all. My head is bursting." That might seem like an extreme state to many of us. But Monet was a specialist in the art of seeing. He trained himself to be alert for exquisite sights. So his receptivity to the constant flow of loveliness came naturally to him. I bring this to your attention, Taurus, because I think that in the coming weeks, you could rise closer to a Monet-like level of sensitivity to beauty. Would that be interesting to you? If so, unleash yourself! Make it a priority to look for charm, elegance, grace, delight, and dazzlement.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Author Renata Adler describes a time in her life when she began to notice blue triangles on her feet. She was wracked with fear that they were a symptom of leukemia. But after a period of intense anxiety, she realized one fine day that they had a different cause. She writes: "Whenever I, walking barefoot, put out the garbage on the landing, I held the apartment door open, bending over from the rear. The door would cross a bit over the tops of my feet"—leaving triangular bruises. Upon realizing this very good news, she says, "I took a celebrational nap." From what I can tell, Gemini, you're due for a series of celebrational naps—both because of worries that turn out to be unfounded and because you need a concentrated period of recharging your energy reserves.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): "I like people who refuse to speak until they are ready to speak," proclaimed Cancerian author Lillian Hellman. I feel the same way. So often people have nothing interesting or important to say, but say it anyway. I've done that myself! The uninteresting and unimportant words I have uttered are too numerous to count. The good news for me and all of my fellow Cancerians is that in the coming weeks we are far more likely than usual to not speak until we are ready to speak. According to my analysis of the astrological potentials, we are poised to express ourselves with clarity, authenticity, and maximum impact.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Of all the mournful impacts the pandemic has had, one of the most devastating is that it has diminished our opportunities to touch and be touched by other humans. Many of us are starved of the routine, regular contact we had previously taken for granted. I look forward to the time when we can again feel uninhibited about shaking hands, hugging, and patting friends on the arm or shoulder. In the meantime, how can you cope? This issue is extra crucial for you Leos to meditate on right now. Can you massage yourself? Seek extra tactile contact with animals? Hug trees? Figure out how to physically connect with people while wearing hazmat suits, gloves, masks, and face shields? What else?

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): "Like any art, the creation of self is both natural and seemingly impossible," says singer-songwriter Holly Near. "It requires training as well as magic." How are you doing on that score, Virgo? Now is a favorable time to intensify your long-term art project of creating the healthiest, smartest version of yourself. I think it will feel quite natural and not-at-all impossible. In the coming weeks, you'll have a finely tuned intuitive sense of how to proceed with flair. Start by imagining the Most Beautiful You.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): I propose we resurrect the old English word "museful." First used in the 17th century but then forgotten, it meant "deeply thoughtful; pensive." In our newly coined use, it refers to a condition wherein a person is abundantly inspired by

the presence of the muse. I further suggest that we invoke this term to apply to you Libras in the coming weeks. You potentially have a high likelihood of intense communion with your muses. There's also a good chance you'll engage with a new muse or two. What will you do with all of this illumination and stimulation?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Each of us has a "soul's code": a metaphorical blueprint of the beautiful person we could become by fulfilling our destiny. If our soul's code remains largely dormant, it will agitate and disorient us. If, on the other hand, we perfectly actualize our soul's code, we will feel at home in the world; all our experiences will feel meaningful. The practical fact is that most of us have made some progress in manifesting our soul's code, but still have a way to go before we fully actualize it. Here's the good news: You Scorpios are in a phase of your cycle when you could make dramatic advances in this glorious work.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): "Life is the only game in which the object of the game is to learn the rules," observes Sagittarian author Ashleigh Brilliant. According to my research, you have made excellent progress in this quest during the last few weeks—and will continue your good work in the next six weeks. Give yourself an award! Buy yourself a trophy! You have discovered at least two rules that were previously unknown to you, and you have also ripened your understanding of another rule that had previously been barely comprehensible. Be alert for more breakthroughs.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "If you're not lost, you're not much of an explorer," said rambunctious activist and author John Perry Barlow. Adding to his formulation, I'll say that if you want to be a successful explorer, it's crucial to get lost on some occasions. And according to my analysis, now is just such a time for you Capricorns. The new territory you have been brave enough to reconnoiter should be richly unfamiliar. The possibilities you have been daring enough to consider should be provocatively unpredictable. Keep going, my dear! That's the best way to become un-lost.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): "Dreams really tell you about yourself more than anything else in this world could ever tell you," said psychic Sylvia Browne. She was referring to the mysterious stories that unfold in our minds as we sleep. I agree with her assessment of dreams' power to show us who we really are all the way down to the core of our souls. What Browne didn't mention, however, is that it takes knowledge and training to become proficient in deciphering dreams' revelations. Their mode of communication is unique—and unlike every other source of teaching. I bring this up, Aquarius, because the coming months will be a favorable time for you to become more skilled in understanding your dreams.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): In June 1876, warriors from three Indian tribes defeated U.S. troops led by General George Custer at the Battle of Little Big Horn in Montana. It was an iconic victory in what was ultimately a losing battle to prevent conquest by the ever-expanding American empire. One of the tribes that fought that day was the Northern Cheyenne. Out of fear of punishment by the U.S. government, its leaders waited 130 years to tell its side of the story about what happened. New evidence emerged then, such as the fact that the only woman warrior in the fight, Buffalo Calf Road Woman, killed Custer himself. I offer this tale as an inspiration for you Pisceans to tell your story about events that you've kept silent about for too long.

THIS WEEK'S HOMEWORK:

Maybe sometimes it's OK to hide and be secretive and use silence as a superpower. Example from your life?

TESTIFY AT FREEWILLASTROLOGY.COM

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BE MONTANA AWARE.

We love our home and want to help keep it healthy. If you're planning to explore Montana, follow these safety measures and do your part to be Montana Aware.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

①

KNOW LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES BEFORE ARRIVING AT YOUR DESTINATION

②

UNDERSTAND SOME SERVICES & DESTINATIONS MAY BE LIMITED

③

STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK

PROTECT OUR HEALTH



WEAR A MASK



MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCE
(AT LEAST 6 FT. APART)



WASH YOUR HANDS & USE HAND SANITIZER



AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE



COVER COUGHS & SNEEZES

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