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MONTANA PRESS

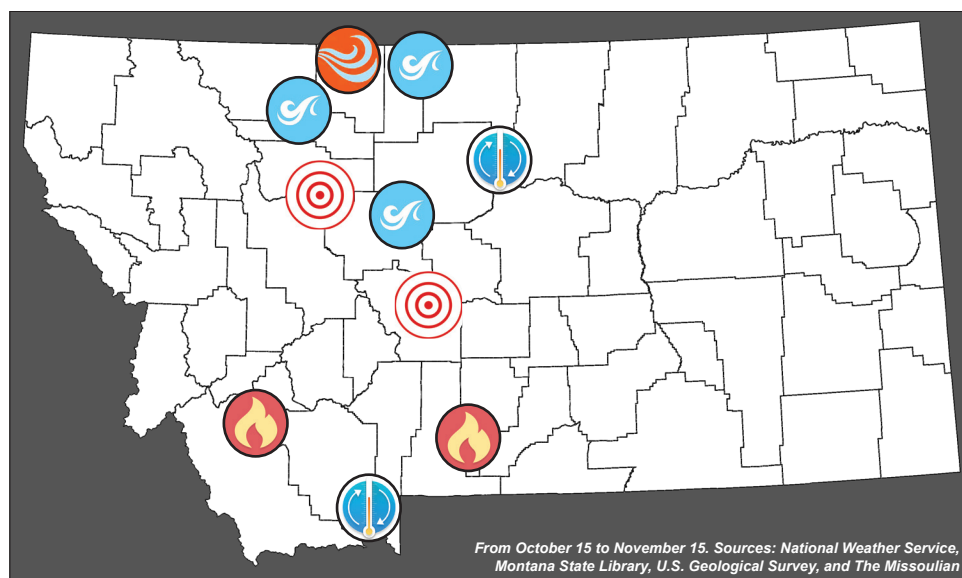
*Free Monthly News, Arts
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LAST BEST PLACES P H O T O G R A P H Y C O M P E T I T I O N

Statewide Calendar • Red Ants Pants Grants • Bygone Days • Montana Almanac

MONTANA ALMANAC



Highs and Lows Across the State

After enduring below normal temperatures for 15 of 16 days, warm temperatures stretched across the state after October 17. High temps of 70°F or above were recorded in Big Timber, Huntley, Laurel (72°F), Hardin (72°F), Lewiston (75°F), and Livingston (76°F). The high temperature for the state was recorded at Loma on October 20 (83°F) and the low temperature was recorded on November 12 at West Yellowstone (-18°F). Incidentally, West Yellowstone also had the coldest low temperature in the contiguous U.S. on November 12 and November 11 (-15°F).

Extreme Winds Blow Across Montana

High winds blasted the state in October and November. Some of the highest gusts were recorded on November 14 eight miles south of East Glacier (79 mph), three miles NNE of Monarch (59 mph) and 20 miles N of Rudyard (59 mph). On November 2, peak wind speeds were measured at weather stations at Deep Creek near East Glacier (87 mph), MacDonald Pass (63 mph) and Judith Peak (62 mph). On October 20, high wind gusts were reported at Deep Creek (65 mph), Browning (48 mph) and East Glacier (47 mph).

Winter Weather Outlook

On October 29, the Missoula branch of the National Weather Service released its winter weather outlook. Because a weak El Niño system - a band of warmer-than-normal ocean water - is setting up in the Equatorial Pacific, officials say this year is expected to be less severe than the previous two years. This also means the main jetstream that fed powerful winter storms to Montana for the past two winters will likely be further south this winter. Forecasters say they have growing confidence that western Montana will also have slightly above-normal temperatures and below-normal precipitation.

Smoke Continues After Fire Season

During late October, wildfires continued to burn in portions of Oregon and Idaho and the smoke drifted eastward at night, affecting portions of Southwest and Central Montana for weeks. The air quality was reduced at times as the smoke continued to move eastward. On November 14, smoke from the largest and most destructive California wildfires in the state's history also made it all the way to Montana skies.

Increasing Temperature Forecast for 2090s

In order to meet future needs for energy, food, and public health, detailed models have been developed by the National Weather Service and others to address these issues. As the climate system continues responding to the heat-trapping gases humans have added to the atmosphere, temperatures will change at different rates in different regions. Recently, climate.gov released new models and data about average temperature increase across the U.S. Average temperatures in the contiguous United States are projected to increase on average in coming decades if global carbon dioxide emissions continue along a high-emissions pathway. Over the period from 1981 to 2010, most of the Lower 48 experienced average October temperatures near or below 60°F. Under a continued high-emission scenario, that national pattern flips. By the 2090s, the majority of the contiguous United States will experience average October temperatures above 60°F. In this scenario, Montana will see average temperatures rise from average temperatures in the 30°F to 40°F range to the 50°F to 60°F range by 2090.

Chinook Causes Wild Temperature Swing

On November 2, chinook winds moved into Cut Bank, raising the temperature 13 degrees in 15 minutes from 37°F to 50°F. Winds increased from around 10 mph to 30 mph with gusts to 39 mph.

Earthquake Activity

On November 2, a magnitude 2.8 earthquake and a magnitude 2.5 earthquake were recorded at a depth of about 5.0 km just west of Manhattan. A 2.6 magnitude quake was also recorded near Manhattan on October 26. On November 13, a magnitude 2.6 earthquake was recorded at 12 km depth near Lincoln.

Commitment to value.
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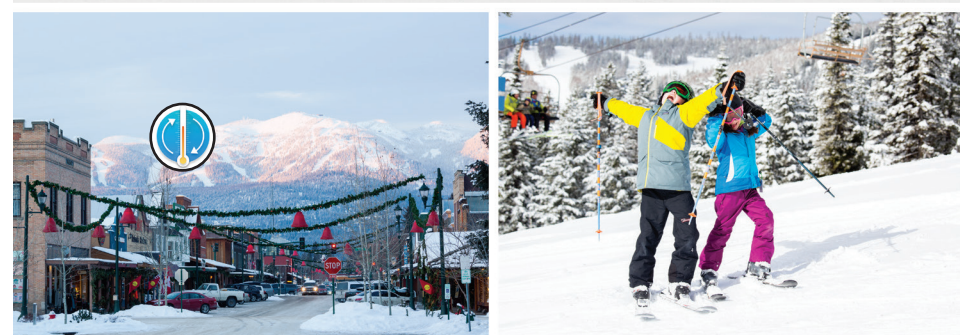
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Grants: bolstering community
and women's empowerment
programs across Montana.

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WE RECOMMEND

A full, highlighted list of events
across the state. Pictured: Russ
Nasset and the Revelators play
Chico Saloon Dec. 14 and 15.

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ON THE COVER The Montana Press launches the first
annual Last Best Places photography competition.
Details, full rules and guidelines can be found on page 10.
Photo by Lindsay Wells.

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BYGONE DAYS

Bygone Days are compiled from archives of Montana Newspapers. Current years featured are 1898, 1933 and 1959. Follow Montana's Bygone Days daily at @MontanaPress on Facebook.

Helena Independent Record December 1, 1898

"Kalispell - There are a few vehicles still on wheels, but pretty much everything goes on runners now. The trainmen report that the thermometer was down to 23 below at Blackfoot the first of last week. The coming of the snow made such a demand for sleighs and sleds that the supply in Kalispell is nearly exhausted."

Anaconda Standard December 2, 1898

"Gone Up in Smoke. Hon. W.H. Lockhart, familiarly known in Butte and Jefferson county as "uncle Lock," received a telephone message from Basin yesterday that 15,000 cords of his wood had gone up in smoke. Mr. Lockhart had the wood piled at the siding near Bernice. He received no information as to how the wood caught fire, but thinks it must have caught from an engine. He is sure he has no enemy on earth. Mr. Lockhart, while greatly distressed at the loss of the wood, met with a very pleasing surprise later in the day when he ascertained that he has \$10,000 insurance on the wood. This cannot begin to cover the loss, but helps a whole lot."

"Missoula, Dec. 1.—'Ten Nights in a Bar Room' will be presented at Bennett Opera House next Monday evening under the auspices of I.O.G.T of this city, and will be participated in by some of the students of the university... The cast is said to be a powerful one and will contain a number of amateurs well up in the histrionic art."

The Anaconda Standard December 4, 1898

"Helena, Dec. 3.—Acting the role of peacemaker came near costing Joe Kastner, a placer miner and old resident of Helena, his life to-night at the hands of George Carew, a telegraph operator employed in the Western Union office. That Kastner was not killed is something no mortal can explain. Unarmed he faced an armed man who struck him over the head with a six-shooter and fired all but one shot at him. Only one of the bullets took effect, hitting Kastner in the right arm, entering at the wrist and coming out at the elbow, making what is believed to be nothing more than a flesh wound. This and a bad bruise on the head... From what can be learned of the affair, the shooting was without a particle of justification and can only be attributed to Carew's quarrelsome disposition when under the influence of liquor, in which condition he is said to be a dangerous man... It seems about 10 o'clock, while Carew and some friends were drinking in a Main street saloon, Tom Murray... and a fellow whose name cannot be learned, got into an altercation... Murray was getting the worst of it when Kastner, who was in

a back room, rushed out and tried to separate the two men. Then Carew took a hand and he and Kastner had some words... As soon as matters cooled off Carew left. He returned in about an hour and sent word... to Kastner to come outside. As soon as Kastner got outside Carew struck him over the head. Kastner got up and made a rush at his assailant, who opened fire. Three shots were fired at close range. Then Kastner ran across the street into the beer hall... a bullet crashing through the glass window after him... Sergeant Nicholson, attracted by the firing, rushed upon the scene and attempted to disarm Carew, when the latter snapped the gun in the officer's face. Fortunately for him, it did not go off. As the two men struggled for possession of the weapon, Carew managed to fire two more shots in the direction Kastner had gone before being overpowered and taken to jail..."

The River Press, Fort Benton December 7, 1898

"C.R.A. Scobey, Indian agent at Fort Peck agency, in Montana, to the general office of the Great northern railroad, as follows: 'There is absolutely no foundation for the reported danger of an outbreak of Indians so far as this agency is concerned. I left Helena last night and have seen reliable parties from the Blackfoot and Belknap agencies and I am full satisfied that there is not the slightest danger of trouble at any point.'"

Fergus County Argus December 7, 1898

"In all of the counties but two in this state the nominees for school superintendent were women, and none but women were successful."

The Phillipsburg Mail December 9, 1898

"To break the monotony of every-day life and have little sport on Christmas afternoon, several of our enterprising businessmen have arranged a racing tournament to take place on Broadway during the afternoon of Christmas Day. Some valuable and useful articles have been donated, to be awarded as prizes to the winners, and the crack horses are already in evidence, training for the event... First prize, given by S.E. McClees, the jeweler, split-second chronograph watch, valued at \$80, and gold chain, given by Crystal Saloon, value \$10... Best three heats out of five, from Pardees Crossing to Fireman's hall."



The Ravalli Republican December 7, 1898

"A masked robber attempted to hold up the saloon of Alexander Gilbert in Butte last Saturday night. While Gilbert and another man were sitting talking, a gun was pushed into the door, which soon followed by a head. Gilbert, who was facing the door, immediately blazed away with one shot which came close to the fellows head, and then got behind the bar. The robber fired two shots, one of which came dangerously close to Gilbert, and then went off, Gilbert giving him a parting shot as he went."

The Choteau Acantha December 14, 1933

"Total Turkey Shipment was 19,241 Pounds. When the final check was completed on the turkey shipment made here on Wednesday last week by the Teton County Shipping association, it was found that the total poundage had mounted up to 19,241. This exceeded expectations and surpassed last year's shipment by 839 pounds."

The Montana Standard Butte, December 14, 1933

"The ring of hammers and rasping of saws reverberated through Butte's fire stations last night as the firemen swung into action repairing toys for the city's needy. Three truckloads of broken and abandoned toys, all of which can be put in first class shape, were turned over to the fire department yesterday. Members of the ladies' auxiliary American Legion, augmented by Girl Scouts and Camp Fire girls, are also busy with needle, thread and seeing machines. The task of the women is to repair and dress hundreds of dolls for Christmas distribution. More than 1,000 toys will be available for the poor."

"Residents will not be permitted to cut Christmas trees within the boundaries of Thompson park, Mayor Archie McTaggart declared yesterday when he instructed police officers to patrol the area at regular intervals. 'Tree cutting in the park has long been forbidden,' Mayor McTaggart said, 'but many who apparently have been misinformed have obtained their trees there in recent years. We urge that the park be preserved for public use.'"

Montana Standard, Butte December 17, 1933

"The dome of the state capitol building here will be covered with native Montana copper as a part of the program of repairs to the state's largest building, just begun under a grant from the civil works administration... the Anaconda Copper Mining company, who are now in New York... will provide the required poundage of copper f.o.b. Helena without charge to the state. It is estimated the recovering of the dome will require about three and on-half tons of 16-ounce sheet copper."

Fallon County Times Baker, December 21, 1933

"Fred Wessner, safety razor salesman, was arrested by Constable Dan Wash Monday on a complaint made by V.B. Steiner of the O'Loughlin elevator. Werner was charged with burglary, having stolen a fountain pen belonging to Steiber. The charge was later changed to petit larceny



and, after pleading guilty before Justice of the Peace R.W. Marks, Wessner was given a sixty day sentence, suspended if he left the community, which he did Wednesday."

The Hardin Tribune-Herald December 22, 1933

"Wives of members of the house are planning what may be the first Christmas celebration ever undertaken by a Montana legislative body. With business piling up the onlookers are becoming doubtful that the special session may be through by the holidays and are getting ready to make the most of it. Some of the sideline legislators are picking the spot where the giant Christmas tree will stand and are looking round for someone to take the part of Santa Claus. Sparking of Sheridan and Groene of Fergus, have been suggested. Members will hang their socks in a row around the front of the chief clerks desk."

Billings Gazette December 25, 1959

"A day to forget the little, tawdry things which sometimes confront us in our work-day, personal world. A day for joy and generosity of spirit. A day to think of others, who may be far away but still so precious in our memories that we can never forget them wherever they are or whatever they may be doing. That is this day, Christmas, and may it be filled with happiness for all."

Helena Independent-Record December 28, 1959

"The blackest Yuletide holiday in Montana traffic history ended Monday with death No. 11 since Christmas Eve. In all, 14 persons were killed in Treasure State highway accidents since Wednesday morning. Five of them died Christmas day and five more of Sunday crashes. It was the bloodiest holiday period since 10 persons were killed in highway crashes over the July 4 weekend."

Big Timber Pioneer December 31, 1933

"The chief reason most [New Year's] resolutions are never kept is because they were impractical to begin with. This year, 1959, we might all resolve that we will make no foolish resolutions that we shall not be able to keep. With the world situation being what it is at the present time, we might all do well to settle on one single resolution—that we will work together for the achievement of world peace." ★

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MONTANA VOICE

Mid-Term Election Post Mortem: Hang on Tight, it's Going Be a Wild Ride

Not since the election following Nixon's impeachment/resignation over Watergate has the Republican Party lost so many seats in Congress. The balance of power has shifted dramatically and the radical Trump presidency is now facing not only a divided House and Senate, but the payback from those he regularly insulted and degraded who will, come January, be chairing investigative committees in the House.

But even before the Blue Wave of very bad news hits the GOP and the Trump administration, it's "Mueller Time" as the tsunami of indictments inundates the White House while Congress tries to ram through Republican priorities in what promises to be a very nasty lame duck session.

Meanwhile, Montana is headed into the 2019 Legislative Session in January with its own significant divisions between Governor Steve Bullock and the Republican legislative majorities. Given that Bullock is now a lame duck, Republicans have already said they're gunning for the governor's office and are not likely to kumbaya with the out-going Democrat.

So hang on, fellow Montanans, it's definitely going to be a wild ride nationally and here at home.

Chaos in the Capital

George Conway, the conservative lawyer and husband of Trump's senior counselor Kelly-Anne Conway recently described the Trump administration as "a shit show in a dumpster fire." While that may make people laugh – especially the majority of Americans who do not approve of Trump's presidential performance – it's worth remembering that his wife is known for claiming the Trump administration has "alternative facts" when questioned by reporters.

Maybe Hubby George's assessment can be explained away in like fashion, but from all the available evidence, it appears that not only can't Trump get along with our long-time international allies, he can't even get along with what is supposed to be his own political party.

Rather unbelievably, for a president who has the incredible advantage of his party holding majorities in both chambers of Congress, Trump has declared that it would be a "good time for a shutdown" of the government if he doesn't get funding for his border wall in the lame duck session.

But Congressional Republicans, who formerly championed fiscal conservatism, have already thrown the nation into nearly a trillion-dollar deficit with the 10-year tax breaks they already passed and which disproportionately benefits the wealthy. Considering most of the lame duck session is going to be spent dealing with critical budget bills, the indications at this time are that Trump's wall isn't going to be funded – or at least not to the \$5 billion he's demanding – which will likely engender yet another Trump tantrum.

Trump's temper aside, what's likely to hap-

pen is we can expect a pile of riders to be slapped on the must-pass spending bills. Passing laws by rider is absolutely the worst way to legislate, however, since the public whom they are supposed to be representing are almost entirely excluded from the back-room deal cutting. Unfortunately, and despite the fact that he promised not to do so in his first campaign for the Senate, look for Montana's own Jon Tester to be one of those trying to slip his riders into law with the most likely candidate the Blackfoot-Clearwater Stewardship Act.

Closer to Home

Governor Steve Bullock has already rolled out his budget proposal for the 2019 session and it largely looks like a replay of failed initiatives and taxes from the 2017 session. Although state revenues are projected to increase modestly, Bullock's spending proposals far outpace the new revenues.

What that means is the general fund is going to have to generate revenue from new or expanded taxes if it's going to meet Bullock's planned expenditures. Unfortunately many of the tax proposals were already rejected by the Republican legislature two years ago and they're not likely to find support this time around.

In fact, it's doubtful Republicans are going to do much at all to make Bullock look good since it's no secret that he has ambitions for higher office and one of the reasons his 2019 budget proposal looks like his 2017 proposals is because he's been on the road in Iowa and New Hampshire promoting himself as a potential 2020 presidential candidate. Toss in the fact that his former budget director has been replaced with the former head of the Department of Environmental Quality who has never prepared a statewide budget and that pretty much explains Bullock's not-so-instant budget replay.



George Ochenski is a Montana columnist whose opinions have appeared in the Missoula Independent and The Missoulian.

Stormy Seas Ahead

Put it all together, in D.C. and here in Montana, and there's stormy seas ahead mateys! While the populace is more than ready to set aside political warfare for some semblance of good governance, it sure doesn't look like that's going to happen at either the state or national level in the coming months. ★

—GEORGE OCHENSKI



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MONTANA BOOKS

*Two Treasures from the Past Highlight
State Culture and History*

The Art of the State: 120 Artworks for 120 Years

To celebrate University of Montana's 120-year anniversary in 2013, the Montana Museum of Art and Culture published a "handbook" featuring 120 pieces selected from the nearly 11,000 objects in the collection.

A year after UM was established in Missoula in 1893, the permanent collection at MMAC began. Since that time, the museum has been limited to showing only one half of one percent of the collection at any time due to the lack of a permanent facility.

Currently, the museum utilizes seven work and storage locations on and off campus. Selections from the collection are displayed in the Paxon and Meloy Galleries on the UM campus as well as in traveling exhibitions around the state and the country.

The "Art of the State" features only a small fraction of the 11,000 works in the collection including pieces of European, American and Asian art, ceramics, textiles, prints and photography. On the pages are 120 pieces "carefully selected" from the permanent collection including work from world-renowned artists such as Daumier, Chagall, Picasso, Miró, Dali and selections from the American art collection by artists such as Frederick Remington, Edgar S. Paxton, William Standing and Winslow Homer.

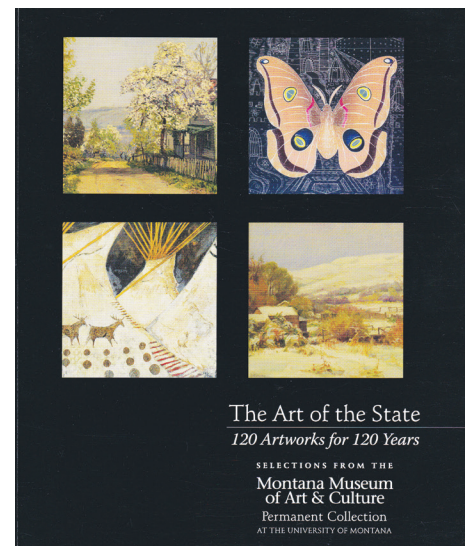
With a mission to "acquire and preserve art that expresses the spirit of the American West and its relationship to the world," the MMAC continues to seek a permanent facility and proceeds from the sale of "The Art of the State" go to this effort. For more information about the MMAC and "The Art of the State" visit www.umt.edu/montanamuseum or call (406) 243-2019.

The current exhibition from the collection is "Between Wisdom and Knowledge: Contemporary Native American Art" at the Paxon Gallery at UM through February 16, 2019. ★

—MP STAFF

Ghost Hunting in Montana A Search for Roots in the Old West

"Ghost Hunting in Montana," originally published by Lyons Press in 2003, initially appears too big for its britches. The author, a self-described observer of life with "the vacant eye of a career vagabond," came from old money and the Ivy League. The author's erudition, familiarity with arcane Montana history along



*Featuring work from the largest art collection
in the state, "The Art of the State" also
illustrates the Montana Museum of Art and
Culture's need for a permanent home.*

his enviable skill with words actually produced a tome almost too well crafted for its genre: travelog time-capsule wherein the author re-discovers himself and his roots.

"Ghost Hunting in Montana" easily beats the competition all hollow, earning this book five stars for its blend of Montana history and picaresque adventuring in late 1980s Montana.

Barnaby Conrad III, indicated from here on as BCIII, writes with a smooth adroitness, leavened by humor, empathy, verve, insight, and veracity.

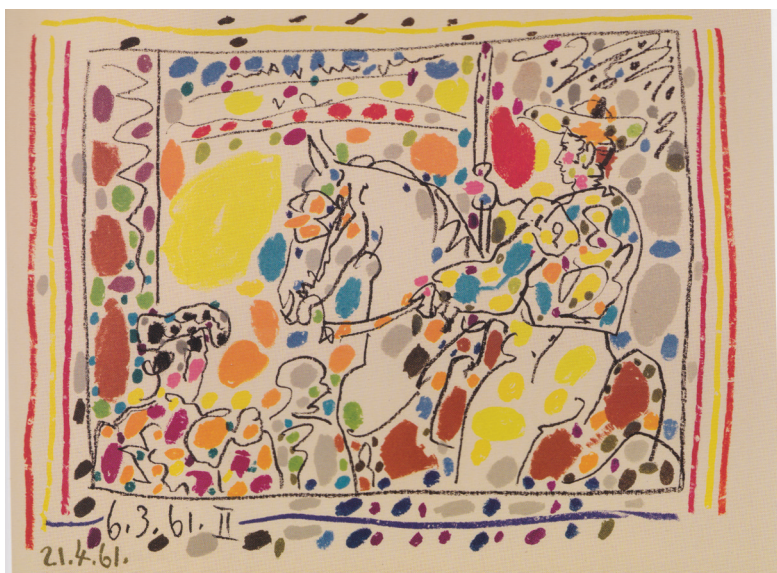
Having ample money and important connections helps any writer, and BCIII also had this, and likely still has it, in spades.

In the late 1980s, this asset enabled the 37-year-old BCIII to embark on a journey along Montana's backroads and byways, rivers and cattle trails, without worrying about jobs or money. For five months, he traveled nine thousand miles throughout the state in search of adventure, Montana history, and his own Conrad family roots.

Each of the 25 chapters in this book reads like an action-adventure article in *Outside Magazine*. Written with present-tense urgency and immediacy, each section carries you along in its millrace and each chapter is more riveting than the last.

BCIII writes of so many Montana places—Red Lodge, Shelby, Butte, Conrad—and too many whistlestops to mention. He writes in such a way to make the reader feel that each

(Top Left): Pablo Picasso, "Le Picador," 1961. This print began as a book project about the Spanish passion for bullfighting. The book's publisher suggested the artist add color to the print and Picasso obliged by using every color in the box of 24 litho crayons. (At Left, Center) Edgar S. Paxton, "Saajawea," 1904. Paxton came west from New York in 1877, the year after the Battle of the Little Big Horn. He moved to Butte in 1881 where he established a painting and portraiture studio before moving to Missoula in 1906. (Lower Left) James Everett Stuart, "Shoshone Falls," 1885. Stuart was a descendent of portraitist Gilbert Stuart. During his lifetime, he created more than 500 works of art, the majority of which were panoramic landscapes of the American west.



small town is actually the “Keystone of Montana,” the chief source of our state’s legends and history. Each locality has an important story to tell, and BCIII tells them all with skill and style.

BCIII springs from a line of long-ago Montana historical royalty, the Conrad family.

Two well-to-do Conrad brothers were suddenly thrust into the Civil War when they signed on as illegally under-age Confederate soldiers in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia near Front Royal. Charles (age 11) and William (age 13) fought with Mosby’s Rangers.

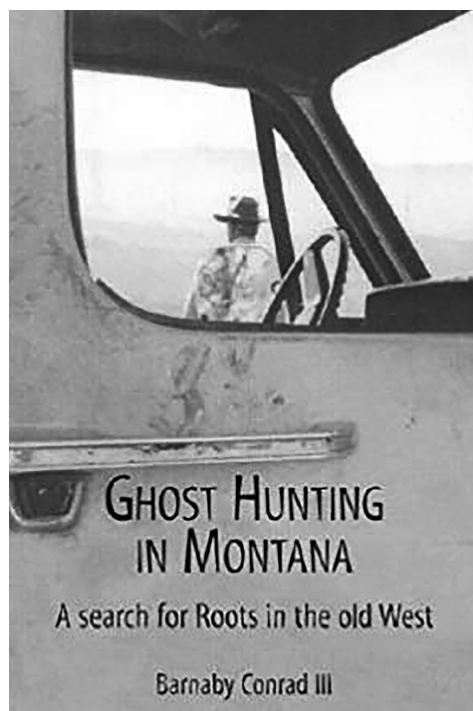
When they returned from the war, surprised to still be alive, they found their family’s plantation in shambles. The brothers decided the only way to rise from the ashes of war was to head west.

The brothers arrived in Montana with a silver dollar between them and flipped the coin to see who would stay in Fort Benton and who would travel to Helena. The efforts of the Conrad brothers were a roaring success. Charles and William Conrad became “Big Men” in Montana Territory, a country so vast they decided to split the territory between them, so to speak. William took the east side, founding the farming community of Conrad while brother Charles took the west side and founded the city of Kalispell.

Yet another Conrad brother, John, decided to try his luck in Montana. By the 1880s, he was already a millionaire. Twenty-nine-year-old John met the well-born 19-year-old Mabel Barnaby during the 1884 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. John and Mabel soon married, bought a handsome, brown Victorian house at 702 Madison Avenue in Helena, and John set his sights on becoming Montana’s next governor.

Then, the unthinkable happened. In spring of 1891, Mabel’s mother was murdered in Denver by means of poisoned whiskey shipped to her from Rhode Island. The poisoner was identified as one Dr. Thatcher Graves, a friend who had “ingratiated himself” with Mabel’s mother, possibly to take advantage of the wealth she inherited from her deceased husband. Before Graves could go to trial for murder, the doctor poisoned himself and all hell broke loose in the marriage of John and Mabel.

Some accounts suggest that John might have played a part in the poisoning of his mother-in-law. Other accounts saw the \$60,000 John spent to prosecute Dr. Graves for the supposed poisoning crime as a show of loyalty to his wife. The murder and trial took a toll on the married couple, the pair accused one another of repeated adulteries and things got violent. A bystander at the time wrote, “At one point there was an in-house riot, featuring the coachman wielding a stick and the Chinese cook swing-



ing a frying pan. John was the loser.”

A decree of divorce was finally granted to Mrs. Mabel Barnaby Conrad, daughter of the late Mrs. Barnaby who had been poisoned.

The judge awarded Mabel custody of their three children, Florence, Maud, and Barnaby Conrad I (or BCI) allowing her to stay in Europe “for the purpose of educating her children.” Since she had her own fortune, it was easy for her to marry an American named George Choate Kendall and move into his chateau in France, never to return to Montana.

Although little seems to be written about BCI, his son Barnaby Conrad II (BCII) lived a long, larger-than-life existence, although few in Montana know his story because he never lived here.

BCII’s best friend and mentor was writer Sinclair Lewis; he caroused with Norman Mailer, Truman Capote, Graham Greene, and Gore Vidal. He took up bull fighting and was nearly gored to death; he wrote a National Book Award-winning book about it, entitled “Matador,” the same year that BCIII was born. (John Steinbeck said it was one of his “favorite books” ever.)

BCII produced four heirs: two boys (BCIII and Winston) and two girls (Kendall and Cay-aetana), all of whom flourished in the fields of painting, writing, publishing, editing, traveling, and exploring.

As for the author of “Ghost Hunting in Montana,” Barnaby Conrad III (BCIII), his long, full life appears to be, and most likely is still is, one happy success after another.

Flourishing first as journalist and magazine

editor, BCIII went on to author more than 15 published books including popular books on absinthe and martinis. BCIII was also free to adventure-travel the world, which he did with great gusto and then write about it afterwards to an eager, receptive audience. Later, he resumed youthful studies of art when he worked with Maurice Sendak, the illustrator who also wrote “Where the Wild Things Are.”

In later life, BCIII started painting more and writing less. His superb, hyper-natural paintings reflect his love of fly-fishing and aquatic wildlife. His works are on display at M. Sutherland Fine Arts in New York City.

Does the legacy continue with a BCIV? Barnaby Conrad the Fourth? At age 58, BCIII fathered a son with his art dealer wife Martha Sutherland in 2010. On the internet, there’s a photo of BCIII holding his beautiful baby boy and both of them looking absolutely radiant. The caption below the picture identifies the little boy only as “Jack.”

Dempsey vs. Gibbons in Shelby 1923

Most Montanans could find a connection to one of the stories in “Ghost Hunting in Montana.” This reviewer’s husband’s family history is even embedded into this excellent book as his ancestor played a small but important role in the Great Jack Dempsey vs. Tommy Gibbons fight in Shelby of 1923.

BCIII tells part of the story on page 109: “In the 1910 U.S. census, Shelby didn’t exist. The Great Northern Railroad rolled across the plains and put a storage facility here. A saloon was built, followed by a hotel and post office. In 1923, an oil prospector struck oil near Shelby and overnight it became a boomtown. Town boosters promoted it as the Tulsa of the West.

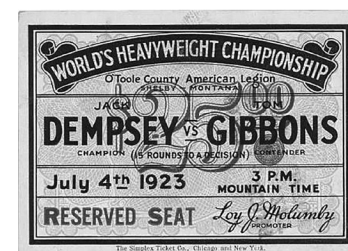
“Shelby boasts one great moment in its history. In 1923, the town went fifteen rounds with Jack Dempsey and nearly got KO’d. It started when two real-estate speculators named James Johnson and Mel McCutcheon decided to pull Shelby’s real-estate sales out of a slump. Over coffee at a certain breakfast joint in 1923, Johnson tapped the sports section of the Great Falls Tribune and showed McCutcheon where it said someone had offered one hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000 adjusted for inflation) to Jack Kearns, manager of Jack Dempsey, if he would send his boy to fight in Montreal. “Mel,” said Johnson, “why don’t we make an offer for a championship fight? It would put Shelby on the map.

“A delegate was sent to New York to sign a contract. Dempsey would fight Tommy Gibbons for a steep price: three hundred thousand dollars. (\$4,500,000 today.)

“Two hundred Shelby carpenters built a forty-thousand seat stadium near the Great Northern tracks. Dempsey rented a house in Great Falls, trained hard, and was photographed with artist Charlie Russell.

“Dempsey was honest and well liked, but his manager, Kearns, was a crook. When the Shelby promoters had trouble raising the last hundred thousand dollars, someone asked Kearns if he would accept fifty thousand sheep as payment instead of cash. ‘What the hell am I going to do with fifty thousand sheep in New York?’ said Kearns at a Great Falls news conference. ‘I want these people to live up to the terms of their contract. If I don’t see one hundred thousand dollars on July 2, Dempsey will not fight.’ In a final scramble, James Johnson leased out most of his cattle and oil properties, borrowed the rest, and came up with the money.

“On the day of the fight, people came from all over the country. The crowd of ten thousand spectators, said one reporter, was a ‘mix



Jack Dempsey waiting to meet Tommy Gibbons in Shelby, Montana, July 4, 1923

of millionaires, Blackfoot Indians, cowboys, shepherds, hookers and sportswriters.’

At this point, my husband’s family history coincides with that of this book. My husband’s paternal grandmother, Velma Dupuis MacCarter, signed on and served as Chief Ticket Seller for this Extravaganza of the Century. This one brief moment of glory for Velma was the ultimate highlight of her all-too-brief, not-very-happy life.

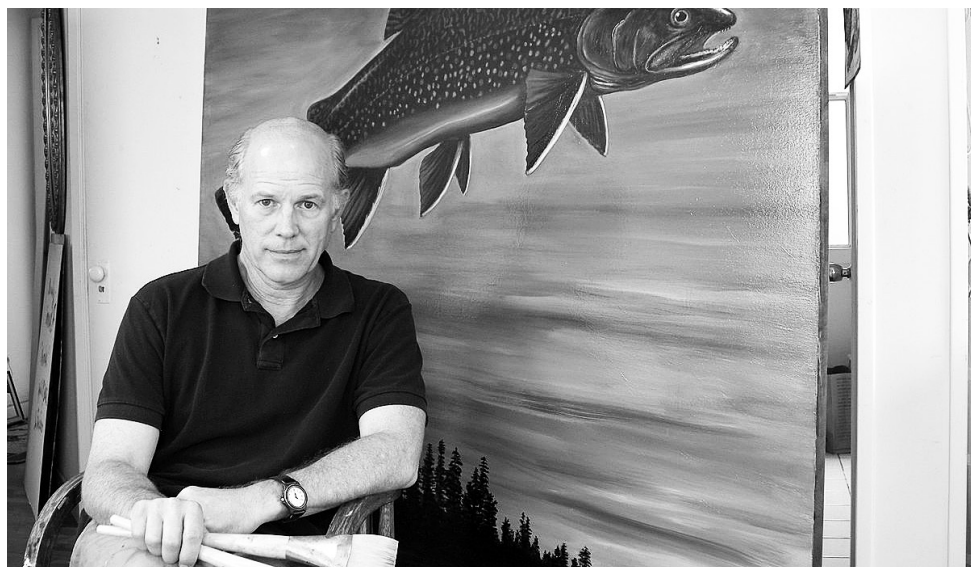
BCIII goes on to say: “Most people crashed the gates.” (So much for poor Velma and the ticket-selling crew she managed.)

“The fight was a tough one for Dempsey, and Tommy Gibbons hung on for fifteen grueling rounds in a dull slugging match. When Dempsey won by a decision, Kearns escaped with the gate receipts in a locomotive hooked only to a caboose. That night, Kearns reputedly slept on the floor of a Great Falls barber shop, clutching the moneybag to his chest, and left at dawn for Seattle.”

Reading “Ghost Hunting in Montana” is to rediscover a forgotten treasure. It deserves placement beside such classics as “Montana: High, Wide and Handsome” by Joseph Kinsey Howard, “The Last best Place” by editors Annick Smith and William Kittredge, and “Montana: An Uncommon Land” by the charismatic English professor at the University of Montana, K. Ross Toole. To my way of thinking, BCIII has also earned a much-deserved place alongside the likes of Brautigan, McGuane, Guthrie, and MacLean.

BCIII concludes his book with a verity too honest not to be sincere and it’s hard not to agree with him: “On a beautiful day in Montana, it was hard to believe God didn’t exist in a sky so blue and so vast, where the clouds seemed like perfect countries onto themselves. And for a moment, just a moment, I wished the pioneers, the buffalo hunters, and cattlemen like my ancestors had never dreamed of the West.” ★

—JANE SUSANN MACCARTER



A recent photo of Barnaby Conrad III in his studio in New York from his Wikipedia page.

MONTANA SPOTLIGHT

Red Ants Pants Grants: Bolstering Community and Empowerment across Montana

Projecting a dedicated community-centered business model, the Red Ants Pants Foundation has awarded over \$100,000 in grants to businesses and community projects in Montana.

"I love the idea that there are so many cool, worth-while projects going on across the state," says Sarah Calhoun, owner of Red Ants Pants, a company dedicated to making work clothes for women. Calhoun is also the founder of the popular summer music festival of the same name held each summer near White Sulphur Springs, Montana.

With a mission to develop and expand leadership roles for women, preserve and support working family farms and ranches and enrich and promote rural communities, the Red Ants Pants Foundation provides a variety of annual grants to organizations across the state and supporting a women's leadership program to encourage young women to participate in community engagement through mentorship.

"Even if it's \$1,000 for a woman in Helena to start her first wood-working business, it's just believing in someone and helping to get their business off the ground," Calhoun says of the work of the foundation and the broad base of Red Ants Pants Foundation grants awarded in the past years. Funding for the grant program and the girl's leadership program comes directly from proceeds generated by the Red Ants Pants Music Festival.

After building a brick-and-mortar and online women's workwear clothing business, Calhoun launched the annual Red Ants Pants Music Festival in a cow pasture outside White Sulphur Springs in 2011. Since its inception, the annual music festival has become an institution in Montana, winning the honor of 2018 Event of the Year by the Montana Office of Tourism.

Country, folk and Americana performers such as Lyle Lovett, Dwight Yoakam, the Steep Canyon Rangers, James McMurtry, Merle Haggard and Robert Earle Keen have all taken the stage at the festival, a three-day event also featuring camping, a variety of ven-

dors and Montana-style demonstrations such as chainsaw skills and cutting horses.

Ticket sales from the Red Ants Pants Music Festival comprise the entire grant program, although donations also figure into the mix, Calhoun says. The grants provide mission-driven boosts to community initiatives, nonprofits and businesses seeking to improve their communities, often in ways previously unimaginable.

Calhoun and the Red Ants Pants Foundation board grant an average of 12 awards per year to businesses and organizations across the state.

Grant awards range from \$1,600 in 2018 to Make it Happen Montana, a program that honors student heroes in schools across the state, to \$4,190 in 2016 to the woman-owned and operated Dropstone Outfitting in Choteau.

From the first grants awarded in 2012 to a broad base of business and organizations including the Gallatin Valley Farm to School program and the YWCA GUTS! Girls' leadership initiative, the Red Ants Pants Foundation has now developed a solid track record of supporting girl's leadership, working family farms, ranches and rural communities. Empowering small business owners and vital, ground-breaking initiatives are all in the foundation's wheelhouse, says Calhoun.

"The grant program is not an incubator for business, it's for leadership on the ground," she adds. "For the grant program, we focus on nonprofit organizations and for-profits with an educational element."

A Pack Mule Named Calhoun

In 2016, a women-owned-and-run Montana outfitter poised on the edge of the Bob Marshall Wilderness, Dropstone Outfitting, was in need of a boost to continue packing in the backcountry. Based in Choteau, the guiding business combined the expertise of co-owners Maggie Carr, a Montana State University graduate in range management, and Yve Bardwell, a University of Montana graduate in environmental studies and water resources.

"We're the only outfitting business in the

Bob that does exclusively foot travel," says Carr, a Choteau native. "We offer the service to people who like to hike, but we provide food, gear, hiking guides and transportation to and from the airport. That's the main difference."

Carr and Bardwell bought the Choteau-based company in 2013 but a few years later realized they needed a few bits and pieces for their growing, hike-centric business.

"That's where Red Ants Pants came in," says Carr. "We needed another mule, a pack saddle and some bear-resistant food containers. So, we applied for that grant and were the recipient in 2016. We ended up buying the mule in 2017. We were the first fully-funded grant at the time."

The hiking-based business won a \$4,190 grant from the Red Ants Pants Foundation.

Carr says they used \$2,300 of the grant monies to purchase a new mule for their operations. Dropstone does not use horses to take clients into the wilderness so it uses mules as packers.

The outfitting company upped the fun ante, collaborating with Red Ants Pants and Facebook on a name-the-mule contest in an example of the creative projects that emerge from foundation support.

"We had a naming competition through Red Ants Pants," says Carr. "'Calhoun' was the highest name voted on ... we left it in the hands of Facebook users."

"I did get a chance to meet Calhoun the mule," Sarah Calhoun says. "It was a big honor. It's not going to get any better than that. I have yet to go on a trip, but I'd like to take our girls' leadership alumni on a trip with Maggie and Yve."

After naming the new mule Calhoun, the outfitters purchased a Red Ants Pants Foundation-embossed pack saddle and pad for \$1,300. In keeping with the community collaboration mission, Dropstone hired Sun River Saddlery of Frenchtown to stamp the saddle.

The outfitting company also bought two bear-resistant food containers totaling \$500. The food containers are required when hiking in the mountains.

"When you travel in the Bob Marshall, it's a Forest Service stipulation that you properly store your food [in an approved contained] so bears can't get in them," Carr says, adding that the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee certifies the containers.

Before receiving the much-needed grant, Dropstone made do with some recyclables.

"We had some old Army ammunition boxes -- big green metal boxes to store med supplies -- that we had refitted, as the committee has certain specs to follow," Carr says. "We had to wrap them up and tie them to the mule."

Bardwell and Carr, both North-central Montana natives who previously worked for various guest ranches and the U.S. Forest Service, appreciate the moral and financial support the Red Ants Pants Foundation grant provided.

"It's an awesome opportunity for small business," says Bardwell. "I know personally how hard it can be to come up with the capital for some small project that would help move your business along. This grant was a real shot in the arm for us. It helped us come up with the stock and the equipment to run two trips simultaneously and that amounts to some major business growth for us."

Choteau residents in 2013, Bardwell and Carr bought High Country Adventures, the first backpacking-centric outfitting business in the country, from Bill and Polly Cunningham, now their industry mentors.

"We share a strong affinity for the Rocky



Proceeds from the annual Red Ants Pants Music Festival in White Sulphur Springs, Montana provide 100 percent of the funding for the Red Ants Pants Foundation grants.

Mountain Front and the 'Bob,' and we take pride in providing quality backcountry trips," Bardwell writes on DropstoneOutfitting.com. "We feel fortunate that we're able to share this landscape with others."

"The Red Ants Pants grant community is a great group to be a part of," says Bardwell. "There are some pretty amazing things going on in rural Montana led by women."

Paying it forward is key to the Red Ants Pants Foundation's mission, a three-pronged objective supporting "girl's leadership, working family farms and ranches, and rural communities," according to the foundation website.

Bardwell and Carr are among the dozens of businesses and organizations exemplifying the Red Ants Pants Foundation mission, says Calhoun.

"It's a network of inspiration and support," adds Bardwell. "And as we continue to grow, it's a community we look forward to working with and helping along. Women in business rock and they like helping each other out."

"With the women's leadership element ... outfitting is not an easy industry to break into," Calhoun stresses. Now her namesake will be facilitating trips in the backcountry for Dropstone and continuing to help the woman-led business prosper.

Community Fire Safety Program

The Garfield County Fire Foundation, based in Jordan, Montana, won the biggest Red Ants Pants Foundation grant to date of \$5,000 in 2018. The organization plans to develop an online fire safety and awareness curriculum, the Teen Fire Safety Online Program, with grant monies.

After recent wildfires, the Jordan community needed early-suppression fire equipment and an educational curriculum targeting ranch-raised teenagers. Young men and women living in rural areas often drive support vehicles alongside adults operating fire-suppression equipment during a crisis.

"The connection between the Garfield County Fire Foundation and Red Ants Pants happened after the 2017 Lodgepole fire," says Anne Miller, Disaster Emergency Services Deputy and a volunteer firefighter. Miller and her husband, fire department Engine Supervisor Eric Miller, live in Jordan, a rural community nearly smack dab in the north-central part of the state about an hour east of Lewistown on Montana Highway 87.



Participants in a recent Red Ants Pants Foundation "Chainsaw 101" course. (Left to right): Katharine Sutphen, Tess Ryley, Sydney Weydemeyer, Holly Wielkoszewski and Brooke Witchell. PHOTO BY BETHANY HANNAH

Following the wildfires, Miller says Jordan and Garfield County parents expressed a need for teens to learn wildfire safety skills such as helping an adult drive fuel and water trucks to firefighters on the front lines and babysitting younger siblings while adults fight fires encroaching on private land.

“In all situations, we want to make sure kids have the ability to make logical decisions they can fall back on,” says Miller, comparing it to a basic, practiced home fire drill among family members.

Miller says the Garfield County Fire Foundation seeks to secure early-suppression fire equipment for the county and to serve as a recovery agent while mitigating the negative impacts of wildfire on the community.

“We will develop a curriculum so agricultural and vocational-ag teachers across the United States, parents and small communities, can use it,” says Miller. “Experts in fire safety will break down the principles and make [the program] very kid-friendly.”

The five-course series will apply videos, personal testimonies and written materials to develop awareness of fire behavior, educate others on what to do if a piece of farm equipment bursts into fire and demonstrate how to work with firefighters and others. Ideally, Miller says, the lessons will incorporate science, math, FFA, 4-H and other course material for students in grades seven through 12. Miller says she hopes the lessons will also enhance community fire awareness for all ages.

“This is something very unique,” says content creator Jeremy Olson of 24link Productions, a public information officer for the Montana Department of National Resources and a volunteer firefighter based in Washburn, N.D.

“It’s probably something not even possible five years ago,” adds Olson. “With technology, we can share information across the country. The whole purpose of this program is to help people make wise decisions and to give them the facts to help prevent fires.”

The target date for the video modules launching the Teen Fire Safety Online Program is June 2019, said Christine Weder, Garfield County disaster recovery outreach coordinator. The versatile curriculum and design are in the research phase, but the educational potential is ground-breaking as far as delivering fire safety to an increasingly wider audience.

“We are defining five classes and content for those classes will work its way into a multimedia project,” says Olson. “The videos are just one small part of the project.

“When it’s all set and done, the video portion can be used as a stand-alone class, but a high school ag teacher or a volunteer fire department can use the resources to teach the class, also,” Olsen adds.

The multi-week or stand-alone curricula are meant to train folks to train other people, says Olson, who created a similar fire education program in North Dakota.

Ideally, a high school science teacher, agriculture teacher or volunteer firefighter across the nation will be able to teach real-life, hands-on lessons and fire awareness from the program, Olson stresses.

“The target audience is high school students and the secondary audience is anyone who lives in rural communities across the nation,” he adds. “Garfield County folks are really progressive in making this project happen. If they are taking the time and effort to do this happen, it will be national.”

While the grant covers the full amount needed to fund the initial lessons, additional costs are to be determined.



(At Right) Red Ants Pants founder Sarah Calhoun with her namesake mule at Dropstone Outfitting. (Below) The RAPF embossed pack saddle and pad. Both the mule and the saddle purchase were made possible by a \$4,190 grant from the Red Ants Pants Foundation.
PHOTOS BY MISSY SPROUSE



“We estimate that with additional donations, grants and matching funds, we should be able to cover the balance, enhance and expand the lessons, as well as keep the online training current and running,” adds Christine Weder.

Red Ants Pants Foundation In-house Programs

With a mission to develop and expand leadership roles for women, preserve and support working family farms and ranches and enrich and promote rural communities, the Red Ants Pants Foundation also works to provide a timber skills and women’s leadership program supporting young women in community engagement through mentoring.

Besides the annual grant-giving program, the foundation is an umbrella organization for programs intrinsically tied to its multi-level mission.

In October, the foundation unveiled a free, inaugural, year-long Girls Leadership Program for Montana girls entering their junior year of high school. With one of three retreats already in the books, program facilitators helped participants “inspire hope in our youth, develop pride in our rural communities and

foster strength and courage in our leadership,” according to the program description on the foundation website.

“The first retreat two weekends ago went so beautifully and beyond our expectations,” Sarah Calhoun says. “The girls are now working with mentors one-on-one.”

The purpose of these programs, Calhoun explains, is to increase girls’ leadership competency and confidence and to create positive social change and positive community impact.

“We had a phenomenal response and loads of applications, from Dillon to Ennis to Browning,” she adds. Eventually, she hopes to expand the program to regional applicants.

“One-hundred percent of the grant program money is awarded to external entities,” says Calhoun. “We have separate line items in our general operating budget for the girls’ leadership program.”

In the girl’s leadership program, young women engage in three webinars throughout the year. Each participant plans a project in their respective community and each is matched with a mentor who offers developmental support and coaching throughout the program.

A diverse, “highly experienced” facilitation



team of women from across Montana with a broad range of professional backgrounds serves as mentors.

Another program offered through the foundation is a three-day “Timber Skills Workshop” designed to empower and educate women of all skill levels on the basic understanding, maintenance and operation of hand and power tools. Participants 18-years-old and older can choose either Chainsaw 101, designed for beginner-to-intermediate chainsaw users or Carpentry 101, designed to teach essential hand and power tool usage in general carpentry.

Safety is the focus of the weekend, ensuring all participants feel comfortable and empowered to learn and practice at their own pace,” reads the course description.

By providing the community with an award-winning annual music festival, the Red Ants Pants Foundation is able to further broaden the scope of their good work across the state.

Calhoun says recognizing and cultivating a strong work ethic, encouraging and building self-reliance for women, educating the public on the importance of maintaining traditional work skills, and providing opportunities for people with different perspectives to connect, build bridges and discover common ground is at the heart of her work with the business, festival and foundation.

The Red Ants Pants Foundation board will meet in January to finalize plans for the next grant cycle, says Calhoun. For more information on grants, the Red Ants Pants Music Festival or participating in Red Ants Pants programs, visit www.redantspants.org. ★

—RENATA BIRKENBUEL

LAST BEST PLACES

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

For nearly a decade, the *Livingston Current* newspaper sponsored an annual Earth Day Photo Contest titled “Last Best Places” from 2004 to 2012. When the same publishers launched the *Montana Press* in November 2018, they decided to bring back the contest and expand the range to include all of Montana.

Traditionally, the contest encouraged photographers to submit their vision of a “Last Best Place.” While contests of the past have included subject matter from all over the world, for the inaugural *Montana Press* competition, we ask photographers to submit images exclusively from Montana.

The finalists of the contest will be selected by the *Montana Press* staff photographer Lindsay Wells whose images have appeared in publications around the world. From a group of finalists, a grand prize winner will be selected along with ten runners-up.



FIRST PRIZE \$500
& COVER IMAGE – MAY 2019 MONTANA PRESS

The Grand Prize is \$500 and publication on the cover of the *Montana Press*. The ten runners-up will also have their photography published in the special issue of the *Montana Press* in May of 2019.

The *Montana Press* will also sponsor a professional gallery showing of the photography and each winner will receive a mounted version of their submitted work.

The *Montana Press* wishes all applicants the best of luck with their submissions capturing “The Last Best Places” of Montana. ★

—MP STAFF



EMAIL ENTRIES

to info@montanapress.net

subject: PHOTO CONTEST
DIGITAL SUBMISSIONS ONLY

OPEN TO ALL AGES

See full contest guidelines at right.

**LIMIT THREE ENTRIES
PER PERSON**

DEADLINE

April 1, 2019 • 12 p.m.

*Submit a caption for each photo
to convey how the image portrays*

**LAST BEST PLACES
IN MONTANA**

PHOTOS BY LINDSAY WELLS



Last Best Places Photography Competition — OFFICIAL RULES —

Term

The 2019 Montana Press Photo Contest (the “Contest”) begins December 1, 2018 and ends April 1, 2019 at 12 p.m. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY APRIL 1, 2019 AT 12 p.m. MST. By submitting an entry, each entrant agrees to the Official Rules and warrants that his or her entry complies with all requirements set out in the Official Rules. This is a skill-based contest and chance plays no part in the determination of winners.

Who May Enter

Contest is open to individuals of all ages.

How to Enter

Entries are limited to three (3) photographs per person. Persons from the same household may all submit separate entries. Photographs must be in digital format. Only online entries will be eligible. No print or film submissions will be accepted for entry into this Contest. The photograph need not be taken with a digital camera; scans of negatives, transparencies, or photographic prints are acceptable. All digital files must be 20 megabytes or smaller, must be in JPEG or .jpg format, and must be at least 1,600 pixels wide (if a horizontal image) or 1,600 pixels tall (if a vertical image).

Photographs may not previously have won an award in any *Livingston Current* Photography Contest.

Only minor burning, dodging and/or color correction is acceptable, as is minor cropping. High dynamic range images (HDR) and stitched panoramas are acceptable. Any changes to the original photograph not itemized here will render the photograph ineligible for a prize.

Photographs that include sculptures, statues, paintings, and other works of art will be accepted as long as they do not constitute copyright infringement or fraud.

The photograph, in its entirety, must be a single work of original material taken by the Contest entrant.

By entering the Contest, entrant represents, acknowledges, and warrants that the submitted photograph is an original work created solely by the entrant, that the photograph does not infringe on the copyrights, trademarks, moral rights, rights of privacy/publicity or intellectual property rights of any person or entity, and that no other party has any right, title, claim, or interest in the photograph.

Subject matter for content is limited to photographs of Montana. A caption for each photo should be provided and must be complete and accurate, sufficient to convey the circumstances in which the photograph was taken and should convey how the image portrays the theme of “Last Best Places.”

Entries will only be accepted when submitted to info@montanapress.net and should contain the words “PHOTO CONTEST” in the subject line.

Judging

Judging consists of two (2) rounds of evaluation based on the following criteria: creativity, photographic quality and genuineness, and authenticity of the content. The entries selected in round one will proceed to round two. In round two, the Judges will collectively select a First Place Winner and ten (10) runners-up.

Contest Prizes

The First Place Winner will receive \$500, and his/her winning photograph will be published on the cover of the May 2019 issue of Montana Press. Ten (10) runners-up will also have their photographs published in the interior in the May 2019 issue of the Montana Press.

License

By entering the Contest, entrants grant a non-exclusive license to reproduce, distribute, display and create derivative works of the entries (along with a name credit) in the print issue of the Montana Press and at a subsequent showing of the photographs in a collective art exhibit.



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WE RECOMMEND...

STATEWIDE CALENDAR LISTINGS

Billings Bozeman Helena Great Falls Butte Missoula & More

We welcome additions and corrections to our monthly calendar. Please send updates to info@montanapress.net.

Saturday, December 1

Statewide

3 Miles to Clyde, rock, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463

Ten Years Gone, Led Zeppelin tribute, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933

Western Sustainability Exchange Holiday Farmers' Market, 9 a.m., Livingston Civic Center, 222-0730
Bob Britten, pianist, 5:30 p.m., Kountry Korner Café, Four Corners, 586-2281

Rawbone, folk/blues/Americana, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303

Billings

Festival of Trees, 11 a.m., MetraPark, Billings, 252-9799

The Oak Ridge Boys, country music, 7:30 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, 256-6052

Strangeways, rock, 7:30 p.m., Pub Station taproom, Billings, 894-2020

Bozeman

Holiday Market Jubilee, 9 a.m., Gallatin County Fairgrounds, Bozeman, 582-3270

SLAM (Support Local Artists and Musicians) Winter Showcase, 12 p.m., Masonic Lodge, Bozeman, 219-7773

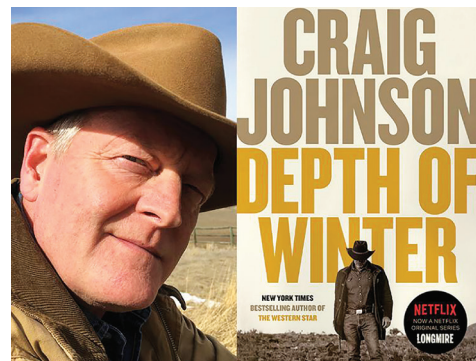
Montana Ballet Company Presents "The Nutcracker," 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Willson Auditorium, Bozeman, 582-8702

Silly Moose Comedy Improv for Kids, 3 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737

Kate & The Alley Kats, musical variety, 4:30 p.m., Wild Joes Coffee, Bozeman, 586-1212

"Tooth of Crime," musical riff, 7:30 p.m., The Eagles Club Ballroom, Bozeman, 587-9996

Irving Berlin's "White Christmas," live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885



STATEWIDE BOOK EVENTS

Monday, December 3

"Idaho's Silver Valley and the Promise and Perils of Industrial Modernity" lecture and book signing with Brad Snow, 5:30 p.m., Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, 994-4247

Tuesday, December 4

Open Mic poetry reading, This House of Books, Billings, 534-1133

Wednesday, December 5

Ednor Therriault, "Myths and Legends of Yellowstone: The True Stories Behind History's Mysteries," book reading, Shakespeare and Co., Missoula, 549-9010

Thursday, December 6

Writer's Night: Doug and Andrea Peacock, "Grizzly Years," 7 p.m., Pine Creek Cafe, Livingston, 222-3628

Christy Stillwell, "The Wolf Tone," book reading, 6 p.m., Country Bookshelf, Bozeman, 587-0166

Saturday, December 8

Craig Johnson, "'Depth of Winter: A Longmire Mystery,'" book reading, This House of Books, Billings, 534-1133

Tuesday, December 11

Molly Damm, "Ground Truth," poetry reading, 6 p.m., Country Bookshelf, Bozeman, 587-0166

Helena

Annual Holiday Sale, Sat. and Sun. 10 a.m., Free Ceramics, Helena, 438-6212

"Willy Wonka," stage play, Wed. through Sun. through Dec. 16, Grandstreet Theatre, Helena, 442-4270

David and Deidre Casey, original songs, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

Great Falls

Liquor Down Band, classic rock, 9:30 p.m., Loading Zone, Great Falls, 727-5777

Butte

"It's a Butte-iful Christmas" Craft Show, 10 a.m., Front Street Station, Butte, 491-4968

30th Annual Festival of Trees, 11 a.m., Gala at 7 p.m., Elks Lodge, Butte, 533-1024

Kitchen Dwellers, bluegrass, Covellite Theatre, Butte, 498-6869

Missoula

Missoula Valley Winter Market, 705 South Higgins, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 396-0593

"Elf: The Musical," through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911

#WomenCrush Festival, 5:30 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251

Holiday Pops, classical music concert, Dennison Theater, UM, 7:30 p.m., Missoula, 243-6880

"White Christmas" stage play, 7:30 p.m., University of Montana, 728-7363

Storyhill, acoustic, 7:30 p.m., Roxy Theater, Missoula, 728-9380

The Waiting, Tom Petty Tribute, 8 p.m., The Wilma, Missoula, 728-2521

Dirtwire, beats/blues and Americana, 9 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Sunday, December 2

Statewide

Montana Ballet Company Presents "The Nutcracker,"

4 p.m., Warren Miller Performing Arts Center, Big Sky, 995-2742

Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs, acoustic brunch, Pine Creek Cafe, Livingston, 222-3628

Dan Henry, blues/reggae/folk, 7 p.m., Norris Hot springs, 685-3303

Billings

The Messiah Festival, free community performance of the Christmas selections from Handel's masterwork, 3:30 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, 256-6052

Bozeman

SLAM (Support Local Artists and Musicians) Winter Showcase, 12 p.m., Masonic Lodge, Bozeman, 219-7773

Irving Berlin's "White Christmas," live musical, 3 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885

Bridger Mountain Big Band, 7 p.m. Sundays, jazz orchestra, Eagles Bar, Bozeman, 587-9996

Dirtwire, electro-acoustic, 7 p.m., The Filling Station, Bozeman, 587-5009

Storyhill, folk duo, 7:30 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776

Great Falls

Voices of Christmas, Great Falls Symphony, 3 p.m., Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts, Great Falls, 453-4102

Missoula

"Fiddler on the Roof," A Hanukkah Sing-a-long, 2 p.m., Roxy Theater, Missoula, 728-9380

"Elf: The Musical," through December 16, 2 p.m., Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911

"White Christmas" stage play, 2 p.m., University of Montana, 728-7363

Holiday Pops, classical music concert, Dennison Theater, UM, 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., Missoula, 243-6880

Monday, December 3

Statewide

Julian Davis, bluegrass, 5 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463

Bozeman

Pints with Purpose, fundraiser, Mondays at 5 p.m., Bridger Brewing, Bozeman

"Idaho's Silver Valley and the Promise and Perils of Industrial Modernity" lecture and book signing with Brad Snow, 5:30 p.m., Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman, 994-4247

Irving Berlin's "White Christmas," live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885

Helena

Open Mic Night, 6 p.m. Mondays, Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

Helena Symphony Non-Series Concert 3, 7:30 p.m., Cathedral of St. Helena, Helena, 442-1860

Missoula

Raising the Dead, live recorded music, 5 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Open Mic hosted by Gary Kiggins, Imagine Nation Brewing, 6 p.m., Missoula, 926-1251

An evening with Joe Biden, discussion of book "Promise Me, Dad," 7:30 p.m., Dennison Theater, UM, Missoula, joebidenbook.com

Larry Hirshberg, rock music, 7 p.m., Red Bird Wine Bar, Missoula, 549-2906

Tuesday, December 4

Statewide

Rich Mayo, Americana music, 6 p.m., Kountry Korner Café, Four Corners, 586-2281

Billings

Open Mic poetry reading, This House of Books, Billings, 534-1133

Bozeman

Open Mic, 7 p.m. Zocalo Coffee House, Bozeman, 404-1036

Helena

String Beings, bluegrass, 6 p.m. Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729

Poolside Music with Aaron Williams, 6 p.m., Broadwater Hot Springs, Helena, 443-5777

Helena Last Chance Barbershop Chorus, 7 p.m., South Hills Church of Christ, Helena, 449-2877

Butte

National Miner's Day Gala, World Museum of Mining, Butte, 723-7211

Gothard Sister's Christmas, fundraiser concert, 7 p.m., Mother Lode Theatre, Butte, 723-3602

Missoula

Tuesday Picking Circle, bluegrass, 6 p.m., Montana Distillery, Missoula, 541-1889

Imagine Ireland, Irish traditional music, 7 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251



EXPERIENCE ART IN A LIVING ENVIRONMENT
AT THE RIALTO IN BOZEMAN AT THE SETTLE
RUTH SALON EVENT ON DECEMBER 5.

Wednesday, December 5

Bozeman

Music & Mussels with Bridger Creek Boys, bluegrass, 5:30 p.m., Bridger Brewing, Bozeman

Stettie Ruth, art exhibit, 6 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776

Gallatin History Museum Lecture, "Gallatin Agricultural Heritage" with Cindy Shearer, 6 p.m., Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman

Acoustic Wednesdays, 6 p.m., Wildrye Distillery, Bozeman, 577-2288

Pickin' in the Parks, acoustic string jam, 6:30 p.m., Story Mansion, Bozeman, 582-2290

Hofbrau Open Mic, 10 p.m., Bozeman, 587-4931

Helena

Cottonwood Club, jazz, 6 p.m., On Broadway, Helena, 443-1929

Cow Tipping Comedy, 6:30 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

The Alley Cats, doo-wop Christmas party, 7:30 p.m., Helena Civic Center, 227-9711

Missoula

Ednor Therriault, "Myths and Legends of Yellowstone: The True Stories Behind History's Mysteries," book reading, Shakespeare and Co., Missoula, 549-9010

Thursday, December 6

Statewide

Smith McCay All Day, rock, 8 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463



OPEN MIC NIGHTS

MONDAYS

HELENA: 6 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, 442-5960

MISSOULA: 6 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, 926-1251

TUESDAYS

BOZEMAN: 7 p.m. Zocalo Coffee House, 404-1036

MISSOULA: 9:30 p.m., Union Club, Missoula, 728-7980

WEDNESDAYS

BOZEMAN: 10 p.m. Hofbrau, 587-4931

THURSDAYS

HELENA: 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, 443-1729

MISSOULA: 8 p.m. Thursdays, VFW Post 209, 728-7749

Writer's Night: Doug and Andrea Peacock, "Grizzly Years," 7 p.m., Pine Creek Café, Livingston, 222-3628

Billings

Projectile Comedy, 8 p.m. Thursdays, The Loft, Billings, 259-9074

Bozeman

Christy Stillwell, "The Wolf Tone," book reading, 6 p.m., Country Bookshelf, Bozeman, 587-0166

Bridger Creek Boys, bluegrass, 7 p.m. Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 599-1399

Lazy Suzy, rock/jazz and soul music, 8 p.m., Zebra Lounge, Bozeman, 585-8851

"Eddie's First Christmas on Patrol," stage play, 8 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737

Helena

Travis Yost, dreamy Americana, 5 p.m., Ten Mile Creek Brewery, Helena, 502-1382

Ian Thomas, country/folk, 5 p.m., Snow Hop Brewery, Helena, 442-5026

Spare Change, jazz, 6 p.m., On Broadway, Helena, 443-1929

Open Mic, 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729

Hawthorne Roots, folk/rock, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

Great Falls

Weekly Irish Seisium, 6 p.m., Celtic Cowboy, Great Falls, 952-0393

The Thrillbillies, country, 6 p.m., The Sting Sports Bar, Great Falls, 727-7972

Butte

Six Appeal, a cappella group, 7 p.m., Rialto Theatre, Butte, 846-7900

Missoula

Jason Clark of UM presents a Gallery Talk, "Between Wisdom & Knowledge: Contemporary Native American Art," 5 p.m., Montana Museum of Arts & Culture, Meloy Gallery, Missoula, 243-2019

"Elf: The Musical," through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911

Rodgers and Hammerstein's "Cinderella," Broadway play and musical, 7:30 p.m., Adams Center, Missoula, 243-4051

Open Mic, 8 p.m., VFW Post 209, Missoula, 728-7749

"Keep it on the Low" tour with Demon Assassin, 8 p.m., Monk's Bar, Missoula. monksbarmt.com

Homegrown Open Mic Comedy, 9:30 p.m., Union Club, Missoula, 728-7980

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

MATCHING MUSICIANS AND ARTS PROGRAMS IN RURAL MONTANA

In 1982, a dozen arts lovers sat in a room at Montana State University in Bozeman listening to VHS tapes, trying to select performing artists for its inaugural Montana Performing Arts Consortium (MPAC) conference. The conference, which would bring together area concert presenters with far-flung acts, aimed to bring live music, dance, and theater to rural Montana towns largely considered cultural no-fly zones.

"Montana's low population and great distances between venues meant performing artists would generally bypass the state," says John Barsness, who led the consortium for almost 40 years. "What was needed was a reason for performers to stop and a way to help make live acts affordable to small, rural and urban communities in Montana."

MPAC is Montana's artistic matchmaker, bringing together community arts groups looking to fill their concert schedules with high-quality, professional performers looking to fill their calendars with decent paying gigs. In the past, the conference has brought acts to Montana that have eventually become art-world famous. Pianist-composer Philip Aaberg and new age Grammy Award winners Tingstad & Rumbel were MPAC performers.

"Montana is entry level, bottom of the food chain," says Barsness. "It's a good place for artists to learn the ropes."

Every January, MPAC sponsors its annual conference, a three-day meet-and-greet of presenters and performers that results in "block booking" a cluster of nearby venues that seek to book the same artists around the same time of year. Block booking allows several groups to share the travel costs of bringing an act to Montana, and it guarantees performers a handful of nearby gigs that make performing in tiny towns economically feasible.

For instance, in April 2019, a New York City-based trio of two singers and a pianist — O Sole Trio — will play gigs in Libby, Polson, Conrad, Fort Benton, Superior, Plains, and Hobson.

"This is how we get culture to places that otherwise couldn't see these kinds of concert," says Keern Haslem, the new MPAC executive director. Haslem is also a playwright, project coordinator at the Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, artistic director of The Square Players, and founding treasurer of the Mansfield Center Foundation for the Performing Arts.

"Audiences are so grateful to see them, to welcome them into their communities, and put them on stage," says Haslem. "Artists who come to Montana feel like they're part of a family." MPAC also provides small grants, about \$500, to help arts groups afford the talent they want to bring to their small towns.

O Sole Trio's David Shenton shelled out \$3,000 in travel costs to attend the MPAC conference in early 2018 — one of several booking conferences the trio attends each year. Some of the big conferences, like New York City's Association of Performing Arts Professionals conference, includes thousands of presenters and hundreds of performers. MPAC hosts 20 to 25 presenters and typically 17 acts.

"We have a one in 17 chance of getting booked," says Shenton, who wound up booking seven full shows and ten outreach performances and master classes in Montana schools, hospitals, and hospices. "We're definitely going to make some money."

The trio also made some friends. While the big conferences may feel like move-'em-in/move-'em-out factories, MPAC works hard to foster relationships during weekends where presenters and artists not only wander the same space, they dine together and invest time learning each others' stories.

All trio members, for instance, hail from small towns, so they understand the joys and struggles of some one-horse Montana venues.

MPAC "was much more friendly," says Shenton, who typically performs for 800-people audiences. "Everybody got a chance to interact. We met every artist and presenter, went to lunch and dinner, walked around town. It was very convivial and friendly. These are the kind of gigs we like to do."



O Sole Trio

January Conference in Great Falls

The MPAC, founded in 1981, is a non-profit organization with a \$50,000-ish budget funded by Montana's Cultural Trust, National Endowment for the Arts grants funneled through Montana arts councils, and income earned from the annual MPAC Artist Showcase & Conference.

Presenters pay \$250 to \$350 for their group to attend, and artists pay \$35 for an application and jury fee plus \$150 for the booth.

The 2019 conference will be held January 25 to 27 at the Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts in Great Falls. The conference site alternates yearly between Great Falls and Fort Benton.

The conference includes four types of participants:

- Rural and urban "presenters," another word for the people who book concerts for their local arts groups.
- Performing artists selected by a three-person jury and their entourage of managers and promotional staff.
- Reps for arts council, summer fairs, and festivals.
- School administrators who books acts that typically spend a day or two in classrooms and assemblies holding master classes and giving kids facetime with performing artists, a first for many students.

The annual conference is "extremely valuable" to Robert Beotcher, a retired sun flower farmer who sits on the board of the Choutau County Performing Arts Concert Association, which sponsors eight concerts a year. "Fifty-

to-seventy-five percent of our acts come from the consortium. We could go through a booking agent, but you don't get the chance to see them, as we do at the conference. If we didn't have the consortium, it would be a lot more difficult to put together a concert season."

The MPAC conference begins on Friday afternoon when about 20 presenters occupy convention display booths and talk up their organizations to artists who cruise the room pressing the flesh of people who might hire them.

"One of the traditional challenges for artists at conferences is trying to make eye-contact with presenters, who are moving targets," Barsness says. "We turn the tables and put the presenters in the booths, and the artists go around the room learning about the communities and what performers they're looking for."

Later in the weekend, presenters visit performer-occupied booths.

On Saturday, 17 artists perform in showcases scattered throughout the day. Each act gets 12 minutes to wow the crowd. It's a sales opportunity that requires artistic and marketing chops.

"We've seen so many showcases where groups sing a song, bow, and get off," says Shenton of O Sole Trio. "We want it to be a party on stage and want the audience to feel like they're part of the show."

On Sunday, the horse trading begins. Presenters meet to discuss the acts, stake claims on whom they want to book, and then haggle over times and dates that form an attractive block of two-to-six bookings, which include some tiny Montana towns like Belt, pop. 500.

With a little luck, every artist attracts some interest; but invariably some are more popular than others.

"I gave up trying to predict what presenters would be interested in years ago," Barsness says.

"It's always something different. Also, the taste of a community evolves."

Okaidja, an Afropop singer-songwriter from Ghana, was a 2018 conference favorite and booked shows in several towns throughout Montana in 2018.

"World music always does well, mainly because school programs want to expose Montana students to diverse music forms and different cultures," Barsness says.

After presenters form their wish list of performers, the artists and venues start negotiating dates and fees. Sometimes, discussions last for months, especially with older bookers who prefer chatting on the phone than returning emails or texts.

Shenton says weeks elapsed before he mapped out an itinerary for O Sole Trio that made sense — early proposals had the trio traversing the state every other day.

"Logistically, it was a little difficult, because most presenters didn't have emails," Shenton says. "We'd call, and presenters would hang up because they thought it was a telemarketer. It took six months to get it together. It's not New York City where everybody is in a rush to do everything. It's Montana."

For further information about MPAC, call Keern Haslem, 916-798-4479. ★

—LISA KAPLAN GORDON



Okaidja Afroso Rhythmic Music Delights Sanders County

On November 17, 2018 at 7:30 p.m. Okaidja Afroso performed a 90-minute music and dance concert at the Rex Theater in Thompson Falls, Montana. There were approximately sixty adults and children in the audience. Afroso encouraged the audience to interact with his music and dance, which the audience did many times during the event.

Audience members were tapping their feet, clapping their hands, and at times shouting in response to Afroso, his music, and his fellow musicians: Francis and Bonoir Jr. Afroso informed the audience the music they would be hearing is from his recent album, clarifying, "Though when I say recent, it actually is two years old now. Maybe it is time for a new album."

During the concert Afroso gave the audience more information about his culture and living in a small town in Ghana. He shared recollections of his grandfather and the meanings behind some of his songs. One song he translated for the audience, "Heaven is not that far away, it is right there inside you." After the last song, Afroso asked that the house lights be turned up and encouraged the audience to engage in a question and answer session.

One audience member asked Afroso how he became interested in music and dance. He replied, "I watched a group of people in my home town perform music and dance. I danced and was told that I was very bad and should probably never dance again in public. I was determined I wanted to continue and kept practicing. Later on, I auditioned for the National Dance Company and was accepted. They helped me get a college education." Afroso then encouraged everyone in the audience to pursue their dreams and aspirations.

"Don't ever give up, no matter what you want to do. If you want to be a mathematician, work for NASA, or be a dancer. Don't listen to those people who ridicule or doubt you, they are not important. Keep going and believing you will do what you want."

Afroso spoke about the most surprising thing he has seen in his travels, "The people have been very accepting of us. We really enjoy being in places where we receive such a warm welcome by everyone."

Karen Thorson, who is the president of the Sanders County Arts Council (SCAC), the organization sponsoring this and other live music and performance events in Sanders County, discussed how the Montana Performing Arts Consortium (MPAC) has been impacting her organization. "The consortium is the lifeblood of what the rural presenters do. We are very thankful for all the help they give us." SCAC has continued to be a strong supporter of the visual and performing arts within Sanders County, Montana. ★

—DOUGLAS WILKS

MONTANA FAVORITE JERRY JOSEPH RETURNS FOR 2018 TOUR

As 2018 draws to a close, singer Jerry Joseph and his long-time rock band The Jackmormons are hitting the home-stretch with dates across Montana in December. It's been a hectic 12 months for the Portland-based musician with touring, his charity work and releasing a new effort entitled "Full Metal Burqa" on Cavity Search Records.

"A bulk of that material had been written in Afghanistan and near war zones," Joseph says of the new album. A previous album, "By The Time Your Rocket Gets To Mars" also featured songs inspired by Joseph's experience in Afghanistan in 2014 volunteering as a teacher at an underground co-ed rock school.

"For 'By The Time Your Rocket Gets To Mars' we tried to keep the songs about magic and god. We sort of left the ones off that were

a little bit more political about Afghanistan," he admits. "That said, I don't think 'Full Metal Burqa' is a political record. 'Full Metal Burqa' is kind of an outtakes album. But then again so was [1981 Rolling Stones album] 'Tattoo You.'"

Joseph says the time he spent teaching Afghan children and teens music while supplying them instruments gave him a greater appreciation for his craft.

"One thing it gave me is it gave me a faith in the power of music that I didn't think I really had," he says. "I've always debated whether I thought music was that powerful or that important. At the end of the day, it's primarily pop music. I think it's awesome for getting laid and for being a teenager or for sad days when it's raining and you're looking out your window with a cup of coffee and a joint. But I never really understood the impact until I saw some 18-year-old kid in Afghanistan learning Megadeth riffs and I realized how powerful it can be in your life."

Growing up as a teenager in the LA Jolla, California area, Joseph says the music scene there at the time was less than ideal. The grandson of Lebanese, Syrian and Irish Catholic immigrants, he spent his youth in California surfing the beaches, playing in rock and reggae bands and splitting his time between California and Wellington, New Zealand before launching as a traveling performer.

Joseph has a long history with Montana, from recording albums in the state to finding the inspiration for his band The Jackmormons in Bozeman.

"We've been playing Montana since 1982," he says. "We've had a great relationship with the people there and with the state. I guess we're kind of on fire. We're on the last run so we picked ending there on purpose."

"I met the bass player we have now [in Montana] in 1984. I also lived there for a little while," Joseph says. "The Jackmormons actually got started there. I was living in Bozeman and I was not going to play music. Somebody convinced me to play this party and the people I played with ended up being The Jackmormons."

He has recorded two live albums in Montana: "Badlandia" at Banditos in Virginia City in 2009 and "Mouthful of Copper," recorded at the Irish Times in Butte and released in 2003.

After spending years touring in far-flung locales like Lebanon, Iceland, Cambodia and Israel, he has called Portland, Oregon home for roughly the last two decades. Although Joseph is well-known in the Portland music scene and was inducted into the Oregon Music Hall of Fame in 2015, he says the welcoming musical community is not the only draw to Portland.

"Portland has a pretty vibrant music scene," Joseph says. "For a small city there's a lot of pretty big bands and then there's a million young bands all competing for the same dollar. But I don't live there because of music, I live there because it's a good place to raise my kids."

Over his prolific career Joseph has produced roughly 30 releases and over 250 original songs. According to Joseph, songwriting and playing music is a natural process. After decades of writing and performing, he says he now feels a deeper sense of gravitas each time he puts pen to paper.

"I think the stakes are higher," says the 57



year-old singer. "As you get older I think you realize you only have a limited time to say something of value. You kind of wish you could go back 30 years and rewrite some of the stuff to make it a little more poignant or a little more honest. When I was young, I read an interview with Neil Young and he said, 'You know I write it, I don't touch it, I never go back to it.' I very much held onto that. And frankly I think it was a huge mistake."

"My friend Willy Vlautin has a band called Richmond Fontaine. He's a pretty renowned writer. One of his books, 'Lean On Pete,' was just made into a movie. He talks about sometimes taking five years to get a line in a song. I used to think that was ridiculous. But now as I'm older I think that was the right move."

Joseph admits he is finding a deeper connection with his own music, noting, "I don't think I ever considered what I do to be art until pretty recently."

Jerry Joseph and The Jackmormons spent this fall touring the States and hitting the East Coast before trekking westward towards Colorado, Iowa and Utah. After the Montana leg of the tour, the band wraps up 2018 with three nights at Mississippi Studios in Portland, including a New Year's Eve gig. In January 2019 he is slated to play the 30A Songwriters festival in South Walton, Florida and headline a three-night run of concerts in Tulum, Mexico in late April.

Joseph plans to spend the rest of 2019 re-

cording a solo album and working with his non-profit organization to give children in war-torn regions access to a musical education. Joseph documents the work of his yet-unnamed non-profit on his blog at www.jerryjoseph.com. The non-profit is working to bring musical instruments into war zone areas and refugee camps in places like Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I want the non-profit to bring instruments into combat zones, and we're going to Iraq again this year," Joseph says. He adds that he will be taking a slight step back from working with The Jackmormons.

"Nobody's sick, we're not breaking up," he emphasizes. "I think just for the band we wanted to recharge. I'm taking a year and kind of putting the band on ice. I want to do something with the band where we're playing or we're doing something that's outside of the box."

Jerry Joseph and the Jackmormons will tour across the state in December. The band will play The Great Northern in Whitefish on December 12, the Top Hat Lounge in Missoula on December 13, the Rialto in Bozeman on December 14, and The Covellite Theater in Butte on December 15. For more information on Joseph or the upcoming tour, visit www.jerryjoseph.com. ★

—JASON MACNEIL

"As you get older I think you realize you only have a limited time to say something of value," says the 57 year-old singer. "You kind of wish you could go back 30 years and rewrite some of the stuff to make it a little more poignant or a little more honest. When I was young, I read an interview with Neil Young and he said, 'You know I write it, I don't touch it, I never go back to it.' I very much held onto that. And frankly I think it was a huge mistake."

WE RECOMMEND...

STATEWIDE CALENDAR LISTINGS

Billings Bozeman Helena Great Falls Butte Missoula & More

Friday, December 7

Statewide

“Peter Pan” stage production, Montana Actor’s Theatre, Havre, 945-0272
Gary Small and The Coyote Brothers, blues and rockabilly, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Montana Manouche, gypsy jazz, 6 p.m., Uncorked Wine and Cheese Bar, Livingston, 222-5418
Holiday Vaudeville Extravaganza, 8 p.m., The Dulcie Theatre, Livingston, 222-1420
Donny Elliot Band, 5:30 p.m., Kountry Korner Café, Four Corners, 586-2281
Aran Buzzas, Montana folk tonk, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303

Billings

Rescued and Reclaimed, antique show, 9 a.m., Montana Pavillion, Billings, 670-5459
Billings Holiday ArtWalk, 5 p.m., downtown Billings, 690-1662
Funky Bunch Improv, 7:30 p.m., NOVA Center, Billings, 591-9535
Warren Miller, **“Face of Winter,”** film screening, 7:30 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, 256-6052
John Roberts y Pan Blanco, musical variety, 8 p.m., Pub Station Ballroom, Billings, 894-2020
“A Christmas Carol,” classic stage play, Friday through Sunday, NOVA Center, Billings, 591-9535

Bozeman

Jazz Night, 7 p.m., Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 359-1999
Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
“Eddie’s First Christmas on Patrol,” stage play, 8 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
World’s Finest & Chain Station, bluegrass, 8 p.m., The Filling Station, Bozeman, 603-969-3548

Helena

Steven Gores, pianist, 5:30 p.m., Holter Museum of Art, Helena, 442-6400
Mead and Read, 6 p.m., Holter Museum of Art, Helena, 442-6400
Dan Henry Band, blues/rock, 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729

Great Falls

Jeff Christiansen, live music, 7 p.m. Fridays, The Sting Sports Bar, Great Falls, 727-7972

Missoula

Bill Lacroix, folk music, 11 a.m., Bagels on Broadway, Missoula, 728-8900
First Friday Gallery Night, downtown Missoula, 5 p.m., 541-0860
Missoula Little Red Truck Vintage Market, 5 p.m., Missoula Fairgrounds, 721-3247
Holiday Open House, 5 p.m., Zootown Arts Community Center, Missoula, 549-7555



TOM CATMULL

American roots musician Tom Catmull is a Missoula-based favorite who will be touring around the state this December. His performances are split between intimate solo acoustic venues and raucous dancehalls. Catmull has shared the stage with Greg Brown, Robbie Fulks, Kelly Joe Phelps, Charlie Musselwhite and Asleep at the Wheel. Catmull plays Dec. 10 at the Redbird Wine Bar in Missoula; Dec. 15 at The Murray in Livingston; Dec. 28 at Uncorked in Livingston; Dec. 29 at the Top Hat Lounge in Missoula; and Dec. 30 at Norris Hot Springs.

Lantern Tours Living History Program, 5:30 p.m., Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, 728-3476
Hawthorne Roots, folk/rock, 7 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865
The Skurfs, Red Onion Purple and West Fork, Youth Cycles Concert Series, Free Cycles, 7 p.m., Missoula, 541-7284
“Elf: The Musical,” through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911

Saturday, December 8

Statewide

The Ridgeway Collective, jazz, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Holiday Vaudeville Extravaganza, 8 p.m., The Dulcie Theatre, Livingston, 222-1420
Bob Britten, pianist, 5:30 p.m., Kountry Korner Café, Four Corners, 586-2281
Todd Green, acoustic electric, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
Billings
Craig Johnson, **“Depth of Winter: A Longmire Mystery,”** book reading, This House of Books, Billings, 534-1133
The Midtown Men, cover music, 7:30 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, 256-6052

Bozeman

“You Are A Miracle,” Festival of Lights, 7:30 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
Bozeman Symphony, **“Gloria,”** 7:30 p.m., Willson Auditorium, Bozeman, 585-9774
“Tooth of Crime,” musical riff, 7:30 p.m., The Eagles Club Ballroom, Bozeman, 587-9996
Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
“Eddie’s First Christmas on Patrol,” stage play, 8 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Hellbound Glory, country, 8 p.m., The Filling Station, Bozeman, 587-5009

Helena

The Dusty Pockets, rock, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Great Falls
Electric City Roller Grrrlz, roller derby, 7 p.m., Montana ExpoPark, Great Falls, 217-7720

Butte

Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs, county/folk, 7 p.m., Covellite Theatre, Butte, 498-6869

Missoula

Missoula Valley Winter Market, 705 South Higgins, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 396-0593
Holiday Craft Bazaar, Fraternal Order of Eagles #32, 9 a.m., Missoula, 531-0946
Little Red Truck Vintage Market, 10 a.m., Missoula Fairgrounds, 721-3247
Holiday Swing Sets, big band jazz and dancing, Downtown Dance Collective, 3 p.m., Missoula, 360-8763
Lantern Tours Living History Program, 5:30 p.m., Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, 728-3476
“Elf: The Musical,” through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911
Locksaw Cartel, 7:30 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Sunday, December 9

Statewide

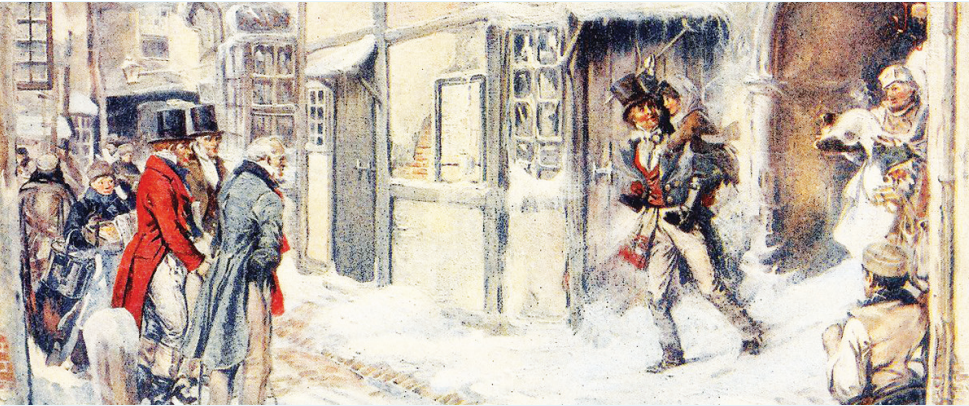
Philip Aaberg, High Plains Christmas Show, 3 p.m., Fort Benton Elementary School, 622-2013
Peter King, acoustic brunch, 11 a.m., Pine Creek Café, Livingston, 222-3628
Holiday Vaudeville Extravaganza, 3 p.m., The Dulcie Theatre, Livingston, 222-1420
Rod Morrison, acoustic rock/Americana, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303

Billings

“A Child’s Christmas in Wales,” NOVA Center, Billings, 591-9535

Bozeman

Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 3 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
“Eddie’s First Christmas on Patrol,” stage play, 3 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Hops Against Hunger, fundraiser event, 5 p.m., Bozeman Brewing Company, Bozeman, 585-9142
Paranormal Talk and Trivia, 6:30 p.m., Townshend’s Teahouse, Bozeman, 577-2740
Bridger Mountain Big Band, 7 p.m., jazz orchestra, Eagles Bar, Bozeman, 587-9996
Long Neck Bottles Band, country, 4 p.m., VFW, Helena, 227-8163
Great Falls
The Harp featuring the Cascade Quartet, 2 p.m., First Congregational Church, Great Falls, 453-4102



NOVA CENTER IN BILLINGS PRESENTS “A CHRISTMAS CAROL”

The Charles Dickens classic holiday stage play touches on forgiveness, compassion, choices, family, guilt, and memories. Presented in a new way with a full cast of both youth and adults on stage at the NOVA Center for the Performing Arts (novabillings.org) on Montana Avenue in Billings nightly Dec. 7 through 9 and Dec. 14 through 16. Starring Steve Zediker as Ebenezer Scrooge and Erin Tucker as Tiny Tim.

Missoula

Missoula Holiday MADE Fair, 11 a.m., Adams Center, Missoula, 243-6880
“Elf: The Musical,” through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911
Lantern Tours Living History Program, 5:30 p.m., Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, 728-3476
“The Sunday Nightcap,” an Evening of Burlesque, 8 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Monday, December 10

Statewide

Mercedes Carroll, singer/songwriter, 5 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Bozeman
Pints with Purpose, fundraiser, Mondays at 5 p.m., Bridger Brewing, Bozeman
Improv on the Verge, 7 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Raising the Dead, rebroadcast of Grateful Dead show, 5 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Helena

Open Mic Night, 6 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Missoula
Open Mic hosted by Gary Kiggins, Imagine Nation Brewing, 6 p.m., Missoula, 926-1251
Tom Catmull, original/stolen Americana, 7 p.m., Red Bird Wine Bar, Missoula, 549-2906
“Momedy: A Postpartum Storytelling Adventure,” 8 p.m., Roxy Theater, Missoula, 728-9380
Zion 1, hip-hop, 9 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865



“TELL US SOMETHING” LIVE ON STAGE
AT THE WILMA IN MISSOULA ON DEC. 11

Tuesday, December 11

Statewide

Dulcie Film Series “Queen of Katwe,” film screening, 6:30 p.m., The Dulcie Theatre, Livingston, 222-1420
Steve Rose, country, 7 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Rich Mayo, Americana music, 6 p.m., Kountry Korner Café, Four Corners, 586-2281
Bozeman
Molly Damm, **“Ground Truth,”** poetry reading, 6 p.m., Country Bookshelf, Bozeman, 587-0166
Evening with the Experts, “Into the Arctic,” 6 p.m., Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman
Open Mic, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, Zocalo Coffee House, Bozeman, 404-1036
Helena
String Beings, bluegrass, 6 p.m. Tuesdays, Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729
Helena Last Chance Barbershop Chorus, 7 p.m., South Hills Church of Christ, Helena, 449-2877

Great Falls

The Harp featuring the Cascade Quartet, 2 p.m., University of Providence Chapel, Great Falls, 791-5202
Missoula
Tuesday Picking Circle, bluegrass, 6 p.m., Montana Distillery, Missoula, 541-1889
“Tell Us Something: A Celebration of Storytelling,” live show, 6 p.m., The Wilma, Missoula, 728-2521
Imagine Ireland, Irish traditional music, Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251
Felly, hip-hop, 9 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Wednesday, December 12

Bozeman

Music & Mussels, Edis and the Incredibles, 5:30 p.m., Bridger Brewing, Bozeman, 587-2124
Acoustic Wednesdays, 6 p.m., Wildrye Distillery, Bozeman, 577-2288
Pickin’ in the Parks, acoustic string jam, 6:30 p.m., Story Mansion, Bozeman, 582-2290
Hofbrau Open Mic, 10 p.m., Bozeman, 587-4931

Helena

Helena Blues Project, 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729
Cow Tipping Comedy, 6:30 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Great Falls
Adoptathon, adopt a pet, 12 p.m., Petsmart, Great Falls, 770-4238

Thursday, December 13

Statewide

Daniel Kosel, country and rock, 8 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Billings
Extrinsic Collective, multi-band performance, 7:45 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020
Projectile Comedy, 8 p.m., The Loft, Billings, 259-9074
Bozeman
Bridger Creek Boys, bluegrass, 7 p.m., Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 599-1399
Lazy Suzy, rock/jazz and soul music, 8 p.m., Zebra Lounge, Bozeman, 585-8851
“Eddie’s First Christmas on Patrol,” stage play, 8 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737

Helena

Matt Srachan, acoustic, 5 p.m., Snow Hop Brewery, Helena, 442-5026
Aran Buzzas, Montana folky tonk, 5 p.m., Ten Mile Creek Brewery, Helena, 502-1382
Coffee Can Stash, jazz, 6 p.m., On Broadway, Helena, 443-1929
Myles Kennedy, rock music, 8 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 465-1231
Great Falls
Weekly Irish Seisium, 6 p.m., Celtic Cowboy, Great Falls, 952-0393
The Thrillbillies, country, 6 p.m., The Sting Sports Bar, Great Falls, 727-7972
Cirque Musica Holiday Wonderland, 7:30 p.m., Montana ExpoPark, Great Falls, 455-8514
Missoula
“Elf: The Musical,” through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911
Open Mic, 8 p.m. Thursdays, VFW Post 209, Missoula, 728-7749
Jerry Joseph & The Jackmormons, rock, 9 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Friday, December 14

Statewide

Reckless Abandon, blues, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463

WE RECOMMEND...

STATEWIDE CALENDAR LISTINGS

Billings Bozeman Helena Great Falls Butte Missoula & More

Friday, December 14 (cont.)

Statewide

Holiday Vaudeville Extravaganza, Dec. 14-16, 8 p.m., The Dulcie Theatre, Livingston, 222-1420
Bob Bramblett/Scott Boehler, blues/R&B, 6 p.m., Uncorked Wine and Cheese Bar, Livingston, 222-5418
Russ Nassett & The Revelators, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Dave Provost, original Americana, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303

Billings

“Twas a Girls Night Before Christmas: The Musical,” 7:30 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, 256-6052
“A Christmas Carol,” classic stage play, Friday - Sunday, NOVA Center, Billings, 591-9535
Matt Braunger “Please Hold Me” comedy tour, 8 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020

Bozeman

Winter Art Walk, 6 p.m., Downtown Bozeman, 586-4008
Jazz Night, 7 p.m. Fridays, Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 359-1999
Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
“Eddie’s First Christmas on Patrol,” stage play, 8 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Jerry Joseph and the Jackmormons, rock, 8:30 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
710 Ashbury, Grateful Dead tribute, 8 p.m., The Filling Station, Bozeman, 587-5009

Helena

Moonshine, live music and dancing, 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729
Whitey Morgan, country, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Great Falls

Missoula

Christmas Steamer with live music by the Tuba Santas, 3 p.m., Draughtworks Brewery, Missoula, 541-1592
Garden City Ballet presents “The Nutcracker,” Fri.-Sun., UM Montana Theatre, 243-4051
Bill Lacroix, folk music, 11 a.m., Bagels on Broadway, Missoula, 728-8900
“TubaChristmas!” brass music, 7 p.m., Southgate Mall Clock Court, Missoula, 241-8616
“Elf: The Musical,” through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911
Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs, county/folk, 10:15 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Saturday, December 15

Statewide

Tom Catmull, original/stolen Americana, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Russ Nassett & The Revelators, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Michael Hoffman, acoustic country/originals, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303



GIRL’S NIGHT OUT: THE MUSICAL IN BILLINGS AND BUTTE

The latest brainchild from the producers of the box office hit, “Girls Night: The Musical,” an all-new Christmas sequel “Twas the Girl’s Night Before Christmas,” features the same five characters who spent a wild, tearful, joyous evening out in a Karaoke night club now gathering for a night on the town to laugh, cry, gossip and let their hair down during the craziest time of the year: the holidays. Playing at the Alberta Bair Theater at 7:30 p.m. in Billings Dec.

Billings

Holiday Chorus, 11 a.m., Billings Public Library, Billings, 657-8290
Seasons Beatings 3, MMA fighting, 7 p.m., MetraPark, Billings, 697-0542
Holiday Pops Concert, Billings Symphony, 7:30 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, 256-3610

Bozeman

Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
“Eddie’s First Christmas on Patrol,” stage play, 8 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Matt Braunger “Please Hold Me” comedy tour, 8:45 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
710 Ashbury, Grateful Dead tribute, 8 p.m., The Filling Station, Bozeman, 587-5009

Helena

Holiday Vendor Affair, 10 a.m., DoubleTree by Hilton, Helena, 465-7439
Jazz at Benny’s Bistro, 6:30 p.m., Helena, 442-0105
Kenny James Miller Band, blues, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

Great Falls

Last Chance Christmas Bazaar, 10 a.m., Montana ExpoPark, Great Falls, 727-8900

Butte

Butte Symphony Holiday Concert, 7:30 p.m., Mother Lode Theatre, Butte, 723-5590
Jerry Joseph & The Jackmormons, rock, 8:30 p.m., Covellite Theatre, Butte, 498-6869
Missoula
Missoula Valley Winter Market, 705 South Higgins, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 396-0593
“Elf: The Musical,” through December 16, Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911
Wolf & The Moons, Americana/bluegrass, 6 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251
Salsa 406, dancing, 8:30 p.m., Dark Horse Bar, Missoula, 728-0934

Sunday, December 16

Statewide

Henry and Isla, acoustic brunch, 11 a.m., Pine Creek Café, Livingston, 222-3628
Wolf & The Moons, Americana/blue grass, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
Bozeman
Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 3 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
“Eddie’s First Christmas on Patrol,” stage play, 3 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Bozeman Scottish Folk Ensemble, instrumental group, 5 p.m., Townshend’s Tea, Bozeman, 577-2740
Bridger Mountain Big Band, 7 p.m., jazz orchestra, Eagles Bar, Bozeman, 587-9996

Helena

Justin Case Band, pop, 6 p.m., Silver Star Steak Co., Helena, 495-0677

Butte

“Twas A Girls Night Before Christmas: The Musical,” stage play, 3 p.m., Mother Lode Theatre, Butte, 723-3602
Missoula
“Slammin’ Poetry for Change,” 6 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 544-9026
“Elf: The Musical,” final performances, 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., Missoula Community Theatre, 728-1911

Monday, December 17

Statewide

Katherine Taylor, blues/rock, 5 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Bozeman
Improv on the Verge, 7 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Helena
Open Mic Night, 6 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Missoula
Open Mic hosted by Gary Kiggins, 6 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251
The Absent Wilson Conspiracy, jazz, 7 p.m., Red Bird Wine Bar, Missoula, 549-2906

Tuesday, December 18

Statewide

The Pickin’ Pear, uke-grass, 7 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Billings
Like A Storm, Palisades, & Farewell to Fear, 8 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020
Bozeman
Open Mic, 7 p.m., Zocalo Coffee House, Bozeman, 404-1036



LIL’ SMOKIES PLAY BOZEMAN AND MISSOULA NEW YEAR’S WEEKEND

The Lil’ Smokies, a “newgrass” quintet from Missoula, will play in both Bozeman and Missoula over New Year’s weekend 2018. In October 2014, they were nominated by the Internal Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) for Momentum Band of the Year and in 2013 they won The Northwest String Summit Band Competition. The band has have shared the stage with Steve Martin and the Steep Canyon Rangers, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Keller Williams, Yonder Mountain String Band, Infamous Stringdusters and many more. Playing at the Rialto in Bozeman (rialtoboze.com) on Dec. 29 and 30 and at the Wilma Theater (logjampresents.com) in Missoula on New Year’s Eve Dec. 31.

Helena

String Beings, bluegrass, 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729
Helena Last Chance Barbershop Chorus, 7 p.m., South Hills Church of Christ, Helena, 449-2877
Missoula
Tuesday Picking Circle, bluegrass, 6 p.m., Montana Distillery, Missoula, 541-1889
Imagine Ireland, Irish traditional music, Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251
Open Mic, 9:30 p.m., Union Club, Missoula, 728-7980

Wednesday, December 19

Bozeman

Music & Mussels with Walcrik, Americana, 5:30 p.m., Bridger Brewing, Bozeman, 587-2124
Acoustic Wednesdays, 6 p.m., Wildrye Distillery, Bozeman, 577-2288
Pickin’ in the Parks, acoustic string jam, 6:30 p.m., Story Mansion, Bozeman, 582-2290
Hoffrau Open Mic, 10 p.m., Bozeman, 587-4931
Helena
John Dendy and Lanie White, jazz, 6 p.m., On Broadway, Helena, 443-1929
Cow Tipping Comedy, 6:30 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

Thursday, December 20

Statewide

The Travelin’ Kind, acoustic Duo, 8 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Billings
Projectile Comedy, 8 p.m., The Loft, Billings, 259-9074
Bozeman
Bridger Creek Boys, bluegrass, 7 p.m., Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 599-1399
Lazy Suzy, rock/jazz and soul music, 8 p.m., Zebra Lounge, Bozeman, 585-8851
Helena
Bozeman IBU’s, live music, 5 p.m., Ten Mile Creek Brewery, Helena, 502-1382
Brit Arnesen, acoustic, 5 p.m., Snow Hop Brewery, Helena, 442-5026
MSK Project, jazz, 6 p.m., On Broadway, Helena, 443-1929
Great Falls
Weekly Irish Seisiun, 6 p.m. Thursdays, Celtic Cowboy, Great Falls, 952-0393
The Thrillbillies, country, 6 p.m. Thursdays, The Sting Sports Bar, Great Falls, 727-7972

Friday, December 21

Statewide

One Leaf Clover, mountain boogie, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Justin Case Band, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Travis Yost, dreamy Americana, 6 p.m., Uncorked Wine and Cheese Bar, Livingston
A Band Called Luck, original acoustic, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
A Cowboy Christmas with Ian Thomas, Band of Drifters and Gypsy Rose, 7 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
Billings
The High Country Boys Christmas Show, 7 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, 256-6052
Dead Presley’s Holiday Party, 8 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020

Bozeman

Jazz Night, 7 p.m. Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 359-1999
Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
Helena
Rocket to Uranus, dance/electronic, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Jeff Christiansen, live music, 7 p.m., The Sting Sports Bar, Great Falls, 727-7972
Great Falls
El Wencho, musical variety, 7 p.m., Elevation 3330, Great Falls

Missoula

Bill Lacroix, folk music, 11 a.m., Bagels on Broadway, Missoula, 728-8900
Reggie Watts, vocalist, 8 p.m., Wilma, Missoula, 728-2521
DASH, funk/soul/pop, 10:15 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Saturday, December 22

Statewide

Denny and the Resonators, blues, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Justin Case Band, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Aaron Banfield, singer/slangwriter, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
Billings
Chase Hawks Rodeo, 7 p.m., MetraPark Rimrock Auto Arena, Billings, 256-2400
Venture Improv, 7:30 p.m., NOVA Center, Billings, 591-9535
“The Glory Days,” a night of early 00’s emo songs, 8 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020

Bozeman

Bozeman Winter Farmers’ Market, 9 a.m., Emerson Ballroom, Bozeman, 587-9797
Irving Berlin’s “White Christmas,” live musical, 7:30 p.m., The Ellen Theatre, Bozeman, 585-5885
Helena
El Wencho, musical variety, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

Missoula

Breakfast with Santa, free rides on A Carousel for Missoula, Caras Park, 9 a.m., Missoula, 549-8382
Missoula Valley Winter Market, 705 South Higgins, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 396-0593
Dan Henry and the One Man Dan Band, 6 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251
Semper Sursum, blues/rock/R&B, 10:15 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865



LANEY LOU AND THE BIRD DOGS

Since 2013, Bozeman-based Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs have been fusing folk songs with country, pop, and rock. They’ve shared stages with Keb Mo’, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Corb Lund, Hayes Carll, The Mavericks, Wynonna Judd, Mark Chesnutt, Blitzen Trapper, The Lil’ Smokies, Lewi Longmire and many more. The Bird Dogs released a live self-titled studio album in 2016, recorded at Basecamp Studio in Bozeman. Their follow-up album, titled *The Vigilante Session*, was recorded live at a forest service cabin in the Tobacco Root mountains. The band plays across Montana in December: Dec. 2 at Pine Creek Cafe in Livingston; Dec. 8 at Covellite Theatre in Butte; Dec. 14 at the Top Hat in Missoula; and Dec. 28 at Lewis and Clark Brewing in Helena.

Sunday, December 23

Statewide
Leif Christian, acoustic brunch, 11 a.m., Pine Creek Café, Livingston, 222-3628
Jessica Eve Lechner, acoustic folk, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
Bozeman
Bridger Mountain Big Band, jazz orchestra, 7 p.m., Eagles Bar, Bozeman, 587-9996
Helena
Long Neck Bottles Band, country, 4 p.m., VFW, Helena, 227-8163

Monday, December 24

Missoula
Open Mic hosted by Gary Kiggins, 6 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251

Tuesday, December 25

CHRISTMAS DAY

Wednesday, December 26

Bozeman
Acoustic Wednesdays, 6 p.m., Wildrye Distillery, Bozeman, 577-2288
Pickin' in the Parks, acoustic string jam, 6:30 p.m., Story Mansion, Bozeman, 582-2290
Hofbrau Open Mic, 10 p.m., Bozeman, 587-4931
Helena
Cow Tipping Comedy, 6:30 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960

Thursday, December 27

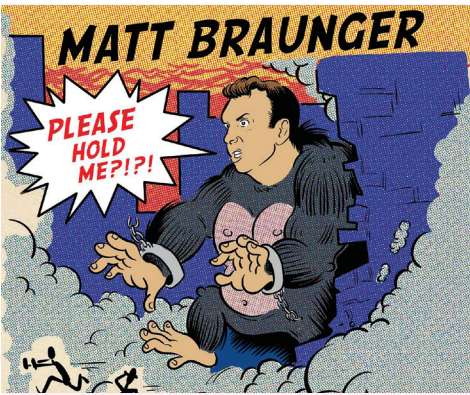
Statewide
Chad Okrusch, Butte songwriter, 8 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Billings
Projectile Comedy, 8 p.m., The Loft, Billings, 259-9074
Bozeman
Bridger Creek Boys, bluegrass, 7 p.m., Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 599-1399
Lazy Suzy, rock/jazz and soul music, 8 p.m., Zebra Lounge, Bozeman, 585-8851
Helena
Grandstreet Holiday Benefit, 6 p.m., Grandstreet Theatre, Helena, 442-4270
Take Two, jazz, 6 p.m., On Broadway, Helena, 443-1929
Paige and the People's Band, soul/rock/pop/jazz, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Great Falls
Weekly Irish Seisiun, 6 p.m. Thursdays, Celtic Cowboy, Great Falls, 952-0393
Missoula
The Thrillbillies, country, 6 p.m. Thursdays, The Sting Sports Bar, Great Falls, 727-7972

Friday, December 28

Statewide
The Wind Drifters, bluegrass, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
www.TWANG, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Tom Catmull, original/stolen Americana, 6 p.m., Uncorked Wine and Cheese Bar, Livingston, 222-5418
John Sherrill, singer-songwriter, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
Billings
Wretches and Kings, Linkin Park tribute band, 8 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020
Bozeman
Montana Manouche, gypsy jazz, 7 p.m., Red Tractor Pizza, Bozeman, 359-1999
Cold Hard Cash, Johnny Cash tribute, 8:30 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
Helena
Wilbur Rehmann Quartet, jazz, 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729
Laney Lou and the Bird Dogs, county/folk, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
Great Falls
Jeff Christiansen, live music, 7 p.m., The Sting Sports Bar, Great Falls, 727-7972
Liquor Down, rock, 9 p.m. Do Bar, Great Falls, 727-0388
Missoula
Bill Lacroix, folk music, 11 a.m., Bagels on Broadway, Missoula, 728-8900
Kenny James Miller Band, 7:30 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Saturday, December 29

Statewide
Band of Drifters, American roots, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
www.TWANG, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Heather Lingle, MonTexas Americana, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
Bozeman
Lil Smokies, bluegrass, 8:30 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
Billings
Shakefist Reunion Show, metal, 8 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020
Helena
The Social Animals, alternative/indie, 7 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960



LAUGH THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS: COMEDY SHOWS AND OPEN MICS

Dec. 1 Silly Moose Comedy Improv for Kids, 3 p.m., Verge Theater, Bozeman, 587-0737
Matt Braunge “Please Hold Me” tour, Dec. 14: 8 p.m., Pub Station Taproom, Billings, 894-2020
Dec. 15 8:45 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
WEDNESDAYS
Cow Tipping Comedy, 6:30 p.m., Lewis and Clark Brewing, Helena, 442-5960
THURSDAYS
Projectile Comedy, 8 p.m. The Loft, Billings, 259-9074
Homegrown Open Mic Comedy, 9:30 p.m., Union Club, Missoula, 728-7980

Missoula
Missoula Valley Winter Market, 705 South Higgins, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 396-0593
Dave Meservy, rock, 6 p.m., Imagine Nation Brewing, Missoula, 926-1251
Tom Catmull's Last Resort, 10:15 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865
The Cold Hard Cash Show, Johnny Cash tribute, 8 p.m., The Wilma, Missoula 728-2521

Sunday, December 30

Statewide
A Band Called Luck, acoustic brunch, 11 a.m., Pine Creek Café, Livingston, 222-3628
Exit 288, rock/blues and country, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Tom Catmull, original/stolen Americana, 7 p.m., Norris Hot Springs, 685-3303
Bozeman
Bridger Mountain Big Band, 7 p.m., jazz orchestra, Eagles Bar, Bozeman, 587-9996
Lil Smokies, bluegrass, 8:30 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
Helena
Sunday Night Live Music with Fred Cobb, 6 p.m., Silver Star Steak Co., Helena, 495-0677

Monday, December 31

Statewide
The Dead Yellers, country/rock, 9 p.m., Murray Bar, Livingston, 222-9463
Exit 288, rock/blues and country, Chico Saloon, Livingston, 333-4933
Liquor Down Band, classic rock, 8 p.m., Eagles Club, Havre, 265-9551
Montana Manouche NYE, gypsy jazz, 6 p.m., Uncorked Wine and Cheese Bar, Livingston
Billings
Billings Symphony Orchestra & Chorale New Year's Eve Concert, 8 p.m., Alberta Bair Theater, 256-6052
Bozeman
An Evening of New Beginnings with SATSANG, 8:30 p.m., Rialto, Bozeman, 877-412-2776
That 1 Guy New Years Eve, 9 p.m., The Filling Station, Bozeman, 587-5009
Helena
String Beings, bluegrass, 6 p.m., Staggering Ox, Helena, 443-1729
Steven Gores, pianist, 7 p.m., Grand Union Hotel, Helena, 622-1882
New Years Eve with Wilbur Rehmann Quartet, 7 p.m., Montana Club, Helena, 442-5980
Missoula
Open Mic hosted by Gary Kiggins, Imagine Nation Brewing, 6 p.m., Missoula, 926-1251
NYE Local Band Showcase, 7 p.m., Free Cycles, Missoula, 541-7284
The Lil Smokies, bluegrass, 8 p.m., The Wilma, Missoula, 728-2521
Letter B, folk rock/indie, 10:15 p.m., Top Hat Lounge, Missoula, 728-9865

Email kate@montanapress.net to update calendar.

OFF THE HOOK

How a Texas Woman I met in Arizona Inspired My Love of Montana

I’m 65. I don’t usually reveal that because ageism is real, and many editors would rather hire chatty millennials than sage boomers. But hiding my age is exhausting, and columns about 40 years of fishing in Montana will make more sense if they’re set in the decades when they happened.

So, this story takes place in 1975 when I graduated from Manhattanville College in suburban New York. As a graduation gift, my parents sent me to the Tanque Verde Ranch in Tucson to ride horses for a week, my passion then, and plan next steps.

The 640-acre, guest-and-working ranch attracts visitors from around the world. At 8 o’clock each morning, before the sun began baking the Sonoran Desert, we’d mount horses for a trail ride past towering Saguaros and into the Rincon Mountains.

I was 22, a young woman from the East traveling solo, an object of curiosity back then – and now. But the guest who fascinated me was Elizabeth, a 40-something, married lady from Houston.

For two weeks each year, Elizabeth left her husband and three kids and took herself to the ranch. In the morning, she’d ride. In the afternoon, she’d lounge by the pool. After dinner, she’d retire to her deluxe, hillside cabin to read, write letters, and wrap herself in “me time.”

Maybe a Mom retreat is standard practice for the upper classes but it was a foreign concept for me. As a newly-minted adult, the only lifestyle I knew intimately was the middle-class one I grew up in. Dad worked downtown. Mom, tethered to the house and kids, and would no sooner allow herself two weeks of R&R than rocket to Mars.

I probed and prodded Elizabeth. How could she abandon her young kids? Travel

without her husband? Feel entitled to ride horses and sip chardonnay by the pool as much and as late as she wanted?

Elizabeth explained she took two weeks to recharge, to gain perspective, to miss her family. The kids complained but survived. And her husband knew a happy wife meant a happy life, and even enjoyed the change of pace at home.

Fast forward 20 years. I was married, had a 5-year-old son, and for the first time since becoming a wife and mother treated myself to a four-day fishing trip on the Big Horn with its reliable Pale Morning Dun hatches and fat brown trout.

I’d throw a dry fly until sunset, then drag myself into the lodge to down a warming whiskey shot and phone home.

During these daily, dump-on-Lisa calls, my husband would tick off everything that went wrong that day, implying the disposal wouldn’t have ground up a spoon if I had been home. My son, still wrapping his young brain around where on earth Montana was, would ask, “Are you ever coming home, Mom?”

I’d hang up rung out with guilt and anger that my family couldn’t cut me some four-day slack.

What happened to that happy wife/happy life thing? Why hadn’t Elizabeth warned me about those calls?

Through the years and annual fishing trips to Montana, the calls got easier. My husband still sounds a little desperate without me – now, it feels like a tribute after 25 years together – and my 22-year-old son barely registers I’m gone.

Every summer, I wrap myself in a few days of aloneness. And as stars light up a big sky, I thank God for planting Elizabeth in my path. ★

— LISA KAPLAN GORDON

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CHEF'S RECIPES

Hearty Pumpkin and Plum Tart and Classic, Easy Pecan Pie



Barbara Earnest, the owner of the Wildflower Café in Emigrant, Montana, closes down her bakery and kitchen during the winter months.

Although the café will not re-open until the spring, creative cooks can recreate a treat from the Wildflower bakery in their home kitchens this holiday season with a recipe for an apple and plum tart.

Apple and Plum Tart with Pumpkin Crust

Pumpkin Pastry (*Pre-made puff pastry from a grocer's freezer may be substituted*)

1 cup heated milk
1/4 cup hot water
1 tablespoon yeast
1/4 cup sugar
Pinch salt
1 cup cooked or canned pumpkin
10 chilled tablespoons unsalted butter
1 and 1/2 cups unbleached flour
plus flour for dusting

For the Pastry:

In a food processor, dissolve the yeast, sugar and salt in the mixture of hot water and milk.

Add the pureed pumpkin and one and a half cups of the flour.

Scrape the mixture onto a well-floured surface and knead in the remaining flour until smooth.

Place in a bowl and refrigerate for one hour.

Roll out the refrigerated pastry on a well-floured surface to approximately 1/8" thickness.

Slice the butter and separate into fourths. Place one-fourth of the butter pats in the center third of the pastry. Fold the outside thirds of the pastry over the butter and quickly roll on a floured surface until the pastry is as large as original piece. Fold in thirds and repeat the butter layering/rolling process three more times.

Apple and Plum Filling

3/4 cup plums, pitted
1 large apple, thinly sliced
1/2 cup sugar

For the Filling:

Mix plums and apples and toss with sugar. Set aside.

Pecan Crumb Mixture and Topping

1 cup pecans
1/3 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup flour
1/4 cup softened butter

For the Crumb:

In a food processor, mix pecans and sugars, leaving the pecans in large chunks. Reserve half of the mixture and set aside as 'Crumb Mixture.' Add to the remaining mix in the food processor the flour and butter. Pulse to mix and set aside as 'Crumb Topping.'

To Assemble Tart:

Pre-heat oven to 350°. Roll out the pastry to approximately 16" square and line a 6" fluted tart pan and form a crust all the way up the side of the pan.

Cut two more circles the size of the pan for layers. Spread one-third of the fruit mixture on the crust and half of the set-aside Crumb Mixture (the crumbs without butter) onto the crust. Add a circle of dough and repeat layer of one-third of the fruit mixture and the remaining Crumb Mixture.

Add another circle of dough, layer with remaining fruit mixture and sprinkle with crumb topping. Decorate with pecan halves and bake in 350° oven for 35 minutes.

Cool completely before removing from pan and serve with favorite cognac or brandy. ★

Photos by Lindsay Wells





Mavis Mason ran the Hearthstone Café for many years on Callender Street in downtown Livingston. She often shared recipes from her collection with her community. While Mason still makes homemade energy bars for sale at the local Foodworks store on Park Avenue in Livingston, Hearthstone Café is no longer serving their well-loved healthy lunches and scrumptious baked goods.

Before closing their doors, Hearthstone baker Anne Marie Quinto shared a simple recipe for pecan pie which can be made with Montana flour and honey.

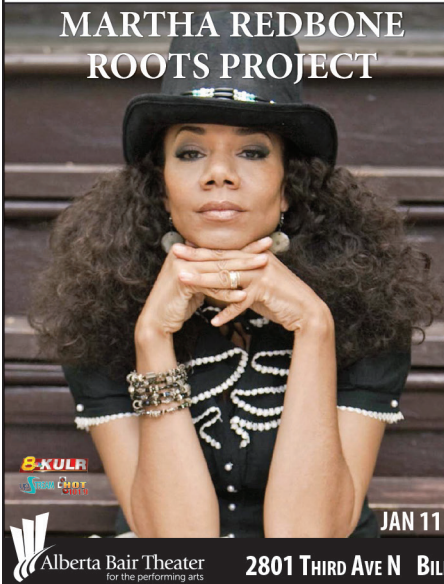
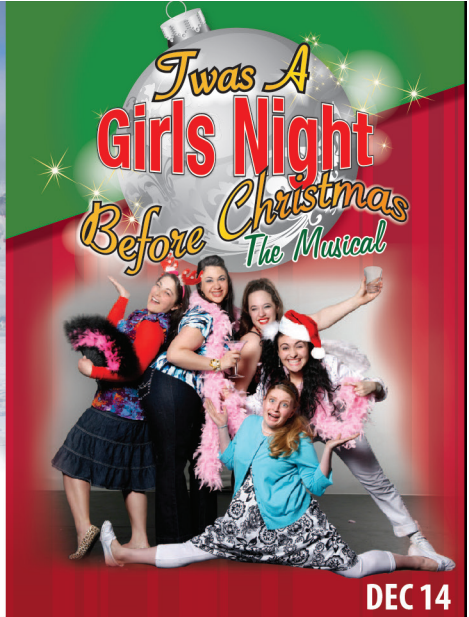
Honey Pecan Pie

Ingredients

- 1 pie crust, store-bought or homemade with high, fluted edges
- 3 eggs
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup melted butter
- 1 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1 cup pecans

To Assemble Pie:

Pre-heat oven to 350°. Mix all ingredients except pecans in large bowl until combined. Stir in the pecans. Pour mixture into prepared pie crust and bake at 350° for about 50 minutes until done and a knife inserted comes out clean. Cool before cutting. ★



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