

THE MSU

# exponent

MONTANA STATE'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1895

FEBRUARY 20, 2025

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**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Amanda Fulton  
[ExponentEditor@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentEditor@montana.edu)

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
Gus Yeager  
[ExponentProduction@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentProduction@montana.edu)

**NEWS EDITOR**  
Connor McLean  
[ExponentNews@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentNews@montana.edu)

**SPORTS & OUTDOORS EDITOR**  
Will Malizia  
[ExponentSports@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentSports@montana.edu)

**OPINION EDITOR**  
Marquart Doty  
[ExponentOpinion@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentOpinion@montana.edu)

**CULTURE EDITOR**  
Molly Houser  
[ExponentEntertainment@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentEntertainment@montana.edu)

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**  
Kelly Hammaren  
[ExponentPhoto@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentPhoto@montana.edu)

**ADVERTISING AND MARKETING DIRECTOR**  
Alli Kernan  
[ExponentAds@gmail.com](mailto:ExponentAds@gmail.com)

**LEAD LAYOUT DESIGNER**  
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MSU Library hands out cake on Valentine's Day.

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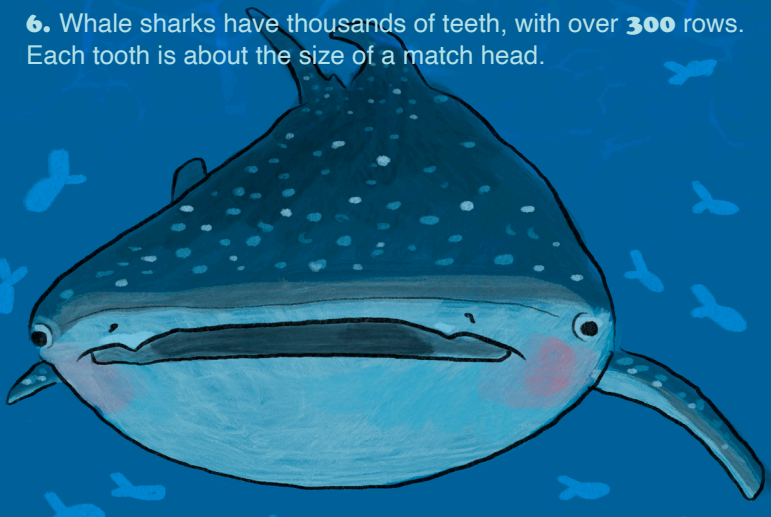
MEME OF THE WEEK u/@ItsMattsLaw



SIGNIFICANT FIGURES | COMPILED BY KELLY HAMMAREN  
DESIGNED BY LELA HASLUP

# WHALE SHARK

- 1. The largest recorded whale shark was **20** meters long.
- 2. Whale sharks have skin that is about **30** centimeters thick.
- 3. Whale sharks can grow to more than **40** feet, which is larger than a school bus.
- 4. Whale sharks weigh about **66,000** pounds, which is more than **three** times the average weight of that same school bus.
- 5. It's thought that less than **10** percent of whale sharks born survive to adulthood, but those that do may live to **150**.
- 6. Whale sharks have thousands of teeth, with over **300** rows. Each tooth is about the size of a match head.



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# MSU office works toward sustainability goals

BY KERRIANNE KIMBRELL

In 2012, MSU established the Office of Sustainability (OS) to advocate for and achieve the University's on-campus sustainability goals. Since then, the OS has instituted different programs and policies to help reduce water and energy usage. The office manages projects, hosts an annual Sustainability Summit — an event where students and staff can learn more about MSU's sustainability and carbon neutrality goals, according to its website — and engages with the MSU community to encourage sustainability.

"We like to say that our office has been around since 2009," said Program Manager of the OS Paul Edlund. According to Edlund, the OS started as a group of about five students who volunteered their time to help people recycle on campus. In 2012, the Associated Students of MSU allocated funds to allow the office to work toward sustainable practices.

In December of 2021, MSU's University Council agreed to implement a sustainability framework through the OS to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040, zero waste by 2035 and earn a Platinum rating through the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) by 2035.

According to Edlund, STARS is a nationwide system many universities use to gauge their sustainability efforts. The STARS rankings start at Reporter — which means they are just reporting on sustainability — to Platinum, the highest rating.

Currently, MSU is a Gold-rated institution under STARS. MSU's progress toward the goal of a STARS Platinum rating by 2035 will help develop the other two aspects of the sustainability framework — carbon neutrality and zero waste — simultaneously, according to Edlund.

One example of sustainability on campus is MSU's diversion rate, Edlund said. Diversion is the amount of waste that gets recycled or composted instead of going to a landfill. According to Edlund, MSU's diversion rate was at 34 percent in 2024. He compared this to MSU's two percent diversion rate in 2009 as a sign of progress.

Other projects include a campus-wide retrofit where fluorescent light bulbs were replaced with LEDs, according to Edlund. Additionally, North Hedges Residence Hall has been retrofitted with a heat recovery ventilator, variable frequency drives are being installed on campus motors and Leon Johnson Hall has received an energy retrofit.

"In terms of reducing waste, achieving awareness and consciousness in the campus community, especially the earth system crisis, yeah, [the OS

is] doing a good job," said MSU environmental history professor Mark Fiege. He cited the creation of courses with environmental emphasis and student efforts to advocate for learning more about sustainability as signs of positive evolution.

"Faculty can create and teach sustainability courses, but what really drives change are the students — they are the energy," Fiege said. "The students' ideas are cutting edge, the faculty needs to catch up and absolutely the administration."

According to Edlund, the classroom is another area of focus for the OS. In 2022, the OS worked with faculty to determine how many classes included sustainability in their curriculum. The office then worked with the Center for Faculty Excellence and the Campus Sustainability Advisory Committee to educate faculty members on sustainability and help them implement sustainability into their curriculum, according to Edlund.

"I feel like [MSU administration] should talk about sustainability more on campus — because I think people understand that they should compost and recycle on campus, but they don't know why," said environmental science student Brooke Horton.

Architecture major Kacey Ronbeck said she had never heard of the OS before and that she didn't think there had been much outreach to students. "There's not a lot of advertisements about it," she said.

"It makes sense that a lot of students don't know about the programs we offer," Edlund said. He acknowledged that the OS' location in the Strand Union Building (SUB) could make it more difficult for students to access. According to Edlund, all the information about MSU's sustainability practices is shared at the annual Sustainability Summit. The next Summit will be held on April 15, 2025.

"[The Sustainability Summit] is such a great place for students to get to interact with faculty, staff, other

students and administrators to learn about: what [is the OS] doing and how [is the OS] involved," Edlund said. The OS also sends out a newsletter and the MSU news service publishes information about MSU's sustainability, according to Edlund.

"Our door is always open," he said. According to him, the OS works closely with students who have needs and suggestions regarding sustainability. Ronbeck and fellow architecture major Madi Gallinger proposed a couple of ideas for further sustainability on campus, including putting tops on outdoor trash cans to limit spillover into parking lots and creating new recycled structures or sculptures to remind students of the University's commitment to sustainability.

Edlund said the OS is there to help students with any of their sustainability goals. "We're at SUB 284, you're welcome to drop in," he said.

To learn more about what the OS offers, head to <https://www.montana.edu/sustainability/>.



# Annual Career Symposium helps students stand out

BY HARLEY ROBERTSON



Students inside the JJCBE.  
Photo by Logan Ross.

The Jake Jobs College of Business & Entrepreneurship (JJCBE) offered students the opportunity to gain practical career knowledge by hosting its annual Career Symposium on Tuesday, Feb. 11 in the Strand Union Building. This year marks the second time that the JJCBE has put on the event.

Dean of the JJCBE Brian Gillespie kicked off the event as the keynote speaker. Gillespie's opening speech urged business students to find what challenges them and engage with opportunities around them to prepare for the professional world.

"Take every opportunity to learn from those around you, engage with your professors, attend networking events and challenge yourself with real-world experiences," Gillespie said. His main message was for students to stay engaged, utilize JJCBE resources and find their passions.

After Gillespie's speech, attendees dispersed to separate rooms to learn about career opportunities within MSU's four business programs — accounting, finance, marketing and management.

The night ended with five different breakout sessions offered to students to learn more about internships, networking, study abroad programs, career resources and MSU's Blackstone LaunchPad (BLP).

The BLP offers entrepreneurial and innovation help to MSU faculty, students and alumni, according

**"[The JJCBE] really prides itself on that experiential, real-world learning."**

— Director of the Bracken Center,  
**Toby Blake**

to its website. Through the breakout sessions, students learned the art of networking, how the BLP can help with students' startups, how study-abroad programs can help student's careers, information about internships and how to utilize career services.

"The intention behind the career symposium is getting at the heart of our students that are usually right at the end of their sophomore [or] middle of their junior year," said Kayla Lee, director of student and community engagement at the JJCBE. According to Lee, the symposium helps inform students about opportunities offered by MSU while they still have some time left in their college careers.

Toby Blake, the new director of the Bracken Center (BC), hosted the breakout session on internships. According to the MSU website, the BC provides

career counseling services, mentoring programs, small classes, curriculum development and more for the JJCBE.

"[The JJCBE] really prides itself on that experiential, real-world learning, so a symposium like this is a really good opportunity to explore not only opportunities within your major and concentration but outside opportunities," Blake said.

According to him, 70 percent of JJCBE students complete an internship during their time at MSU, as opposed to the nationwide average of 39 percent. "And then — even better — 60 percent of them are offered full-time positions, usually with that same company right out of undergrad," Blake said.

Maria Stoppolecamp, the former director of the BC, hosted one of the breakout sessions last year. She said she received over 50 new appointments from students for one-on-one coaching because of the event. "People saw the value of internships. They wanted to meet and learn more and they scheduled one-on-one coaching appointments which is fantastic," Stoppolecamp said.

Symposium attendee and business finance major Andreas Drekonja said he found information in the internship breakout session helpful for his career goals. "[I] think I'll definitely reach out to the [BC] and see what I can learn from there," said Drekonja after attending the internship breakout session.

"Engaging with the campus, showing you are involved with whatever it is — whether it's being an ambassador in [the JJCBE], whether it's being an AdvoCat — I think that shows a lot of heart," said Lee when asked how students can stand out to employers. She said that engaging in extracurricular activities shows employers that students have soft skills. That includes the ability to hold a conversation and put themselves out there, which employers look for when hiring.

AdvoCat guides are students who give tours of MSU's campus to prospective students and help facilitate certain events on campus, according to the MSU website.

Blake and Stoppolecamp also said it is important to engage in extracurricular activities like study abroad programs, internships or volunteer work, which can help students stand out to employers. "They're really looking for that well-rounded student — they're looking for job history and employment and then they're also looking for involvement and leadership skills," Stoppolecamp said.

To learn about future events held by the JJCBE, visit [montana.edu/business/index.html](https://montana.edu/business/index.html).

## SPORTS

# Men's basketball builds momentum with back-to-back home wins

BY JOSH RUIZ

Men's basketball defended home court last week, picking up a 74-66 win over the Weber State University (WSU) Wildcats on Thursday, Feb. 13 and defeating the Idaho State University (ISU) Bengals 74-69 on Saturday, Feb. 15.

The pair of victories propelled the 'Cats into the thick of the Big Sky Conference (BSC) standings, as they sit in fourth place with just four games remaining in the regular season. With the March 8 BSC Tournament looming, the wins are helping this 'Cats squad hit their stride.

MSU faced a much different Wildcat squad than they did earlier this year on Jan 18. While WSU had their top scorer Blaise Threatt (19.2 points per game), the team was without their second and third leading scorers, Miguel Tomley (11.2 points per game) and Dyson Koehler (10.1 points per game). Threatt also leads WSU in rebounds (5.7 per game) and assists (4.2 per game) this season.

"It's tough," Head Coach Matt Logie said when asked about the challenge of defending a high-usage player like Threatt. "One of the things that's hard about when you have such a focal point of your offense is sometimes the other guys aren't in rhythm as much, and so when their opportunities come we're able to hold some of those other guys down."

Logie's thinking had the Bobcats in a good position as they managed to hold Threatt to just nine points in the first half while building up a 13-point lead. The Wildcat offense sputtered throughout the first 20 minutes, shooting 34.6% from the field and 12.5% from deep compared to MSU's 44.8% and 38.9%, respectively.

However, the 'Cats couldn't keep Threatt down for long and he finished with 32 points, seven rebounds and six assists in the Wildcats' losing effort Thursday night.

The game drew close at one point in the second half, with MSU's lead narrowing to just three points after a Threatt layup with 2:56 remaining. However, guards Jabe Mullins and Tyler Patterson made key plays to keep the Bobcats ahead for good.

"It's always a great sign when we get in these close games, and we would have liked to keep it at a 10 or 12 [point lead] the whole time, but it just shows our growth that we can get in close games and win," Patterson said. "That's what it comes down to at the end of the day."

MSU faced another defensive challenge Saturday



night against ISU as the team would have to solve the puzzle of defending redshirt sophomore Dylan Darling, who leads the Bengals in points per game this season with 19.3.

ISU also averages the second most rebounds per game in the BSC and gives up the fewest to opponents per game, according to Big Sky Conference website. The Bobcats faced an even greater obstacle on the glass Saturday, as they only average the eighth most rebounds per game and have given up more than any other team in the BSC this season.

Saturday's game started off strong for MSU with the 'Cats racing out to an early 16-5 advantage through the first nine minutes of action.

Their fortune would not hold for long. A lead that grew as large as 14 points in favor of the 'Cats eventually became a two-point deficit, 62-60, on a Darling three-point jumper with 4:11 remaining in the second half.

However, the Bengals would not lead again as the Bobcats maintained composure and closed the game on a 14-7 run.

Although the 'Cats lost the battle of the boards 36-26, they equaled a season-high in blocks with a total of

seven, the prior occurrence also happening against ISU on Jan 16.

During a key timeout late in the contest, forward Sam Lecholat told the team to eliminate second and third chances to score. "That's why they got back in the game, and so that last 5:30, I was just telling the guys: just get rebounds, be physical and just keep them off the glass," he said.

MSU will look to carry this momentum into the "Brawl of the Wild" matchup against the University of Montana on Feb. 22, hoping to avenge a seven-point defeat that took place earlier this season.

"We just gotta stay locked in and stay consistent," Mullins said. "That game is gonna be packed and [we'll] definitely have the advantage with the home court, so [just] staying locked in this week and not taking it easy."

To stay up to date on men's basketball or find information about attending games, visit its website <https://msubobcats.com/sports/mens-basketball>.

# Self-made skaters offer everyone a place on the ice

BY ALEXIS CARDENAS

With every spin, jump and lift, the MSU Figure Skating Club is carving out its unique path on the ice, creating a community as tight-knit as its routines.

The club was formed in 2022 and has nearly quadrupled since then. “Our team started two years ago with four people,” said club President Abby Skane. “Last year was my first year — there were eight of us — and then this year, there’s 14 of us.”

According to Skane, the club performs during halftime at the Bozeman Icedogs and MSU men’s hockey home games and, more recently, at figure skating competitions.

Skane coordinates with the University and the U.S. Figure Skating Organization — the national governing body for figure skating — to get the club to competitions. For the 2024-2025 season, the MSU Figure Skating Club has planned performances in Denver, Colorado, San Jose, California and Cody, Wyoming, Skane said.

According to current Community Outreach Officer Mary Kondelik, the process of joining the club begins with tryouts. “We started doing tryouts this year,” she said. “We have [new members] come skate at a practice. It isn’t super crazy and it isn’t super hard, so we encourage a lot of people to come and try it out. We just want to see you skate and see how you are on the ice, and there’s really no pressure at all.”

In addition to tryouts, the club has different levels of competitiveness. “We have a group of girls that compete that are semi-competitive. And then we also have a performance group, which is where we go out and cheer for games,” Skane said.

Skane also spoke about the experience level required to perform at the hockey games. “We do have a level requirement that’s relatively accessible, but it does require some sort of prior [skating] background. But we also have a group where, if you can skate and you can stop — which we can teach you how to do — you’re welcome to participate.”

Skane shared some unique challenges the club has faced due to its novelty. “We do not have a coach, but we all self-choreograph. We self-train and then we go out and compete on our own,” she said.

Additionally, she spoke about the financial obstacles the club faces. “The biggest issue is figuring out ice time and being a club sport because it’s very expensive,” she said, explaining that the club receives a majority of its funding from sponsors. “We’re pretty much all fundraised. We have 12 to 15 sponsors across the country that help us, and we also have a GoFundMe which is always open.”

Although the club has faced its fair share of challenges, it has also experienced many achievements. “We have definitely accomplished a lot this year, and

I’m very excited to see us accomplish more. This year, we competed in Denver, Colorado. We incorporated new spins, flips and lifts into our programs, which we choreographed as a team,” said Kondelik.

Club member Ginny Adams spoke about her experience with the group. “I’ve been skating for about six months,” she said. “I’m working on a competition program right now, and I’ll eventually perform at the hockey games. Until then, I’m working on my own skating skills and my own personal goals.”

Adams, though new to skating, said her experience in past sports aided her transition into figure skating. “I was a competitive fighter for 12 years, so the muscle, balance and coordination from that has definitely helped a lot [with skating] because it’s just kind of second nature,” she said.

Freshman Abigail Beaver, a competitive member of the club, explained how it has helped her transition into college. “I came into college knowing I was going to be on a skating team. My sister — way in the Midwest — is on one, and I did it all throughout school. It’s kind of like having a built-in safety net. When classes are hard, you have teammates that are older than you and know what to do,” she said.

Beaver, who experienced her first competition this past November, noted one of her most memorable moments on the club so far. “In Denver, I was the first of our girls to compete. Getting on the ice and hearing representing MSU and hearing my name get called — that was such an aha moment.”

Beaver encouraged anyone interested in joining the club

**“... if you can skate  
and you can stop –  
which we can teach  
you how to do –  
you’re welcome to  
participate.”**

**– MSU Figure Skating Club  
President Abby Skane**

to give it a shot. “Honestly, just take the risk and just do it,” she said.

“You can always back out. You never have to go all in the first time, and really, we don’t bite,” she explained. “You can be at the lowest level. You can never have owned a pair of skates before or you could have been skating your whole life. We will take you.”

For more information on how to join or support the club, visit [www.montanastatefigureskating.com](http://www.montanastatefigureskating.com) or [@montanastatefigureskating](https://www.instagram.com/montanastatefigureskating) on Instagram.

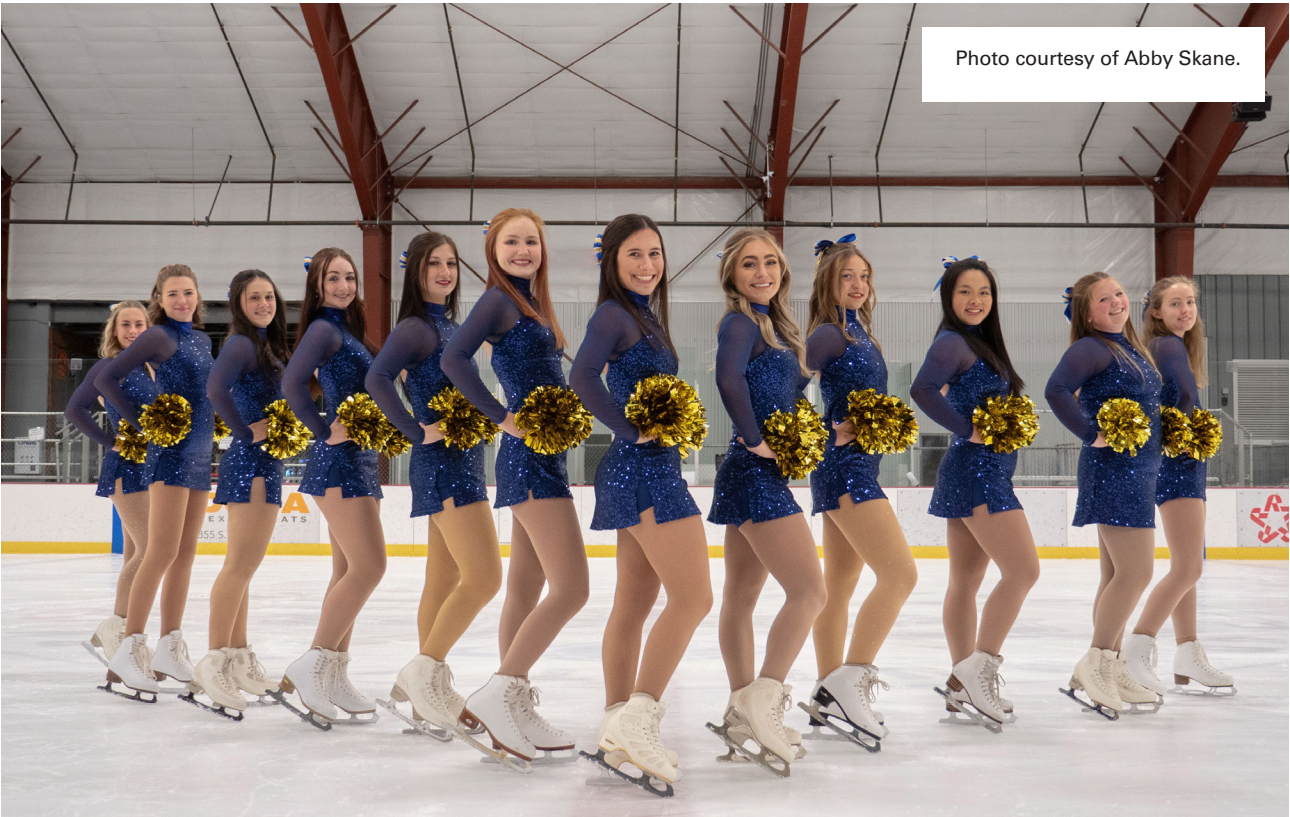


Photo courtesy of Abby Skane.

# BILL THREATENING STUDENT REGENT POSITION TABLED IN COMMITTEE

By Maya Holmes

Montana Senate Bill 210 (SB 210), introduced on Jan. 30, threatened to remove the student regent position from the Montana Board of Regents (BOR), the state’s governing body of higher education. However, a push from student representatives led to the bill’s tabling in committee on Feb. 4.

The BOR is a group of appointed individuals responsible for making decisions regarding the governance and administration of the Montana University System (MUS) and has the authority to supervise and control the 16 public colleges and universities in the state, according to the MUS website. The BOR is run by seven regents appointed by the state’s governor and confirmed by the state Senate. In 1972, the Montana Constitution that one of the regent positions ought to be set aside for a student enrolled in a university overseen by the BOR. Student regents serve one-year terms, while the other appointments are for seven years.

“The student regent [position] is our only form of direct representation from students,” said the Associated Students of MSU (ASMSU) Government Affairs Director Kai Hegna. “The student representative on the BOR — more than anything — brings that student voice and the student experience to a board of people who haven’t been in the university system for 40 years.”

The discussion surrounding SB 210 began in late 2024. According to Hegna, ASMSU began hearing about the prospective bill in November. “What we heard at first was there was talk of removing the student regent without much compromise,” he said.

On Jan. 30, 2025, the bill was formally introduced and assigned to the Senate Education and Cultural Resources (SECR) Committee, according to the Montana Legislature. Senator John Fuller (R) sponsored the bill at the request of the Governor’s Office, according to Hegna. The primary rationale for SB 210, as articulated by Fuller and the Governor’s Office, was the ineffectiveness of the student regent position due to its one-year term.

“It was kind of like the guy who took off all his clothes and jumped on a cactus,” Fuller explained to the committee when he introduced the bill. “When

asked why, he said it seemed like a good idea at the time. And after some twenty years [of having a student regent], it appears it’s not working as well as we planned.”

However, student representatives heard conflicting perspectives during legislative hearings. ASMSU President Jacob Zink said that when a different education committee member asked the governor’s office if the student regent position is effective, the office said it has had nothing but success. “They’re always showing up, always actively participating,” he recalled.

“If it wasn’t effective, then I was willing to sit down and explore [the question:] how do you make the student regent more effective so that it would benefit everybody? But in the end, that wasn’t what they were interested in,” said Izzy Watson, a student lobbyist for ASMSU who was present in Helena during the bill’s first reading.

Watson explained that student voice is important on the BOR not only because the student regent represents every university in the MUS, but also since students contribute 67 percent of the MUS’s total budget through tuition and fees. “The state does appropriate a lot of money to us and yes, we do appreciate the money, but it will remain a fact that the students contribute the majority of [the MUS’s] total budget. All we’re asking for is one position on the governing board,” she said.

“That student regent offers something that nobody else can — a first-hand perspective,” Zink said.

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-ASMSU Government Affairs

Student leaders across Montana began immediately working to counter SB 210. Representatives from various student governments — like ASMSU and the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) — gathered for the announcement of the bill at committee.

“We basically read the bill and had to start fighting it in the time of about three days,” Hegna said. The Montana Associated Students (MAS) — a group that represents the MUS’s student governments — also convened, and each group began to implement its own approach to combat the bill.

Hegna detailed ASMSU’s strategy: “We did everything — from President Zink emailing legislators, I wrote out memos to be handed out to each Democrat and Republican on that committee, we contacted people and wrote speeches for our lobbyists. We really did everything we could.”

“Each campus did something different,” Zink said. “We took the option of directly contacting the legislators just to sit down and have a conversation.” He explained that the campuses also sent their student lobbyists to testify against the bill in Helena.

Watson said that to testify against a bill, lobbyists go into the committee where a bill is being introduced and give a speech on why they want legislators to vote a certain way on the legislation at hand. In the case of SB 210, three lobbyists — Watson from ASMSU, Hope Morrison from ASUM and Emmett Jeschke from MAS — testified against the bill at the first reading on Jan. 30.

On Feb. 4, the SECR committee ultimately voted to table SB 210, halting further progression or consideration. “Each bill, before it gets taken to the floor

to be voted on by the members of the House or the Senate, gets assigned a committee,” Hegna said. “The committee members decided to table it, which means you basically set it off to the side and it will sit there until either a later date — or it dies there, which is what we were hoping for.”

During the Feb. 4 committee meeting, Hegna explained that before the senators voted on SB 210, some said that hearing student voices had changed their opinions. “I had a number of conversations with students regarding this bill, and they were thoughtful, they were very persuasive,” said Republican Senator Sue Vinton during the comment portion of the hearing.

“I understand the concern that was pointed out about young people being entrusted with millions — billions — of dollars, but the people we are talking about are of the age where they could be elected to this body if they run,” Senator Forrest Mandeville (R) said. “I’m reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul to

Timothy — let no one look down upon you because you are young. So, I’m going to be a no on this bill.”

“We ended up flipping it to a 10-4 vote in our favor,” Watson said. “We



flipped five Republicans.”

When contacted by the Exponent for comment, Fuller stated: “Referenced bill was tabled in committee,” and did not elaborate further.

When asked if this result was a win for student lobbying, Hegna said: “I don’t want to [count] wins just yet because it is tabled, but I would call this a win because we get another two years of student representation until the legislature tries to take a smack at us again.”

Overall, Watson encouraged students to stay engaged in legislative processes. “The way that students can be represented in the legislature is by interacting with their student government. It’s just a really great way to have a better connection with the MSU community as a whole,” she said.

“I always tell folks, no matter your background, if you’re a part of a political group or not, if you’re interested, come talk to us,” Zink said. “We actively solicit student input and voices. We have vacancies on our legislative action committee. Anybody with any level of experience, there’s a spot for you.”

To find more information on ASMSU, visit its website at [montana.edu/asmsu/](https://montana.edu/asmsu/). To learn more about current or past bills in the Montana Legislature, head to <https://www.legmt.gov/bills/>.

# CULTURE

## Gallatin Nature Society encourages accessibility in outdoor circles

BY TATIANA MEANS

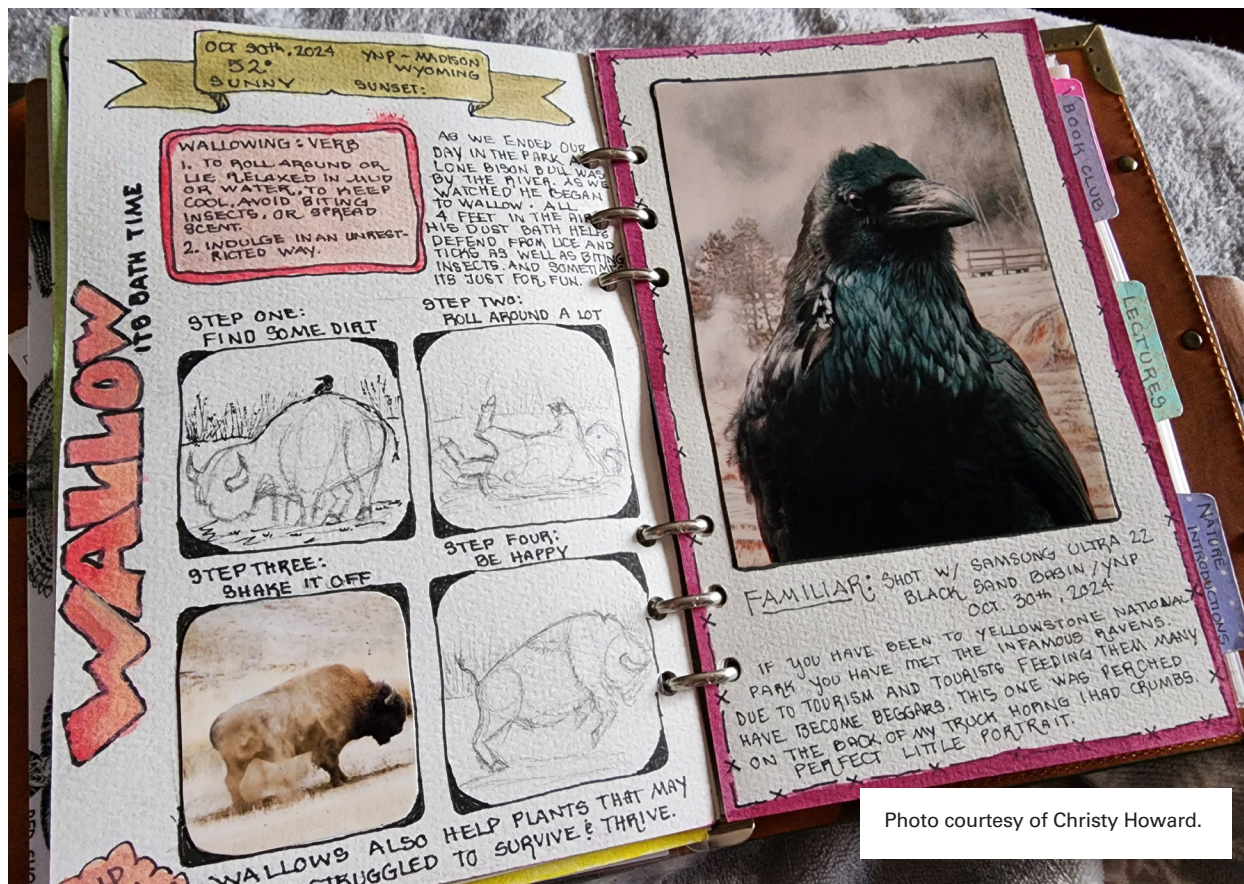


Photo courtesy of Christy Howard.

Tucked in the corner of local tea shop Steep Mountain Tea House, a group of nature lovers were gathered with sketchbooks in hand ready for a nature journaling workshop put on by the Gallatin Nature Society (GNS). Leading this workshop was Christy Howard, founder and organizer of GNS.

Howard — who was born in Bozeman — explained that she started GNS around a year and a half ago after noticing a lack of accessibility in local nature circles. “It’s definitely about equity and diversity and just trying to make sure that Bozeman is for everybody,” she said.

Howard said that she has always been a lifelong nature lover. “My dad took us to all the national parks as a kid and he worked in Yellowstone, so nature’s always been kind of my thing,” she said. “My first major journal was pictures I cut out of Ranger Rick and National Geographic magazines that I stole from my dad.”

Nature journaling really kicked off for Howard during the pandemic, when she began using art to help manage her mental health. “The only thing [nature] requires is for you to be present. It doesn’t manipulate, it doesn’t care about numbers, it

doesn’t care about disability,” she said.

To Howard, nature journaling can be a way to bring nature education to people who may not have the same opportunities as others. She often works with what she called underserved populations at the Bozeman Senior Center, Memory Care and Assisted Living Spring Creek and Eagle Mount.

“Because I work with different populations some of them may have different audio, visual and physical abilities. Nature journaling is still for them,” Howard said. She showcased examples of journals with photos instead of drawings and others with only writing.

“I have one person who survived cancer and now their journal is a list of reasons why they’re still here,” she said.

Howard emphasized that nature journaling doesn’t have just one look. “Many people, when they see nature journals, they’re thinking — oh my gosh they have to be perfect — but that’s not what it’s about,” she said. “Ultimately, nature journaling is simply a way to observe nature and look at it in new ways.”

Howard described her work with the senior community as both fulfilling and inspiring. “There’s just something about that joy and curiosity that we had when we were kids and just couldn’t wait to soak up everything, but still seeing it when you’re 70 and 80,” she said.

Howard said she doesn’t just work with underserved populations — she emphasizes inclusivity all around. She spoke about her experience as someone with lupus hiking in Bozeman, and how outdoor culture can be exclusionary. “On Bozeman trails, sometimes if you’re differently-abled or bigger, people will go like, why are you here?”

Beyond personal reflection, Howard also sees nature journaling as a form of what she calls “craftivism.”

Craftivism, which is a portmanteau of craft and activism, is a form of activism that uses crafts to create social change. She explained that she has witnessed how nature journaling can encourage eco-activism.

“Nature journalism is a form of citizen science,” Howard said. “Once you really start looking at something and start to care about it, you’re willing to protect it.”

GNS holds nature journaling workshops at Steep Mountain Tea House on the second Wednesday of every month from 5 to 7 p.m. For more information, visit GNS’s substack at <https://gallatinnaturesociety.substack.com/> and follow @gallatinnaturesociety on Instagram.

**"Once you really start looking at something and start to care about it, you're willing to protect it."**

— Gallatin Nature Society founder

**Christy Howard**

# Dining halls dish out global flavors at International Food Bazaar

BY MOLLY HOUSER

"I'm from the East Coast, where there's a lot more ethnic food," said Natalie Lanasa, a sophomore studying animal sciences and a student employee in the Rendezvous Dining Pavilion. Lanasa stood behind the counter, stirring a pot of traditional beef stew from Western Africa as she spoke. "Montana doesn't really get a lot of that."

Many might agree with Lanasa's statement: Bozeman isn't generally recognized as a hub of international cuisine. However, last Wednesday Feb. 12, the MSU dining halls put that notion to the test.

Miller Dining Commons and Rendezvous Dining Pavilion welcomed MSU students and the Bozeman community for the annual International Food Bazaar (IFB). For over 30 years, the IFB was put on by the Office of International Programs and held in the Strand Union Building, according to its website. After a hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the event moved to the dining halls in 2023. Since then, the dining halls have taken charge of organizing the IFB.

"This is what we do," dining hall Executive Chef Jill Flores said. "We put big dinners on, we order food, we prepare food, we cook food. We have the skill set to do a really nice job at this — that's why the dining halls took it over."

Flores — who serves as the executive chef for both dining halls and the on-campus bakery,

**"Getting to try new dishes and new cultural things — it goes both ways, we benefit, students benefit."**

— Executive Chef Jill Flores

Indulge Bakery — explained that the event is a welcome challenge to both her and the staff at both dining halls.

With cuisine hailing from over 34 countries on six continents, the dining halls had something for everyone. Rendezvous featured a variety of items, from Chinese vegetable spring rolls, German currywurst, South Korean lettuce wraps and homemade kimchi to French crêpes — the dining hall offered well over 30 types of dishes.

"Every dish that we prepare, there has to be a recipe for it, it has to be analyzed, we have to understand the allergens," Flores said. "These are not our regular menu items so we have to build

that all out and make sure we have everything accurate so everything is safe for the public to eat."

According to Flores, the planning and production of this event usually starts about six months to a year beforehand — meaning that right as one bazaar finishes, the teams start planning for the next year's IFB.

"Everyone was involved," Flores said. "It takes a bit of everything, cause not only are we creating the menus, we have to place orders. We have an auxiliary team that helps create the menus. We have folks that help us with advertising. Everyone has a hand in this."

Chef de Cuisine of Rendezvous Rob Strauch detailed the effort that coordinating this event takes.

"Sourcing a lot of international cuisines can be really difficult in Montana," Strauch said. "Some of these specialty items can take anywhere from six to 10 weeks to get here. So, we have to put our ducks in a row and make sure we communicate with our suppliers way ahead of time."

Despite the amount of planning this event requires, Flores explained that it has helped make lasting connections in the MSU community.

"We have a peanut soup — last year the African students came in and showed us how to make it. I think that is a really special connection," Flores said. "Getting to try new dishes and new cultural things — it goes both ways: we benefit, students benefit."

Although the IFB won't return until next February, both dining halls have begun hosting more events for students and the Bozeman community to enjoy, according to Strauch.

"I would say this semester more than ever, we are trying to do lots of little events and pop-ups and specials — things that the dining halls haven't been doing to the level which we have this year," Strauch said. "For example, at Rendezvous, every Tuesday we do a plated taco special for Taco Tuesday. We'll often get some local tri-tip and grill out and make carne asada or we'll do braised chicken overnight. It's a really fun way to try and explore some different cuisines."

To keep up to date with the dining halls and see more information on the next IFB, visit <https://www.montana.edu/culinaryservices/diningoncampus.html>.



A student grabs Korean food during the IFB.  
Photo by Logan Ross.

# Songwriters share heartfelt tunes at Steep Mountain Teahouse

BY ISABELLE KAYSER

There was a quiet hum of activity in Steep Mountain Teahouse last Thursday night; patrons played card games and sipped tea while listening to the music played by two performers from local musical group Songwriters in the Round (SR).

The two individuals from SR performing on Feb. 13 were organizer and founder Drew McDowell and group member Will Sandish. “[SR focuses] more on the songwriting aspect and workshopping song ideas together, this works best as a collective versus a band,” McDowell said.

SR usually includes four to five members playing at a time but often switches out group members for different events. “The group so far also includes Doc Branscomb, Jack Oousterhius and Dan. Just Dan,” McDowell said.

The group began playing at local coffee shops and breweries last spring. They often call their collective a bunch of “Bozeman songsters” — or, as they put it, a bunch of “BS.” “It’s about bringing more people into the venue, but more importantly about the music,” McDowell said.

In addition to the collective, both McDowell and Sandish are also in their own bands. McDowell started a band called “The Scurry”

and Sandish fronts “Willy on the Wire.”

The two explained that their path to music started early. “Both my parents were musicians, they were in a wedding band together,” Sandish said. “I just always kind of had that around the house.”

During their performance the two played and sang from memory, intermixing their original lyrics with expressive guitar riffs and improvisations. Many of their lyrics combine humor, joy and sadness.

“We emphasize the lyrics, melody and structure of a song, not so much the detail work of arranging it for a full band,” McDowell said. “We push each other to show up with new material and to keep the creativity flowing.”

McDowell and Sandish explained that they both often reference their life experiences when composing songs. For example, Sandish wrote a song called “Secrets” while he was in college.

“So I just started writing a song about the crazy dreams I was having,” he said. “And it ended up being my first song that I felt I needed to memorize and play for people.”

In a full-circle moment, Sandish played “Secrets” in the teahouse last Thursday.

Additionally, McDowell has found inspiration

**"There's also a bunch of talented songsters here that don't have a vehicle to get their songs heard. This is the way."**

— Songwriters in the Round founder

**Drew McDowell**

in writing about his childhood Golden Chow Retriever Nellie. The first song he wrote about Nellie was called “Dog in My Backyard.”

“[Dogs] are very mindful beings,” McDowell said. “It was written during a time in my life when I was hanging out with my dog Nellie all day every day. I couldn’t go anywhere and it was just like the simple life of a dog.”

Nellie passed away about five years ago, which led him to write another song about his relationship with her, titled “Head Full of Stories.”

At the end of their performance, the audience in the coffee shop gave a loud round of applause.

“There’s an audience here in Bozeman that are critical listeners and really enjoy clever and emotive songwriting,” McDowell said. “There’s also a bunch of talented songsters here that don’t have a vehicle to get their songs heard. This is the way.”

McDowell’s next performance with his band “The Scurry” will be at The Filling Station, where they will be opening for “High Fade” on Tuesday, March 15.

To hear some of McDowell’s music, visit his Spotify page at the handle “Drew McDowell.” Sandish is not yet publishing music, but said he intends to soon.

To get involved with SR, email McDowell at [drew.mcdowell22@gmail.com](mailto:drew.mcdowell22@gmail.com).



McDowell and Sandish perform their original music.  
Photo by Logan Ross.

# OPINION

## Where is MSU's Grant Writing Class?

BY NATHAN MAYVILLE



Wilson Hall on a snowy Wednesday morning.  
Photo by Logan Ross.

Like many higher learning institutions, MSU receives much of its research funding through grants — particularly federal ones.

In September of 2023, the MSU News Service (MNS) published an article titled “Led by sciences and engineering, [MSU] research spending hits record \$230 million.” The article explained that \$207 million of that record sum came from federal sources and that 858 undergraduates, 612 graduate students and 53 postdoctoral researchers were “directly supported” by research spending in 2022-2023.

With so much relying on funding from federal grants — from individual salaries to mortgage payments on University buildings — it seems like an oversight for MSU to not provide a grant writing class.

“Competition for research dollars is fierce and the success our faculty and research staff show in securing funds is indicative of the quality of their scientific and creative pursuits,” said MSU’s Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost Bob Mokwa in the MNS’ article.

Doug Downs — a professor at MSU’s College of Letters and Sciences — explained that there are multiple kinds of grants, but research grants provide funding for discipline-specific research, often through higher learning institutions like MSU. Community or civic grants may provide funding for infrastructure repair or development, and education

grants — like the Pell Grant — may provide funding to students of institutions of learning, according to [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

Though the grant process can seem obscure and ponderous, it can be broken down into a couple of relatively simple steps. First, an individual or organization must determine if they are eligible for a specific grant, whether it be from a federal, state or private institution. Then, they must apply for the grant in a process often referred to as grant writing.

“There are a lot of people asking for the same money, so [grants are] intensely competitive,” said Downs. MSU is ranked an R1 research university by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of

**"A grant class could provide value to students, the university and the surrounding community. "**

Teaching and the American Council on Education, according to NBC Montana. Additionally — as shown by the \$207 million which came from federal sources in 2022-2023 — MSU is receiving a lot of money from research grants, according to the MNS.

Those research dollars don’t all go to research in the way one might expect. There are numerous costs associated with research that take portions of the total sum. Downs explained that research participants may need to be compensated and researchers and research assistants will need to be paid and provided benefits for the work they contribute to the project. In addition, research materials such as lab equipment may cost money.

Besides the direct costs associated with the research, there are also indirect expenses, referred to as Facilities and Administration (F&A) costs.

“So, I’m applying for a federal grant to do this,” Downs said, referring to a hypothetical grant proposal process. “And the University has negotiated with the federal government broadly by negotiating with, in our case, the Department of Health and Human Services, to say that our indirect cost rate is 40 percent. So if I ask for 10 grand, I am actually asking for 14 grand.”

The amount of money contained in the indirect cost rate of a research process goes to ensuring that the institution facilitating the research can do so effectively. Large grants may need to be managed by administrative personnel, whose compensation would also come out of the F&A funds. STEM research may require advanced laboratory spaces, the construction of which also may be generated by F&A funds.

“When somebody applies for a grant, they say, I need a lab,” Downs said. “We need a building to put the lab in. We literally don’t have the space. So, part of my grant proposal is to use the F&As to help fund the building.”

A grant class could provide value to students, the university and the surrounding community. First, students would receive examples of and experience in the grant writing process, making them more confident and capable professionals. In learning the grant writing process, students could provide value to the community by writing grants for local organizations in need of funding. “You would be doing your grant proposal with an area organization that needed a grant proposal written,” Downs said.

Finally, the university could centralize the process for learning how to write grants and have access to an experienced pool of grant writers who could apply for grants more effectively.

# Education is Failing Everyone

BY JOELLE SCARROW

As we are just over halfway done with the 2024-25 school year, I can't help but notice how many of my peers are burnt out and disillusioned by our broken education system. The focus of contemporary education is often on acquiring the highest grade point average instead of cultivating genuine creativity and passion. Because the aim of getting a good grade does not instill creativity, curiosity and drive, the singular focus of a grade-driven system cannot prepare students for the modern world.

The modern landscape of our approach to education — with the exception of a minor subculture shift to discussion-based classrooms — has barely changed beyond the rising price tags associated with the collegiate experience. The U.S. experienced massive problems rising from the increased testing and heavier burden placed on teachers to be passing their students, due to the No Child Left Behind Act enacted in 2001. The Every Student Succeeds Act was passed in 2015 in an attempt to counteract some of these issues, but it by no means compensates for the deep-rooted issues throughout the educational system.

I have experienced this failure. In my junior year of high school, despite maintaining a 4.0 GPA, I had failed to learn or challenge myself seriously. That was, until I encountered AP calculus. It broke me and my GPA that year, but I had never felt more proud of a grade in my life. Despite suffering greatly throughout the year, at the end of the course I realized that no class had ever endeavored to challenge me to learn like this one had. In removing the ideals of a perfect grade and GPA, I was able to experience education beyond the pursuit of a good grade.

The U.S. education system fails to acknowledge how little a grade can reflect learning. When contrasted with some of the best education systems in the world — Denmark and Finland — the U.S. lacks many of their key practices, according to articles published on the official website of Denmark and the World Economic Forum, both prioritize problem solving capacity over memorization, lowered or eliminated standardized testing, don't make schools have a competitive atmosphere, respect and train their teachers to a higher degree and

emphasize students specializing in areas of interest in high school. Due to the earlier specialization, many universities in Europe do not require core requirements once entering university.

In the U.S., college students with far less direction are far more frequent despite the immense cost as compared to Europe. According to an article published in the NACADA journal, a publication put out by The Global Community for Academic Advising, "full-time college students in the U.S. who selected undecided as their intended college major increased from 1.7 percent in 1966 to 8.9 percent in 2015" and "as many as 75 percent of college students will change their major at least once."

As a public university, MSU falls into many of these common pitfalls seen throughout American education. No matter what degree or department you may have, we are all confined to the same grade-driven system. Often the burden of fighting this system falls upon individual professors. I have found that my favorite professors often stray from traditional practices like testing because they recognize how little learning test scores reflect.

The creativity our future world will need has been stripped from us after years of ceaseless, monotonous curriculum aimed at inflating our GPAs. And in its absence,

those of us who now seek to enter the adult world are woefully underprepared to make an impact.

So how do we fight this? We ask as many questions as we possibly can and we imbue this passion into our education systems. Everyone has a skill that has the capacity to change the world as long as we do not squander it on a mindless pursuit of financial gain. How we educate ourselves and others has the capacity to cripple or amplify the potential of a nation. For the sake of all our futures, please question the system that defines us and pursue your curiosity beyond the currently limiting collegiate establishment.

## MSU PD Unclaimed Property List



The Montana State University Police Department posts an ongoing list of unclaimed property that we have in our possession. The property is listed in the link below as "MSUPDUnclaimed Property." Per Montana State University Resolution Number 601, if the property remains unclaimed for a period of three (3) months from the date of initial posting, it will be destroyed, returned to the finder, donated, converted to law enforcement use, or sold at public auction, the property or the value of the property is not redeemable by the owner or another person entitled to possession. To check the MSU PD Unclaimed Property List, go to: <https://www.montana.edu/police/found-property.html>.



← If you are missing property and you suspect any of the property on these lists may be yours, please get in touch with us at [foundproperty@montana.edu](mailto:foundproperty@montana.edu) or by calling (406) 994-2121.

FEB. 20 -  
FEB. 26

Want your event featured here?  
Email event info to us at  
[ExponentEntertainment@montana.edu](mailto:ExponentEntertainment@montana.edu)  
one week in advance.

CALENDAR

THU 20

**OFF-CAMPUS LIVING  
RESOURCE FAIR  
SUB BALLROOMS @ 10 A.M. - 3 P.M.**

The office of Off-Campus Student Life is pleased to welcome campus partners, local property managers and leasing managers, city officials and public transportation officials to MSU to host a resource fair for students looking to move off-campus.

FRI 21

**BOZEMAN COLLECTS EXHIBIT  
BOZEMAN ART MUSEUM @ 11 A.M. - 5 P.M.**

Bozeman Collects brings the treasured collected artwork of Bozeman's locals into the public eye. Find work by Warhol, Goya, Lasansky and Dalí alongside local artists, unique gems of history and much more. The exhibit opens Jan. 3 and ends March 15. Admission is free.

SAT 22

**BANGTAIL BIATHLON  
CROSSCUT MOUNTAIN SPORTS @ 7:30 A.M. - 12:15 P.M.**

The Bangtail Biathlon is an event hosted by Crosscut Mountain Sports Center at our race-ready range and on our beautiful trails. This event draws biathletes and skiers from the Bozeman community and throughout the Rocky Mountain West.

SUN 23

**MAP BREWING X 406 FLEA  
MAP BREWING @ 12 - 4 P.M.**

Shop from six vintage vendors and two accessory artists while indulging in one of MAP's 20+ delectable beers on tap.

MON 24

**ONE O'CLOCK JAZZ — BLACK HISTORY  
CONCERT**

The One O'clock Jazz Band is an audition-only ensemble that represents the strongest music students in the area of Jazz. The group consists of both music majors and majors from other departments on MSU's campus. Tickets are \$15 for general admission and \$5 for students.

TUE 25

**YOGA  
BOZEMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY @ 12:15 P.M.**  
Certified yoga instructor Sara Clary leads a gentle 45-minute flow.

WED 26

**CHICAGO: THE MUSICAL  
BRICK BREEDEN @ 7:30 P.M.**

In the whirlwind of Chicago's Jazz Age, two of the Cook County Jail's most notorious murderesses — vaudeville star Velma Kelly and chorus girl Roxie Hart — become fierce rivals as they compete for headlines amidst a media frenzy. Tickets are \$40+.

**USED  
BOOK  
SALE**



**Bozeman Public Library**  
Community Room - 626 E Main St

**Sat, Feb 22 | 10am-5pm | Most Items \$1-3**

**Sun, Feb 23 | 1pm-5pm | Fill-a-Bag Sale**

*Books, Music, Movies, Board Games & Puzzles, Collectibles, Classics, & More!*

**(406)582-2425 [www.supportbozemanlibrary.org](http://www.supportbozemanlibrary.org)**

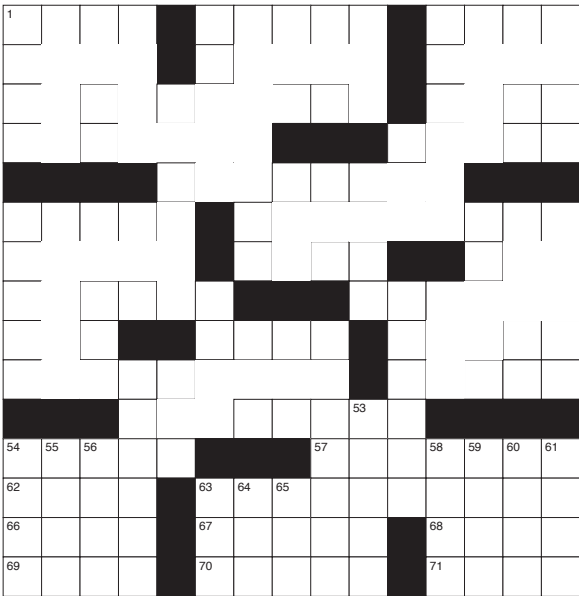


# PUZZLES

Brought to you by the MSU  
exponent

Love the Exponent? Follow us @MSUExponent!  
For solutions, visit Printable-Puzzles.com and enter puzzle code.

CODE: #8V79CEV4



Across

- 1. Places to wait in line for licenses
- 5. O'Hara's \_\_\_\_ to Live
- 10. French WWI aircraft
- 14. Corner piece
- 15. Planted, as seed
- 16. Baba \_\_\_\_ (Gilda Radner parody)
- 17. Salad ingredients, sometimes
- 19. Courtroom attention-getter
- 20. Grows incisors
- 21. Thin nails
- 22. Regarded highly
- 26. Ill-treat
- 30. Taxpayer request
- 34. Mommies' mommies
- 35. Singer Diana
- 36. Dam-building New Deal agcy.
- 37. Irks
- 39. Hot dog brand
- 42. Quiche ingredient
- 43. Park of London
- 47. Paris's \_\_\_\_ des Beaux-Arts

Down

- 48. Character-related musical theme
- 51. Levees
- 52. Crawfish dish
- 54. Dodges socially
- 57. Bitter, as in taste
- 62. Sounds of amazement
- 63. Sweet treat
- 66. Harplike instrument
- 67. Donor classification
- 68. Petitioner
- 69. 24-hour periods
- 70. Looks nastily
- 71. Write to on a cell phone

Aback  
Alone  
Amaze  
Axioms  
Bakes  
Beers  
Bidden  
Bonds  
Brand  
Cedes  
Comprehensible  
Cuffs

Dammed  
Decks  
Dirty  
Erred  
Glads  
Grammar  
Gripe  
Invaders  
Judged  
Lawsuit  
Leafs  
Lends

Mainstays  
Movie  
Noise  
Nutmeg  
Panting  
Peeve  
Plops  
Polar  
Qualifiers  
Quirk  
Readjusts  
Renews

Sensationalism  
Shaming  
Terminate  
Thorough  
Viral  
Weekend

Down

- 1. "Dadgum it!"
- 2. Oliver Twist's request
- 3. Yea or nay
- 4. Comic sketch
- 5. Residue
- 6. Morning crowler
- 7. Editor's mark (abbr.)
- 8. Eff follower
- 9. Norton and Harris
- 10. Duel tools
- 11. Words before visit or price
- 12. Amazed
- 13. HÃagen-\_\_\_\_
- 18. Picture-taking word
- 21. Actor Affleck
- 23. Skeleton opening
- 24. Sci-fi visitors
- 25. Arizona city
- 26. Heavenly harpist
- 27. It's got a flat bottom
- 28. Eel, on a Japanese menu
- 29. Used a chair
- 31. "\_\_\_\_ the canal zone and let Congress debate" (T.R. boast)
- 32. Seed source
- 33. Nose holes
- 38. "Get lost!"
- 40. Exchange for cash
- 41. Verizon acquisition
- 44. "\_\_\_\_ Mama Tambien" (2002 film)
- 45. Chateau \_\_\_\_ (Dumas locale)
- 46. Obliterator
- 49. Grammar class subjects
- 50. White and Adirondack: Abbr.
- 53. Repercussions
- 54. Auctioneer's declaration
- 55. Boxing's Oscar De La \_\_\_\_
- 56. "Driving Miss Daisy" playwright Alfred
- 58. Kind of stop or area
- 59. Lapis lazuli's hue
- 60. Long-horned wild goat
- 61. Groceries carrier
- 63. "The \_\_\_\_ Club" (Bakker org.)
- 64. CBS logo
- 65. Zoo beast

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| 5 |   | 3 |   |   |   | 7 |   |   |
|   | 6 | 2 |   | 1 |   |   | 5 | 3 |
|   |   |   | 8 | 5 |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | 4 |   |   | 1 |   |   |   |
| 1 | 2 |   |   |   |   | 9 |   |   |
|   |   | 7 | 6 |   | 5 |   | 8 |   |

CODE: #C050SV

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|   | 7 |   |   | 2 |   |   |   | 4 |
| 9 |   |   | 7 | 4 |   | 2 | 5 |   |

CODE: #R438QZ

M P E E V E S L E A F S Z D  
V S D N E L H H T I M Y N E  
N I I O Q B G R A M M A R R  
U R R L U I U N N M R T Z R  
T A T A A S O E I B I S H E  
M L Y W L N R D M T R N P A  
E O Q S I E O D R E N I G D  
G P V U F H H I E E R A P J  
D L B I I E T B T G N M P U  
A B A T E R I N V A D E R S  
M O K D R P K O F B S U W T  
M N E F S M O I X A T N J S  
E D S P L O P S K C E D E S  
D S F F U C W E E K E N D S

CODE: #Y243CA



What era are you in?

- Crashout era
- Moviegrid era
- Nissan Altima can't go anywhere era
- Sleeping in nothing but my socks and my trapper hat era
- Eating the most appetizing Crayola crayon colors era

Napping on the Exponent couch era

Answering box-texts instead of writing this 1,000-word essay era

Jumping on the Exponent couch with my shoes on era

Succumbing to the sinister eldritch whispers I hear when I'm left alone with my thoughts era

Skiing era

Being snug as a bug in a rug with a mug era

Hustle culture dropout era

Stressed era

AAAAAAAAAAAAHH  
HHHHHHHHHHHHHH

Mesozoic Era

Tall Tales  
& TIDBITS

Champ didn't respond.  
I'm going through mourning.  
Money laundering is my coping mechanism.