

THE MSU

exponent

MONTANA STATE'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1895

MARCH 12, 2026

03 NEWS

WOMEN'S
CENTER HOSTS
DISCUSSION IN
HONOR OF RBG

07 SPORTS

ICEDOGS FALL
TO HELENA AT
HOME

10 CULTURE

ROLLER DERBY
OFFERS
CLASHES AND
CAMARADERIE

14 OPINION

TRANSPHOBIC
LEGISLATION IS
UN-AMERICAN



**'TODAY IS JUST THE GREATEST DAY': BIG SKY
HOSTS 17TH ANNUAL SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

PG 08

Since 1895, the MSU Exponent has been publishing original content for students, faculty and the university community. Funding comes from an annual student fee and revenue from our advertisers. Every Thursday during the academic year you can pick up a copy on campus, or visit us online at www.msuxponent.com. For corrections, letters to the editor or any other inquiry you have, contact the Editor-in-Chief or stop by the office, SUB 366.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Amanda Fulton
ExponentEditor@montana.edu

MANAGING EDITOR
Will Malizia
ExponentProduction@montana.edu

NEWS EDITOR
Connor McLean
ExponentNews@montana.edu

SPORTS & OUTDOORS EDITOR
Kendall Becker
ExponentSports@montana.edu

OPINION EDITOR
Tatiana Means
ExponentOpinion@montana.edu

CULTURE EDITOR
Molly Houser
ExponentEntertainment@montana.edu

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Kelly Hammaren
ExponentPhoto@montana.edu

ADVERTISING AND MARKETING DIRECTOR
Alli Kernan
ExponentAds@gmail.com

LEAD LAYOUT DESIGNER
Levi Gessler

MULTIMEDIA MANAGER
Evan Oroho

PROFESSIONAL ADVISER
Bill Lamberty

To the best of the Exponent's knowledge, all advertisers are compliant with state and federal laws. Advertisements do not necessarily represent the mission or views of the Exponent.



Instructors for MSU's Counseling & Psychological Services's Mindfulness Monday classes, Melissa Casad and Terra Pratt, in the Student Wellness Center on March 8.

PHOTO BY LUCI BOURGEOIS
COVER DESIGN BY LELA HASLUP
COVER PHOTO BY CAITLIN RODGERS

TALK BACK!

Love us? Hate us? Tell us! Slide into our DMs or tag us on all your favorite social media platforms and let us know what you think. We want to hear all your gripes, rants and glowing reviews!

- @MSUExponent
- @MSUExpo
- @MSUExponent
- #MSUExponent

Correction Notice

The Exponent published a story in its Feb. 19 edition titled "Citing funding issues, U.S. Customs and Border Protection drops out of career fair" that incorrectly attributed comments about federal agents and self-defense to Daniel Bitton and stated that he was a member of the campus chapter of Young Americans for Liberty (YAL). Bitton is not a member of YAL and the quotes were made by a different individual, who is a YAL member. The article was corrected online on March 10, and all references to Bitton and YAL in this context have been removed. The corrected version of the story can be found online at msuxponent.com.

— Amanda Fulton, Editor-in-Chief

SIGNIFICANT FIGURES

COMPILED BY AMANDA FULTON
DESIGNED BY LELA HASLUP

Ropefish

1. Ropefish have a long, serpentine body that can grow from **15** to **36** inches.

2. They are native to West and Central Africa and can live **8** to **20** years in captivity.

3. Ropefish have **2** breathing methods, lungs and gills, which help them cope with low-quality water.

4. They are closely related to ancient fish species, with fossil records indicating that they emerged **66** to **100** million years ago.

Women's History Month kicks off with a discussion on RBG's legacy

BY AVERY EDWARDS

The MSU Women's Center kicked off Women's History Month with a discussion moderated by the Pre-Law Club about the life and legacy of the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG). The event was the first in the Center's month-long series celebrating women's contributions to history.

Students came together on Wednesday, March 4 to discuss RBG's legacy as the second female Supreme Court justice, appointed in 1993.

"It's important for women to see other women in such high positions, seeing that they're able to go that far," said event moderator Suzie Foster. "And besides her career as a Supreme Court justice, she brought women to the place that they are today."

Students discussed RBG's advocacy for women's rights as an important but demanding part of her legacy.

"It kind of seems like [RBG]'s job is to be a Supreme Court justice and also the person that's setting up all these fields for women to get into," said Apryl Little, a student assistant for the Women's Center. "Which is obviously a noble pursuit, but it also just requires more from her than it requires from a man in the exact same position."

The discussion was meant to not only educate students about the importance of RBG in history, but also raise awareness about the Women's Center, Little said.

The Women's Center, which is located on the third floor of the SUB, is dedicated to creating an equitable environment for people of all genders, according to its website.

"I hope it helps them find a community," Little said. "That's my favorite part of working at the Women's Center — it's a good way to make connections to people that maybe you never would have made connections with."

According to her, before it gained federal recognition, Women's History Month began as an unofficial showcase of women's historical contributions.

"Women's contributions weren't viewed as important as men's. They just weren't often documented," Little said. "So it's not even that we weren't teaching it, it's that we really didn't have a lot of material to teach from."

Siena Quesada, a Women's Center assistant, said she grew up thinking that many of science's most important discoveries were made by men. Through celebrations of Women's History Month, she



learned that some of these men had taken credit for women's work.

"We have this month because we want to learn more about different female icons and all the stories that normally get ignored," Quesada said in an interview after the event.

"We have this month because we want to learn more about different female icons and all the stories that normally get ignored and don't get taught."

-Siena Quesada

According to her, the many untold stories of women in history, science and politics are just one reason the celebration should last for a month.

"There are so many reasons why this should be a whole month, and I think there are so many reasons why it's sad that this has to be a whole month," Quesada said during the discussion.

"There are still so many positions that [women] are going to have to work hard for just to be the first," she said.

For discussion moderator Mey Palomino,

Women's Day — which took place on March 8 — is an especially important part of the month because of her Mexican heritage. In Mexico City, an enormous celebration takes place to commemorate the international holiday.

"It's not only to advocate for women's rights, but it's also to call attention to another critical issue — femicide, which is the intentional killing of women," she said in an interview after the March 4 discussion.

Little said Women's History Month reminds her of the ongoing need to advocate for women's rights.

"Rights that we thought we had are not guaranteed without continuous pushing and advocating for those things," she said in an interview after the event.

"I view my job now — and the job of our generation — is just to keep that moving and not to let it slip back, because it's entirely too easy for that to happen if you're not continuously pushing for it," Little said.

To learn more about the Women's Center, visit <https://www.montana.edu/women/>.

Protestors fight immigration bill

BY BRYAN KELLY FOR THE EXPONENT - APRIL 6, 2006

Concerned students and Bozeman residents gathered at noon on Wednesday, April 5, to protest H.R. 4437. The bill was recently passed in the U.S. House of Representatives and proposes stiff legal action against immigrants already living in or entering the United States illegally. It is currently being debated in the U.S. Senate.

Students involved with both the MSU branch of Amnesty International and the Progressive Activism Coalition organized the protest.

The event's organizers cited several points of H.R. 4437 to which they object, among them the construction of a 700-mile fence along the U.S./Mexico border and the proposed felony status and associated imprisonment for illegal immigrants and those accused of aiding or housing them.

"We are here today because we do not

believe poverty-stricken immigrants are felons," Erica Aytes, one of the protest's organizers said. "We are here today because we believe helping other human beings is something to be praised, not condemned. We are here today because we believe families belong together, regardless of their country of origin."

Keynote speaker Leah Schmalzbauer was then introduced. Schmalzbauer is currently a professor of sociology and anthropology at MSU and prior to becoming a professor she worked with migrant families in the Boston area.

"This is an issue that is really close to my heart ... I'm an immigrant scholar," Schmalzbauer said, adding, "To me [immigration] is not just a political issue, it's not just a flashy media topic, this is a human rights issue."

She noted that there are roughly 12 million people living and working illegally in the United States, all of whom would be subject to felony charges and possible imprisonment or deportation under the bill's provisions.

Additionally, friends, families, churches, scholars and others who help or study illegal immigrants would be possible subjects for criminalization, Schmalzbauer said.

"It would also increase what I see as a culture of fear," she said. "It portrays immigrants as a security threat."

Schmalzbauer named several reasons why immigrants come to the U.S., including asylum from political persecution and depressed local economies at home that cannot sustain them.

Immigrant workers in the U.S. often send money to their families in their home countries, thereby helping to sustain local economies there.



Protestors hold up signs on the Centennial Mall, advertising their stance against H.R. 4437. The group succeeded in distributing over 200 information sheets on the bill.
Photo by Erica Aytes.

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 or by calling (406) 994-2121.

Poll: Montanans deeply divided on federal immigration enforcement

BY ZEKE LLOYD FOR MONTANA FREE PRESS - MARCH 5, 2026

This piece is part of MTFP’s 2026 poll week, where we’re exploring data on how Montana voters feel about their elected officials, environmental concerns, immigration enforcement and other issues.

One-hundred percent of Montana Democrats expressed disapproval of Republican President Donald Trump’s approach to immigration in a Montana Free Press-Eagleton poll conducted in late December and early January — while 94% of Montana Republicans expressed support.

Regardless of political party, an overwhelming majority of Montana voters, 85%, expressed strong feelings one way or the other about the issue. About 49% of respondents overall said they strongly approved and another 37% strongly disapproved, leaving only about 15% without a strong stance on the issue.

The poll was conducted before the fatal shootings of U.S. citizens Renee Good and Alex Pretti intensified protests over immigration enforcement actions in Minneapolis. It was also before the Jan. 25 arrest of business owner Roberto Orozco-Ramirez in the small eastern Montana town of Froid.

Republicans were substantially more likely to support Trump’s immigration policies than Democrats or independents.

While 86% of Republicans “strongly approve” and another 8% “somewhat approve” of Trump’s approach to immigration, 0% of Democrats approved at all or had no opinion. Independents, meanwhile, were split at 51% “strongly disapprove” and 27% “strongly approve.”

About half of poll respondents also said they strongly supported collaboration between federal immigration authorities and Montana Highway Patrol. A similar number supported federal immigration authorities collaborating with both county sheriff’s offices and local police departments.

Collaboration between U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and local government has become a contested issue in Helena, which is under investigation by Montana Attorney General Austin Knudsen over whether the city commission’s resolution to restrict police from cooperating with ICE violates a 2021 bill that banned sanctuary cities.

The MTFP-Eagleton poll surveyed 801 registered voters through telephone interviews and text-to-web questionnaires. Data was collected from Dec. 23, 2025 to Jan. 3, 2026. The poll, which was weighted to reflect the demographics of the state’s voters, has an overall margin of error of plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

This piece is part of the Montana Insights project, which is commissioning rounds of polling to help MTFP readers understand public sentiment on key Montana policy issues. Further findings from the Dec. 2025-Jan. 2026 poll are available on the MTFP website.

YOUR CITY YOUR CHARTER



2026 LOCAL GOVERNMENT SURVEY | BOZEMAN, MT

The Bozeman City Study Commission is conducting a once-every-ten-years review of the Bozeman City Charter, providing opportunities for public learning and input as it considers whether updates are needed to how Bozeman is governed. Community members are highly encouraged to attend or watch BCSC meetings online and share input before the final report is completed later this year. Meeting times and location are standard unless otherwise noted.

Time: 4-6pm MT
Location: Bozeman City Hall

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:



EMAIL US: govreviewwebozeman.net

February 2026: Mayor Structure & Executive Function

- February 5, 2026
- February 18, 2026

March 2026: Representation & Elections

- March (TBD), 2026
- March 25, 2026

April 2026: Community Representation Structures

- April 2, 2026
- April 15, 2026
- April 24, 2026
- April 30, 2026

May 2026: Report Drafting & Public Input

- May 7, 2026
- May 13, 2026
- May 28, 2026

June & July 2026: Report Finalization & Adoption

- June 4, 2026
- June 17, 2026
- July 2, 2026
- July 8, 2026



ASMSU ELECTIONS CHEAT SHEET

01

RESEARCH

Get to know your student government! Determine whether you'd like to run for President, Vice President, or Senate seats. Your current student seat holders would love to discuss their roles with you, too! Find office hours and specifications of roles at: <https://www.montana.edu/asmsu/>

02



APPLY

Apply using the QR Code for your desired role. **The filing deadline is March 24 at 11:59 PM.** If you have any questions, reach out to our elections director asmsuelections@montana.edu

03

NETWORK

Get to know your current student leaders! All Senate meetings are open to the public on Thursdays at 6 PM in the Alumni Legacy Lounge. See your President, VP, and Senators in action!

04

VOTE!!

Make sure to VOTE! You can vote online using the QR code above or the URL below on **April 7-8.**



<https://www.montana.edu/asmsu/programs/civic-engagement/elections.html>

Helena Bighorns silence the Icedogs in Bozeman

BY CAMPBELL GOWDY

The Bozeman Icedogs' final home game of the season took place last Friday, ending in a 10-5 loss to the Helena Bighorns. However, the evening was about more than the scoreboard, as three Bozeman skaters were celebrated for taking home ice one last time.

According to its website, the Icedogs are a junior hockey team in the North American 3 Hockey League. Its roster consists of players from across the U.S. who live with host families during the season.

The team typically plays 47 games throughout the regular season, which runs from September to March. Its opponents are spread out across Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota, according to the team's website. The Icedogs are a U-20 team, meaning that once players turn 20 years old, they age out.

Three Icedogs will age out at the end of this season: forwards Baron Masopust, Andrew Kaunas and Devin Bruns. Masopust and Kaunas played their final home match Friday night, but Bruns was unable to compete due to a hand injury.

For Baron, the opportunity to play at home one last time alongside his younger brother — Icedogs forward Hayes Masopust — made the night that much more special.

"Being able to share the ice and compete together in a place that means so much to us is something I'll always cherish," Baron said. "Every one of my teammates feels like a brother, but having Hayes on the team this year made the experience even more meaningful."

At 7:30 p.m., the puck dropped and the excitement began. Within 10 minutes of the first period, the Icedogs were down three goals, as Helena forwards Kade Pareja, Austin Tyler and Ty Schell each found the back of the net.

Helena added two more goals before the end of the period, while Bozeman managed to get on the board with a goal from defenseman Seth Hanson, assisted by Kaunas and captain forward Lex Steckelberg. At the end of the first period, Helena led 5-1.

Following a performance by MSU's Figure Skating Club, Bozeman took the ice again, looking motivated and ready for a comeback. Early in the period, Steckelberg scored with assists from Kaunas and Baron. Helena swiftly responded, adding four more goals before the end of the period.

On a power play after a holding penalty on Hanson, Schell scored for Helena. Later in the period, Baron was sent to the penalty box for checking-from-behind.

Helena forward Austin Uecker and Schell



Jeffrey Hershberger of the Helena Bighorns and Jack Ryan of the Bozeman Icedogs on the sidelines of the game on March 6.
Photo by Marina Adelman.

"Being able to share the ice and compete together in a place that means so much to us is something I'll always cherish."

- Baron Masopust

each scored twice, completing hat tricks. While Bozeman seemed to play stronger than in the first period, it wasn't enough as the second closed with Helena leading 9-2.

The third period brought Bozeman fans to their feet as cheers from both teams filled Haynes Pavilion. About five minutes in, Helena forward Tyler Parsons was sent to the penalty box for cross-checking, creating a prime opportunity for the Icedogs to score.

Although the team didn't score on this chance, Bozeman dominated the third period, putting three more goals on the board. Left-wing Matthew Stamp made the first goal, assisted by center Jacob Larned and forward Sam Trufant. The second goal was scored by Baron and assisted by Kaunas and Steckelberg.

The final goal for the Icedogs came from Kaunas with another assist by Steckelberg. Helena added one final goal late in the period, scored by right-wing Chase Berg with an assist from defenseman

Mason Blair. The game ended with Helena taking the win 10-5.

For one final time on Friday night, Bruns, Kaunas and Baron were written into the history of Bozeman junior hockey.

"My most memorable experience playing for the Icedogs isn't just one moment — it's the connection we've built with the community over the past two years," Baron said. "Walking around downtown and having people say, 'Great game last night' really shows how much the team has meant to Bozeman."

"Seeing young fans excited about hockey and dreaming of becoming Icedogs one day is something I'll always support," he said. "None of it happens without the support of this community, and if we can make a fan's day even one percent better, then we've done our job."

To learn more about the Bozeman Icedogs, visit www.bozemanicedogs.com.

WITH BOOTS AND SNOWSHOES MONTANA CELEBRATES

By Caitlin Rodgers

Skis, boots and snowshoes lined the Madison Base Area at Big Sky Resort early last Monday as music blasted through a speaker. Athletes raced past spectators, all chasing the same goal: to showcase that, regardless of where you start, anyone is capable of crossing the finish line.

On March 2, Big Sky hosted the 17th Annual Montana Big Sky Area Winter Games Competition. Organized by Special Olympics Montana, the day consisted of three events: snowshoeing, intermediate giant slalom and advanced giant slalom.

The morning kicked off with snowshoeing and time trials, followed by both slalom races after lunch. Dozens of volunteers jumped in to support the 44 athletes competing.

Sean Fitzgerald, a volunteer who has served as the winter games competition coordinator for the past 15 years, was largely responsible for overseeing Monday's events.

"We have over 70 volunteers. That includes ski-with volunteers; we have about 35 of those folks. All the other ones are either administration, ribbons, awards, MC and then also the folks that run the competition," Fitzgerald said.

Nine teams — all from Montana — competed in the games, with four representing Bozeman. These were the Bozeman Outreach Bobcats, the Bozeman Yetis, the Bozeman Flames and the Bozeman Jedis.

Many athletes chose to compete with a unified partner. This partner is a volunteer who trains and competes alongside the Olympian. Their individual times are added together for a final score, according to Fitzgerald.

"Unified is an interesting concept and it definitely needs to be celebrated," Fitzgerald said.

Grant Clark, a unified athlete, competed for the Bozeman Yetis alongside his brother Jack Clark in the giant slalom.

"My brother has Down syndrome, so I've been a part of Special Olympics for eight or so years now," Grant said. "More people should be volunteering, because it's awesome."

Thayne Pankratz, a unified teammate and friend of the brothers, echoed this sentiment. He emphasized the privilege of competing alongside the Olympians.

"Seeing how happy these guys get when they get a medal is just a really awesome feeling," Pankratz said. "It's really awesome to help them out, but also to show people

that they're not any different."

Another notable Olympian was author Ruth Spinelli, who competed with the Bozeman Flames. Spinelli has been skiing for 12 years and competing in Special Olympics competitions since high school. She is the chief athlete advisor for the MSU Champions Club, MSU's Special Olympics club.

"It was hard at school and I couldn't get straight As," Spinelli said. "So I was like, 'Let's do Special Olympics then.'"

In 2021, Spinelli published a book titled "Hearts and Souls with Special Olympics," which aims to make Special Olympic stories heard. The book is available on Amazon.

"I did a survey of athletes, volunteers, coaches and parents. Then they gave it back to me and I wrote the book," she said. "I'm working on a second one that's about LETR. LETR stands for Law Enforcement Torch Run."

Through LETR, local law enforcement assists Special Olympians in carrying the torch at opening ceremonies. This enables law enforcement to actively support the Special Olympics community, according to the Special Olympics website.

Spinelli competed with her unified partner, MSU junior Cecelia King. King became involved with the Special Olympics through Eagle Mount, a local organization that provides adaptive recreation and sports opportunities for people with disabilities and cancer, according to its website. She began volunteering with the foundation this year, which led her to meet Spinelli.

King emphasized the importance of the event for creating connection and celebrating all athletes.

"It's important to the community because it's a good way to bring everyone together, like athletes and participants, and it doesn't matter who you are," she said. "We can all do the same things and we're all capable and strong."

Not all athletes compete with a unified partner, however. Amy Wittman, a Belgrade Panther, held down the snowshoe race on her own.

Wittman has been competing in the Special Olympics since she was eight and this year marks her 20th season, as well as her second time competing in the snowshoe race.

"When I first started, I met my first coach during downhill skiing and then my mom jumped in and became the coach, and my dad," Wittman said. "It became like a family. Everyone is really supportive, so they all jumped in."

HOES, SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATES ALL ATHLETES

Emy Reznik, Big Sky's grand experience and event specialist, was present for the entire day. She could be found smiling and cheering on the athletes as she worked to keep things on track.

"Definitely high energy. A lot of stoked faces both on and off the course," Reznik said. "I'm helping Big Sky coordinate [the games], but I've actually been a volunteer at the Special Olympics in Colorado for many years. It's very near and dear to my heart."

The games were made possible by several sponsors including Big Sky Resort, which provided equipment, lift tickets, facilities and ski patrol. The Big Sky Ski Education Foundation — a nonprofit that provides ski lessons for children in several disciplines, according to its website — set up the courses.

"We are incredibly proud to host the Special Olympics of Montana for the 17th consecutive year, bringing together dozens of competitors and volunteers who fill our mountain with determination and joy," said Tom Marshall, the general manager of Mountain Experience at Big Sky Resort.

"Through our work with Eagle Mount and Special Olympics Montana, we're committed to making world-class snow sports accessible to everybody," he said.

Bozeman's Round House Ski and Sports Center provided rental equipment for the athletes and Lone Mountain Land Company — a real estate developer in Big Sky — provided food. Moonlight Community Foundation — the charitable arm of Big Sky's Moonlight Community — gave out custom water bottles awarded to athletes at the end of the events.

Eagle Mount also contributed to making the day possible by pairing up athletes and coordinating volunteers, according to Fitzgerald.

In addition to the support from businesses and organizations, volunteers were crucial to making the day go smoothly. Bentley McCullough, this year's Miss Rodeo Montana, was one of these volunteers.

McCullough — a rodeo athlete and American Sign Language-English interpreter — was awarded the title through the Miss Rodeo Montana Pageant. According to the organization's website, she aims to use her time as Miss Rodeo Montana to promote accessibility and inclusion.

McCullough served as one of the MCs for the day, providing live commentary from Madison Base as the athletes competed.

"As part of my year as Miss Rodeo Montana, it is my utmost goal to serve everyone that I possibly can," McCullough said. "I think that this is an amazing community of people that are right here, so I love being able to give back to my community."

Spinelli encouraged others to consider volunteering for Special Olympic events.

"Coming to an event and volunteering, it gets you addicted to athletes like me," Spinelli said. "Once you volunteer, you get addicted to it and it'll change your life totally."

The day wrapped up with an award ceremony celebrating all the athletes who competed in this year's games.

"It is seriously the culmination of all this hard work, all these volunteers showing up," Fitzgerald said. "And that's what it's all about. It's all about the smiles. Today is just the greatest day."



Special Olympics athlete Ruth Spinelli and her unified partner MSU junior Cecelia King on March 2. Photo by Caitlin Rodgers.

‘It’s f-cking badass’: Gallatin Roller Derby League skates into action

BY JASMINE BARLOW

Twice a week, members of the Gallatin Roller Derby League lace up their skates and prepare for inevitable collisions on the track. With each match — called a jam — lasting just two minutes, the fast-paced environment is filled with strength and teamwork.

The Gallatin Roller Derby League started in January 2014 and has around 45 skaters. According to Kelsey Clark, who goes by the derby nickname Mauled Whiskey, the league is made up of skaters of all ages united by the desire to defeat the other team.

Clark is on the board of directors for the league and helps organize its practices. She said roller derby is fast-paced and thrilling to watch.

“It’s been described as playing chess while someone throws bricks at your head,” she said.

Jessica McReynolds, who teammates call Rice Rice Baby, has played with the club for four and a half years. She said she likes roller derby because it is a good space for her to release pent-up aggression.

“It’s one of the most welcoming places I think I’ve ever been,” McReynolds said. “As women, we’re taught that we don’t have aggression, but we do, and this is a really good outlet to get it out in a safe environment.”

Clark said that the team will attend a state-wide tournament in April, so recent practices have focused on game strategies and scrimmages.

“You spend a lot of time with one another,” she said. “I think when you see people challenging themselves and trying and failing, and trying and succeeding, and being frustrated and having to work to overcome that, I think that really bonds you together.”

Jennifer Guenther, known as Jenga, started roller derby at 40 years old having only been to the roller rink once or twice. Four years later, she’s competing with the Gallatin Roller Derby League and volunteering to teach the beginner group.

Guenther said the community helped her navigate multiple difficult events in her life.

“This is my fourth season, and during that time period, I lost my brother to suicide, and I was married and then I got divorced,” she said. “And these ladies have really helped me remember that you can come here, you can have a lot of fun, you can get some aggression out and you can do something a little different to really pull your happiness together.”

Guenther said anyone is welcome to join the beginner program, which runs once a year in January. It costs \$85 for eight weeks and includes any equipment needed. Once they complete the eight weeks, they can move on to more advanced levels and eventually compete if they choose.

Ellie Zaher, a beginner who received the nickname

Hot Saw, said she found the group on Facebook and hopes to eventually enter in competitions.

“When I got here, I felt very welcomed,” she said. “And everybody’s so kind — we’re all learning. We’re all falling and making mistakes. No one’s berating you. Everybody’s like, ‘Yeah, you’re gonna fall, it’s okay.’”

Zaher said members of the club come from many different walks of life, and all support each other and have fun.

“Everybody has different body sizes — it’s awesome. I think it’s cool to see not just one kind of person here,” she said.

Mechanical engineering student Katerina Shabalin is known in the rink as Party Thrasher. Shabalin played in a junior league during high school and joined Gallatin Roller Derby after moving to Montana to continue playing her favourite sport.

“It’s f-cking badass, the dopest people I know have

been on these teams,” she said. “It’s a full contact game where your skills can be in strength, in speed [or] in a combination of those things. You put your body on the line with your best friends, and that’s really cool.”

Clark said roller derby could be an excellent opportunity for students looking to try a new sport.

“I think challenging yourself in any domain is really good for you emotionally and prepares you for other challenges in your life,” she said. “So it’s a good way to mentally train yourself to do hard things.”

For more information on Gallatin Roller Derby, visit its website <https://www.grderby.com/> or Instagram [@gallatinrollerderby](https://www.instagram.com/gallatinrollerderby).

“It’s been described as playing chess while someone throws bricks at your head.”

- Kelsey Clark



Members of the Gallatin Roller Derby League practice at the Gallatin County Fairgrounds on March 2.
Photo by Sarah Cornish.

Construction underway at Resurrection Parish

BY ELLERY WAKEFIELD

Anyone driving down 11th Avenue may have noticed the ongoing construction at Resurrection Parish, a Catholic Church just off campus. The construction comes as the church begins preparing for the arrival of a second priest.

The renovations started this past August and are expected to be finished in August 2026. According to Dan Wetstein, a parish volunteer, the expansion will include a new rectory for the priests to live in and upgrades to the current parish hall. The new second floor will be a student center with lounges and meeting rooms.

The Parish Finance Council began conversations about additions and refurbishments in 2021 when they were informed that a second priest would be joining the church, according to Wetstein.

Wetstein said that at the time of the announcement, Resurrection's priest was living off campus near the Gallatin Crossing Mall.

"People immediately recognized that this was going to be problematic because our existing parish housing for our priest is pretty limited," he said.

According to Travis Russell, the director of engagement for Resurrection Parish, having the priest on the premises makes them more accessible to parishioners.

"At the heart of everything in the Catholic Church is the sacraments, and the sacraments are offered by the priest," he said. "Being able to have the priest on the premises, [allows him] to be more accessible to everyone — the parishioners, but also the students."

Wetstein said that once members of the finance council began looking into adding housing for priests, they realized other refurbishments and additions were needed.

"We've been really restricted over the last several years in what we can offer up for meeting times," Wetstein said. "The parish hall and all the rooms were in constant use, so [the additions] will give us far more flexibility."

The renovations will give students in Cat Catholic — the student organization based at the church — more space to meet, according to the Coordinator for the Campus Ministry Monica Elsinger.



"I'm very much about helping all the different entities communicate and build and bond," she said. "I'm looking forward to small group rooms for Bible studies to come together and have uninterrupted study [so] they don't have to meet around the one tall table in the kitchen that's very tight."

Elsinger said this connection with students helps Resurrection grow the catholic faith and empower parishioners to foster a deeper

intimacy with Jesus Christ.

"We want to encourage and help [students] to discover how to think, rather than what to think," she said. "[We want them] to be aware of the beauty and truth and the goodness our faith stands on."

According to Russell, these new spaces will also create more opportunities for events and programs to engage MSU students.

"Having this new space will allow us to go out and invite more students to come and join in the different activities that we offer," he said. "Having it be right next to MSU's campus is such a great opportunity to be able to invite students into that community."

Russell said renovations will give students and parishioners space to come together and grow their faith while deepening the sense of community at the parish.

"Students can feel like they can kind of come and find a reprieve from perhaps some of the everyday stressors of life in school," he said.

"THE PARISH HALL AND ALL THE ROOMS WERE IN CONSTANT USE, SO [THE ADDITIONS] WILL GIVE US FAR MORE FLEXIBILITY."

- DAN WETSTEIN

For more information about Resurrection Parish, visit <https://www.resurrectionbozeman.org/>.

Stop Beating Around the Bush — Our Sexual Wellness Education Needs Help

BY SARAH SCHARFF

The first semester of college brings about many changes for young adults as they navigate independence, constant academic pressure and — for some students — new, more intimate experiences.

The MSU students I know are generally open to talking about sexual health, which is encouraging, but it isn't enough on its own. We need to investigate potential gaps in our education and recognize that we can be more open as a community about sex, STDs and contraceptives.

According to Stephanie McDowell, the executive director at Bridgercare, just half of sexually active students reported using a condom the last time they had sex.

"In 2021, people aged 15 to 24 were the most likely group to contract chlamydia in Gallatin County," McDowell said. To me, it seems that these age ranges and rates might line up with low condom use.

Despite this, she said college students are talking about sexual health more than ever before.

"Compared to older generations, today's students are often more open to discuss things like consent, healthy relationships and the emotional aspects of sexual wellbeing," she said.

As of 2025, 45 percent of patients who visit Bridgercare for reproductive health are between 19 and 24, and the clinic regularly partners with MSU professors, student organizations and undergrad interns to provide sexual health education on campus.

In addition, MSU has resources available for students looking to learn about their reproductive health. Student Health Services is an excellent source for contraceptives, birth control and sound medical advice. Additionally, the MSU Women's Center provides free Plan B and condoms.

However, while the University offers plenty of resources for contraceptives, some say they have been harder to come by recently.

According to psychology professor Katharine Kujawa, there have been fewer free condoms in dorms.

"I've heard some students saying that there aren't as many condoms being passed out in the residence halls these days," they said. "[It's] definitely different from the MSU I've known for the past 15 or 20 years."

When I lived in the dorms, there were always bowls of condoms in bathrooms and we had frequent floor meetings about safe, consensual sex. These were discreet safe sex practices — especially for students who didn't want to be seen purchasing condoms or couldn't afford to.

Even if they weren't very personal or extensive, these discussions made me feel like I could reach out to dorm staff for help if anything was amiss.

Kujawa has also noticed that students seem to be coming to MSU with less knowledge about sexual health than before. "In the last two or three years, I've encountered a growing population of students who have had absolutely no exposure to sexual health education," they said. "There seems to be a widening gap of what people know."

Sydney Marcus, a political science student, said she recognized these gaps in her own knowledge before arriving at MSU. "I just found out that certain birth controls are type one carcinogenic," she said. "Nobody talks about that."

Before starting college, I did research on sexual health and settled on an IUD. Nonetheless, many topics were mysterious to me, such as male birth control and fertility cycles. Throughout college, my education still hasn't felt like enough.

Marcus's experience underscores the idea that many students are coming in with limited sexual education. She said she transferred from a religious school

that did not offer birth control options or initiate conversations about sex.

According to her, while MSU has done a great job offering resources and being open to people's needs, that alone doesn't address the knowledge gaps students bring with them.

"If they wanted to provide more general information on the topic, that would probably be helpful," Marcus said. "Any education is good education."

She suggested that Student Health Services should have sexual health newsletters that discuss where to find oral contraceptives and offer research-based advice for students.

Despite being a frequently taboo topic, sexual health is human health. Students are improving communication and seeking resources now more than ever, but Gallatin County is still struggling with STD rates — and MSU students are still coming in with gaps in their sexual education. Now, it's up to us to fill those gaps and find healthy ways to have sex.



MSU Students Should Use the Public Library More

BY JOSIE HINES

The Bozeman Public Library is located at the east end of Main Street, right next to Lindley Park. It has been in this spot for almost 20 years, but is a surprisingly hidden gem of resources that MSU students too often neglect.

The public library is a great space for doing homework or getting some reading done. Last semester, I sat for hours in the library, working through my required reading lists for my classes. There are tons of fun chairs, undisturbed places to lounge and plenty of sunlight.

Andrew Western, a senior kinesiology student, said he enjoys the library's quiet atmosphere. "I go upstairs, I

think the higher you go, the less people there are. I just like the quiet," he said.

However, the library is more than an alternative study spot with comfortable seating and ample natural light. Bozemanites with a library card have access to more resources than can fit into this article but I will share as many as I can.

Of course, the library has books and audiobooks available for checkout. The staff highlights the newest nonfiction and fiction volumes on their "Most Wanted" shelf display.

If the library doesn't have a book you're looking for, don't fret. According to Carmen Clark, the department head for collection management, you can use the Interlibrary Loan service to have it sent from another library anywhere in the country.

Library aide Elianna Burnim said that people use the loan system when they're aware of it. "Not everybody knows that's accessible to them, but when they do, they are very eager to get that [resource]," she said.

On top of that, if you want to check out a book from the library but can't get there, you can request that the Bookmobile — the mini mobile branch housed in a 40-foot Blue Bird school bus — deliver it anywhere in town, including campus.

In addition to its bookshelf on wheels, the library has an extensive collection of online resources. With a library card, you can download multiple apps that let you check out ebooks, audiobooks and movies on your personal devices.

Other virtual resources include access to multiple

online publications and self improvement platforms where users can take classes for language, crafting and professional skills.

Burnim said that she feels like the "E-Library" is another underutilized resource. "We have a bunch of stuff that's just behind the [home page]. Once people do find [it], they use it a lot," she said.

Furthermore, the library hosts classes, clubs and workshops in its community spaces every week. Staff release schedules at the start of each season. The current spring schedule includes weekly cooking classes, crochet and knit workshops and introductory sewing classes.

"There's always a lot going on," Clark said. "Some of the classes you have to register for them, it's limited because we only have so much [space], and we have to buy materials."

Outside of scheduled programming, the event rooms are also available to community members.

One of the event rooms contains various creative tools, including an embroidery machine, a computerized sewing machine, a 3D printer, a Cricut and a laser cutter.

According to Clark, access to these tools first requires completing an in-person or online training session, followed by a test to ensure you are able to use them safely. After that, you have free rein.

"Reading the [materials] and taking the test took about 20 minutes and doing the practical took maybe five," MSU alum Briana Virella said. "Then I could immediately use the machine."

The library also has a small recording studio, where guests can record whatever they need. According to Clark, the studio and makerspace materials are available for sign-up in two-hour blocks.

Admittedly, the public library does not do the best job at making its many resources known, which, according to Clark, is the root of this issue.

"Pretty much every time I talk to a patron [they say] 'Oh, I didn't know you have that,'" Clark said. "I think we need to do better with marketing ourselves because we have so much."

Perhaps the most underrated resource of the library is its printing services. According to Clark, if you have your library card, you have a monthly \$20 credit for free color printing at the library. This is a resource I wish I had known about last year, when my MSU printing credit ran out.

Obtaining a library card is simple and free. It only requires proof of residence in Gallatin County. For Montana residents, this means bringing an ID, and for out-of-state students, a CatCard as well.

For more information about the Bozeman Public Library, visit <https://www.bozemanlibrary.org/home>.



People work inside the Bozeman Public Library on March 10. Photo by Sarah Cornish.

Transphobic Legislation is a Violation of Liberty

BY ASTER RAPKOCH

Historically, U.S. LGBTQIA+ citizens — especially transgender people — have been victims of hate crimes, systemic oppression and social ostracization.

Some progress has been made toward legal and social equality in recent decades, but as President Donald Trump moves through his second term, transgender citizens are facing new legislative setbacks, going against America's mission of liberty and justice for all.

In January 2025, Trump released Executive Order 14187, which prohibits doctors from receiving federal Medicaid or Medicare funds to perform gender-affirming care for those under 19 years of age and publicly condemned doctors who performed these operations.

According to a Feb. 8 New York Times (NYT) article, this Executive Order caused hundreds of hospitals to pause or end gender-affirming care for minors.

Further, Kansas' state government passed Senate Bill 244 on Feb. 18, which invalidated the drivers' licenses of transgender citizens whose gender markers didn't match their sex assigned at birth.

According to a Feb. 18 NYT article, Rep. Susan Humphries (R-Kan.), the bill's sponsor, claimed it was about protecting the truth of biological sex. However, the bill is less about truth and more about a goal that has been present throughout Trump's second term: restricting trans rights.

By passing this kind of legislation, the U.S. government, federal and state, undermine its promise of freedom for all citizens.

Medical equality for transgender folks has also been significantly restricted. The Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Secretary, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., announced new restrictions which execute the policies outlined in Trump's executive order on pediatric gender-affirming care, according to a Dec. 18 NPR article.

"So-called gender affirming care has inflicted lasting physical and psychological damage on vulnerable young people," Kennedy said in the article. "This is not medicine. It is malpractice."

Documented medical evidence counters these claims. According to a 2022 article by the Columbia University Department of Psychiatry, gender-affirming care can greatly improve the mental health of gender diverse children.

The DHHS's goal is to provide effective health care to U.S. citizens by advancing public and social health through scientific research, according to its website. However, in condemning gender-affirming care, Trump and the DHHS undermine this supposed core mission.

One organization that is also shaping government policy conversations around gender-affirming care is the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank that produces research and policy proposals for federal and state officials, according to its website.

According to an Aug. 17 NPR article, The Heritage Foundation, which published Project 2025, has deep ties with the Trump administration.

In a Feb. 24 post on X, the Heritage Foundation endorsed banning schools from allowing children to socially transition — including changing names, pronouns and gender presentation — citing the recent case of Sage Blair.

According to a Feb. 25 article by the NYT, Blair had, at the time, socially transitioned from female to male at school and was encouraged to use the men's restroom by her counselors. Blair was later sexually assaulted in that restroom and, after running away from home, was trafficked across several state borders.

Instead of focusing on transgender people being targets for harassment and condemning the boys who assaulted Blair or the people who trafficked her, the Heritage Foundation redirected the blame toward the school officials who supported her social transition.

"Federal action is necessary to protect children like [Blair] from the predatory conduct of gender ideology proponents," the organization wrote.

In addition, according to the Feb. 25 NYT article, Trump also said that state governments must ban children from socially transitioning without parental consent.

If these bans were to be passed, it would put many transgender children in danger, especially in rural areas.

According to a 2025 literature review published in the research journal *Youth*, rural, transgender youth are significantly more likely to experience social ostracization, victimization and poor mental health outcomes.

Greyson Moorman, a member of Students for a Democratic Society at MSU, agreed.

"There are going to be transphobic parents," he said. "It may tear families apart, it may create schisms in the family, and it will cause direct harm to kids if [the ban] is passed."

Maris Fessenden, the current vice chair of Queer Bozeman, said that anti-trans legislation in general may also violate the First Amendment.

"I think that being trans, expressing yourself and your inherent, innate identity is absolutely free speech," said Fessenden, who clarified that their opinion does not reflect Queer Bozeman's position as an organization.

Transgender people deserve the same protections as any American. If the government refuses to grant these, it undermines its duty to provide equitable treatment for all.



CALENDAR

Want your event featured here?
Email event info to us at ExponentOpinion@montana.edu one week in advance.

**MARCH 12 -
MARCH 18**

THU 12

THURSDAY’S TABLE
Bozeman Public Library
@ 1 p.m.
Watch home cooks share their family recipes.

FRI 13

**OLLI AT MSU FRIDAY FORUM:
“AI IN EDUCATION: FRIEND OR
FOE?”**
Online via Zoom
@ 12 p.m.
The forum will feature two panelists who work in education and will speak about AI use, management, implications and influences in grades K-12 and higher education. Register online on the MSU website.

SAT 14

**PLANTING THE PAST SEED BOX
WORKSHOP**
Museum of the Rockies
@ 10 a.m.
Participants will create seed boxes modeled after those used between the 1860s and 1920s. The workshop will be \$30 for Museum of the Rockies members and \$35 for non-members.

SUN 15

**THE SHANE CENTER PRESENTS
“RENT”**
The Ellen Theatre
@ 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Celebrate the 30th anniversary of “Rent” with the Shane Center.

MON 16

PLAYWRITING 101 - SESSION #1
Park County Senior Center
@ 5:30 p.m.
In partnership with Livingston Fringe Festival, Elk River Arts & Lectures, this event will present a free, all-ages playwriting workshop.

TUE 17

RUSH HOUR RESISTANCE
Gallatin County Courthouse
@ 8 a.m.
Join Bozeman Rising for its “Rush Hour Resistance” every Tuesday as people chat, show their signs, wave and count the number of cars and trucks that beep at them.

WED 18

**SPRING BREAK INTERNATIONAL
TEA PARTY**
MSU Library
@ 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Join the MSU Library and the MSU Office of International Programs for the third annual Spring Break International Tea Party. Come sip, share and learn something new with fellow tea lovers and bookworms from our own wonderful community.



PUZZLES

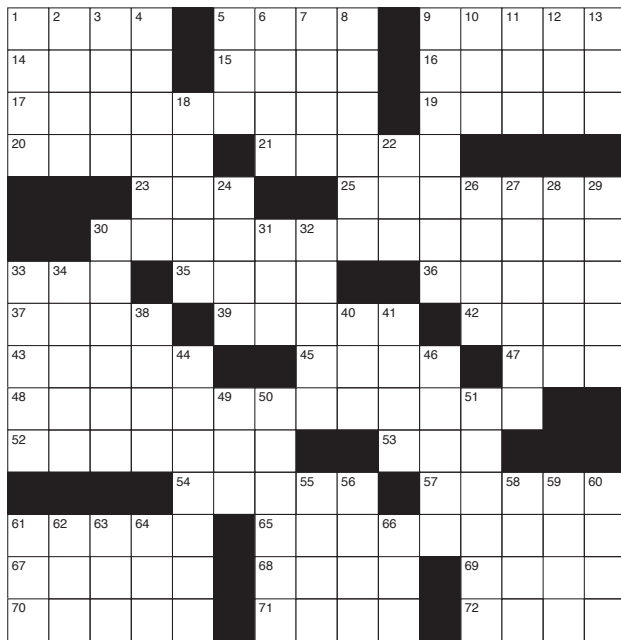
Brought to you by the MSU

exponent



For solutions, visit Printable-Puzzles.com and enter puzzle code.

Crossword #V46P23RQ



Across

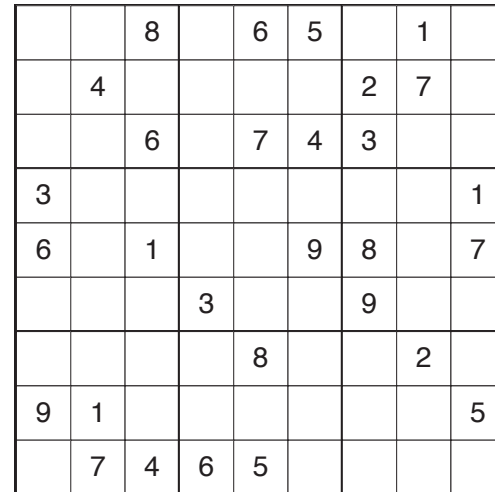
- German chief
- Fruity drinks
- Linguistic quirk
- Sixth and seventh of eight
- NATO, for one
- Capital of Bulgaria
- Thrill
- Down ____ fours
- Bullet casing
- Split apart
- Faucet
- Of a historic interval
- Mollusk-made substance
- Three in Italy
- Trail trek
- "Is there no ____ this?"
- "Old MacDonald ____ farm..."
- Crowbar, e.g.
- Parker of "South Park"
- Manifesto
- Not new

Down

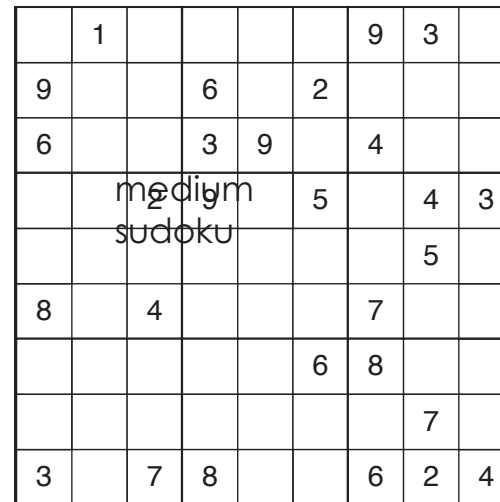
- Bullfight bravos
- Word on a Vietnamese menu
- To be, in Tours
- Bridge over Venice's Grand Canal
- Befitting
- Smear, like paint
- Earth tone
- Hi-fi successor
- Carbon 13 or cobalt 60
- Singer McLean
- "... ____ woodchuck could chuck wood?"
- Tanker's cargo
- Grand ____ seizure
- Poet once married to Ted Hughes
- Block letters?
- Yankees great Rizzuto
- Not worth a red ____
- Certain subatomic particle
- Soviet collective
- Composer Andrew ____ Webber
- Florence family
- Scrape together, with "out"
- Theater skits
- Underlying idea
- Speed checker
- Eight, in Aachen
- Subj. for immigrants
- Move, in real estate slang
- Angry speeches
- Winning coach of Super Bowl XX
- Part of the Mediterranean Sea (abbr.)
- Disappear
- Declined
- Confer suffix
- Cry from the crib
- Islamic sect
- Obeys
- Pupil's locale
- Driver's req.
- ____ roll (hot)
- Watering hole
- Stop
- Units of wt.

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Aping | Encase |
| Bench | Encores |
| Bronze | Finch |
| Bulge | Fires |
| Chrysanthemums | First |
| Cookies | Frustrate |
| Daises | Glide |
| Decoy | Grimly |
| Differentiates | Gusty |
| Dotes | Image |
| Drawls | Lemon |
| Dumbs | Licorice |

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| Merry | Tipsiest |
| Needled | Total |
| Prime | Trestle |
| Reset | Tribute |
| Safest | Virtually |
| Scholarship | Yells |
| Scrubs | |
| Slush | |
| Snort | |
| Snowy | |
| Spits | |
| Tepee | |



CODE: #X736PH



CODE: #12030M



CODE: #N525UC

How are
you gonna
decompress over
Spring Break?

Hydraulic press

Yelling at my kids for
grabbing me the wrong
kind of beer

Hijacking a plane and
enjoy a nice little flight

Hittiing my head on the
wall and say "stupid!
stupid! stupid!"

Licking my parent's
himalayan salt lamp
until it's gone

Getting absolutely
faded off a blinker in
the SUB bathroom

Giving Pearl and Hairy
a hug

Brutally framemogging

Appropriating Irish
culture

Sticking it to the man

Greening out every
single day

Performatively reading
in a coffee shop

Getting hamsauced
and pretending I'm
leprechaun

Hitting Connor

Going on a nice walk

Tall Tales & TIDBITS

