My partner, Abraham Jindrich, and I spent some time hiking around the Ross Creek Cedar Grove Scenic Area near Troy, MT. When he paused to take in his beautiful and immense surroundings was the moment that I captured this shot.

Equipment: Nikon D700 with Nikon 17-35mm f/2.8 lens
Settings used: 1/60 s at f/3.5, ISO 1250

Judge’s comments: Such beautiful lighting. The man in the picture gives it the necessary perspective. Fantastic picture.
# MNA Calendar

## May

- **30** Memorial Day - MNA office will be closed
- **31** Final day to register for the 131st MNA Annual Convention

## June

- **7** Primary election
- **9, 10** MNA office will be closed
- **9** MNA & MNA Board of Directors’ meeting, Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish
- **10, 11** 131st MNA Annual Convention, Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish
- **11** MNA & MNAS annual meetings and election of officers, Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish
- **11** Presentation of the 2016 Better Newspaper Contest Awards and banquet, Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish
- **17** Deadline to submit articles for the June Press Pass

## July

- **1** Annual deadline to file a County and Municipal Sworn Statement of Circulation
- **4** Independence Day - MNA office will be closed
- **15** Deadline to submit articles for the July Press Pass

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**Welcome**

New Associate Member

ISO Adobe PageMaker 6.5 Program for IBM.

Please call Mary Lou @ 406.670.6635 or email: marylou.pilati@gmail.com.

I have built oh so many documents I am unable to open. Thanks!

---

** Montana Newspaper Association**

825 Great Northern Blvd., Ste. 202
Helena, MT 59601
Phone 406-443-2850
Fax 406-443-2860

**Our Mission:**

To advance and sustain the news publishing industry in Montana.

Jim Rickman, Executive Director | jim@mtnewspapers.com
Kevann Campbell, Business Development Manager | campbell@mtnewspapers.com
Ryan Stavnes, Member Relations & Client Services | member@mtnewspapers.com
mtnewspapers.com

May 27, 2016
MEMBER PROFILE

JAMES WALLING
Publisher, The Glasgow Courier

Born, year & place:
1978, Vancouver, WA

First newspaper job:
Screens Editor (film and theatre critic) at Willamette Week in Portland, Oregon

Family:
Single, with a beautiful Basset named Diesel

Education:
BA (English), The Evergreen State College

Community involvement and diversions:
I’ve joined community organizations like Kiwanis, established the beginnings of a Go Society in Valley County, organized a softball team and joined a pool league, among other things. My main diversion at the moment is a fledgling literacy project called Boxcar Road Books (Valley County doesn’t have a bookstore!) and working on a railcar I purchased near the Missouri River behind the Fort Peck Dam. I’m also working on a nonfiction book about the American novelist John D. MacDonald for Schaffner Press.

How did your career lead you to where you are now?
I moved to Valley County to take this job by way of the Pacific Northwest, Central Europe and Texas, where I also ran and/or worked at various newspapers.

What's the most important thing you learned along the way that prepared you for your current role?
The value of hyperlocal media. The small papers I’ve worked for, founded and managed for others have been the most lasting and meaningful journalistic experiences of my life.

What aspect of the job do you find the most rewarding?
I value the independence of running a publication owned by other newspapermen. The support is there, as is the experience and institutional memory, but I’m largely free to make my own decisions, along with my staff.

What aspect of the job do you find the most challenging?
I find the independence of running a newspaper challenging, as well as rewarding. The job has the tendency to take up most of one’s time, energy and thought.

What have you done to enhance the brand of your newspaper in your area?
Encouraging civil debate and discussion among readers and contributors to our opinion section has been a successful means of integrating disparate generations and social groups into the fabric of our publication. So has additional emphasis on—and support for—the arts.

What is your digital strategy right now?
As crazy as it may sound, we’re currently working on introducing video to the main site and experimenting with methods of monetizing that content on a hyperlocal level. More generally, we try to keep enough of our content available online to provide the basic public service our community has come to expect, while encouraging our readers to enjoy a physical copy of the Courier.

What is your print strategy right now?
Basically, our print strategy is the whole strategy. The younger demographic needs to learn how to turn off their screens long enough to read the print product, or we’ll end with a corner on an empty market. It’s our job to teach them how, and encourage them to actually do it. Turn off your screens should be our industry’s motto, especially at the small-town level.

How does the MNA serve you and your newspaper?
The MNA provides support for legal and ethical challenges, while also providing additional revenue streams via statewide advertising, and offering access to high quality content on subjects critical to both our profession and the nation. Sounds pretty good. And it’s all true.
In Memorium

James John ‘J.J.’ Coggeshall

James John ‘J.J.’ Coggeshall passed away at age 51 on April 24, 2016, surrounded by family and friends, from chronic graft versus host disease. Thank you to everyone who helped us through the last 2½ years and helped keep ‘J.J.’ positive.

‘J.J.’ wrote his own obituary before he went to transplant at the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix. Here are just a few excerpts:

Many folks do not get the opportunity to write their own obit so close to their passing, and I am fortunate enough to do so (also I am quite a control freak when it comes to writing this and think I would do a better job than anyone else).

I was born December 22, 1964, in Helena.

When I was growing up in the Helena Valley, I pretty much ran everywhere in order to get to most of my friends’ houses, and I could not be late getting home. That served me well as I became a pretty fair runner. At HHS, there were guys far better than me, but hopefully I pushed them enough to help win the first ever boys team cross country state championship.

My working days started in high school and progressed continually with jobs at the Independent Record, the Missoulian, Montana Magazine and others. Except for my first month and a half at MSU, I never had more than two weeks without some kind of job(s) or time at work. Should not have worked so much. Hindsight really is 20/20.

I realize I kidded around too much (perhaps even right now for some). For good or bad, that was who I was. I tried to look at the positive side of things and wanted to make people happy through a laugh or two.

In closing, I would say this: Don’t waste things: time, food, energy, natural resources, money, love, compassion, office supplies, etc. There is always someone else who needs these things too, so use what you have been given wisely.

Cole Boehler

On April 30, 2016, Cole David Boehler died in a drowning accident on the Jefferson River, one of his favorite places on earth.

He was born Sept. 5, 1955, in Devils Lake, ND. While in high school, he excelled in debate. He attended the University of Montana for two-plus years and then set out to earn a living.

Cole began newspapering in Wyoming and worked as an award-winning sales manager and journalist in North Dakota and Montana. He was a founding partner of the Nickel Saver in Butte. He also worked for Lee Enterprises in Missoula and Butte, then started The Butte Weekly with his father. After Virgil’s death, Cole started Continental Communications and published the Montana Tavern Times for 14 years.

He was fortunate enough to turn his passion for motorcycling into his work, publishing three books and two periodicals about motorcycling. He was looking forward to retirement in 2017.
May 27, 2016

PEOPLE and PAPERS

MNA supports Taylor Featherman with a $1,000 scholarship to U of M J-School

As an eighth grader, he was shy and quiet outside his circle of friends, that is, until he heard himself on the radio.

Since then, senior Taylor “Tato” Featherman hasn’t stopped preaching his enthusiasm for sports, particularly the New York Mets and his beloved Chicago Bulls. In fact, today, once he gets on a roll about this pro basketball team or that college football team you practically need to blow a whistle and call a time out. And that’s a good thing.

For his efforts, interest, initiative and all-around excellence in high school journalism, Taylor was recently named the Montana High School Journalist of the Year by the Montana Journalism Education Association, the Montana Newspaper Association and the University of Montana School of Journalism. This award includes a $1,000 scholarship provided by the Montana Newspaper Association’s educational foundation.

His portfolio of newspaper articles, podcasts, radio shows on KGVO and KGBA, live streaming of boys and girls basketball games, and, most recently, live broadcasts on KGVO of Missoula teams at the state AA basketball tourney, is now at the national level competition.

His success began when “Tato’s” older brother, Jordan, and his buddy, Brendan Juden, started a sports talk radio show in Dillon, Mont., while they attended the University of Montana Western. Jordan and Brendan, both Big Sky graduates and Sun Journal alum, passed the torch, and their love for sports radio, when they let 13-year-old Taylor call in each Friday for “Tato’s Fav Five.” From there, the ball got rolling, so to speak.

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Fast forward to freshman year. Taylor joins journalism. He’s like the rocket scientist of sports reporting. He studies everything, knows everything: Who is hurt, who hit and who didn’t, what time they went to bed and what they ate for breakfast. Heck, he probably knows their daily horoscopes, how they like their lattes and how the humidity will affect the arc of the “downtown” three-pointer. I think ESPN should thank him, no, shower him with confetti, post his face on the sign above Times Square, polish his toe nails, and raise a statue on Mount Sentinel in his honor for its over-the-top ratings. After all, his TV is never tuned to another channel, except for maybe small time-outs for XBOX challenges.

Since then, Taylor has morphed from reporter to editor-in-chief of the Sun Journal, and he has taken Big Sky journalism to different arenas, including radio and Internet streaming of audio and video.

Although Taylor is not an athlete in school (though I can validate his sweet fade-away, 12-foot jump shot that I’ve witnessed during games in our driveway), his love of anything sports is still one thing which has forged long and strong friendships.

One of his best friends, fellow senior Luke Lingscheit said, “I’ve never seen someone look so deep into a game. Most people just watch what happens, but “Tato” watches and researches why these things are happening. He will check if Derrick Rose got enough sleep the night before the game, or what music he is listening to before tip-off. The kid loves sports.”

Likewise, longtime friend senior Kolton Sandau said, “He’s one of the most knowledgeable individuals I have met when it comes to sports. He and I love to get in little arguments over what’s going on in the sports world, and I better be sure I know what I’m talking about, because I guarantee he does.”

Jake Tabish, also a senior, believes sports are internal for Taylor. Sports are not just something to pass the time; instead, he believes, “Tato” is passionate about his teams and sports in general.

“It shows his true love for sports that his mood genuinely changes depending on the outcome of games, as well as just player and team status,” Tabish said.

So, who knows? Maybe, someday, you, on a long road trip, down a dark highway, will flip on the radio. You will troll along the radio dial until it stops on ESPN, and suddenly a familiar voice will strike you.

You can smile and say, “Hey, I know that guy. He was a bit odd, after all. Montana winters, twenty below, never wore pants, just shorts. Cool. He did it.”
For almost a year, Malta’s Brandon Nicholson has been writing columns for the Phillips County News and this summer, thanks to a grant from the Montana Newspaper Association, he will be a paid intern as a columnist, reporter and photographer.

“The Montana Newspaper Foundation is very pleased to award Mark Hebert and the Phillips County News a 2016 Internship Grant,” said Jim Rickman, MNA Executive Director.

Nicholson is a 2013 graduate of Malta High School and the son of Chad and Michelle Nicholson. He is currently attending Montana State University in Bozeman.

“I think it is going to be great to be able to be home this summer and to work for the newspaper,” Nicholson recently said. “I don’t have anything special in mind as to what I will do, but I will do what is asked of me and I am excited to learn the ropes at a newspaper I have grown up reading.”

Nicholson said he isn’t necessarily interested in pursuing a career as a journalist, but said he isn’t against the idea, either.

“An opportunity to write a weekly column presented itself and I enjoy writing,” he said. “I am having fun with that and I was surprised on how many comments I got on my column when I came home last time. I don’t know if I want to be a journalist, but this summer internship is a great opportunity to learn something new.”

Nicholson will finish the spring semester at MSU in mid-May before heading home to Phillips County to start the three-month internship. Aside from working, Nicholson said he is also looking forward to fishing, wakeboarding and hanging out with his family and friends. He said he hasn’t been able to spend a summer in Malta since graduating from high school in 2013.

“It will be nice to be home for a change,” he added.

The Internship Grant is awarded through the The Montana Newspaper Foundation, a 501 C3 organization governed by a board of trustees, whose purpose is to raise, accumulate and disperse funds in support of annual scholarships, internships and newspaper industry-related education.

Nicholson is one of three recipients of the 2016 Internship Grant, with the other two grants going to the Laurel Outlook and the Big Timber Pioneer. There will be a 50/50 match to pay for the internship, the other half provided by PCN.
Montana lost a true original with the passing of former Sen. Conrad Burns this past week. Funeral services will be 11 a.m. Friday at MetraPark Arena in Billings.

Sen. Burns made many visits to the Great Falls Tribune newsroom over his three terms, but one stands out in the memories of Tribune staffers.

A few weeks after the razor-thin election loss to Jon Tester in 2006, Sen. Burns was seen taking a beeline to the office of Tribune Publisher Jim Strauss, for a closed-door, one-on-one visit. Many staffers still wondered what was said that day and asked Strauss about it after news of the senator’s passing broke. Strauss recalled the visit:

The senator walked past my assistant and closed the door. He was visibly angry as he sat across my desk and told me he wanted to meet with me eye to eye and hear firsthand why the Tribune did not endorse him. I had known Sen. Burns since my time at the Billings Gazette in the 1980s, and it was clear he had counted on getting the Tribune’s support in that election.

I told Sen. Burns it was a tough, split decision, as has been reported in the endorsement. I told the senator he was talking to the right person, because it was a five-person editorial board and the vote was 2-2, when I cast the tie-breaker.

At that point he leaned forward and said, “It was that %@#$ Abramoff wasn’t it?”

I said that wasn’t it. In fact the entire editorial board didn’t give the lobbyist Jack Abramoff’s scandal much weight because the findings of the investigations related to Sen. Burns were still inconclusive. (No charges were ever filed against the senator.)

I told the senator that what it came down to was he had made too many inappropriate statements. Those repugnant statements put all of Montana in a bad light.

Over the years, Sen. Burns had created controversy for a string of remarks, including calling Arabs “ragheads;” belittling immigrants; inviting lobbyists to a “slave auction” after voting for a civil rights bill; and retelling an anecdote that included the N word when relating that it was “a hell of challenge” living in Washington D.C. with its high black population.

Sen. Burns asked me about all he had done for Great Falls, protecting and building its military assets. “Doesn’t that matter?” he asked. I acknowledged he had been a huge and effective supporter of Great Falls’ military missions. I told him there was no disputing that.

“So a couple of comments is what it came down to,” the senator said shaking his head.

I said it wasn’t a couple. It was a clear and disturbing pattern, and, frankly, those statements were embarrassing — and damaging — to Montana.

He got up at that point and as he left he turned and said, “You made a mistake, and you’ll regret it. You can kiss that base goodbye.”

Looking back, the loss of Sen. Burns’ support for our military assets was, indeed, my biggest concern. It’s a relief Malmstrom Air Force Base and the Montana Air National Guard roll on in Great Falls.

There was no question that Sen. Burns loved Montana from corner to corner. It came down to that Montana needed a new voice in Washington, and I was confident Tester could provide that voice.

We’d like to pay tribute to a colorful political leader who worked hard for Great Falls and Montana, and to his family. The late, personable Conrad Burns deserves much credit for his efforts.

— Tribune editorial board
Advertising and Enterprise Journalism focus of upcoming webinars

The educational webinars are brought to you as a member service of the Montana Newspaper Association, in conjunction with the Iowa Newspaper Foundation.

For more information about each webinar, and to register, go to http://www.onlinemediacampus.com/webinars/

An advanced registration fee of $35 is required to avoid paying a late fee. We encourage members to make the webinars a group educational event by gathering around a single monitor or projected image to take advantage of the one registration fee. Please allow a few minutes for discussion after the training.

June 3, 2016 – Online Media Campus
How to Market and Sell in Brutally Competitive Environments
12 - 1 PM MST Registration: $35
In this presentation, award-winning author Jeff Beals shows you how to unearth what your clients truly value, while building trusting, career-long relationships.

June 9, 2016 – Online Media Campus
Interactive Storytelling Tools: Enhance your readers’ experience
12 - 1 PM MST Registration: $35
Journalists can tell digital stories with a variety of tools that make the experience more interesting and personal for the reader.

June 23, 2016 – Online Media Campus
Watchdog Reporting for all Newsrooms
12 - 1 PM MST Registration: $35
Think you don’t have enough time for watchdog journalism? Stretched way too thin for investigations? This session is intended for editors and newsroom leaders, as well as reporters looking to take their watchdog skills to the next level.

June 24, 2016 – Online Media Campus
Best Practices for Digital Planning
12 - 1 PM MST Registration: $35
Do you have a digital posting schedule? You should. We’ve compiled lessons, tips and best practices from three of GateHouse’s top digital editors, on how they plan for web, mobile and social posting. By using analytics and maximizing use of your best content, you can drive audience and build a loyal reader following.

MNA Email

The MNA office recently upgraded to Office 360, including the Outlook email program. Please check your contacts in your email address books and update as needed. Jim Rickman, executive director, jim@mtnewspapers.com; Kev Campbell, business development manager, campbell@mtnewspapers.com; Ryan Stavnes, member services, member@mtnewspapers.com and, for our accounting services, please use accounting@mtnewspapers.com. Emails to former staff contacts (mtbook@, randy@, pamela@, mtomgr@) will no longer be received. Please delete and update, or call 406-443-2850 for assistance. Thank you for your cooperation.
Annul city and county printing contracts

June 30 is the annual deadline to provide your city and/or county clerk and recorder with an updated Sworn Statement of Circulation. We are happy to provide you with the following tools to help with the process.

Montana Code 18-7-411. County printing contract: http://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/18/7/18-7-411.htm

A link to the County Sworn Statement of Circulation form: County Sworn Statement

Montana Code 7-1-4127. City printing contract: http://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/7/1/7-1-4127.htm

A link to the City Sworn Statement of Circulation form: City Sworn Statement

Or visit: http://www.mtnewspapers.com/annual-sworn-statement-of-circulation/

MNA Q&A

Can newspapers be held liable for discrimination in real estate advertising?

Anyone who makes, prints or publishes advertisements (or causes them to be made, printed or published) needs to be concerned about housing discrimination. This definition includes all advertising and media, i.e. broadcast, brochures, billboards, direct mail, flyers, newspapers, posters, shoppers, etc. This provision extends to prohibit the use of discriminatory words, phrases, photographs, illustrations, symbols or forms. The Department of Housing and Urban Development, which investigates complaints, takes the position that newspapers face civil suits if they publish advertisements that encourage discrimination (or even indicate a preference) relative to protected classes. You might wonder if the Fair Housing Act and regulations hinder free speech as espoused in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The answer is NO. There is a distinction between free public speech and commercial speech. Advertisements are commercial speech and, thus, are subject to regulation. Newspapers are not in the practice of accepting ads for anything illegal, such as prostitution, stolen property or illegal drugs. Because discrimination is against the law, newspapers cannot accept ads that discriminate. In order for newspapers to comply with all of the Fair Housing Act regulations, publishers of housing advertisements should do the following: provide a printed copy of their nondiscrimination policy to each employee and officer; post copies of the policy in conspicuous locations in their businesses; make copies available in their businesses; include a Fair Housing notice at the beginning of the real estate advertising section; and avoid referring to the kinds of people who might live in or buy a particular dwelling in advertisements.
Agenda

Thursday, June 9

3:00 pm  MNA & MNAS joint board of directors’ meeting

Friday, June 10

Morning  Open for relaxation and recreation

11:00 am  Convention Registration opens

11:30 am  Montana Newspaper Foundation golf fundraiser

     Montana Newspaper Foundation fundraiser event

5:30 pm  Social Hour | Silent Auctions open

6:30 pm  Dinner

7:30 pm  2nd Annual MNF Spelling Bee

Saturday, June 11

8:00 am  Convention Registration opens

8:00 am  MNAS Annual Meeting

9:00 am  MNA Annual Meeting & election of officers

10:00 am  Montana Newspaper Foundation Annual Meeting

10:00 am  Education session:  David McCumber – Small Staff, Big Stories: Finding the Resources to Do Great Journalism

11:00 am  Education session: Kimberly Davis – U.S. Census Tools for Reporting & Marketing

12:00 noon  Past Presidents’ Luncheon

12:30 pm  Presentation of 2016 Master Editor/Publisher Award and Montana Newspaper Hall of Fame Award

1:30 pm  Education session: Jayme Fraser – Tools for Telling Old Stories in New Ways and Finding Narratives Hidden in Numbers

2:30 pm  Education session: Sally Stapleton – Photojournalism, The Value of the Moment

3:30 pm  Education session: Cindy Sease – Advertising News Ideas & Roundtable

5:30 pm  President’s Reception social hour

6:30 pm  Dinner

7:00 pm  Silent Auction #1 closes

7:15 pm  Performance by the Alpine Theatre Project

7:30 pm  2016 Better Newspaper Contest Awards – Emceed by the Alpine Theatre Project

8:00 pm  Silent Auction #2 closes

9:00 pm  Silent Auction #3 closes

9:30 pm  Hospitality Suite opens
## 131st Annual Convention
**MONTANA NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION**

Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish MT - June 10 & 11, 2016

### ATTENDEE Registration

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Please complete for each attendee - print full name and mark box for events attending...thank you!

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### ORGANIZATION Registration (1 per member newspaper or 1 per associate member)

- **Newspaper Name** ____________________________
- **Associate Member Name** ______________________

**Total Registration Fees**

- **No payment is required at this time...**

- **Total Registration Fees**
  - *(total attendees’ fees + organization fee)* $ _______

Please mail Convention Registration

TO: Montana Newspaper Association
825 Great Northern Blvd, Ste 202
Helena MT 59601

or email to Ryan member@mtnewspapers.com

**final convention registration is due May 31st**

Grouse Mountain Lodge
406.892.2525 | info@glacierparkinc.com

GLACIER PARK INC.

Please contact the Grouse Mountain Lodge for reservations.
Please plan to join us to support the Montana Newspaper Foundation at the annual convention. The Foundation provides funding for annual University of Montana School of Journalism scholarships, internships and member education. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Last year’s convention raised $11,000 through donations and participation. Our goal is to continue this level of support this year.

Here’s how member newspapers can support the Foundation at this year’s convention:

**Golf Scramble**
11:30 am - 4:00 pm

The Golf Scramble will be held at Meadow Lake Golf Course. Please contact MNA if you would like to golf, 406 443 2850.

**3 Silent Auctions**
5:00 pm - OPEN

Please donate items for the SILENT AUCTIONS that will start Friday afternoon and end Saturday night after the awards. Unique items from our member newspapers’ communities are requested. Please contact MNA with your intended donations, email campbell@mtnewspapers.com. Donors will be recognized on bids sheets.

**2nd Annual Spelling Bee**
7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

This year’s Spelling Bee will be open to individuals attending Friday night’s banquet and festivities. No need to register in advance. One individual champion will be crowned this year. Foundation chair, Melody Martinsen, will serve as Bee Master.

**Live Auction**
11:30 am - 4:00 pm

Please donate items for the LIVE AUCTION that culminates Friday’s Foundation fund-raising. Bobby Roshon will be our auctioneer. Please contact MNA with your intended donations in advance...thank you!

No need to bring your wallets to Friday night’s fund-raising festivities as MNA will bill individuals after the convention! Come, have fun and support the future of our industry in Montana. A portion of Friday night’s registration fees is a direct contribution to the Foundation. We hope you will attend and enjoy the night!

**RAFFLE - GRIZ CAT**
June 20th

Please purchase/sell raffle tickets and return all stubs and money to the MNA office by Friday, June 18th. One winner will be chosen by random drawing on June 20, 2016. The raffle for the 2016 GRIZ CAT football game package is open to the public. Last year’s raffle raised $2,600+ with raffle ticket purchases coming from all over the state. Please run MNA house ads (available on the MNA FTP site) to promote the raffle as you are able. GO GRIZ, GO CATS!!
Visit the Whitefish Chamber of Commerce website for information on events, activities and area attractions

Whitefishchamber.org and for TripAdvisor’s Top 10 List of Things to do In Whitefish, Montana
www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g45402-Activities-Whitefish_Montana.html

Arts & Culture

Alpine Theatre Project - www.alpinetheatreproject.org
Whitefish Pottery www.whitefishpottery.com - 240 Central Avenue in Whitefish
Frank Lloyd Wright Building Lockridge Medical Clinic, now Morrison-Frampton Law Office, 341 Central Avenue - www.franklloydwrightsites.com
Hockaday Museum, 302 Second Avenue East in Kalispell - www.hockadaymuseum.org

Recreation

Whitefish Mountain Resort - www.skiwhitefish.com
Golf
Whitefish Lake Golf Club on Whitefish Lake - 406-862-5960 | www.golfwhitefish.com
Big Mountain Golf Club in Kalispell - 406-751-1950 | www.bigmountainclub.com
Meadow Lake Golf Resort in Columbia Falls - 406-892-2111 | www.meadowlakegolf.com
Water
The Wave Aquatic & Fitness Center - www.whitefishwave.com 1250 Baker Avenue in Whitefish
Boat Tours - Wild Horse Island on Flathead Lake offers scenic day trips, call 406-837-5617
Horseback Riding
Swan Mountain Outfitters - www.swanmountainoutfitters.com | 406-387-4405 | 1-877-888-5557
Cycling - a cycling and pedestrian trail begins at the city park in Whitefish
Whitefish Trail - www.whitefishlegacy.org | June 9th Birding Guided Hike
Rafting & Hiking
Glacier Guides and Montana Raft www.glacierguides.com 1-800-521-7238, early summer special 10% off whitewater or scenic rafting trips, $167.99 + tax
Fly Fishing
Glacier Raft Company - East Glacier www.glacierraftco.com book online and save 10% off day trip
Stumptown Anglers www.stumptownanglers.com 1-877-906-9949
Lakestream Flyfishing Shop www.lakestream.com 406-862-1298
Glacier National Park
Located just 25 miles from Whitefish. Embark on a Jammer Bus tour on the Going-to-the-Sun Road www.glacierparkinc.com
Shopping
Whitefish is known for its boutiques and specialty stores, find a directory at www.whitefishchamber.org/list/QL/shopping-specialty-retail-23.htm or visit www.explorewhitefish.com

Dining | Nightlife

Breweries
Great Northern Brewery 2 Central Avenue Whitefish www.greatnorthernbrewery.com
Bonsai Brewing 549 Wisconsin Avenue in Whitefish open 1pm - 8pm
Restaurants www.whitefishchamber.org/list/QL/restaurants-food-beverages-22.htm
A mayor takes issue with an editorial that criticized a city council action, calling your facts into question. Irrate parents challenge your decision – your right – to report their son didn’t dress for the basketball game because he was suspended for violating school policy. A pastor is critical of an ad you accepted for publication, saying it was in poor taste.

Hardly a week passes that a newspaper’s policies and practices aren’t called into question. Many complaints are fielded in private conversation.

In other instances, though, readers want to share their opinions with a wider audience with a letter to the editor – which often spurs additional conversation, both pro and con, on the newspaper’s decision. The exchange soon dwindles, and the newspaper likely wins high marks for allowing readers to toss brickbats, as well as bouquets.

There are cases when editors feel compelled to add a P.S. to a letter. I urge you to think twice – even three times – before doing so. Postscripts may give you a “feel good” sensation in the short term, but they can have long-term consequences in relationships with your readers, and rarely for the better.

Don’t get me wrong. Some letters warrant a response. I’m a firm believer in having a dialogue with readers. That includes writing columns to explain news decisions, especially when an issue is raised in your newspaper. But there are some important considerations.

First and foremost, don’t blind side the writer. It’s always best to have a conversation with the author. Explain your decision-making and your wish to explain your reasoning to the broader audience. Gauge the reaction; the conversation may dissuade you from writing anything. If you proceed with a column, the author deserves a heads-up. You may well view the column as an explanation; the writer will likely view it as a rebuttal. That’s all the more reason to connect.

The process is fairly straightforward when dealing with the person who feels mistreated by a newspaper decision and pens a letter. It becomes more complicated with a “third party” complaint. Consider the woman who criticized a newspaper headline: “Drug defendant dies at 19; cause unclear.” She wrote, in part, “What you did was not responsible journalism. It was callous sensationalism.”

In this case, the more important consideration in any editor’s response is the family of the youth that will be drawn into additional limelight through no fault of their own. The letter itself will likely generate more attention; you’re in a difficult position to stop additional exchange. A column also may prolong the debate, and you do have a choice in that regard. A conversation with the family, at minimum, gives you an opportunity to explain your decision in private.

Those conversations can be difficult. Individuals may refuse to talk and hang up abruptly. But the calls also might pay you dividends in the long run. I speak from experience. I made many a call to individuals when our news decisions were called into question. Some remained a private conversation; some resulted in a column. In all instances, the readers – our customers – gained a better understanding of the hows and whys behind our decisions, even if they did not agree.

If you write a column, don’t be afraid to say that, upon reflection after the crush of deadlines, you may have handled the circumstances differently – if that is the case. Showing that you are human, too, strengthens your credibility.

Requisite to writing any column is having a conversation with the author and/or affected individuals. In contrast, many editors tack a P.S. on letters without ever connecting with the author. From the writer’s perspective, editor’s notes are just an example of the newspaper having the “last word” and diminishing the impact of the letter. Do so, and it’s a good bet the authors will be hesitant to submit another letter. They will be unafraid to express that sentiment to friends, too. In the end, you lose with the author and your readers.