

HOPE & FIRSTS

Bill Crane, Executive Director

What happens when life gives you more questions than answers? In my case, you write a newsletter article about it. The last year has been the most uncertain and interesting time of my life. Most of us never thought we would live through a world-wide pandemic. The political polarization of our country has also rocked me back. I have never felt less grounded than during the last year.

Last month, anywhere from 7,000 to 16,000 people died each day worldwide, 400 to 700 people died each day in the United States. Here in Montana, the prevailing attitude is that the pandemic is over. About 1 person died from Covid each day in Montana. An article I recently read

said that we have reached an “acceptable number of daily deaths.” I feel like we, in Montana, are in the eye of the hurricane. We are pretty safe right now, but we are surrounded with the potential for change. I hope everyone enjoys this relative calm.

The last couple of months have been more about firsts. I was vaccinated 2 + 2, (second vaccination plus two weeks) in April. After that, we went out to dinner for the first time in a year. Last month, we spent quality time with a grandchild for the first time in a year. I visited my mother without a mask for the first time in a year. I had coffee with two friends for the first time in a year.

These firsts give me hope... cautious hope.

Sharing thoughts.

I ran across this story the other day and thought it was worth sharing.

“A professor gave a balloon to every student, who had to inflate it, write their name on it and throw it in the hallway. The professor then mixed all the balloons. The students were then given 5 minutes to find their own balloon. Despite a hectic search, no one found their balloon.

At that point, the professor told the students to take the first balloon that they found and hand it to the person whose name was written on it. Within 5 minutes, everyone had their own balloon.

The professor said to the students: “These

balloons are like happiness. We will never find it if everyone is looking for their own. But if we care about other people’s happiness, we’ll find ours too.”

These are trying and uncertain times. We thank everyone who supports Montana Shares and our members groups.

Like the previous 26 years, we have great prizes in our raffle drawing. We are again offering our Covid rate of 18 raffle tickets for \$100. Please support our work for our member groups with your raffle purchase.

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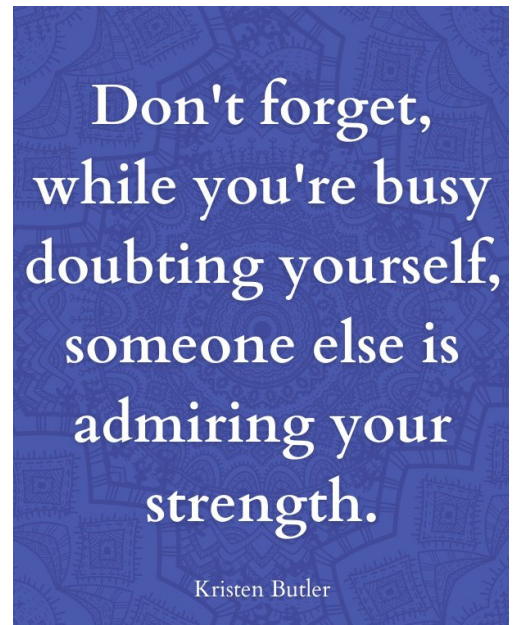
Thanks To These Montana Employers

The following employers included Montana Shares in their giving campaigns last year for their employees and/or were special event sponsors. We appreciate their willingness to give expanded choices in giving to their employees. Employees appreciate the convenience of payroll deduction for their charitable donations and the convenience of learning about a wide array of nonprofits at their office. Our campaign isn't complete without the huge generosity of individuals outside of workplaces who also donate through Montana Shares to our members. Those individuals, employees and the employers who generously match the individual contributions have helped Montana Shares during our 2020/2021 campaign. We were thrilled to be able to provide funds supporting our members totaling over \$229,118. If your workplace is not on this list and you want the convenience of "giving at the office" don't hesitate to contact the Shares office or any of the members to discuss how we can make that a reality this fall.

1st Liberty Federal Credit Union, Great Falls
Bison Engineering, Inc., Helena
Blue Cross Blue Shield, Statewide
Bozeman Public Schools
Butte SilverBow County
Carroll College
Child Care Connections, Bozeman
Child Care Resources, Missoula
City of Billings
City of Bozeman
City of Helena
City of Missoula
Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)
Community Coordinated Child Care, Butte
Community Food Co-op, Bozeman
DA Davidson Companies, Statewide
Disabilities Rights Montana, Helena
Family Connections, Great Falls
Great Falls School District
Intrepid Credit Union
Helena School District
Jefferson County
Lewis & Clark County
Missoula County
Missoula Public Schools
Montana Federation of Public Employees
Montana History Foundation, Helena
Montana Legal Services Association, Helena
Montana Shares, Helena
Montana State University - Billings
Montana State University - Bozeman

NCAT, Butte
NeighborWorks Great Falls
NeighborWorks Montana
NIC MT, Helena
Northrop Grumman, Helena
NorthWestern Energy, Statewide
On Site Management, Statewide
Opportunity Bank of Montana, Helena
Real Food Market & Deli, Helena
Rocky Mountain Development Council, Helena
Rural Employment Opportunities (REO),
Statewide
St. Peter's Hospital & Clinics, Helena
State Bar of Montana, Helena
State Employees' Charitable Giving Campaign
(SECGC), Statewide
Stockman's Bank, Helena
University of Montana - Montana Tech, Butte
University of Montana, Missoula
Valley Bank of Helena
Van's Thriftway, Helena

Plus the many individuals throughout the state who are giving outside a workplace and businesses that support Shares and our members through special events including our annual raffle. All are appreciated and welcome.



Montana Shares is a partnership of Montana-based nonprofit groups devoted to improving the quality of life in communities throughout the state. Our members promote, protect and preserve our state's human, animal, cultural and natural resources. They work on issues concerning women, children, families and seniors, health and hunger, the environment, arts and culture, education, domestic and wild animals, social justice and human rights. The purpose of Shares is to work with and on behalf of our members to promote and support their programs, provide training, technical assistance, consultation and financial support on a year-round basis and, thereby, to help them expand and diversify their programs that serve Montanans. Contributions received at Montana Shares further serve to accomplish these purposes.



Council Officers - 2020-2022

President- Nikki Andersen
Vice President- Kelley Willett
Secretary- Darbie Hess
Treasurer-Bernie Ongoy-Franks
Past President- Dave Chadwick

Montana Shares at-large members and term ends Working on behalf of all members of Shares:

Nikki Andersen, Helena, 5/22
Dave Cooper, Helena, 5/23
Darbie Hess, Helena, 9/22
Mary Wright, Helena, 5/23

Council members Individual (representation) (term ends)

Nikki Andersen (At-large member) (5/22)
Carrisa Beckwith (MT History Foundation) (5/22)
Dave Cooper (At-large member) (5/23)
Bernie Franks-Ongoy (Disability Rights MT) (5/22)
Darbie Hess (At-large member) (5/22)
Bill Mathews (MT Food Bank Network) (5/22)
Michelle Rogers (NeighborWorks MT) (5/22)
Ann Rupert (Bridgcare) (5/23)
Kelsee Dalton Watts (L&C Humane Society) (5/22)
Kelley Willett (MT Trout Unlimited) (5/23)
Mary Wright (At-large member) (5/23)

Montana Shares Staff
Bill Crane, Executive Director
Kristi Paulsen, Office Manager
Jami Welch, Accountant

Member of:
Community Shares USA
communitysharesusa.org



Montana Nonprofit Association
mtnonprofit.org



Montana Nonprofit Association



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sharesreport

A newsletter from Montana Shares, a partnership of Montana-based nonprofit groups devoted to improving the quality of life in communities throughout Montana

www.montanashares.org

Please open! Your Montana Shares Raffle Ticket sheet is enclosed. Prize packages are valued between \$200-\$300 each! Special Covid-19 sheet included.

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Thanks to our funders 😊



This newsletter is made possible in part thanks to a **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana** grant for our communication plan. Thank you BCBSMT for helping us reach donors across the state. **The Real Food Store** gives customers the choice of getting ten cents for reusing a bag or donating it to Montana Shares. Since its inception this program has generated \$41,378 in donations to Shares. Thanks to Laughing Water, all the staff and all the customers who re-use their bags and donate the savings to Montana Shares. **Van's Thriftway** customers have donated over \$27,180 through the on-going Round Up for Montana Shares program. The few cents generated from rounding your bill up to the next whole dollar adds up quickly.

43 member groups serving the people of Montana * New Members

Alternative Energy Resources Organization (AERO)
AniMeals
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Montana
Bike Walk Montana
Bridgercare
Camp Mak-A-Dream
Cancer Support Community Montana
Disability Rights Montana
Friends of the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula
Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument
Great Falls Community Food Bank, Inc.
Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter
Holter Museum of Art
Jeannette Rankin Peace Resource Center
K9 Care Montana
Last Chance Community Pow Wow
Lewis & Clark Humane Society
Missoula Medical Aid
Montana 4-H Foundation
Montana Association for the Blind
Montana Audubon

Montana Child Care Resource & Referral Network
Montana Discovery Foundation
Montana Food Bank Network
Montana Free Press
Montana History Foundation
Montana Legal Services Association
Montana Meth Project
Montana Natural History Foundation
Montana Spay/Neuter Task Force
Montana Supporting Military
Montana Trout Unlimited
Montana Watershed Coordination Council
Montana Wilderness Association
Montana Wildlife Federation
NAMI Montana
NeighborWorks Montana
Pride Foundation
Queen City Ballet Company
Rural Employment Opportunities, Inc. (REO)
Spay Montana
*Thrive
Windhorse Equine Learning