
simply local magazine
BILLINGS
August 2025 Golden Hour Glow
POWER, PROSTHETICS, & PURPOSE
HOT SPRINGS GUIDE
BACK-TO-SCHOOL PREP
THAT GOES BEYOND SUPPLIES
HARVESTING THE
HEART OF OUR REGION
INSIDE A SIGNATURE CDW
CUSTOM HOME BUILD
live your best life right where you are.
local family food home

GROWN LOCAL



Our roots run deep in this great state and our commitment is clear. Only local. Only in Montana.

Stockman Bank®

Montana's Brand of Banking

Forbes WORLD'S BEST BANKS POWERED BY statista 2025

Forbes BEST-IN-STATE BANKS POWERED BY statista 2025

Member FDIC | Equal Housing Lender

TY NELSON
DESIGN & REMODEL

BUILDING HOME POSSIBILITIES
KITCHENS | BATHROOMS | ADDITIONS



1041 Broadwater Ave, Billings, MT 59102
406-534-8360 | tynelsonconstruction.com

FEATURED ON: houzz
FIND US ON: facebook

Don't start the school year off without the required immunizations and sports physical forms! Get scheduled today.



2 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS:
1232 N. 30th Street
3401 Avenue E
(off of Zimmerman Trail)

West End Location
8:00am - 5:00pm (Mon-Fri)

Downtown Location
8:00am - 6:15pm (Mon - Fri)
8:00am - 5:00pm (Saturday)
11:30am - 5:30pm (Sunday)

childrensclinicofbillings.com
406.281.8700

OPEN 7 days a week

Children's Clinic
Trusted by Families for Generations



Shared Seasons

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."

-Coretta Scott King

Life moves quickly, so fast that it can feel impossible to keep up. We fill our days chasing achievement and checking boxes, trying to be everything to everyone. But sometimes, productivity needs to take a back seat so we can carve out space for rest. To sit in the stillness of a quiet morning. To talk with a friend without an agenda. To listen for the *still, small* voice. To find simple ways to give of ourselves and intentionally carve out time for community. We weren't made to do life alone. We were made for togetherness.

And as it turns out, there's not much that's actually *social* about social media. It can quietly undermine our contentment and steal our joy. When we measure our lives against someone else's highlight reel, it's easy to feel like we're falling short. But what we don't see are the sacrifices behind that vacation, the prayers behind that child, the quiet perseverance behind a dream finally taking shape.

It can feel like we're the only ones who don't have life figured out. But the truth is, no one really does. We're all carrying unseen burdens. It's only when we peel back the layers and get real with each other that we find the sweet spot of life: in raw, honest moments of vulnerability. By showing up, sharing stories, carrying burdens, and offering encouragement right from where we are, we all have something to offer, but our gifts can't make a difference unless we're willing to step outside our carefully curated lives and engage with the world around us.

In this issue, we celebrate the final days of summer and explore ways to carry its warmth and intention into the seasons ahead. You'll meet individuals who refuse to let disability define or limit them. Instead, they use it as a kind of superpower, pouring into others and becoming the helpers our world so desperately needs. We also highlight practical ways to show up for our community through volunteering, generosity, and serving those on the margins, reminders that real impact often begins with the smallest acts of kindness.

Let's strive not just to sit back and partake, but to stop our scrolling, participate fully in loving our neighbors, and making a difference in our community and sphere of influence. Everyone has something to give. Everyone has a story worth sharing. Let's take the time to listen. And as summer starts to wind down, may we be intentional about soaking in its final moments. There's no better time than now to savor the season and share its warmth with those around us.

Love,

Stephanie

Montana Woman-Owned Small Business of the Year!

US Small Business Administration, May 2025

Introducing the Fraxel® DUAL 1550/1927



We have been long-term promoters of Fraxel — the pioneer of fractional skin resurfacing. The **Fraxel Dual** is an advanced version of the Fraxel laser system, offering two distinct wavelengths in one device to treat a broader range of skin concerns more effectively.

Call 406.294.9660 to schedule your complimentary consultation ◆ billingsdermatology.com

BD&A
Billings Dermatology & Aesthetics

Please call 406.294.9515 to schedule a dermatology appointment.

Monday – Friday ◆ 2294 Grant Rd, Billings

OUTREACH CLINIC LOCATIONS:

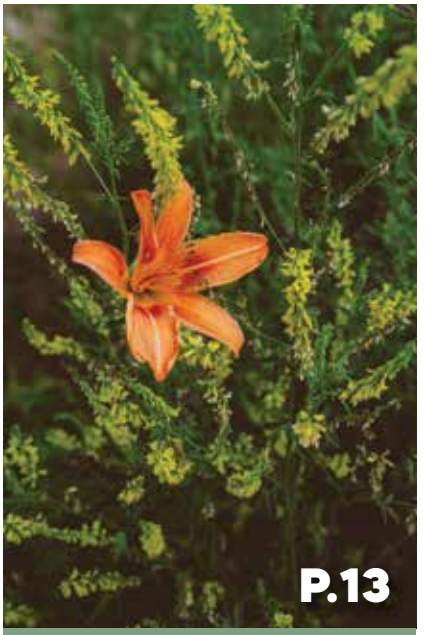
Miles City ◆ Cody ◆ Powell ◆ Worland ◆ Red Lodge

Compassionate and Dependable Care | Independently Owned

Tanya Riddle, MD, FAAD is a triple board certified dermatologist and an ASMS Fellow specializing in Mohs Surgery

August 2025

CONTENTS



local

14
Feature
Power, Prosthetics, & Purpose

21
Community
10 Simple Ways to Make
a Big Difference

24
Business
Rocky Vista University
Expanding into
Veterinary Medicine

31
Outdoors
Making the Most of the
Last Days of Summer

39
Hot Springs Guide



family

48
Feature
Back-To-School Prep
That Goes Beyond Supplies

55
Education
Building Brighter Futures
for Every Student

59
Family Matters
A Quiet Rescue
for Montanans

62
Hands On
How to Make This Summer
a Lasing Memory

66
Travel
Make the Most of Your
Summer Staycation



ON OUR COVER: *Special thanks to Jackie Jean Photography for our cover photo*

Please recycle this issue of Simply Local Magazine.





food

72
Feature
Harvesting the
Heart of Our Region

76
Giving Back
Simple Ways to Help
End Hunger in Our City

81
Meet the Makers
The Sisters Behind
Bee Bar Billings
Are Making Every
Sip a Celebration

home

86
Builder
Inside a Signature CDW
Custom Home Build

events

SCAN FOR EVENTS
Here and throughout
the issue

Celebrating 17 years in our community!



NOW OPEN!

UpLIFTT Thrift

LIFTT
Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow



Monday : CLOSED
Tuesday: 10am - 5pm
Wednesday: 10am - 5pm
Thursday: 10am - 5pm
Friday: 10am - 4pm
CLOSED Saturday and Sunday

UpLIFTT Thrift is a nonprofit thrift store in Billings, MT. Every purchase supports Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow (LIFTT), a Center for Independent Living dedicated to empowering people with disabilities and older adults to live more independently.

Store Location: 1201 Grand Ave. Suite #1

Check us out on Facebook:

For any questions please contact:
406-534-1147
uplift@liftt.org

simply local magazine *Behind the Scenes*

PUBLISHER
Simply Family Magazine, Inc.
PO Box 21587 ~ Billings, MT 59104
406.702.0267

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Jenny Barriger
jenny@simplylocalmagazine.com

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Stephanie Toews
stephanie@simplylocalmagazine.com

CALENDAR
b365@simplylocalmagazine.com

ADVERTISING SALES
For advertising inquiries contact
advertising@simplylocalmagazine.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE & DISTRIBUTION
customerservice@simplylocalmagazine.com

Check www.simplylocalbillings.com for distribution locations. Subscriptions are also available. Visit our website to get SLM delivered to your mailbox for a small annual fee!

© 2025 Simply Family Magazine, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from the publisher. The content of advertisements and editorial materials contained in this publication may not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publishers.



FOUNDERS
Kim Nelson & Jenny Barriger

PROUD MEMBER OF

it's BILLINGS Chamber of Commerce



JENNY BARRIGER
Founder | Executive Director



STEPHANIE TOEWS
Creative Director | Executive Editor



SYNDA ROREX
Creative & Print Engagement



LYNAE COLE
Digital Specialist



TOVE OBLANDER
Creative & Digital Engagement



BRITTANY SCHIMKE
Staff Writer & Creative



ASHLEY FISHER
Senior Account Executive



BRE ROBBINS
Account Executive



MAISIE DORITY
Audience Specialist



NICOLE ALLEN
Operations Specialist

Thank you to our August contributors

PHOTOGRAPHY | VIDEOGRAPHY











EDITORIAL


JAMIE BLOTSKE


MARIA WEIDICH


ELISE HABEL

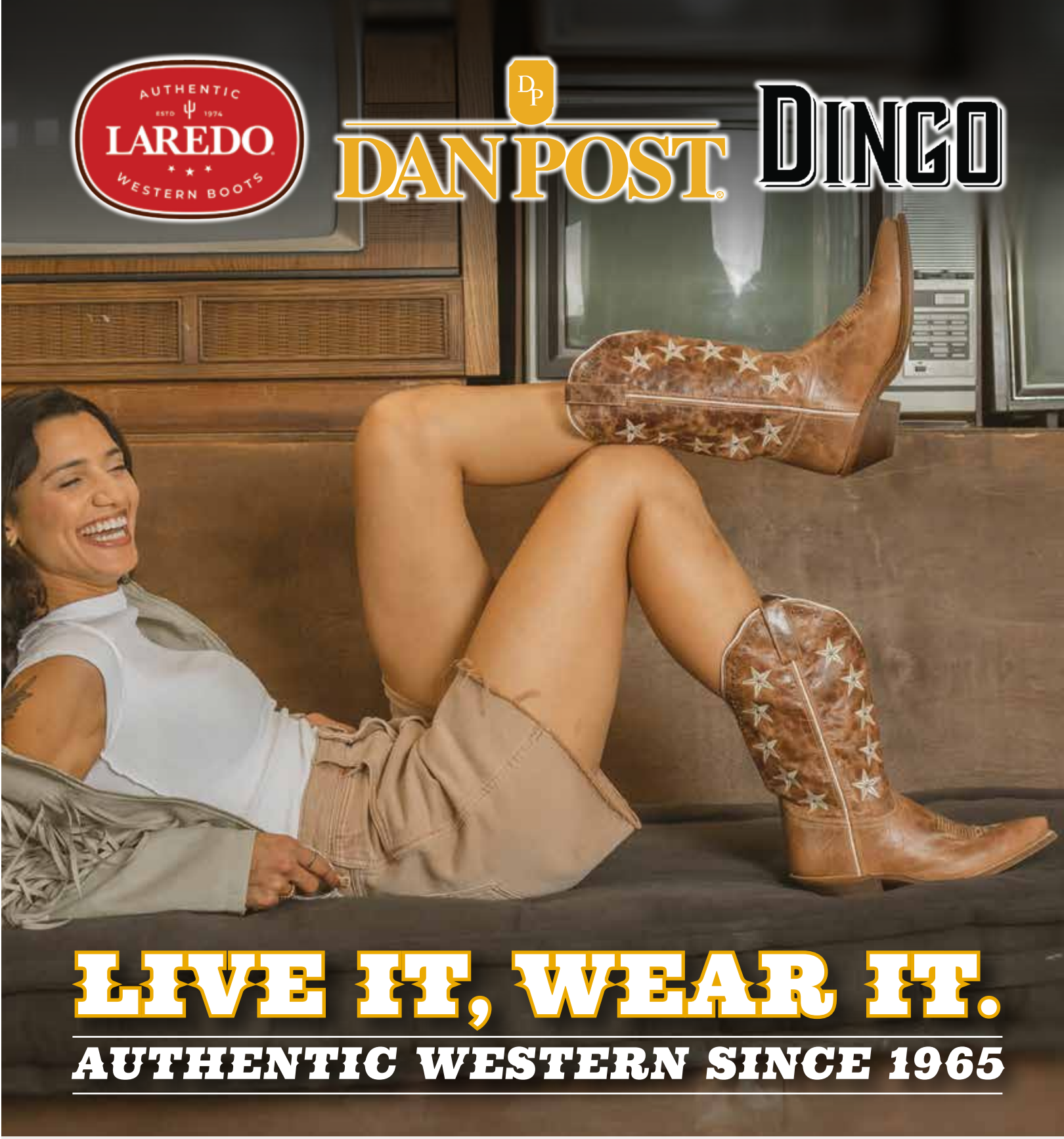

MALOREE EVERETT


STEPHANIE HOBBY


JESSICA RENSTROM


TORY KOLKHORST


HANNAH OLSON



Shipton's
Branded With Quality

BIG R STORES

BIG R WEST
2600 Gabel Road
(406) 652-9118

BIG R HEIGHTS
1908 Main Street
(406) 384-0099

BIG R EAST
216 N. 14th Street
(406) 252-0503

BIG R SHERIDAN
2049 Sugarland Dr.
(307) 674-6471

BIG R LEWISTOWN
825 NE Main Street
(406) 350-4422

BIG R HARDIN
1001 N. Center Ave.
(406)-953-5111

SHIPTONSBIGR.COM

ORTHO MONTANA
URGENT CARE

KEEP *Playing!*



- SPRAINS
- STRAINS
- JOINT INJURIES
- BROKEN BONES
- FRACTURES
- SPORTS INJURIES
- TORN LIGAMENTS
- INJURED TENDONS
- LACERATIONS
- CASTING, BRACING & SPLINTING
- PHYSICAL THERAPY
- OUTPATIENT SURGERY

IMMEDIATE ORTHOPEDIC CARE FOR EVERYBODY

OPEN UNTIL 5 PM
8:00 AM-5:00 PM
MONDAY-FRIDAY

2900 12TH AVE N, STE 140W, BILLINGS | 406.237.5050 | MONTANABONES.COM

simply local

your best life right here.

14
Feature
Power, Prosthetics, & Purpose

21
Community
10 Simple Ways to Make a Big Difference

24
Business
Rocky Vista University Expanding into Veterinary Medicine

31
Outdoors
Making the Most of the Last Days of Summer

39
Hot Springs Guide

Photo by Jamie Blotske





Photo courtesy of Andrew Walker



POWER, PROSTHETICS, & PURPOSE

Article by Jessica Renstrom
Photos by Arianna Skoog

"It's so helpful to talk with someone who has had the experience of losing a limb. Because I've been there, I know what it's like." - Karsyn Hornby

We all know that life can change in an instant, but few are truly prepared for what that means. Andrew Walker and Karsyn Hornby have both endured life-altering losses. But when the unthinkable happened, neither of them gave up – they got to work. With the help of Caleb Rogers at Alpine Medical Prosthetics & Orthotics, they've not only reclaimed their mobility but also found ways to connect with others facing similar challenges.

Their paths to amputation are vastly different: Andrew's came suddenly after a near-fatal infection, while Karsyn's followed a devastating accident as a teenager. But both refused to let their injuries define their futures. Instead, they've committed themselves to rebuilding active, fulfilling lives, and using their experiences to support others.



Photo courtesy of Andrew Walker

A LIFETIME OF ADAPTATION

Karsyn Hornby has been living with limb loss for 17 years. Her amputation followed a traumatic accident at 13, just before high school. "It was a crushing injury. They couldn't save it," she recalls.

Although she physically adapted and learned to walk again within a year, the mental toll lasted longer. "The mental part is the hardest. I wasn't healthy at first," she says. Support from her family and a life coach helped her emerge stronger, turning her pain into purpose.

Karysn began working in a gym during high school and became a personal trainer. "I loved fitness and challenging myself in a unique way. I was constantly asking, 'How can I do this in an adaptive way?'" That philosophy encouraged her to pursue hiking, cycling, skiing, yoga, and even Orange Theory classes, all on a prosthetic leg.

But it wasn't always smooth. Early prosthetics caused frequent falls and painful skin breakdowns. Then she met Caleb Rogers, and everything changed. "Caleb introduced me to liners and sockets that actually fit me. It was a whole new standard of care. No blisters after an 11-mile hike? That was life-changing."

Now a health and wellness coach for the VA, Hornby works with clients across Montana and often connects with new amputees.

Currently pregnant with her second child, Karsyn remains active daily. "I love to maximize everyday life, and really embrace it. After having been so close to death, I'm so grateful for time with my kid (soon to be 'kids!')."

A CHRISTMAS TURNED CRISIS

For Andrew Walker, everything changed on Christmas Eve. "I was perfectly healthy, very active, lifting weights, chasing my kids," says Andrew. But by the next day, he was septic and unconscious, intubated in the ER. "Everything in my body just fully shut down."

On December 26th, his right leg was amputated. When he finally woke from a coma on January 9th, he couldn't speak and had no idea what had happened. But once he grasped his new reality, Andrew didn't hesitate to start moving forward.

Fortunately, he and his wife already knew Caleb Rogers from working alongside him in therapy. "We knew how talented he was because he would help our patients. I knew I wanted him to help me. I asked Caleb to come meet me in the hospital, where I told him, 'I have three kids. I need to get going.'"

Caleb fitted Andrew with a microprocessor knee, helping him progress from falling every few steps to walking, and now training to run again.

"I want to do a 5K with a running blade, and I'm applying for a grant through Amputee Blade Runners." In addition to finishing his first Heart & Sole Race this summer, Andrew recently carried his 4-year-old on his shoulders for a quarter mile and is getting back to playing soccer with his kids, among many goals in a future he refuses to slow down for.

"I don't accept a reality where I can't run anymore or carry my kids," Andrew says. "That's just not who I am."

Andrew has returned to work recently after co-founding a local amputee support group at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Montana.

THE MAN BEHIND THE MOBILITY

Both Karsyn and Andrew are quick to credit Caleb not just for their mobility, but also for the confidence and clarity that enable them to move forward.

For Karsyn, working with Caleb for the past eight years has been nothing short of transformative: "He changed my life – not just physically, but my confidence, too."

"I consider him a friend," Andrew says. "He's so patient with me. He's so good with helping me understand the process and how long it will take to get where I want to be."

And Caleb? He views his work as a means to help people regain their independence. "Prosthetics and orthotics are a tangible representation of freedom to me," explains Caleb. "Creating a device for someone that makes them more capable, more free, is a wonderful thing, and I'm thankful that I get to do that."


Welcome to the world, bestie.
Intermountain Health
The Power of We



GIVING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD

Both Karsyn and Andrew share a core belief: that their stories can help others navigate the same terrain.

In Karsyn's words: "Physical adaptation is the easy part. The mental side is where the real strength is needed." And it's knowing you're not alone, having the support of a community, that helps carry you through.

Andrew continues to build his support group and is active on social media (@ampedupwalker), where he's connected with people from around the world. "A grandma asked me to talk to her 4-year-old grandchild who's had an amputation," he says. "That's what it's about."

For both of them, the journey doesn't stop with recovery. They're running toward a future where no one has to face limb loss alone. SLM



Photo courtesy of Andrew Walker

For more information

on local amputee support, please contact the Rehabilitation Hospital of Montana or reach out to Andrew Walker on Instagram (@ampedupwalker)

ROC HOUSE



1025 Shiloh Crossing Blvd #6 Billings, MT
406-652-9999 | shoprochouse.com

ALPINE MEDICAL LLC
PROSTHETICS & ORTHOTICS



Billings' LOCAL SPECIALIST for prosthetics & pediatric orthotics!

Providing families with dependable care & personalized solutions

Upper & Lower Extremity Prosthetics & Orthotics

Cranial Remolding Orthoses

Scoliosis Bracing

Caleb Rogers, CPO • 2675 Overland Ave, Ste E
406.534.1041 • alpinemedicalprosthetics.com

INTEGRITY and CRAFTSMANSHIP

The Stylish way to stay hydrated.



See our new line of WanderFull Hydrobags!

neecee's
Shiloh Crossing • 406-294-2014
/neecees
@neecees_mt



FRAE
EVERYDAY GOODS

LOCAL + SUSTAINABLE
goods for daily living

ECO FRIENDLY + PACKAGE FREE + REFILL
MADE IN MONTANA + HANDCRAFTED GIFTS

FRAE COLLECTIVE Now Open
116 N 29TH ST #A @DOWNTOWN BILLINGS

SHOPFRAE.COM
FRAE WEST FLAGSHIP
115 SHILOH ROAD SUITE #1 @SHILOH COMMONS

MONDAY-SATURDAY 10A-6P & SUNDAY 10A-3P

406 NATIVE ROOTS
Connecting Culture & Community

Thanks for helping us grow into our NEW LOCATION!

Your Source for Beads, Culture & Community

Join us in celebrating our NEW LOCATION!

Shop at 406 Native Roots, a community hub that supports Indigenous artists and celebrates Native art.

Discover our classes
SCAN ME

2211 Grand Avenue | (406)697-6717 | www.406NativeRoots.com

CO+LAB



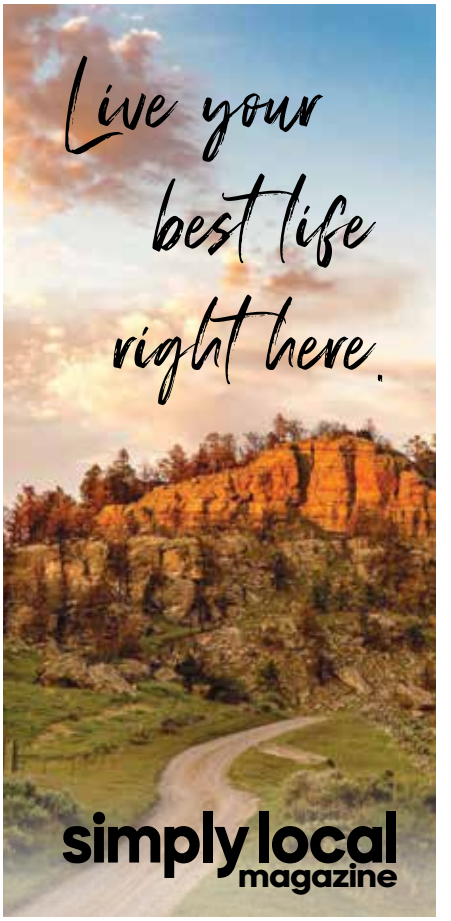
Transform your backyard into a home theater with the Movie Night Kit, part of our **CO+LAB2go** circulating equipment collection!

This kit includes a **projector**, **screen**, and **bluetooth speaker**- everything you need to bring the magic of the movies to your home.

Just add your own popcorn and blankets for a fun and cozy night in!

All you need is a library card! Visit us online to learn more.

explorelearncreate.org
@bplcolab
@CO+LAB
Billings Public Library | 510 N. Broadway



10 simple Ways to Make a Big Difference

Article by Jessica Renstrom

ONE

VOLUNTEER WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Join their build crew at the Billings site on Tuesdays, Thursdays, or Saturdays, no construction experience required! You can also help out at the ReStore (their nonprofit building materials shop) on Tuesday through Saturday to support their affordable housing projects.

MORE INFO HERE:

TWO

DONATE TO TUMBLEWEED'S FOOD PANTRY

Drop off non-perishable food items (canned goods, pasta, rice, cereal) at Tumbleweed's pantry in downtown Billings. Consider organizing a food drive at your workplace or school to help provide for homeless youth in our community.

SCAN TO SEE WHAT THEY NEED:

THREE

BEAUTIFY WITH PARKS & REC

The Billings Parks & Recreation Department welcomes volunteers for tree-planting, trail clean-ups, planting native flowers, and more. Visit their website or contact the Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator to join as an individual or group.

FOUR

SUPPORT MONTANA RESCUE MISSION

From serving hot meals to organizing donation drives, there are many ways to help MRM. They're always in need of toiletries (soap, toothpaste, shampoo, feminine products) and meal service volunteers. Check their website for shift sign-ups and donation details.

FIVE

VOLUNTEER AT BILLINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Help with shelving, literacy programs, children's story hours, or community events. The library often needs help during afternoons and weekends. Fill out their volunteer form on the library's website or stop by in person.

SIX

SUPPORT LOVE & SONSHINE MINISTRIES

Help homeless young moms and their babies by donating diapers, wipes, and feminine hygiene products to Love & SONshine. These essentials are in constant demand and make a great gift for moms in need.

SEVEN

HELP SENIORS STAY CONNECTED

Volunteer with senior centers or assisted living homes to provide companionship, tech help, or activity support. Even an hour a week chatting or playing cards can brighten someone's day and reduce isolation.

EIGHT

TUTOR OR MENTOR YOUTH

Volunteer with nonprofits such as Boys & Girls Clubs, Big Brothers Big Sisters, or local after-school programs. Tutoring, mentoring, and serving as a trusted adult can make a significant difference in a child's life.

NINE

CLEAN UP YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Organize or join a block cleanup. Provide gloves, trash bags, and recycling boxes for your neighbors. Pair with local businesses for pickup support or coordinate with the City of Billings' Garbage Collection.

TEN

HELP SENIOR DOGS AT POOCHZ BNB

Support Poochz BnB, a sanctuary for senior dogs, by donating supplies like cleaning products, soft throws, chew toys, or pet-friendly food. Volunteers can assist with yard work, prepare meals for the pups, plan fundraisers, or spend time reading and playing with the dogs. Every act of kindness makes their golden years brighter. SLM

JESSICA IS A BILLINGS LOCAL WITH A BACKGROUND IN MARKETING AND A DEGREE IN COMMUNICATIONS. SHE LOVES BEING A MOM AND SOAKING UP TIME WITH HER YOUNG CHILDREN. IN HER SMALL POCKETS OF FREE TIME, SHE ENJOYS PAINTING, FINDING COOL ROCKS, AND PLOTTING HER NEXT ADVENTURE.

PUT KINDNESS INTO ACTION

Ready to roll up your sleeves and get involved? Whether you're lending a hand or simply showing up in support, these local events make it easy to connect with causes that matter, right here in our own backyard.

Family Fun Day Block Party

Saturday, September 20 | 11 AM – 2 PM
Ping Circle Subdivision, 1202 N Ping Cir

Join Habitat for Humanity for a free, fun-filled day with food, live music, games, a bounce house, and a chance to tour their current build site. Don't miss your chance to win a playhouse raffle while supporting the mission to build affordable homes in our community.

Fitness Night for a Cause

Monday, August 5 | 5 PM – 8 PM
D1 Training, 1678 Shiloh Rd STE 3

Get moving for a mission! Join Coach Sydney for a workout benefitting Love & SONshine Ministries. Enjoy nutrition tips, refreshments, live music, and pop-ups from local businesses. Register on the D1 Fitness app.

AMR Car Seat Safety Checks

August 9 (Billings) & August 19 (Lockwood)
10 AM – 2 PM | Free

Ensure your child's car seat is properly installed with help from certified techs. A free and vital back-to-school safety check!

Magic City Wellness Expo

Saturday, August 23 | 10 AM – 5 PM
MetraPark – Montana Pavilion

Discover local wellness resources, attend seminars, and shop holistic vendors. Proceeds benefit addiction recovery efforts through Adult & Teen Challenge Billings. Gift totes, raffles, and kids 10 & under are free!

WHERE LOVE AND GOOD HEALTH MEET.

Caring Hands
VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Emergency Services
General Practice
Breeding Services
Surgery

Pharmacy
Avian and Exotic Services
Boarding






NOW HIRING!

985 S 24th St W Billings, MT | 406.656.6320
MON - FRI: 8am - 5pm
Alternating SAT appts available: 8am – 12pm

AAHA ACCREDITED
The Standard of Veterinary Excellence

ESPRIT
HEALTH CLINIC AND MEDISPA

Navigating Menopause with Confidence: Embrace Our 3-Step Philosophy

LABS | LISTEN | LIVE

AUGUST SPECIAL:
FREE 10 MINUTE HRT VIDEO CONSULTS

esprithealthclinic.com

406-831-7500

DOG★TAG BUDDIES
4TH ANNUAL
CELEBRITY CHEF GALA



EXCLUSIVE
R.E.D. TIE
DINNER WITH CHEF ANDRE RUSH
A NIGHT OF PURPOSE, RESILIENCE, AND THE POWERFUL BOND BETWEEN A VETERAN AND THEIR SERVICE DOG

Scan or visit
DOGTAGBUDDIES.ORG
to learn more

OCTOBER 11, 2025 | NORTHERN HOTEL

ROCKY VISTA

Expanding into VETERINARY MEDICINE



Langlas GENERAL CONTRACTORS

ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY

a&e create impact.

UNIVERSITY



Article by Stephanie Hobby
Renderings courtesy of Rocky Vista University

This spring, Rocky Vista University hosted a groundbreaking event for the upcoming College of Veterinary Medicine. The new facility is currently under construction adjacent to the Rocky Vista University Montana College of Osteopathic Medicine, which opened in 2023 on 12 acres in the West End of Billings. A skybridge will connect the two campuses, fostering better student and faculty interactions.

Founding Dean of the proposed veterinary college, Dr. Robert Murtaugh, stated that once accredited, the college is expected to join the **32 existing American Veterinary Medical Association** (AVMA)- accredited colleges across the country. Currently, only 27 states offer AVMA-backed colleges, so students hoping to pursue the profession often have to relocate. The two closest programs, both located over 500 miles away from Billings, are Colorado State University in Fort Collins and Washington State University in Pullman. For context, there are 158 accredited MD-granting and 37 accredited DO-granting schools in the nation.

Launching a new veterinary school is a monumental undertaking, and building the facility is just the beginning. Three assistant associate deans were recently hired to help with the planning and development. “We have a solid team now, and our intent is to try to accomplish accreditation a year from now, hire faculty, and have students in by the summer of 2027,” Murtaugh said.

Attaining accreditation is an arduous process. The Higher Learning Commission, an independent agency founded in 1895 to accredit degree-granting institutions of higher education, facilitates quality assurance in higher education across the United States. In April of last year, HLC formally approved the RVU’s request to offer the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree. The university is now working with the AVMA Council on Education to finalize the process.

When considering a new location, planners took into account Montana’s economic reliance on agriculture, the strong medical and educational corridor in Billings, and the geographical distance from another veterinary school.



"Billings is the largest population center in Montana and the surrounding states, and there are no vet schools in the Mountain West region. It makes sense from a lot of standpoints, such as geography, population growth, and a welcoming community."

-Dr. Robert Murtaugh

Organizers say the new program is taking an innovative approach to teaching and is paired with a state-of-the-art facility. Training will include a blend of real-world veterinary medical experiences through simulations, anatomy and surgical labs, and rich clinical encounters. The new facility spans a 60,000-square-foot campus, where organic meeting spaces and natural light were design priorities. Every classroom and lab space was created to offer an optimal learning environment. RVU anticipates training 125 students per year.

Langlas General Contractors, a Montana-based firm with deep roots in the region, is overseeing construction of the new veterinary facility. Their role in bringing this high-impact project to life further solidifies their commitment to shaping educational and healthcare infrastructure across the state.

As the lead architecture firm on the project, A&E Design is playing a key role in bringing that vision to life. “A&E Design is proud to be part of the visionary team bringing Rocky Vista University’s College of Veterinary Medicine to life,” said Dusty Eaton. “As the lead design firm, we’re honored to help shape a forward-thinking facility that will serve as a cornerstone for veterinary education and animal care.”

One of the program's goals is to prioritize student support. Beyond academics, RVU anticipates having a Student Affairs team to support success in learning, provide mental health resources, offer wellness programs, facilitate student organizations, offer tutoring, and assist with career planning.

Additionally, students will be able to complete their degree in three years with a compressed curriculum. Traditionally, veterinary students complete their degree over four years, with the first two summers off.

G&T PLUMBING & MECHANICAL
406.256.6016

COMMERCIAL
RESIDENTIAL
REMODEL
REPAIR



LICENSED • BONDED • INSURED
WATER HEATER SERVICE & REPLACEMENT
HOT WATER AND RADIANT HEAT
PLUMBING FIXTURES REPAIRED OR REPLACED
FREE ESTIMATES & SENIOR DISCOUNTS

1402 CENTRAL AVENUE • BILLINGS, MT • WWW.GANDTPLUMBING.COM

TrueNorth Steel®

Strong Foundations for Bright Futures

Congratulations Rocky Vista University on your new Veterinary Medicine College.

With regional focus and national expertise, our construction experts turn visions into reality through comprehensive solutions and an unwavering commitment to quality. TrueNorth Steel is proud to help support a future built on care, science and strength.

TrueNorthSteel.com





"We're going to put it all together without breaks in between the semesters," Murtaugh said. "They will receive the same amount of training and education, but coursework will be done over two years instead of three." The final year will be spent in dispersed clinics, much like what medical students do in their final years of training, where students rotate through different hospitals and clinical groups.

The proposed school will be able to track each student in the final 12 months of their rotations to ensure they have opportunities to specialize in their areas of interest. "We will have lots of opportunities to work with a variety of practices, hopefully both regionally and nationally, and options to make that final year customized to their interests and needs," he said.

Billings is uniquely situated to facilitate several collaborations for the proposed veterinary school. Murtaugh says **ZooMontana, Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter, and Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch's** cow/calf operation have all indicated their support for working with students and faculty. Such partnerships would not only provide optimal care for animals at those institutions but would also present a variety of learning opportunities for students.

Murtaugh says they are also planning to work with local veterinary clinics and hospitals to enhance training for their students. "We have a lot of animal hospitals we work with across the Mountain West," he said. "Everything from dairy practices to animal shelters. For the students, we'll emphasize the mixed animal and rural practice needs." They will evaluate potential students based on these interests and support them as they pursue specialized training in their final years of school and placement after graduation.

He added that having access to such a wide variety will offer students numerous opportunities to explore various careers. "Some will do small animals, some will do shelter medicine, some will decide to do an internship in a specialty training, and others might decide they want to be an orthopedic surgeon in veterinary medicine," Murtaugh said. SLM

Scan for more information about the program







CONGRATULATIONS ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY

MONTANA COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE



Hill Masonry employs highly educated and experienced team members to work with our customers, architects, engineers, contractors, and vendors to deliver safe, high-quality, and on time projects.

406-656-5955
hillmasonryinc.com
MONTANA

MCAA
MEMBER OF THE MCAA

HILL MASONRY

Langlas
GENERAL CONTRACTORS

CONGRATULATIONS TO ROCKY VISTA!



52 years in business
Commercial & Residential
General Contractor
406.656.0629



Montana didn't just need a school. It needed a solution. We're proud to help Rocky Vista University do something that's never been done before: design Montana's first veterinary school. A campus shaped by real need and local values, ready to serve the West and lead the future of care.

www.ae.design

MUSTANGS

BASEBALL

A SUMMERTIME CLASSIC



8/1- KOA Boy Scout Night
8/2- onX Maps Conservation Night Jersey Auction
8/3- Friends & Family 4 for $44
8/12- Discount Tuesday!
$5 ga, $4 brats, $3 nachos, $2 soda, $1 popcorn
8/13- Warrior Wishes $5 military tickets
8/14- Bark in the Park - Shiptons Big R
8/15- Baseball Card Giveaway - Stockman Bank
8/16- vs. Glacier Range Riders
8/17- Friends & Family 4 for $44
8/26- Discount Tuesday!
$5 ga, $4 brats, $3 nachos, $2 soda, $1 popcorn
8/27- Warrior Wishes Jersey Auction
8/28- $5 kids tickets, $2 ice cream
8/29- Briggs Team Poster Giveaway
8/30- Rocky Mountain College Hat Giveaway
8/31- Fan/Host Family Appreciation

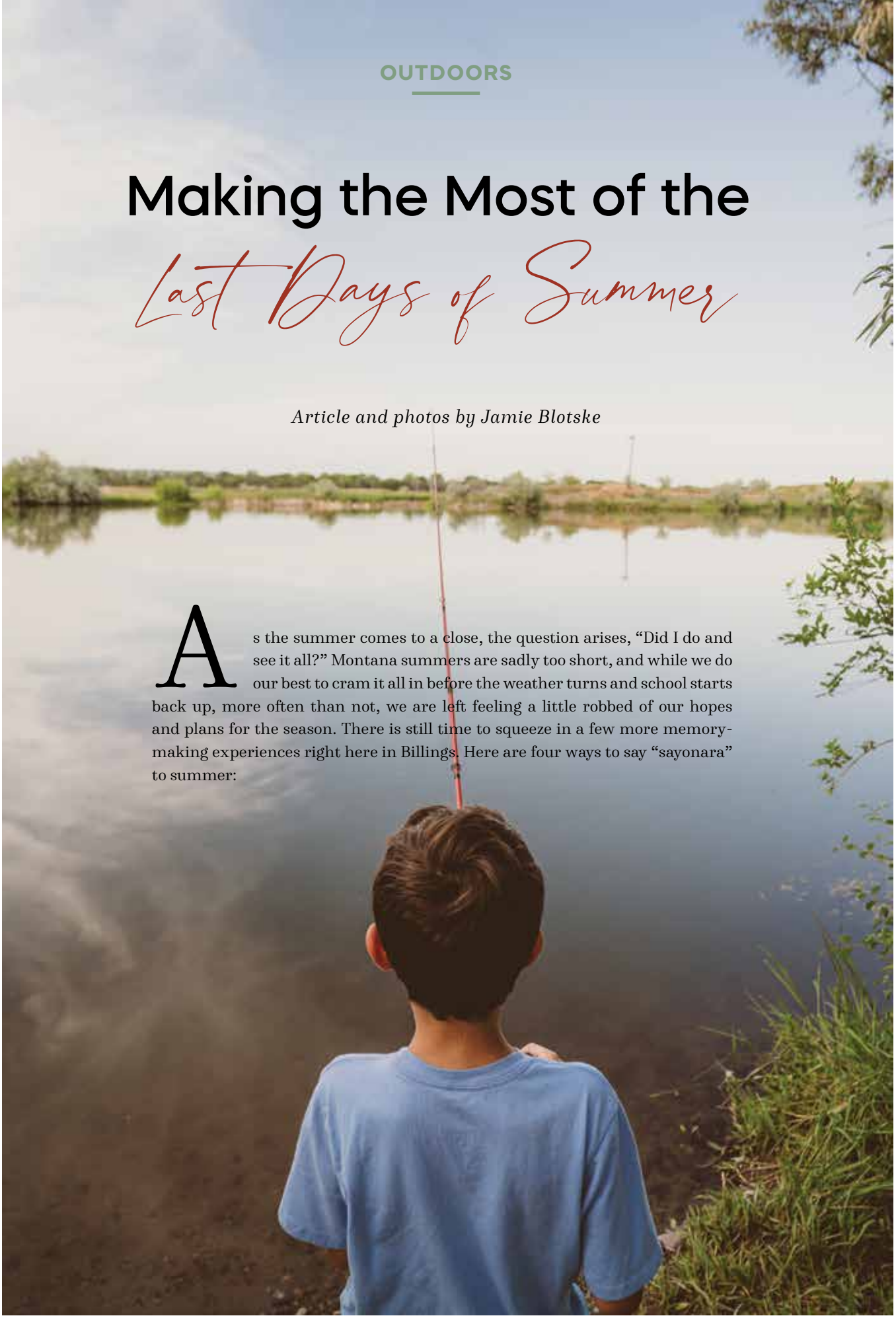
GET TICKETS

billingsmustangs.com 406-252-1241

OUTDOORS

Making the Most of the *Last Days of Summer*

Article and photos by Jamie Blotske



As the summer comes to a close, the question arises, "Did I do and see it all?" Montana summers are sadly too short, and while we do our best to cram it all in before the weather turns and school starts back up, more often than not, we are left feeling a little robbed of our hopes and plans for the season. There is still time to squeeze in a few more memory-making experiences right here in Billings. Here are four ways to say "sayonara" to summer:

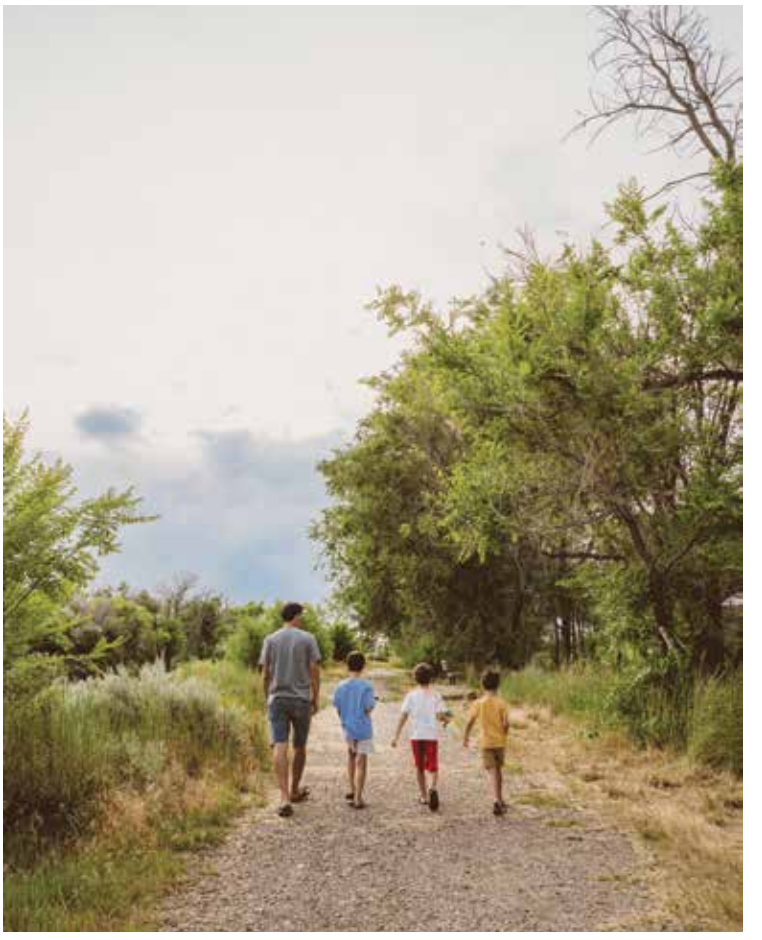


LEISURE ACTIVITY – STARGAZING

The rims make for a beautiful setting to sit and stargaze. While the city lights interfere with this activity by casting a brightness into the sky, a clear summer's night will still allow for plenty of stars to showcase their twinkling wonder amid the darkness. Grab a blanket, beverage, and binoculars to enjoy this relaxing and magical experience. Head to the rims to grab a seat and settle in to stargaze the night away! Zimmerman Park, Four Dances Recreational Area, and Swords Park are all excellent options for this leisure activity.

ADVENTURE ACTIVITY – JOEL'S POND

Are you aware of this hidden gem located directly behind Scheels in Billings? While some are familiar with it, many are not, making it a great spot to get out and try something new! Joel's Pond (12 acres in size) is unique in that it is smack dab in the middle of the hustle and bustle of the west end, yet feels as though you are completely immersed in nature, as trees and lush greenery surround it. You can paddleboard (Rentals are available at Scheels! Paddleboard rentals are on a first-come, first-served basis), kayak, and fish for bass. There are also walking trails and picnic tables for those who want to enjoy the pond from a distance without getting wet.



SOCIAL ACTIVITY – FARMER'S MARKET

Strolling a farmer's market is a quintessential summer activity, as it involves warm weather, the outdoors, and mingling among friends, fellow residents, and local vendors. It's a great way to support small-scale farmers, artisans, and food producers. As stated on their website, "rain or shine", the Yellowstone Valley Farmer's Market will run every Saturday from now until October 4th, 2025. "With over 60 vendors spanning four city blocks, you're sure to find something for every meal (and snack) of the day!" Grab your family, meet up with some friends, and head downtown to walk & shop your way through the market, with an iced coffee in hand, of course!

DON'T MISS OUT ON YOUR FAVORITE MONTANAFAIR BITES, INCLUDING:

- Vikings On a Stick
- Funnel Cakes
- Caramel Apples
- Smores Fries
- Footlong Corn Dogs
- All Things BBQ
- Cotton Candy
- and much, much more!

9 DAYS TO ENJOY YOUR FAV'S







celebrate

AUGUST 8-16, 2025

110 YEARS OF FUN!

Montana Fair

montanafair.com



WILDLIFE ACTIVITY – BIRDWATCHING

No, you do not need to drive to the mountains to have a nature encounter. No need to leave city limits to observe wildlife. While you will not spot any grizzly bears, elk, or bighorn sheep, there is ample opportunity to view many different types of bird species, right here in the Magic City. Billings is home to quite a diverse array of birds, from your common backyard birds, such as Black-capped Chickadees and Downy Woodpeckers, to larger birds like the bald and golden eagles. While an exact number of bird species in Billings is unknown, the count is likely over 100, due to the varying habitats our city is home to. Riverfront Park, Four Dances, Pictograph Cave State Park, the Montana Audubon Center, and the Shiloh Conservation Area are all known to be excellent bird-watching locations. Turn this activity into a fun scavenger hunt for the whole family! You might ignite a passion for a new hobby. SLM

MORE WAYS TO SEND OFF SUMMER

Looking to pack in a few more community moments before the season turns? Add these local events to your August calendar:

The Windmill & Bar 51 First Annual Car Show

Saturday, August 2 | 11 AM – 2 PM

Celebrate summer with chrome, classics, and community at this debut event featuring local vendors, live music, and a limited menu from The Windmill & Bar 51. Come browse the cars or cheer on the Billings All Stars!

Note: This is a registered event with limited space, so call ahead or plan to spectate. Definitely one to watch for next year!

Montana Fair & Rodeo

August 8–16 | Rodeo August 14–16

Nothing says summer like carnival rides, concerts, and fried food! Make a day (or several) out of MontanaFair at MetraPark. And don't miss the rodeo in the brand-new outdoor arena!

Food Truck Battle on the Yellowstone

Saturday, August 23 | Starts at 12 PM

Support Veterans and sample the best bites Billings has to offer at this high-energy food truck competition. Held at the Armed Forces Reserve Center, the event also features beer, live music, and kid-friendly fun.



FAMILY GETAWAYS
BEGIN IN BILLINGS

Easy travel, local warmth,
autumn adventures



BIL
BILLINGS
LOGAN
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

TRAVEL WITH US FLYBILLINGS.COM

the BaseCamp
GEAR FOR THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Clothing, Footwear,
Gifts & Gear to fit your
Outdoor Lifestyle

Featuring one of our favorite brands:

BIRKENSTOCK



Helping you find your perfect
pair since 1975.

1730 Grand Ave. | Billings
5 West Broadway | Helena
thebasecamp.com

WESTERN SECURITY BANK
DIVISION OF GLACIER BANK

Intentionally Simple.
Incredibly Powerful.

Some things in life should be **simple**...

Totally FREE Checking.

*and a **FREE** gift!*

Banking as it should be.

Unless specified otherwise, customer purchases checks. Other fees such as overdraft, continuous overdraft, etc. may apply. See fee schedule for details. Free gift provided at the time of account opening. Bank rules and regulations apply.

Member FDIC

GET STARTED TODAY AT
WESTERNSECURITYBANK.COM

MONSTER DRAWING RALLY 2025







Friday, October 10, 2025 // 5 – 8 PM

Admission: $20 adults, $10 kids aged 6 – 17, Free for kids 5 and under

Artist Registration Now Open!

The Monster Drawing Rally is a fast-paced, lively event! Over 50 artists will create artworks from start-to-finish in front of a live audience. Each piece is then auctioned for $50.

Scan to learn more and get tickes!

yam

yellowstoneartmuseum
401 North 27th Street · Billings, MT
406.256.6804· artmuseum.org



YELLOWSTONE
SURGERY CENTER

YellowstoneSurgeryCenter.com
406-237-5900

“ Yellowstone Surgery Center is my preferred place to operate here in town. Patients are great and the staff is wonderful to work with.

~ PJ Hawkes, MD

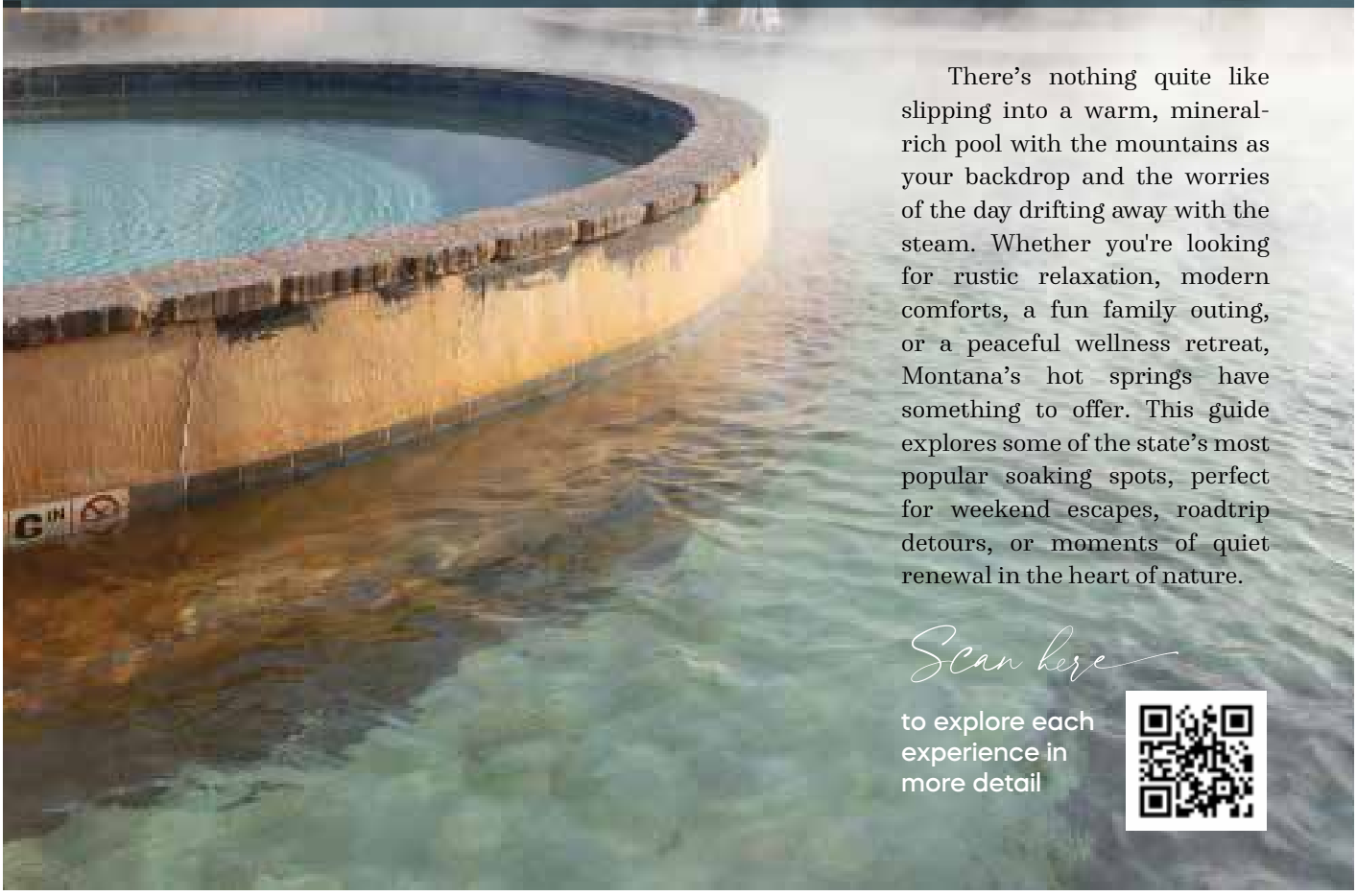
Yellowstone Surgery Center *Makes it Better*


BILLINGS SYMPHONY
GIL SHAHAM
ALESSIO BAX
JOYCE YANG
ARCOSTRUM
TIME FOR THREE
NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC STRING QUARTET
A Season of Celebration!
75TH SEASON SUBSCRIPTIONS ON SALE NOW
SUBSCRIPTIONS, TICKETS & INFO: billingssymphony.org


AVA LAW GROUP
REPRESENTING THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE POWERFUL
Andrew Van Arsdale
Founding Partner
Kasodie West
Partner
Teague Westrope
Partner
Strength You Can Trust. Justice You Deserve.
AVALaw.com

HOT SPRINGS *guide*

SOAK IT IN - YOUR GUIDE TO MONTANA'S BEST HOT SPRINGS OF 2025



There's nothing quite like slipping into a warm, mineral-rich pool with the mountains as your backdrop and the worries of the day drifting away with the steam. Whether you're looking for rustic relaxation, modern comforts, a fun family outing, or a peaceful wellness retreat, Montana's hot springs have something to offer. This guide explores some of the state's most popular soaking spots, perfect for weekend escapes, roadtrip detours, or moments of quiet renewal in the heart of nature.

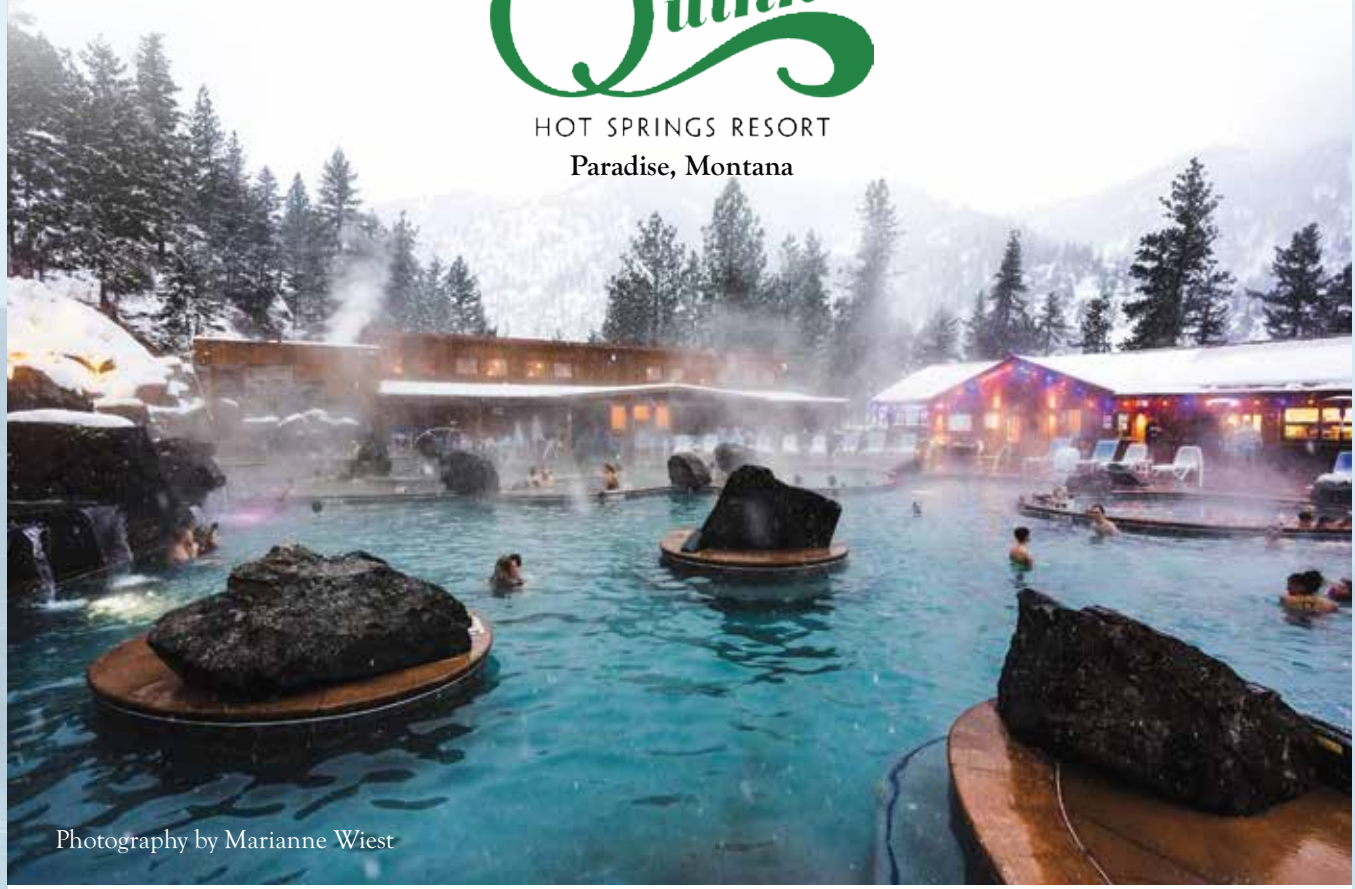
Scan here

to explore each experience in more detail

Quinn's

HOT SPRINGS RESORT

Paradise, Montana



Photography by Marianne Wiest

SERVING GUESTS SINCE 1885

Quinn's Hot Springs Resort is located on the Clark Fork River in Paradise, Montana. We have a restaurant, tavern, gift shop, poolside bar, 7 pools, and 83 accommodations that include standard and luxury options for both couples and families or groups. Our Luxury River-View Cabins are the ultimate experience in relaxation and comfort with stunning river and mountain views. Guests choose from 7 pools that range from the upper 90s to 106 degrees Fahrenheit, including a cold plunge at 55 degrees.

190 HWY 135, PARADISE, MT • 406-826-3150 • QUINNSHOTSPRINGS.COM

Lodging Phone
406-589-7350

yellowstone®
HOT SPRINGS RESORT

Stay Where You Play

Pool Hours
9:00am - 9:00pm
Tuesday - Sunday

YellowstoneHotSpringsMT.com

SCAN ME

Fully Furnished Suites with Kitchens
Lodging available year round.


Cabins


Suites




Cafe


BOZEMAN
HOT SPRINGS
RELAX.
RECHARGE.
REJUVENATE.
@bozemanhotsprings
at Bozeman Hot Springs



SPA HOT SPRINGS MOTEL & Tenderfoot Cabins

Our Story/About Us:

Just 35 miles from Showdown Ski Area and Silver Crest Cross-Country Trail System, Kings Hill offers easy access to over 200 miles of groomed and marked snowmobile trails considered to be one of the finest snowmobile areas in Montana. 1000's of acres of forest access, numerous campgrounds and miles of trails are nearby for hiking, biking or wildlife watching. Just a few miles from Newlan Creek Reservoir and Lake Sutherlin for incredible fishing, kayaking, water skiing and more.

202 WEST MAIN STREET • WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, MT • 406-547-3366 • SPAHOTSPRINGS.COM

YELLOWSTONE
eye·care



Shawn Lebsock, O.D. Dixon Maggard, O.D. Angie Biskupiak, O.D. Joseph Steiner, O.D.

CALL US TODAY TO SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT!

2120 Grand Ave | Billings, MT ▪ YellowstoneEyecare.com ▪ (406) 656-7605



Investing in Financial Futures

First Federal partners with local K-12 schools to support smart money habits in students through free financial literacy materials, interactive bank tours, and classroom visits from our professionals.

FIRST FEDERAL
Celebrating 90 Years
BANK & TRUST

TRUSTED. LOCAL. 406.652.3381 • 645 Henry Chapple St • www.efirstfederal.bank

The ZONE

• STRENGTH TRAINING
• YOGA
• CYCLING CLASSES

No Pressure.
– JUST PROGRESS –

TRY THE ZONE STUDIO TRIAL MEMBERSHIP
2 WEEKS AT $25!

SIGN UP NOW!

2120 Lampman Dr A • 406-730-7320
thezonebillings.com



WESTERN HERITAGE CENTER

Explore, Discover, Celebrate at the Western Heritage Center

EXHIBITS:
Equally Different
CapAble Montanas (Opens Aug 12)
Empowered heARTS
Through the Lens of Joseph Henry Sharp

High Noon Series (12PM)
Aug 21: Eugenics – Casey Pallister
Sept 18: Plains Indian Sign Language – Oly Hugs & Billy Big Day
Oct 16: Left Out in the Cold – Joe Lanning
Nov 20: Western Thoroughbreds

Walking Tours (10AM offsite)
Aug 1: Homes by Cohagen
Aug 8: Pioneer Park
Aug 15 & Sept 5: Grave Side Stories
Aug 22: Hidden in Plain Sight
Aug 29: Minnesota Ave History
Explore local history & architecture

GALLERIES OPEN
TUES - SAT 10AM - 5PM
2822 MONTANA AVE

Daily service throughout
EASTERN MONTANA



capeair.com | 800-CAPE-AIR

NFL FLAG FOOTBALL LEAGUE

4 PRACTICE LOCATIONS
BEGINNING

SEPTEMBER 8TH
COUNTRY MANOR PARK
CASTLE ROCK PARK

SEPTEMBER 9TH
VETERANS PARK
OPTIMIST PARK

4 WEEKS OF GAMES
STARTING SEPTEMBER 27TH

$90/resident $100/non-resident

SIGN UP NOW @ BillingsParks.org
or at
Parks and Recreation office @ 390 N 23rd St.

Billings PARKS AND RECREATION

simply family

fun. inspired. simplified.



48
Feature
Back-To-School Prep
That Goes Beyond Supplies

55
Education
Building Brighter Futures
for Every Student

59
Family Matters
A Quiet Rescue
for Montanans

62
Hands On
How to Make This Summer
a Lasting Memory

66
Travel
Make the Most of Your
Summer Staycation

Photo by Littles + Bigs Photography





BACK-TO-SCHOOL PREP That Goes *Beyond Supplies*

Article by Maria Weidich
Photos by Littles + Bigs Photography

As we busy our days buying fresh notebooks and first-day outfits, it's important to remember there's more to back-to-school prep than shopping lists.

"Many students struggle with re-establishing routines, and others may be feeling anxious or overwhelmed, especially if they're starting at a new school," said Taylor Walk, an elementary educator serving Billings Public Schools for 10 years.

These non-academic skills can often have a greater influence on a student's ability to learn, connect, and thrive in a school environment. Lucky for parents and caregivers, these real-world character lessons can be taught through fun and everyday experiences.

NAVIGATING SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Teaching our students communication skills before school begins isn't just helpful, it's essential. From making friends to managing emotions, social skills lay the foundation for everything students experience in the classroom. Kids who feel heard, understood, and connected are also ready to learn. Teaching these skills can be easily woven into fun and playful moments at home.

MINI MISSIONS:

- Play games like *20 Questions* or *Would You Rather?* to build conversation.
- Let them lead the interaction with the cashier or wait staff at your favorite restaurant.
- Role-play real-life scenarios like meeting a new classmate or asking a teacher for help.
- Play "Show and Tell" at home, encouraging them to make eye contact and speak clearly.

TIME MANAGEMENT BASICS

Shifting from summer's relaxed pace to a structured school routine can be tough for students. Mattie Walton, a Billings Public Schools teacher and mom of two, shared, "We are using our bodies and brains differently, which can take time to adjust." She recommends easing the transition by starting school-year sleep routines early and preparing the night before with tasks such as packing lunches, backpacks, and laying out clothes.

MINI MISSIONS:

- Rehearse a school-day morning at home, assessing how long it takes to get ready.
- Create a visual weekly planner that includes time for school, chores, screen time, and play.
- Set a timer for chores, getting ready, or other tasks, and try to "beat the clock".
- Revisit screen time expectations utilizing a "tech time tracker".

LEARNING FINANCIAL LITERACY

Money affects nearly every part of adult life, and teaching our students early can help them understand the value of money and develop independence, encourage healthy spending habits, and bring math into their daily lives.

MINI MISSIONS:

- Have a *Back-to-School Budget Challenge* and let your student help shop for school supplies, comparing brands and quality in purchases.
- Run a mini business with a classic lemonade stand or garage sale to teach the concept of earning income.
- Gamify summer savings with a visual tracker and periodic rewards.

TEACHING EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Teaching kids to recognize and manage emotions can begin as early as infancy, says Beth Gregg, a mom of two and Special Education Teacher. "There are so many easy and natural moments to teach these skills at home," she said. "Talking about feelings after a playdate or when watching a show, asking 'How do you think they felt?' or 'What would you have done?' are great places to start." She also emphasized modeling emotional maturity: "Saying, 'I'm feeling overwhelmed, so I'm going to take a break' shows our kids what healthy coping looks like."

MINI MISSIONS:

- Play board games to teach patience and resilience.
- Read stories or watch movies and pause to discuss emotions.
- Play emotion charades, acting out feelings while others guess the emotion.







Pop-up Sale
Book Nook
Billings Public Library

16 August
Saturday
9am-2pm

Quality books at bargain prices.



FOSTERING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Teaching personal responsibility starts by giving kids responsibility. "We make back-to-school snack shopping a little event on its own," said Whitney Creek, a Billings photographer and mom of three. "Picking out snacks together makes for something to look forward to, and it definitely helps her remember to pack them in her backpack and bring them to school!" Creek also recommends practicing simple tasks, such as zipping zippers, tying shoes, and opening water bottles, especially for younger students.

MINI MISSIONS:

- Create a daily task chart with progress rewards.
- Give kids a job at home with a fun title like Backyard Manager or Chief Breakfast Helper.
- Make a responsibility jar with fun and age-appropriate tasks to select each day.

BUILDING EMPATHY AND INCLUSION

Elementary educator and mom of two, Caitlin Dimock, has been in the classroom for 13 years and believes empathy and inclusion skills should be practiced and noticed daily. "You can't read one book, volunteer at one event, or talk your students into including others," she said. "You've got to model, model, model, and make these part of your family vision."

MINI MISSIONS:

- Volunteer at the local animal shelter or neighborhood clean-up.
- Use role-playing and games to imagine different perspectives and challenges.
- Create Kindness & Inclusion BINGO with simple actions like complementing someone, learning how to say "hello" in a different language, or invite a new friend to a playdate.

Life, social, and emotional skills are essential for kids; they're the foundation for managing stress, building friendships, and staying curious. Before school starts, take time to nurture their growth; the most valuable lessons often happen before the first textbook is opened. SLM

LOCAL EXPERT INSIGHTS:

"One thing we do before school starts..."

Start easing back into routines: earlier bedtimes, planning lunches, and discussing what the school day will look like. We also spend time chatting about what they're excited for and what might feel a little scary. I remind them that it's normal to be nervous and that trying your best, even when something is hard, is what really matters.
Beth Gregg,
Special Education Teacher and Mom of Two

Make a conscious effort to soak up every last bit of summer joy, like outdoor adventures and time together as a family, knowing these cherished memories will energize us for the exciting new discoveries and connections waiting in the classroom.
Mattie Walton,
Middle School Geography Teacher and Mom of Two

One thing I do is go on a one-on-one date with my oldest daughter. With three kiddos at home, it's rare we get that time together! We go out for lunch and ice cream, and shop for a couple new school outfits and school supplies. It helps ease the transition and makes the back-to-school season feel like something to look forward to, not just the end of summer.
Whitney Creek,
Owner of Littles + Bigs Photography, Mom of Three

A few days before school begins, we will do a full dry run: wake up at the right time, go through the morning routine, get dressed, and even walk or drive to school. The goal is to take the mystery and the morning chaos out of that first day. It helps everyone feel calmer and more confident, and it gives us time to troubleshoot little things.
Taylor Walk,
Elementary Educator and Mom of Two

Practice eating lunch in 20 minutes, including opening own baggies and cleaning up!
Caitlin Dimock,
Elementary Educator and Mom of Two

Early Childhood Preschool



406-281-5362
Three Day A Week Program
Tuesday - Thursday
Morning and Afternoon
Options



Learn Play Engage

BILLINGS CAREER CENTER

the Y

PRESCHOOL

Program runs Sept 8, 2025-May 22, 2026, from 8:30 – 11:30 AM

- 3 & 4 Years -T/TH
- 4 & 5 Years- M/W/F

REGISTER TODAY!

the Y

AFTERSCHOOL

Serves students grades K-6 from September 2, 2025-May 22, 2026, Mon-Fri.

No pickups from middle schools.

REGISTER TODAY!

eci

EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION
— Launching Lifelong Learners

MILESTONES MATTER!

Help your child reach developmental milestones

Services are provided at no cost to families with children ages 0-36 months who have developmental delays.



Call us *TODAY* to ask how we can help
406-281-5885 | 2016 Grand Ave Billings, MT 59102

PARK'S

BACK TO SCHOOL!

NEW LOCATION! 2135 GRAND AVE.

FREE KIDS' CLASS



See your child grow emotionally, physically & mentally.

KIDS DEVELOP

DISCIPLINE
CONFIDENCE
FOCUS

LIMITED OFFER

parksbillings.com

Big Sky Boats

Service and Repair, LLC

BOAT RENTALS



Slipped at Yellowtail and Tongue River.

Boat life made easy — slip in, store up, and hit the water stress-free.



MENTION THIS AD FOR 10% OFF YOUR FIRST RENTAL

2561 Monad Road
Billings, MT
406.633.0456

Fun on the Water Awaits — Scan to Rent!

Register for Fall!
Sign up now and get 50% off your registration fee!

CAC



Spots are filling up fast!

Children's Art Classes®

Promo Code: Simply

Learn, Explore, & Enjoy.



OPEN EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK
10AM-4PM

ZOO MT

TAKE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

www.zoomontana.org



Building Brighter Futures for Every Student

Article by Hannah Olson
Photo courtesy of Billings Public School

Billings Public Schools is home to countless stories of growth, thanks to passionate educators and programs working behind the scenes. The *Reading Intervention* and *Quest* programs are powerful examples of how dedicated staff and innovative support are helping every student thrive.

HELPING YOUNG READERS FIND THEIR PATH

In Billings' 21 elementary schools, a dedicated team of literacy coaches, such as Kristie Martin and Janelle Clark, rotates weekly, offering teacher support that enhances reading and writing instruction, creating a lasting impact well beyond their brief visits.

"This year's been a little different," Kristie explains. "There are five of us, and we each rotate between four or five schools. We focus on supporting teachers, modeling lessons, providing professional development, and analyzing data to understand how students are progressing."

From left - Literacy Coaching Team in Billings Public Schools - Jami Humphrey, Janelle Clark, Hillary Gnerer, Kristie Martin, Angie Paris

Reading interventionists work with K–5 teachers to ensure literacy instruction is effective and evidence-based. Trained in the science of reading, they help teachers understand how students learn best and guide intervention strategies through collaborative data analysis.

"After a training, say, on vocabulary and comprehension, we send out a sign-up sheet for teachers to invite us in," Kristie says. "We don't want to just give a lesson and walk away. Real change happens when we work side by side."

The team emphasizes consistency across schools, ensuring that students experience the same approach regardless of their location. "When a kid moves schools, it doesn't feel like starting over," Janelle explains. "Same approach, same tools, same focus."

Beyond lesson planning, coaches assist with student assessments and collaborate closely with Instructional Improvement Specialists to ensure teachers are equipped with the right tools. "The demands on teachers are greater than ever," Kristie reflects. "We're here to make sure they feel supported every step of the way."

CHALLENGING YOUNG MINDS THROUGH QUEST

While literacy interventions help students master foundational skills, another initiative within Billings Public Schools aims to support students at the top of the learning curve. The Quest program offers gifted and talented learners a space to explore, imagine, and delve deeply into their passions.

"We bus students from across the district one day a week to the Quest Center," says Jennifer Williams, Quest Liaison. "These are students who often feel like they're waiting for the rest of the class to catch up. At Quest, they're surrounded by like-minded peers. They have a chance to work at their level, grapple with challenging ideas, and build resilience when things aren't easy."

Each year, approximately 500 students participate in Quest, representing about 5 percent of the district's total student population. The program is expanding from second to sixth grade, encompassing K–7 students starting next year.

More than an enrichment program, Quest emphasizes "learning with a purpose." Students work on projects with a genuine global or community impact, creating pollinator gardens in partnership with the Parks and Recreation department, developing enrichment activities for the animals at ZooMontana, or learning about AI ethics with help from NASA and other expert mentors.

Each unit culminates in an authentic presentation, allowing students to showcase their work for the very people who inspired it. "That's what makes it special," Jennifer explains. "The students have an audience, a purpose, and a sense of belonging. They learn how to work through frustration, build resilience, and stretch themselves creatively and intellectually."

More than anything, Quest provides a space where students can find belonging. "These kids are used to being 'the one at the top' in their classrooms," Jennifer adds. "Here, they're surrounded by peers who understand them. They can have conversations that feel enriching and challenging. They can be themselves."

HELPING ALL STUDENTS REACH THEIR POTENTIAL

The efforts of literacy coaches and Quest staff underscore a central theme across Billings Public Schools: every child deserves to be challenged, supported, and celebrated for who they are and how they learn best.

"Teaching reading and writing well is the backbone of everything students do," Kristie says. "We want every teacher to have the tools and knowledge to do it effectively, so every child can walk into any classroom and have an amazing teacher ready to help."

For Jennifer and the Quest team, it's about providing a space where gifted learners can flourish. "We want them to experience struggle, to learn how to overcome it, and to understand that with hard work and resilience, anything is possible."

At the core is a shared belief: strong schools are built not just on curriculum and test scores, but on dedicated educators guiding every child toward success. SLM

HANNAH HAS BEEN IN BILLINGS FOR OVER TEN YEARS AND EARNED BOTH A BACHELOR'S IN ENGLISH AND A MASTER'S IN PUBLIC RELATIONS FROM MSU BILLINGS. SHE OWNS NARRATOR CREATIVE CONSULTING AND IS A FREELANCE WRITER. THE GREATEST THING IN HER LIFE IS HER DAUGHTER, VIENNA.

Rockin' Under THE BIG SKY

The After Party

STARTS AT 8 PM

SEPTEMBER 12 ✦ ZOO MONTANA

Ticket Price: $20

LEARN MORE

SLIP INTO YOUR GROOVIEST '70S GEAR AND BOOGIE WITH US—AN EVENING OF MUSIC, DANCING, AND FUN TO SUPPORT SERVICES FOR OLDER ADULTS!

ADULT RESOURCE Alliance of Yellowstone County

ALLIES in AGING

BIG SKY Senior Services



LEARN MORE AT ALLIESINAGING.ORG



LIGHT YOUR WAY

Professional Counselor

GWEN FELTEN M.A., LCPC, PC

406.698.0402 | feltengwendolyn@gmail.com
1500 Poly Drive Suite 120, Billings, MT 59102

Anxiety. Depresion. Trauma

Specializing in Orthodontics for children, teens and adults.



New Patients Welcome!

- Complimentary Consultation
- No Dental Referral Required
- Dental Insurance Welcome and Accepted
- Payment Plans Available

Member American Association of Orthodontists

Roberts Orthodontics, PLLC

1211 24th Street West, Suite 3
BILLINGS, MT 59102

Find us on Facebook

406-702-1939

Michelle K. Roberts, DMD

www.MichelleRobertsOrtho.com



A Quiet Rescue for Montanans



Article by Tory Kolkhorst

On a warm and sunny June afternoon at the Lockwood Rural Fire Department, community members, lawmakers, firefighters, and beyond joined together to behold a new type of emergency response being made available to the public. This service is not accompanied by 9-1-1 calls, sirens, or firetrucks rushing to the scene, but rather the safe and silent surrender of a mother's care for her infant. Montana's first and only **Safe Haven Baby Box** is now available for use at the Lockwood Fire Station at 501 Johnson Lane for any mother or family who may be facing a crisis.

"Every year, countless infants are heartbreakingly abandoned in the United States. While each situation is unique, parents often find themselves in times of crisis, facing emotional and practical challenges that can lead to desperate and unsafe decisions. These tragic stories underscore the urgent need for a secure and compassionate alternative that provides parents with a safe and anonymous option for child surrender and gives children the possibility of a brighter future," the Safe Haven Baby Box website states.

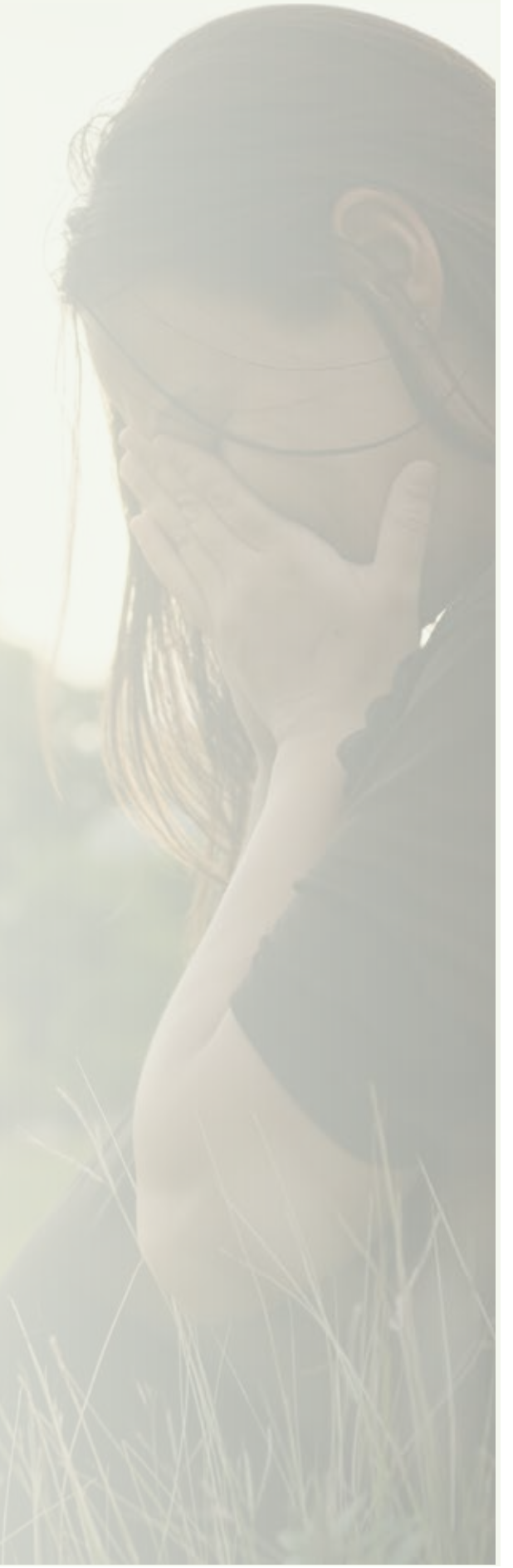
The story behind the Safe Haven Baby Box is powerful and deeply personal. Its founder, Monica Kelsey, was abandoned just two hours after being born by her then-teenage mother after surviving a brutal sexual assault. Monica went on to have a successful career, serving in the military and as an emergency responder. It was during a trip to Cape Town, South Africa, that she encountered a baby box for the first time. This experience, paired with her personal testimony, ignited her passion to establish Safe Haven Baby Boxes, transforming her pain into purpose. "To use a Baby Box, simply locate a designated site near you, open the secure door, place the baby inside, and close the door… The exterior door locks automatically when a newborn is placed inside, and an interior door allows medical personnel to promptly and securely retrieve the baby, ensuring immediate care and protection," the Safe Haven Baby Box website shares.

When it comes to infant surrender laws throughout the United States, the timelines vary from 3 days to 365 days. The Montana Safe Haven Newborn Protection Act, passed back in 2001, allows families to surrender a baby within thirty days of birth without being charged with any crime, so long as the baby shows no sign of abuse. In 2022, Billings native Jill Bushman was inspired to create a pathway that would enable the use of baby boxes under this law. Bushman shared her vision with Montana State Representative Sherry Essmann, who then introduced HB 200 to provide for safe, legal, and anonymous surrender of an infant through safe haven baby boxes. This bill successfully passed in 2023, and in May of 2025, Governor Gianforte signed a separate bill to create a grant program for the installation of baby boxes across the Treasure State. The Safe Haven Baby Box in Lockwood was generously provided by an anonymous donor. "I hope we never have to use it, but if we do, it's a life saved," Representative Essmann stated.

Initially, some folks questioned the Lockwood location for the Safe Haven Baby Box, wondering why downtown Billings wasn't chosen, with its high volume of traffic and greater population density. However, the decision to place this device in Lockwood was no accident, as their Fire Department pioneered the effort from start to finish.

"When members of our department found out about this option, we immediately recognized that it would fill a huge void in our community," shared Katie Haider, Firefighter/Paramedic and Public Information Officer for Lockwood Fire Department. "We do not have an emergency department or a law enforcement station, or even a post office. As a fire department, we have worked really hard to find any way possible to return the support that the community has always given to us. Bringing a Safe Haven Baby Box to Montana was the biggest honor, and could not fit our mission any better."

Rather poetically, this particular Safe Haven Baby Box is number 343 - a number that carries profound significance among the firefighting community, as it reflects the number of firefighters who selflessly lost their lives on September 11th. May Safe Haven Baby Box number 343 serve as a testament to us all, as it provides a lifeline to those who need it the most. This particular baby box may have been the first in Montana, but it certainly won't be the last, as interest is growing among communities throughout the state to expand access to these life-saving devices. While the box itself may seem small, the impact it will have on any family who chooses to use it will be significant. **SLM**



FRESH, LOCAL & EASY – YOUR FARMER'S MARKET WIC BENEFIT IS BACK!



Starting **June 4**, eligible WIC participants (4 months and older) can receive **$30 per person** to use on fresh fruits and veggies from local farmers.

Use it through **October 31** — that's longer than ever before!

- Benefit is now in the **Healthy Together app**
- **No smartphone? No problem** — ask your WIC clinic for options
- Works **statewide** at any **WIC-approved vendor or roadside stand**
- This benefit is **in addition to** your regular WIC food package

WIC WOMEN, INFANTS, & CHILDREN

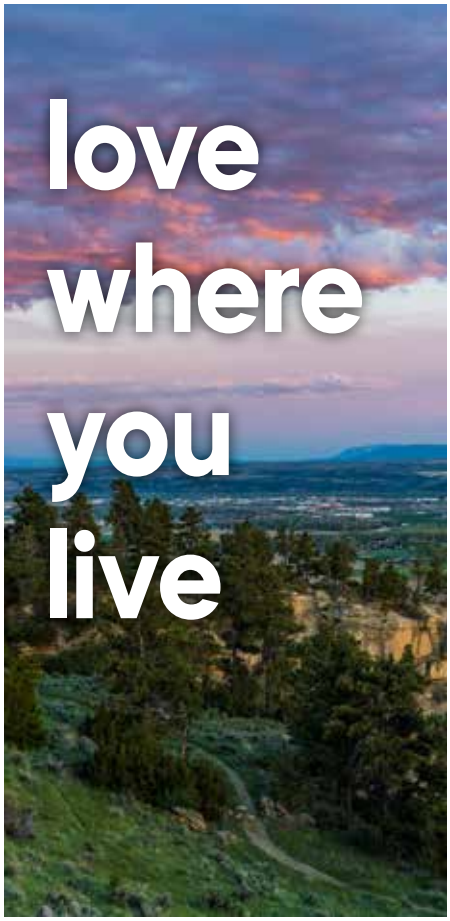
RiverStone Health

406.247.3370

RiverStoneHealth.org/WIC

WIC

*this institution is an equal opportunity employer



Accepting New Patients

Call to Schedule an Appointment

PEDIATRIC Dental SPECIALISTS

Kelly Clarke, D.D.S.
Mark Wilgus, D.D.S. • Tanner Bennion, D.D.S.

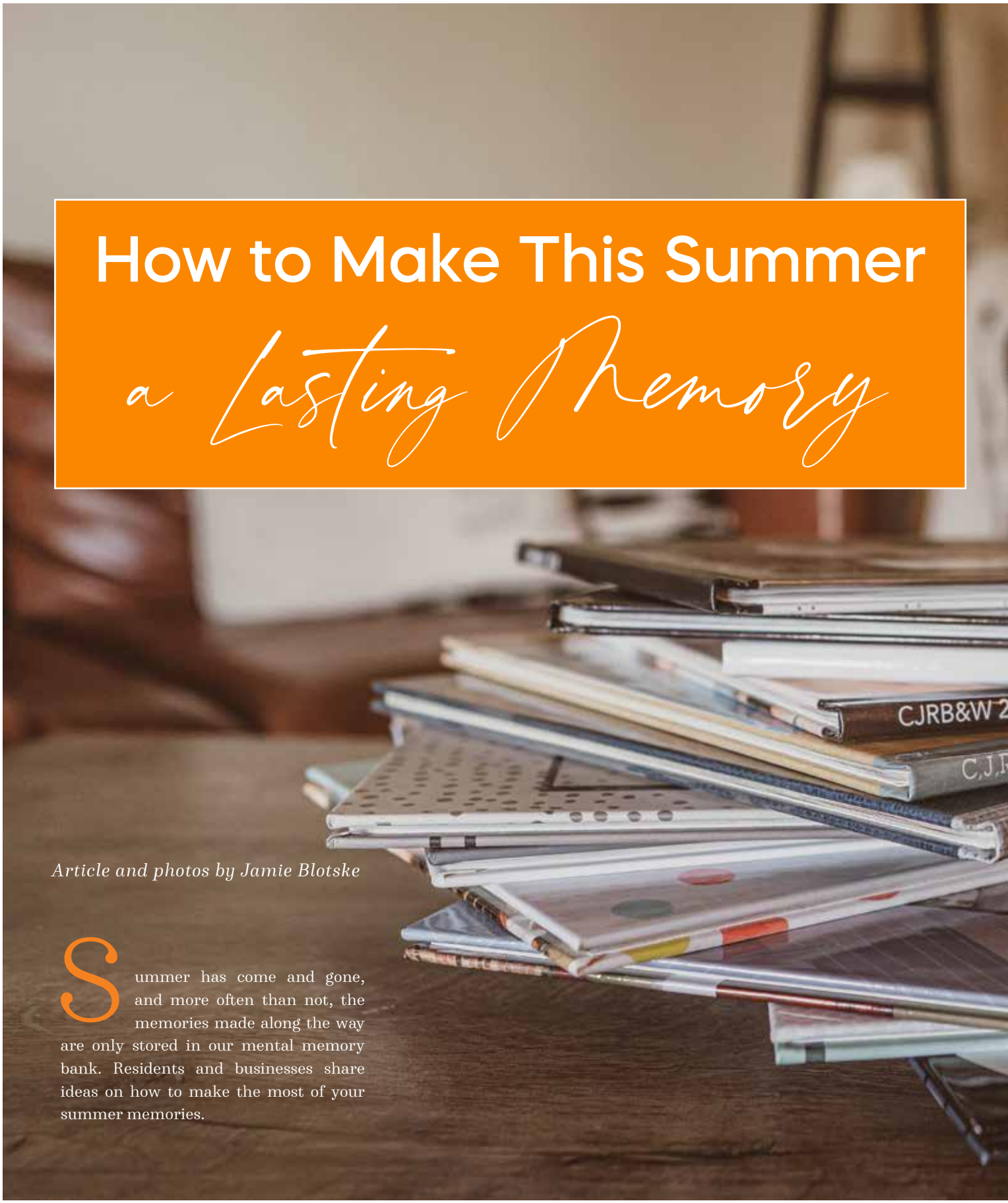
See us at any of our 5 locations!

(406) 652-5550 • 1-800-655-0409

BILLINGS, MT: 2700 Grand Avenue, Suite B
BILLINGS-HEIGHTS, MT: 848 Main St.
MILES CITY, MT: 205 S. Haynes Avenue
CODY, WY: 2910 Big Horn Avenue
SIDNEY, MT: 401 N. Central

www.pediatricdentalspecialists.org

How to Make This Summer a Lasting Memory



Article and photos by Jamie Blotske

Summer has come and gone, and more often than not, the memories made along the way are only stored in our mental memory bank. Residents and businesses share ideas on how to make the most of your summer memories.



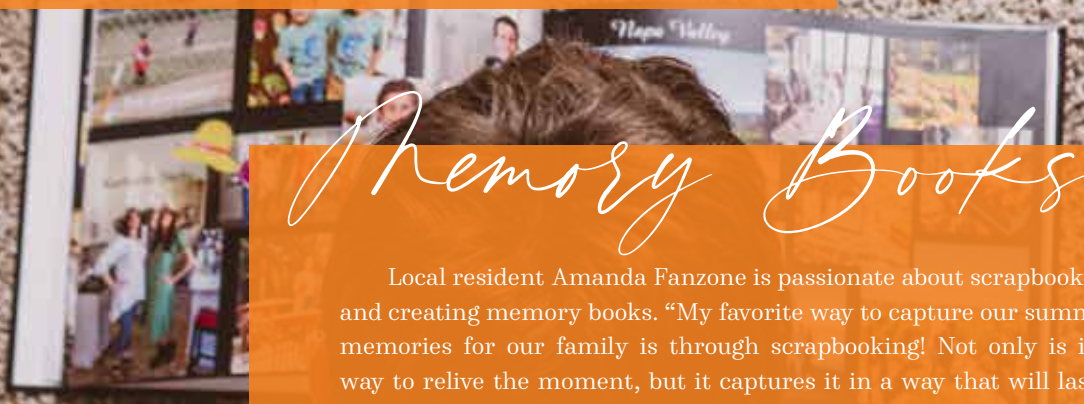
Letters & Lists

Maggie Winters, of Billings, said that two things come to her mind when she thinks about summer and preserving memories. "I sit down and write each of my kids a letter. I use my iPhone camera roll and scroll through it to remind myself of the highlights, accomplishments, and exciting growth. I try to find a good Scripture for each of them and end the letter with their cute nicknames or the hilarious things they would say. I print it off, put it in an envelope, seal it, and decorate it. The kids know about the letters, but they have no idea what is in them. Each year, they go into memory boxes. One day (which is undecided at this point), my kids will have years of letters, where they can be reminded of how much their mom loved them." Cue the tears!

The Winters family also creates a summer bucket list. Each person picks four or five things to contribute to the list. Some are extremely simple, while others require more effort. "It's a really fun activity that keeps the family intentional!" Maggie said.

Coffee & Canvas

Yellowstone Coffee & Canvas would love to help you and your family capture your summer memories! "We LOVE getting people together and making MEMORIES!" proudly stated on their website. From options such as a canvas to ceramics, to a Montana-shaped wood sign, everyone in your family will enjoy an afternoon of painting, sipping, snacking, and reflecting on the fun that was had this summer!



Memory Books

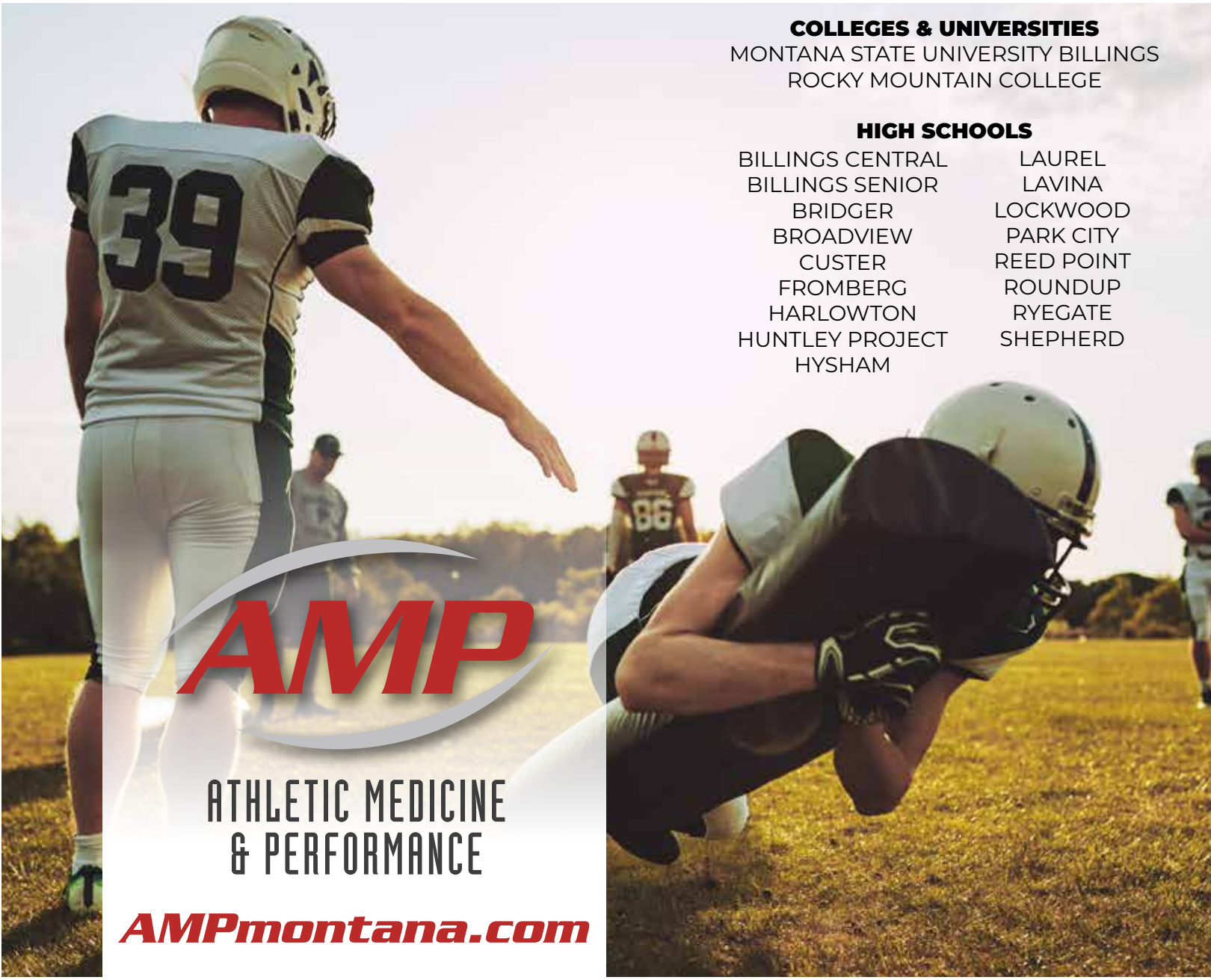
Local resident Amanda Fanzone is passionate about scrapbooking and creating memory books. "My favorite way to capture our summer memories for our family is through scrapbooking! Not only is it a way to relive the moment, but it captures it in a way that will last a lifetime. My kids love looking back at the books I've made over the years. It is definitely a hobby I plan to continue!" she said. Amanda has put her talents to use by creating both traditional scrapbooks and digital memory books through custom printing sites like Shutterfly or Vistaprint.

Family Photoshoot

What better way to capture the smiles of the season than with a fun family photoshoot?! While the great outdoors make for a beautiful backdrop, the weather can be iffy at times. Billings Open Studio, a rental space in the heart of downtown Billings, is always dependable! With 2,000 square feet of space, the north-facing windows allow for the sun's beautiful natural lighting. Grab your favorite photographer, book the studio, and plan for a photoshoot to remember the summer by!

SLM

AMP/ORTHO MONTANA ARE HONORED TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES BY PROVIDING ATHLETIC TRAINERS AND PHYSICIAN COVERAGE FOR MANY OF THEIR PRACTICES AND GAMES.



COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS
ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

HIGH SCHOOLS

BILLINGS CENTRAL
BILLINGS SENIOR
BRIDGER
BROADVIEW
CUSTER
FROMBERG
HARLOWTON
HUNTLEY PROJECT
HYSHAM
LAUREL
LAVINA
LOCKWOOD
PARK CITY
REED POINT
ROUNDUP
RYEGATE
SHEPHERD

AMP

ATHLETIC MEDICINE & PERFORMANCE

AMPmontana.com

PROVIDING HELP TO **MONTANA ATHLETES** FOR OVER 30 YEARS.



JAMES S. ELLIOTT, MD



STEVEN J. KLEPPS, MD



JOSHUA S. BOWLER, MD



BEN K. PHIPPS, MD

POWERED BY:

ORTHO MONTANA - INTERMOUNTAIN HEALTH - YELLOWSTONE SURGERY CENTER

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SUMMER *Staycation*



Article and photos by Jamie Blotske

While summer often calls for road trips and getaways, there's something refreshing about slowing down and enjoying what's right in our own backyard. As thoughts shift from pool days to packed lunches, now's the perfect time to squeeze in one last summer adventure without ever leaving Billings.



Lodging Ideas:

THE BIGHORN RESORT

With its "Stay. Swim. Play." experience, The Bighorn Resort makes it easy to plan a whole weekend of fun in one convenient location. Between on-site dining, a family fun center, and The Reef, Montana's largest indoor waterpark, you'll find everything you need to relax, recharge, and create lasting memories.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Looking for the comforts of home? Booking through platforms like Airbnb or Vrbo gives you space to spread out, plus added perks like a full kitchen and laundry. One local gem is a cozy 3-bedroom home on Farmstead in the Annafeld Subdivision, perfect for families looking to unwind close to home.

Book Here



photo courtesy of KOA

BILLINGS KOA

Fun fact: the very first KOA was founded right here in Billings! This family-friendly campground features a heated swimming pool, themed playground, adventure mini golf, and KampK9® for your furry friends. With fishing, free Wi-Fi, clean showers, and more, it's the ideal mix of outdoor adventure and modern comfort.

Local Activities:

BILLINGS ESCAPE ROOM

Put your family's teamwork to the test by solving puzzles in a themed escape room. It's fast-paced, collaborative, and seriously fun. Will you make it out in time?



photo courtesy of KOA

MEIER
FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC
—ADJUST YOUR LIFE—



3419 CENTRAL AVE. (WEST END)



2908 2ND AVE. N (DOWNTOWN)

2 CONVENIENT LOCATIONS | NOW OPEN SATURDAYS

CELEBRATING 19 YEARS OF WELLNESS

(406) 651-5433 | MEIERCHIROPRACTIC.COM

PICTOGRAPH CAVE STATE PARK

Explore ancient caves, scenic walking trails, and fascinating museum displays at this 23-acre park just outside town. A beautiful blend of nature and history, it's the perfect day trip for curious minds and adventurous spirits.

STEEPWORLD CLIMBING & FITNESS

No reservation? No experience? No problem. This locally owned climbing gym welcomes all ages for a fun, challenging outing. Bring the whole family and reach new heights together.

Where to Eat:

PIZZA RANCH (HEIGHTS)

A family favorite for good reason, this pizza buffet comes with a full arcade, making it a win-win for kids and grown-ups alike.

DIAMOND X BEER CO.

With a diverse menu, full bar, and plenty of space to spread out, Diamond X is great for group gatherings. Kids can enjoy arcade games and pool indoors or yard games out on the patio.

MEADOWLARK BREWING

From comfort food and craft beer to indoor playrooms and outdoor pickleball courts (reserve online), Meadowlark Brewing offers something for everyone in the family.

So, whether you're craving relaxation, adventure, or just a change of scenery, a Billings staycation offers the perfect way to savor summer, without the suitcase. SLM



photo by Arianna Skoog

StoryBook Hollow
MONTESSORI
NOW ENROLLING!

- *Ages 2-Kindergarten*
- *Hours 7:30am-5:30pm M-Th | 7:30am-4:00pm F*
- *Licensed*
- *Low ratios*
- *Park-like setting*
- *Christian Based*

CALL TODAY
TOURS AVAILABLE!
406-652-6900

storybookhollow@aol.com
www.storybookhollows.com



Set your child up for success with a check-up

Make sure your child is growing strong, staying protected, and feeling their best. RiverStone Health makes it easy to schedule well-child visits, catch up on immunizations, and get the care they need all in one place.

RiverStone® Health | Kid Connect

Pediatric Care • Immunizations • Family Health Services

406.247.3350 | RiverStoneHealth.org

This project is funded in whole by grant #CDC-RFA-IP19-1901 from the CDC of the U.S. Dept. of HHS and MT DPHHS. The contents herein do not necessarily reflect the official views and policies of HHS or DPHHS.

Town & Country Foods

MEXICAN CORN ON THE COB

Smoky, sweet, and topped with creamy, tangy goodness, Mexican grilled corn, also known as elote, is the ultimate summer side. Grilled to perfection and slathered in mayo, cheese, and lime, it's a bold flavor explosion you'll crave all season.

INGREDIENTS

- 8 ears fresh sweet corn shucked, silks removed
- Olive oil spray for grilling
- ¼ Cup plain Greek yogurt, mayonnaise also works
- ¼ Cup light sour cream
- ¼ Cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ ounce taco seasoning
- 1 Tablespoon fresh lime juice (from ½ lime)
- 1 teaspoon flake sea salt or sea salt

For Garnish

- ¼ Cup chopped fresh cilantro
- ¾ Cup freshly shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1 whole lime cut into wedges

INSTRUCTIONS

- Spray or brush each ear of corn lightly with olive oil.
- 8 ears fresh sweet corn,Olive oil spray
- Grill for approximately 10 minutes, turning often to avoid burning. The corn should brown in places and be cooked through.
- Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix together Greek yogurt, sour cream, grated Parmesan, taco seasoning, lime juice, and salt. Set aside.
- Take corn off of grill and brush liberally with Greek yogurt mixture.
- Sprinkle each ear of corn with cilantro, shredded parmesan, and squeeze with more lime juice.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

FEATURING TOWN & COUNTRY FOODS ORIGINAL TACO SEASONING

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND ONLINE AT WWW.TNCFOODS.COM

OPEN 7AM CLOSE 10PM



simply food

eat well & live a full life.

72
Feature
Harvesting the
Heart of Our Region

76
Giving Back
Simple Ways to Help
End Hunger in Our City

81
Meet the Makers
The Sisters Behind
Bee Bar Billings
Are Making Every
Sip a Celebration



Harvesting the Heart of our Region



Photos Courtesy of Visit Billings

A Culinary Journey Through August's Farmers Markets

August is when the bounty of summer reaches its peak across south-central Montana. Regional markets overflow with sun-ripened produce, homegrown herbs, and handmade goods that reflect the heart of our land and the people who nourish it. Whether you're strolling through a Saturday market downtown, picking up pre-ordered produce, or discovering hidden gems in nearby towns, there's no better time to eat local, cook seasonally, and savor what's fresh.

Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market:

A SATURDAY MORNING TRADITION

Downtown comes alive every Saturday morning with this iconic market stretching across multiple blocks. Expect juicy peaches, corn still warm from the morning sun, and everything from locally roasted coffee to freshly baked bread.

WHEN: Saturdays from July 19 through August 4, 8 AM–Noon, rain or shine
WHERE: Downtown N. Broadway
DON'T MISS: Early tomatoes, handmade jams, and street musicians adding to the vibrant atmosphere.



Healthy By Design Gardeners' Market:

FRESHNESS WITH PURPOSE

Thursday evenings in South Park come alive as this market focuses on community health and food access. It's SNAP- and WIC-friendly, partnering with Billings Parks & Recreation to create an inclusive space where everyone can bring home fresh, nutritious food.

WHEN: Thursdays from June 12 to October 2, from 4 to 6 PM.
WHERE: South Park
DON'T MISS: Youth-grown veggies, wellness booths, and occasional cooking demos.

Bountiful Baskets:

AFFORDABLE PRODUCE WITH A COMMUNITY TWIST

For those who love to meal prep or crave variety, Bountiful Baskets offers a co-op-style produce pickup every other Saturday. Participants contribute and receive a generous mix of seasonal fruits and veggies, often enough to inspire a week of creative cooking.

HOW IT WORKS: Order online, then pick up
WHEN: Friday Evenings, 5:30 PM
WHERE: Faith Chapel
PRO TIP: Bring a laundry basket or large tote to make hauling your haul easier.

for more information



Yellowstone Valley Food Hub:

LOCAL FOOD, YEAR-ROUND

This grower-owned cooperative makes shopping local simple and accessible with weekly online ordering from over 35 Montana farmers, ranchers, bakers, and makers. From grass-fed meats to seasonal vegetables, fresh dairy, honey, and more, the Food Hub curates a diverse selection of regional products all in one place.

WAYS TO SHOP:

- Shop in Person: Open to the public every Friday from 10 AM–3 PM at 2115 Lampman Drive, Ste. A, Billings.
- Order for Pickup or Delivery: Place your order online by 11:50 PM on Tuesday for Thursday delivery in Billings and Laurel or pickup at one of six locations around Billings and Red Lodge.

HOW IT WORKS: Create a free account. Shop exactly what you want, no subscription required, and enjoy fresh, regional food all year long.

Celebrate the harvest, support your neighbors, and let every meal tell a story of community and season. **SLM**

create an account

Simple Ways to Help End Hunger in Our City

Article by Elise Habel

"Adequate nutrition is fundamental to success."
-Shelley Pierce

It's estimated that 1 in 9 adults in Montana face hunger, and that number is even more staggering among children at 1 in 6. It's something that we can sometimes overlook in our day-to-day lives: our neighbors, students, and community members face food insecurity daily. Meet some incredible organizations in our city that are actively fighting hunger and feeding our community, and learn how you can be a part of the solution.

THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Education Foundation is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to the well-being of children within School District 2. "We fuel student achievement by investing in the entire educational experience," says Shelley Pierce, the Development and Community Relations Manager for the organization. Food insecurity can make it hard for children to focus in school. To help, the Education Foundation provides 700 discreetly packed **BackPack Meals** weekly and manages 36 food pantries for older students. "Nearly 40% of all students in Billings Public Schools are on free and reduced lunch," says Shelley, "so we know that it is critical that our students receive adequate nutrition year-round."

AS THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR APPROACHES, HERE IS HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE EDUCATION FOUNDATION:

- Volunteer to pack monthly fresh fruit kits that are added to the BackPack Meals.
- Gather a team and assemble larger food kits for school breaks, such as Christmas break.
- Start a food drive at your business to collect items for the food pantries (food that is not expired, not contained by glass, and that children would enjoy eating).
- Make a monetary donation.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels (MOW) serves another vulnerable demographic in our community, 255 homebound seniors, delivering hot meals on weekdays and frozen meals on weekends, powered entirely by dedicated volunteers. "I cannot overstate enough how incredible our volunteer drivers are." According to Stacy Seward, the program coordinator for the organization. "Sometimes they are the only person a participant might see that day." Not only do volunteers provide the physical nourishment a participant needs, but they also connect with people in the field. As a branch of the Adult Resource Alliance, MOW volunteers can also direct participants to other ARA programs that may benefit them during their visits. Last year, Meals on Wheels provided 77,978 meals countywide.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN SERVE THE ELDERLY IN OUR COMMUNITY ALONGSIDE MEALS ON WHEELS:

- Volunteer to drive a route and deliver meals.
- Sign up to be a "substitute" driver.
- Make a monetary donation to help MOW combat rising food costs.

FAMILY SERVICE

In 2024, **Family Service** distributed 3.4 million pounds of food to 35,000 households in Yellowstone County alone! It is certainly no small task to feed the community, but Family Service, its organizational partners, and hardworking volunteers are wholeheartedly committed to caring for the needs of Billings with a zero-waste attitude. "We never want any resources that come to us to go to waste," Debbie Anderson, the Program Manager of Warehouse Development, tells me. "For food that we may have excess of, we have a freeze-drying program that provides community employment for those with disabilities."

Family Service operates highly on the drive of community donations, volunteerism, local business partnerships, and the earnings of the thrift store. "Every little bit counts, and it all adds up," Debbie added. "Thank you, everyone, for growing with us because the need is also growing - it takes a community."

HERE ARE SOME WAYS YOU CAN PARTNER WITH FAMILY SERVICE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

- Advocate for the organization by following them on social media and sharing their posts.
- Volunteer in their no/low-cost thrift store and sort shipments and donations, or greet thrift store customers.
- Sign up to help the food pantry run smoothly during operating hours.
- Kids! Write Letters to Elders that will be packed in the monthly food boxes available for low-income individuals aged 60 and beyond.
- Excess produce in your garden? They gladly accept that as well!
- Are you or is someone you know a USDA Certified Wild Big Game processor? Family Service is seeking a partner to help increase the supply of lean protein coming through their doors.

The resilience of our community is defined by the selfless and compassionate acts of others that have an hour, a dollar, or simply kindness to spare. As we roll into a new season, take the opportunity to consider how you can take a stand in the battle against hunger in your sphere - it doesn't take much to make a difference. SLM

ELISE IS A MONTANA NATIVE WHO SPENDS SUMMERS ADVENTURING WITH HER HUSBAND AND THEIR CAT, CALLI. A SELF-TAUGHT TRADESWOMAN, SHE JUGGLES CREATIVE WORK LIKE VIDEO PRODUCTION AND CONTENT CREATION WHILE DREAMING OF ONE DAY HOMESTEADING AND RAISING A FAMILY. FOR NOW, SHE ENJOYS WRITING AND BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS.

Banano
Premium Fruit Smoothies
$1 OFF
Cool down with a
Strawberry Lemonade smoothie
1001 Shiloh Crossing Blvd., Suite 6
Billings, MT 59108

Spinners
$1 OFF
TIME FOR A TREAT!
California Tart
3031 Grand Avenue

Download Our App!
live. join. gather. enjoy.
billings365.com Your place for everything, everyday in Billings. powered by simply local
EVENTS IN BILLINGS & SURROUNDING AREAS
Keep up with it all.
billings365.com
Epic Events. All Year Long.



Whether you're a chef, home cook or restaurant operator, we offer a one-stop shopping experience that includes:

- Thousands of professional foodservice and wholesale grocery products
- High-quality meats and seafood
- Variety of fresh produce
- Premium oils
- Farm-fresh dairy
- Paper and cooking products
- Cleaning and janitorial supplies
- Professional kitchen appliances and equipment

Shamrock
FOODSERVICE WAREHOUSE

Shamrock Foodservice Warehouse | 1323 Main Street | Billings, MT 59105

Billings'
most comprehensive
and up-to-date
full calendar of events
can be found online here!

SCAN ME

B 3 6 5





The Sisters Behind BEE BAR BILLINGS

Are Making Every Sip a Celebration

Article by Maloree Murphy
Photos by Andrew Bonner

There's a new buzz in Billings, and it's coming from a sleek horse trailer that's been transformed into one of the most talked-about mobile drink carts. Sisters Casey and Carly, the creative force behind Bee Bar Billings, are shaking things up with custom lemonades, mocktails, and cocktails that are as beautiful as they are delicious.

Born and raised in Montana, Casey and Carly built Bee Bar Billings with three things in mind: flexibility, creativity, and connection. What started as a casual conversation quickly turned into a full-fledged business after Casey decided to step away from her decade-long coaching career. "I'd been a volleyball coach for ten years," she shared. "But as a new mom, it felt like it was time for a change."

The very next day, she proposed the idea to her sister Carly. "She pitched it to me and I said, 'Let's do it,'" Carly recalled. "We applied for our business license that same day."

That leap of faith became Bee Bar Billings, a fully customized mobile drink experience that now books two to four events per week. From kids' birthday parties to weddings, baby showers, and corporate gatherings, Casey and Carly have created a business that enables them to prioritize family while still showing up fully for their clients.

At the center of it all is their converted horse trailer, designed in a dark, moody aesthetic with black accents that immediately stand out. But while the cart draws attention, it's the drinks that people can't stop talking about. Each one is tailored to the occasion and topped with whimsical details, such as edible flowers, fluffy cotton candy, or themed candy skewers.

"We try to make every menu unique to the client and occasion," said Carly. "We ask what the client is looking for and build everything around that, from the flavors to the names of the drinks." Whether it's a spicy margarita called "Megan's Marg" at a zoo wedding or playful strawberry spritzers for the upcoming Strawberry Festival, every detail is intentional.

It's the reactions that make it all worth it. "We love seeing kids light up when they get a drink topped with candy or glittery sprinkles," said Casey. "But adults get just as excited_there's something about receiving a drink that's both fun and thoughtfully made." That attention to detail starts well before the event. "What people don't see is the prep," Carly added. "We'll be at home watching tennis while hand-skewering hundreds of toppers. It takes time, but we want every drink to feel specially curated."

They've also begun forming meaningful partnerships with other local businesses. Their edible flowers come from Swanky Roots, and they're in conversation with local honey producers to sweeten some of their drinks. "Eventually, we'd love to source even more ingredients locally, fresh fruit, herbs, maybe even make our own honey," said Carly. "We really want to support and collaborate with other people in Billings."

Looking ahead to Montana's colder months, the sisters hope to introduce a smaller pushcart for indoor use. They envision cozy setups, such as hot cocoa bars, apple cider stations, or even dry mix drink kits, for the holiday season. "We know it might slow down a bit, but we're excited to get creative," said Casey.

For events that include alcohol, Bee Bar Billings operates in accordance with Montana law. "We can't purchase or transport alcohol, but clients can provide it, and we handle the mixing and serving," Carly explained. "We even give them a shopping list based on guest count. It's super collaborative."

While the sisters are proud of their aesthetic and product, what matters most is how people feel when they





interact with Bee Bar Billings. “We’ve had such great feedback,” said Casey. “People tell us our drinks made their event feel more elevated and fun. That means everything to us.”

Pricing for Bee Bar Billings varies depending on the event. Typical drink prices range from $5.50 for a kids’ beverage to around $8 for one of their buzz-worthy energy drinks. Private events are based on a minimum sales threshold.

Whether it’s lemonade with edible glitter or a full-service cocktail menu at a mountaintop wedding, Casey and Carly are proving that a little extra effort and a lot of heart can turn a simple drink into something unforgettable. SLM

Catch the buzz

BOOK NOW! @beebarbillings



pork
TASTE WHAT PORK CAN DO.™



GET THE RECIPE

BLT
ON GRILLED SOURDOUGH WITH
GARLIC AIOLI

Montana pork PRODUCERS COUNCIL

montanapork.org

pork checkoff

© 2025 National Pork Board, Des Moines, Iowa USA. This message funded by America’s Pork Producers and the Pork Checkoff.



DURABLE. DELIGHTFUL.

Distinguished.

Discover fine furniture that complements the beauty and charm of your Montana home.

High quality.
Enjoy the beauty and durability of solid hardwood and outdoor poly furniture.

Unique.
Browse our in-stock furniture, or customize your furniture to fit your style.

Convenient.
Skip the transportation hassle with our delivery and installation services.



You're invited to our 5th Anniversary Sale

- Aug 29th - Sept 1st (closed Sunday)
- Coffee and pastries every day
- Free lunch on Friday and Saturday (11 am–2 pm)
- Discounts on select furniture

West Bench HOME FURNISHINGS

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

406.445.2197
westbench@ibyfax.com

749 West Bench Road
Roberts, MT 59070

simply home

love where you live.



86
Builder
Inside a Signature CDW
Custom Home Build

Photo by Nathan Satran



Article by Tory Kolkhorst
Photos by Nathan Satran

Inside a Signature CDW **Custom Home Build**



"Building Dreams One Home at a Time," states the homepage of the CDW Construction website. That's what you can expect when building with an award-winning custom home builder, CDW. Whether it's tailoring a home layout to flow with daily routines, incorporating custom design features, altering different finishes to make them more accessible, or simply building a structure that complements the beauty of our Treasure State, CDW Construction knows how to put people first to ensure they get the product of their dreams.



Located in the heart of Ironwood on a scenic, oversized lot, this remarkable two-story custom home epitomizes luxury both inside and out. At roughly 4,100 square feet, boasting four bedrooms, three bathrooms, and an oversized garage, this house makes a statement in this coveted Billings West End neighborhood. Between the sweeping views of Billings' iconic sandstone Rimrocks and the glistening underground pool, this residence is a true showpiece that will serve the homeowners well for generations to come.



Thanks to the intentional design of the home and the local partnerships that brought the vision to reality, every detail was thoughtfully and meticulously executed. When stepping through the oversized double doors at the front entrance into the heart of the home, a striking oversized two-tier farmhouse chandelier draws immediate attention, in addition to the floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace and custom wine cellar, neatly tucked under the staircase that leads to the second level.

The majority of the flooring featured throughout the home is a sturdy stone-composite luxury vinyl plank, known for its durability and appearance of hardwood. Plush carpeting in the bedrooms and on the second floor enhances comfort in daily living without compromising style.

Comfort Heating & Air Conditioning, LLC



We are proud to partner with CDW Construction providing homeowners with high efficiency home heating and cooling systems.

Contact our Comfort Advisor today!

406.656.5157
www.comfortheatingbillings.com

READERS' CHOICE WINNER
For Over 10 Years

CDW CONSTRUCTION

THOUGHTFULLY DESIGNED. EXPERTLY BUILT.

Call CDW Construction for custom homes, commercial builds, and real estate development.

(406) 672-1448
CDWCONSTRUCTIONMT.COM



CARPET ONE FLOOR & HOME®

- HARDWOOD
- CARPET
- LUXORY VINYL TILE
- CERAMIC
- STONE
- LAMINATE & MORE

Home Begins Here.

505 S. 24th St W
Billings MT 59102
406-656-9300
carpetonebillings.com







Comfort Heating
& Air Conditioning, LLC

Prevent A/C problems this summer

Schedule a Precision Tune-Up on your A/C today!

We perform a thorough cleaning and check of your system and change the filter.
Ask us about our affordable **Comfort Care Plan**!

Over 40 YEARS
LOCALLY OWNED SINCE 1983
Comfort Heating & Air Conditioning



For Over 10 Years
Billings' Best Heating and Air Conditioning Contractor

(406) 656-5157
9934 S. Frontage Rd. • Billings 59101
www.comfortheatingbillings.com



The large custom kitchen and bathrooms feature beautiful cabinetry crafted from hickory and finished with a gray Casimere stain, and the countertops are made of *Macaubas Blanco* quartz, creating a subtle yet striking contrast throughout. The walls are drenched in Sherwin-Williams' *Drift of Mist*, a warm, light gray color that can appear cooler or neutral, depending on the lighting. The trim is painted a clean and crisp *Snowbound*. The lights pictured throughout the home are primarily a farmhouse contemporary style, and the rock work is Wheaton County ledge stone secured with white grout, giving a clean and classic appearance.




Turn your home into the ultimate
staycation destination with stunning
windows and doors from
406WINDOWCo.
406
DESIGN
SERIES



Natural light plays a significant role in this Ironwood home, thanks to the seamless integration of high-quality products from 406 Windows. Between the expansive windows and oversized glass patio doors, the homeowners enjoy unobstructed views of the Billings Rimrocks, while natural light streams in from sunrise to sunset. The open-concept living space transitions seamlessly outside by simply sliding open the oversized glass bifold doors, allowing you to step onto the back deck, which frames views of the sparkling underground pool and lush, green grass.

MAGIC CITY
GRANITE
A NORTHERN STONE COMPANY





Stay Inspired

Discover jaw-dropping countertop designs and remodeling ideas that will transform your space.

GRANITE • QUARTZITE • MARBLE
QUARTZ & REMNANTS

5020 Titan Ave Billings, MT 59101
406-252-1106
www.magiccitygranite.com

ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

Visit Davidson Home Furnishings for STYLISH, UNIQUE, QUALITY home furnishings!



DAVIDSON
Home Furnishings & Design
2228 Grand Avenue, Billings, MT
406-656-9540

davidsonhomefurnishings.com

simply local

More Than Pages

Amplifying Your Story with Print, Digital, and Impactful Advertising



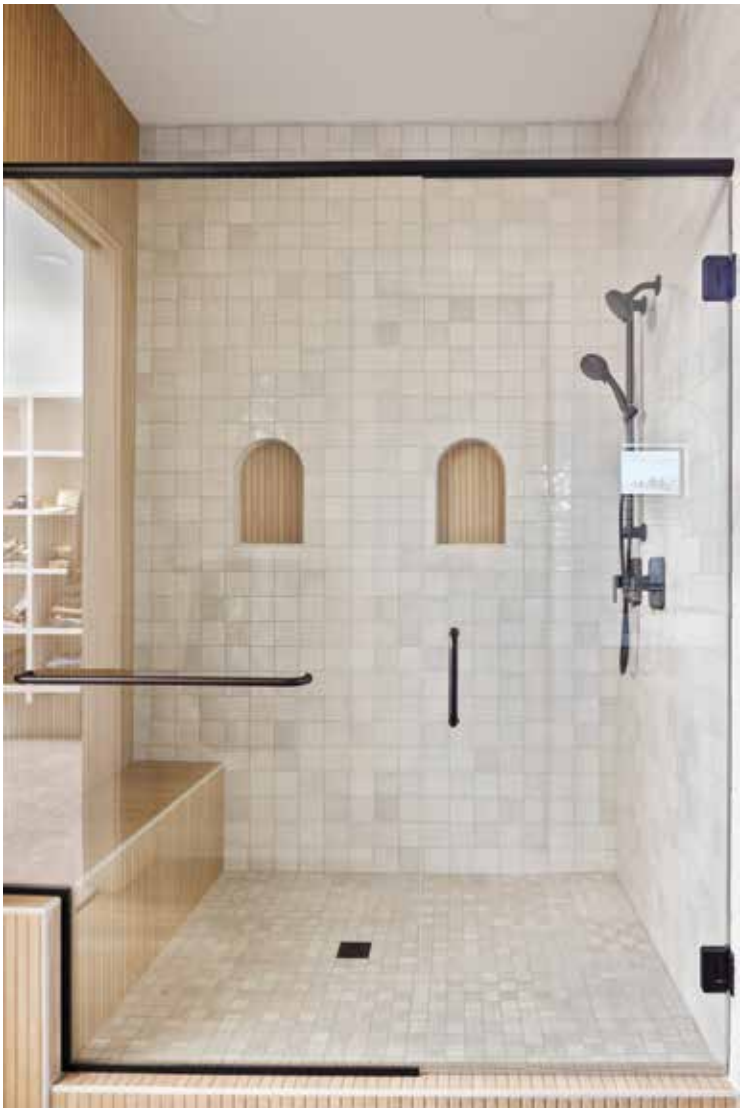
This backyard oasis is the perfect extension of this stunning custom home, and Montana's infamous big sky effortlessly fills in the rest of the picture. From hosting backyard barbeques to enjoying quiet mornings with coffee in hand, this outdoor-indoor connection is both stunning and functional.

"Each client is unique, which usually means each home is different and designed to best suit their needs. It might be small changes like enlarging a bedroom, moving windows, or adding storage, but those details can have a big impact on the functionality for the owners, and that is what we want to achieve." -CDW Construction Team



The master bathroom in this Ironwood home is nothing short of a personal retreat for the homeowners. The oversized shower is thoughtfully designed with natural tones, crisp and aesthetic tile work, and matte black plumbing fixtures exquisitely framed through seamless glass panels. Arched shower niches complement the soft curves of the additional arched features found throughout the home, seamlessly integrating this space into the overall design.

At the center of CDW Construction's approach to any project is an unparalleled commitment to quality and relationship building. This type of commitment to thoughtful design goes beyond aesthetics and proves to benefit people of all abilities and needs. "We have worked with clients who have mobility challenges and other disabilities that make daily life more challenging. Being able to build new homes for these folks to help make being at home easier is a privilege," shared CDW. Features like barrier-free showers, widened doorways, or lowered countertops are not just thoughtful, they're life-changing.



EMPOWERING MONTANA'S AGENTS WITH COACHING, TECHNOLOGY, AND CULTURE.

kw YELLOWSTONE PROPERTIES
KELLERWILLIAMS®

BACKED BY EXPERIENCE. DRIVEN TO SELL.



CHECK OUT HANNAH RENO'S LATEST LISTINGS

SCAN ME

RAMSEY TRUSTED

Graduate REALTOR® Institute

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

REALTOR® MLS

CLHMS



As the state of Montana, and specifically the Yellowstone Valley, continues to be a sought-after destination for living and working, professionals within the construction industry must be flexible and forward-thinking. "Costs have gone up, but homeowners still want custom features and will cut costs in some areas to try and add in others," the CDW team shared. "Clients want natural light, and they want to blend indoor/outdoor living with oversized patio doors and pass-through windows. Everyone also wants a big garage!"

CDW Construction is a family-owned business that got its start right here in the Yellowstone Valley. Founder and Owner Chad Wagenhals was born and raised in Eastern Montana, bringing a foundation in mechanical engineering technology and economics to each new project, paired with hands-on experience in managing construction jobs of all sizes. He and his team are committed to delivering exceptional craftsmanship and an unmatched client experience. **SLM**

TORY KOLKHORST GREW UP IN THE HUNTLEY PROJECT COMMUNITY, WENT ON TO RECEIVE DEGREES FROM TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY, AND THEN QUICKLY RETURNED TO THE LAST BEST PLACE, WHERE SHE AND HER HUSBAND, COLLIN, HAVE PLANTED ROOTS TO RAISE THEIR CHILDREN, KENNEDY, CREW, AND COOPER. WITH A DAY JOB IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, TORY FINDS INDULGENCE IN AUDIOBOOKS, REALITY TV, CRUMBL COOKIES, AND TAYLOR SWIFT SONGS. PROVERBS 9:10.

CENTRAL WELLNESS

CENTRALWELLNESS.COM 1420 SOUTH 24TH ST. WEST BILLINGS, MT 59102

BEST PROVIDERS. BEST PRODUCTS. BEST VALUE.

The Gold Standard Experience Every Time

- All Neurotoxins- $8.50 Per Unit
- Voluma XC 1 syringe - $670
- Vollure XC 1 syringe - $659
- Volbella 1 syringe - $539
- Volux XC 1 syringe - $739
- Juvederm Ultra XC 1 syringe - $499





BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT! **406-869-1066**

Billings Clinic

The Difference Excellence Makes

Excellence allows Ashley to enjoy life with her son and prepare to welcome her second child after experiencing a stroke at age 36.



First and only designated Comprehensive Stroke Center in Montana and Wyoming.

BillingsClinic.com/stroke