

The Helena Education Foundation
presents
Great Conversations
2005
Conversation Topics and Speakers

Arts, Sports and Entertainment

Our Hunting Heritage: Origin, Traditions and Challenges

Thomas Baumeister, Ph.D. Oversees outdoor education for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Education Bureau; avid hunter and conservationist who enjoys debating and engaging people in discussions surrounding hunting as an individual, social and cultural phenomenon.

My Favorite Montana Golf Courses

Skip Hatveldt. Played golf since he was 10 and enjoyed the game as the most social of sports; played many of Montana's courses and "never met anyone I couldn't play nine holds of golf with."

Bike Tourism for the Non-Jock

Angie and Eric Grove. Since their first bicycle honeymoon tour 20 years ago, have toured throughout Europe and the US, with each tour differing and adding new lessons, especially: jocks don't always make the best touring partners!

Objects of our Affection: Relics and Revelations

Crystal Shors. Antiques dealer, estate sales manager and writer; lifelong collector of Montana memorabilia and stories.

Culture

Homicides R Us: My Favorite Criminals

John Connor. Chief Criminal Counsel, Office of the Montana Attorney General; Chief of Special Prosecutions Unit for 16 years; former public defender and country attorney.

How is the Bible as the "Word of God?"

Chris Fuller, Ph.D. As a member of the Theology Department at Carroll College, teaches courses in Old and New Testaments, Comparative Religion and Catholic Theology; specialty is the Gospel of Matthew.

Sturgis: It's All About Harleys

Dennis Flynn. Owner of Valley Farms, has been an avid motorcyclist for 41 years; member of the Last Chance Riders Motorcycle Club and has attended the Sturgis seven times.

Blogging to the Future: Can Traditional Media Survive?

Chuck Johnson. HHS and UM grad; studied politics and economics at Oxford University; has reported on MT government and politics for Lee Newspapers and Great Falls Tribune since 1974.

American Indian Medicine: Social, Physical and Spiritual Healing

Joe LaFountaine. Helena native of the Anashanabe Ojibwa tribe; runs traditional ceremonies and sweat lodges round the country; has worked with local youth to help them gain balance and find their place in society; also an artist.

Egypt

Jeff Morris

Radical Islam and Nationalism: Merging Currents in the Middle East?

Clay Scott. Foreign correspondent for Christian Science Monitor; radio & ABC news; covered conflicts in Bosnia, Chechnya, Iraq, Israel & the Palestinian territories; won an Emmy for reporting from Kosovo.

Is War Inevitable on the Korean Peninsula?

Robert Swartout, Ph.D. Professor and Chair of history at Carroll College; Peace Corps volunteer in Korea and Senior Fulbright Scholar; Ph.D. from Washington State University; published four books on Korean-American relations.

Economy

Public Service, Taxes and the Modern World

Dan Bucks. Montana Director of Revenue, previously Executive Director of the Multi-state Tax Commission, a national association of state governments; together with wife, Jan, have raised six children and are grandparents of three perfect grandchildren.

Growing, Growing, Growing, Gone? What's Happening in Helena and Can We Survive It?

Tim Burton. Helena City Manager for the past 5 ½ years and Lewis & Clark County CAO for 6 years; graduated from Carroll College and the University of Montana.

Hobby Farmers: Don't Give Up Your Day Job!

Dave Lewis. Worked for four governors over past 30 years with the State of Montana; since retiring, served two terms in Montana House and one in the Senate; farmed to retain sanity for nearly 40 years in the Helena Valley.

Why Can't We DO Something About Our Healthcare System?

Bob Putsch, M.D. Clinical Professor of Medicine at U of Washington School of Medicine, trained in internal medicine; coauthored 2004 study on "Distributive Justice in American Healthcare."

Liz Gans.

Education

What is an Educated Person?

Bruce Messinger, Ph.D. Superintendent of Helena Public Schools; MT Superintendent of the Year 2002; active at state & national level in school funding, student achievement & learning outcomes.

The University System: What is It's Role in Montana's Way of Life?

John Mercer. Chair of the Montana Board of Regents; Speaker of the Montana House of Representatives from 1993 – 2000; graduated from U of Montana and Northwestern University School of Law.

History

Thomas Frances Meagher: Foolish Rascal or Hero and Stateman?

Hank Burgess. Anaconda native and retired English Professor at Carroll College; member Helena Division Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Who are the Best American Presidents?

Harry Fritz, Ph.D. U of Montana History Department Chair teaching American history and Montana history; Carnegie Foundation's Montana Professor of the Year 2004; also teaches Montana history and is a Lewis & Clark historian and author; served in the Montana House and Senate from 1985 – 1993; a Missoula native with degrees from Dartmouth, University of Montana and Washington University.

Saving the Marlow and other Folklore from Helena's Urban Renewal Past

Larry Gallagher. Helena's Urban Renewal Director from 1972 – 1977 then consulted with communities around Montana on urban renewal plans, private investment and preserving local tax bases.

What's So Special About the Montana Constitution?

Karla Gray. First woman elected to the Supreme Court and Montana's first female Chief Justice; active in access to justice and public trust issues statewide and nationally; a Michigan native, came to Montana as "soon as I knew!"

How Does Popular Culture Affect Public Support for War in America?

Rex Renk. Deputy Clerk of the Montana Supreme Court as appellate court specialist for over 12 years; Carroll College graduate; complete doctoral coursework in American History and History of the American West at U of New Mexico.

American in the 1960's: The Best of Times, The Worst of Times

Dennis Wiedmann, Ph.D. Professor and Chair of Political Science, Carroll College; Burlington Northern Teacher of the Year, 1991; NEH Fellow 1984, UC Berkeley.

Literature

I'm Just Wild About Harry (Potter)

Pat Cotter. Justice of the Montana Supreme Court since 2000 and Harry Potter fan; 1977 graduate of Notre Dame Law School; will bring 16- year old daughter and the “great conversation” of a teenager Harry and Hermione’s age to the table.

The Ancestry and Fun of Our Dear Mother English

Frank Crowley. Helena attorney & humorist; passions include the study of languages & etymology, his own version of “linguistic anthropology; B.A. in economics and foreign languages from Holy Cross, MS from U of Montana and law degree from Boston College Law School;

The West Was Won on a Bay Horse

Tom McGuane. A Michigan native; Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University; author of several highly acclaimed novels which chronicle the spectacle of characters living on the edge; his books have been published in 10 languages and screenplays seen worldwide; an avid conservationist who now lives with his family in Montana.

But, Wait - Have You Read THIS Book?

Kay Satre, Ph.D. Luckily, her profession teaching literature and writing at Carroll College gives her time (and professional license!) to read good books, sometimes over and over. She loves old ones and new one, curled up in her favorite chair, savoring the worlds and ideas that books supply.

My Favorite Mysteries

Lisa Cordingley. Former English teacher, currently involved in many non-profit groups include ArtBeats, Grandstreet and the Helena Education Foundation; always a fan of a wonderful read, especially mysteries, a passion for which began at age 12 with her first Agatha Christie novel.

Catchphrases: The Great American Linguistic Addiction

Chrysti M. Smith. Poplar native who hosts NPR series “Chrysti the Wordsmith”; author *The Verbivore’s Feast*, June 2004.

Nature and the Outdoors

Up a Creek Without a Paddle: Joys and Lessons of Back Country Adventure

Stan Bradshaw. Canoe instructor, skier, hiker, angler, lawyer and sometime fishing guide, who spends as much time as possible in the outdoors.

Developments on the Rocky Mountain Front

Gloria Flora. Worked with the U.S. Forest Service for 22 years, Forest Service Supervisor of the Lewis & Clark National Forest who helped Montanans protect the Rocky Mountain Front by declaring a moratorium on oil and gas leasing; currently Executive Director of Sustainable Obtainable Solutions, dedicated to ensuring the sustainability of public lands.

Rolling Rock Dog Ranch

Alayne Marker. Left Seattle with husband and 17-year career as attorney with Boeing to start Rolling Rock Dog Ranch in December 2000, as sanctuary for disabled animals; Ranch is currently home to over 70 disabled animals from all over the US.

Birding in the Big Sky Country OR Please don't wear those vests with the pockets or hats with long bills, people might think we're nerds.

Mike Menahan. A prosecutor at the Lewis and Clark County Attorney's office, where the habitat is suitable mostly for jailbirds. He has birded (yes, that is a verb) extensively in Montana and the People's Republic of China.

Politics and Government

Justice at Risk? What is an Independent and Responsible Judiciary?

The Honorable Gordon Bennett. Born in Scobey, MT, the Athens of Eastern MT; lawyer; retired district court judge; farmer; mediator; currently devoted to securing the role of law by removing, insofar as possible, the selection and maintenance of judges from partisan politics.

Is Ethics Simply Politics in Disguise?

The Honorable John Bohlinger. Lieutenant Governor for the State of Montana; Billings small businessman for 33 years; Marine Corps veteran; UM graduate & state legislator for 12 years

Government: If We Don't Like It, Why Do We Have It?

Jim Elliott. Rancher and State Senator from Trout Creek, Montana; began career in public service as chairman of the Trout Creek dump; served in the Montana House from 1989 – 1997 and then was elected to the Montana Senate.

Calling Balls and Strikes from the Bench: Whose Strike Zone?

Don Molloy. Chief Judge, U.S. District Court, Montana; Board member, Federal Judges Association; U of M Law School; U.S. Naval Aviation 1968 – 1973; football scholarship U of Montana.

US Supreme Court

Brian Morris.

A Consultant's Confession about Campaign Wars

Raymond Strother. Considered one of the fathers of political consulting, conducted more than 300 campaigns for governor, House and Senate, and president; published two books, a novel and book about political consulting.

Science and Technology

Farewell to Privacy in the New Digital World?

Jim Arnold. Director of Technology for SRI International; works with industry to create innovative electronics/software products; latest work focuses on artificial intelligence, mobile computing, anonymity and privacy in a connected world.

Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature

Dayna Baumeister, Ph.D. Worked internationally in the field of biomimicry since 1997, as educator, speaker, research and design consultant, with a devotion to applied natural history and a passion for sharing the wonders of nature with others.

Are We Alone? Is there Life on Other Planets and When Could We Know?

Kelly Cline, Ph.D. Originally from Alaska; earned Ph.D. in Astrophysics at U of Colorado studying sunspots and the sun's activity; teaches math/physics/astronomy at Carroll College.

March of the Penguins: Divinity or Darwin?

Ken Eden, M.D. Helena internist & gastroenterologist; long history of educating the public on the importance of basic science and understanding health and medical studies; loves the outdoors, biking and hiking worldwide.

The Yellowstone Volcano: A Restless Giant

Henry Heasler, Ph.D. Park geologist for Yellowstone National Park, working with scientists to improve monitoring of the Yellowstone volcano; research interests in geothermal systems and land heat transport; native of Powell, Wyoming.

A Clone of Your Own: Should We, Can We, Clone a Human?

Randy Lewis. Professor of Molecular Biology at the University of Wyoming; teaches course called "Science and Society" on science's influence on society and society's influence on science; researches spider silks proteins and chronic wasting disease and has continued interest in increasing the public's knowledge of science and its effects on everyday life.

What's So Good about Dinosaurs Anyway?

Mary Higby Schweitzer, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Marine, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, North Carolina State University; HHS Class of 1973; Research Associate and Associate Curator, Museum of the Rockies; speaks around the country on her work in dinosaur preservation; works with ex-convicts on resume writing and basic computer skills.