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Helena Education Foundation  
PO Box 792  
Helena, MT 59624

# GREAT CONVERSATIONS

NOVEMBER 20, 2019

**Helena Education Foundation** works to enrich education in the Helena Public Schools through consistent community investment of time, talent, funding and other resources, providing students, staff and the community with unparalleled educational opportunities and experiences.



Please join us for dinner and a Great Conversation!  
**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2019**

Brought to you by the Helena Education Foundation

Proceeds and donations offset the cost of this event and ensure this program will continue to benefit the Helena community.

Thank you to our event sponsors:



ALAN & NANCY NICHOLSON



REGISTRATION

### Reserving your Great Conversation is easy as 1-2-3:

1. Review the exciting list of Great Conversations on this invitation, and **select four different conversations** as your top choices.
2. Complete the form below, indicating your topic and meal preferences. You are guaranteed placement at one of your four choices.
3. Mail your reservation, or register online at [hefmt.org](http://hefmt.org). We must receive your registration and payment by **Thursday November 14, 2019**.

You can also view a full list of table descriptions online at [www.hefmt.org](http://www.hefmt.org)

DISCLAIMER

### Registration and payment must be received by: Thursday, November 14, 2019.

Reservations are first-come, first-served and are not fully processed until payment is received. Book early to save your seat! Call us for student discount information: (406) 443-2545.

We kindly request your e-mail address so that we can confirm your reservation AND keep you informed about future Helena Education Foundation events.

BOOK IT!

### Register online at [hefmt.org](http://hefmt.org)

or mail to: Helena Education Foundation  
PO Box 792  
Helena, MT 59624

RESERVATION INFORMATION

PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR FULL NAME AND THE FULL NAME OF YOUR GUEST(S) FOR PLACE CARDS AND NAME TAGS.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  Vegetarian entrée requested

Table choices (You must select 4): A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  Vegetarian entrée requested

Table choices (You must select 4): A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here if you would like to be seated at the same table

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Enclose \$65 for each reservation. HEF is a nonprofit charitable organization and depends on donations to provide services and programs.

In addition to the event cost, I would like to add a tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I can't attend, but want to support the HEF with a tax-deductible donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Payable to the Helena Education Foundation

Online registration and credit card payments accepted at [hefmt.org](http://hefmt.org)

GREAT CONVERSATIONS  
NOVEMBER 20, 2019  
GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL \* 5:30 P.M. RECEPTION \* 6:30 P.M. DINNER

*The Helena Education Foundation invites you to*

RESERVE A  
**GREAT  
CONVERSATION**

## Culture and Creativity

- 1. From Subculture to Pop Culture** Tattooing is an ancient practice, deeply embedded in many cultures. In recent decades tattoos have become mainstream, an art form embraced throughout our society. **Chantel Schieffer**, who has worked in many different professional sectors, sports tattoos of her own. She is interested in sharing stories about this art form, as well as exploring how we address body art as commonplace in today's work place.
- 2. Montana Suspense: Crown of the Continent Mysteries** Chat with award-winning author, **Christine Carbo** about her best-selling novels of suspense, including how she became a published author, what makes a good mystery and why she's drawn to setting stories in and around the Crown of the Continent, including the darker side of the area—the side the tourist brochures don't show. Christine is the author of *The Wild Inside*, *Mortal Fall*, *The Weight of Night* and *A Sharp Solitude*.
- 3. Hardwired for Narrative** We are naturally drawn to narrative in its multiple forms; in fact humans are "hardwired" for stories that heal, connect and foster social belonging. **Virginia Reeves**, author of *Work Like Any Other* and *The Behavior of Love*, teaches writing, communication and literature at Helena College. Virginia looks forward to sharing why storytelling is her life's work and how narrative works in our lives.
- 4. Putting on the Dog** *Putting on the Dog* is an American expression that means putting on fancy or expensive clothing to go out on the town. Humans have been putting on the dog—as well as the cow's hide, the sheep's wool, the worm's silk, the duck's down—for millennia. What we wear represents one of our most profound engagements with the natural world. Join **Melissa Kwasny**, Montana Poet Laureate and author of *Putting on the Dog: The Animal Origins of What We Wear* for an off-the-rack discussion about the clothing supply chain from animal or plant to manufacturer to consumer, involving ranchers, hunters, farmers, tanners, dyers, spinners, weavers and many more.
- 5. Lights, Camera Action!** Montana Film Commissioner **Allison Whitmer** has been involved in filmmaking for more than 20 years—With *The Horse Whisperer*, *Certain Woman* and *Walking Out* among the more than 30 movies to her credit. While many see film as a powerful tool to promote Montana; others see Montana as a powerful tool to tell stories; both are true. Allison can answer your questions from cowboys on the silver screen to the future of Montana films. She no doubt has some behind-the-set stories to tell as well.

## Tech Today and Tomorrow

- 6. Teens and Screens** Remember when you bought that cell phone for your child so you could stay in touch? Are you worried about the effects of technology on your relationships with your children? Join pediatric psychiatrist and dad, **Dr. Keith Foster** for a face-to-face (rather than FaceTime) discussion about teenagers and the effects of screen time on physiological, psychological and social development and interpersonal relationships.
- 7. Conscious Consumerism in the Digital Age** Ever been plagued by advertisements for items you're actually shopping for online? How does the internet know? Learn the ways in which your data is being used by online marketers, how this marketing might affect your choices outside of your awareness, and how you can make better choices for you and your family. **Justin Angle** is Associate Professor of Marketing and the Warren and Betsy Wilcox Faculty Fellow at UM. Justin's research has been published in *Journal of Consumer Research* and *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Sports Illustrated*, *ESPN*, *The Washington Post* and *Business Insider*.
- 8. Disconnect and Connect** Gary Myers likes his iPhone a lot; he likes people more! While our digital devices make our lives easier in an unprecedented way...is that always a good thing? What happens to us as humans when we prioritize what's happening in our digital lives over what we're experiencing in the moment? Studies show adults need to limit their screen time too. Gary, Educational Technology Coordinator for the Helena School District, urges you to disconnect and enjoy this... great conversation!

**1. CHOOSE** four conversations from the topics below. Follow a passion, or engage in a new adventure!

**9. Lab-grown Meat and CBD Beer** New technologies are changing the way we eat. Lab-grown meat may interest some, while presenting challenges in terms of nutrition and rural income. New products, such as CBD are deployed faster than regulatory agencies can approve them. Many moving pieces will impact the future of our food system. **Ben Thomas**, formerly Deputy Undersecretary of Agriculture and now Director of Montana's Department of Agriculture, is passionate about food and agriculture policy and supporting consumer choices while empowering farmers and ranchers. Dine with Ben and focus on the future of food.

## Science and Society

- 10. Inside Megafire: From Surface to Crown** Wildland fires can race, creep, flare, jump and spread, but what do we know about fire behavior and how do we know it? Visit with **Faith Ann Heinsch**, physical scientist with U.S. Forest Service at the Missoula Fires Sciences Lab and current manager of the BehavePlus fire modeling system about fire danger modeling and what's new in our understanding of fire behavior.
  - 11. Detangling Privilege** What does it mean to have privilege and why are we often resistant to recognizing our own? Take advantage of this discussion by **Kimberly Feig** about the detangling of privilege from its thorny connections to meritocracy, hard work and social mobility. Kimberly, Helena College sociology instructor, is the chair of their Diversity and Inclusion Committee and teaches courses in Criminology and the Sociology of Popular Culture.
  - 12. The Invisible Power of Implicit Bias** Implicit bias refers to "attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner," so how can we act to counter our biases? **Brooks Robertson** leads engaging and lively discussions that will gently guide you to a better awareness of your own biases, both positive and...the other kind. Brooks' expertise is in management consulting with experience in the US, Fiji, Australia and Papua New Guinea.
  - 13. The Human Dimension of Managing Wildlife** From federal and state agencies to private landowners, managing our beloved Yellowstone involves diverse interest groups and a Park outline politically determined with little concern for the biological integrity of wildlife populations. Go outside the boundaries for this discussion about population, ecosystem and landscape of the broader Yellowstone Ecosystem with **Grant Hokit**. A scientist and profession of biology and ecology at Carroll, Grant teaches about the current and future management concerns of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.
  - 14. Fixing Broken Genes** Gene therapy is in the news and in practice, with over 7,000 known single gene disorders and emerging technologies that allow us to "fix" genetic errors. Shodair's **Corbin Schwanke**, Administrative Director of Medical Genetics, and **Katie Seraji**, genetics counselor, will discuss inherent dangers and ethical questions that arise in the practice of gene therapy. How far should gene therapy go?
  - 15. The True, the Biased and...the Echo Chamber** Where do you get your news? We have more options now than ever before, but do you ever wonder which sources are considered the most trustworthy? **Bill Whatsitt** has managed all three of the Greater Montana Foundation's media use surveys. With a long career in government and communication research, Bill is ready to delve with you into the role of media in our society, and media use trends in Montana. Discuss with him the implications for the electorate and for society as a whole.
  - 16. Cocktail Hour** Like to drink, but are you confused about when to shake and when to stir? Learn the basics for mixing (and sample) your own craft cocktails with **Steffen Rasile** of Gulch Distillers, who will explain the six basic categories and demonstrate a few recipes. Distiller and beard champion, Steffen loves talking about his craft. He'll teach you how to mix and match and to riff on your favorite drinks.
- ## Economics and Education
- 17. College is Worth It. Who Should Pay for It?** Investing in higher education benefits individuals and society, so who should pay for it? For some, the answer depends on who you think benefits most. Join **Bryce Ward**, founder of ABMJ Consulting and a research associate at the Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities at UM to discuss current higher education funding and the consequences and benefits of placing the burden of higher education costs on students. Bryce's research has been featured in the *New York Times*, *PBS NewsHour* and *ProPublica*.

**2. JOIN** an expert who will lead the discussion at your table throughout the evening.

- 18. Our Polarized Public Square** Our public discourse offers few occasions for us to meet in the middle. Cries of globalism vs. nationalism, immigrants vs. invaders, socialism vs. capitalism, free press vs. fake news...us vs. them. Some days it's hard to imagine that we can again find common ground. **Rob Saldin** is a professor of political science at the University of Montana and a regular commentator on MTPR. Perhaps you and Rob can figure out how to lead us away from "Love it! or Leave it!"
  - 19. Bears vs. Bulls** "Prepare for the unknown by studying how others in the past have coped with the unforeseeable and the unpredictable." —Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. Take a look at past market cycles, what influenced them and prepare for the unknown with **Sean Minor** of Capital Group, home of American Funds. Understand how the bear and bull market works and learn the few things you can do today to weatherproof your portfolio.
  - 20. The Cannabis Economy** Since 2012 twelve states have decriminalized recreational cannabis; a handful of others, including Montana, have legalized medical cannabis. What does the decriminalization of recreational cannabis mean for the economy—tourism, health care, tax revenue, the legal system and our society? Can Montana learn from other states' experiences? Associate Director of UM's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, **Dr. Robert Sonora** will lead this discussion on the potential of pot to affect our future.
  - 21. Public Bucks for Private Schools.** The 1972 Montana Constitution prohibits the appropriation of public money for private, sectarian education. In 2015 the Legislature created a tax-credit program directing money to private religious schools, setting Montana on a path to the US Supreme Court in the pending case *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*. Join Helena attorney **Jonathan McDonald** to explore how Montana ended up in the center of a fight about educational funding that has been brewing for 200 years.
  - 22. From the World's Factory to Global Power** Based in Beijing for more than two decades, **Dexter Tiff Roberts** was China Bureau Chief for *Bloomberg Businessweek*. Now serving as a fellow at UM's Mansfield Center, Dexter will explore with you China's challenges in transforming its economy and outdated policies. Has China mismanaged Hong Kong and its economy? Maybe the biggest question of all—Is the US China Trade War a proxy for superpower competition?
  - 23. The 70's are the new 60's** People are living longer and doing more in retirement today than in previous generations. With 22 years of experience, **Peter Dan Sullivan**, a Helena Certified Financial Planner, has learned that every retiree's vision of retirement is unique and often unclear. For this discussion, bring your questions, concerns, insights, and cheery demeanor for lively banter of financial and emotional planning for retirement in an era of often surprisingly spry activity.
- ## Past and Present
- 24. The People's Crusade: Montana's Constitution** In 1972, 100 ordinary citizens—ranchers, ministers, housewives, educators and even a beekeeper—came together to look far into the future and write Montana's Constitution. So, how'd they do? Join **Greg Petesch**, former Montana Legislative Services Division Legal Director and Code Commissioner for a backward and forward discussion about how this governing document came about, why it contains what it does, its strengths and weaknesses and what the future holds for the People's Constitution.
  - 25. Lost and Found: Montana's 2nd House Seat** For the first time since 1990, Montana has a good chance of regaining its lost second US House Seat. Join three-time Districting and Apportionment Commissioner, **Joe Lamson**, for a preview of what's in store for the 2020 redistricting process. Joe will review the key events that have shaped past commissions as they have sought to create legislative maps to make the constitutional promise of "one person, one vote" a reality for all Montanans.
  - 26. All Rise** Retired District Judge **Jeffrey Sherlock** spent 27 years on the bench, presiding over 238 jury trials and thousands of hearings—ranging from homicide, to divorce, to constitutional matters, to dog bites. This is everything you've always wanted to know about things judicial. What does it mean to legislate from the bench? Should judges be elected? How do they stay awake during some cases? This conversation is bound to answer your questions and yield more than a few anecdotes.
  - 27. Montana's Political Hell-Raiser** During a tumultuous time, Senator Burton K. Wheeler's 24-year Senate career was marked by remarkable independence, bipartisanship, respect for the Senate as an institution, and of course great controversy. What can his career have to tell us about our troubled political times? Join writer and historian **Marc C. Johnson**, who published the first comprehensive biography of Montana's maverick Burton K. Wheeler for a historic discussion about the Senator and other Montana politicians of national renown.

**3. ENJOY** stimulating conversation and a delicious meal featuring a menu created just for this event.

**28. Forever Fixes for the Richest Hill** Butte's 30+ year Superfund cleanup is an attempt to deal retroactively with the environmental consequences of 150 years of metal mining. What comes after Superfund? And who gets to decide? Butte faces perpetual problems that require perpetual solutions, but will Butte ever be "fixed"? Join **Nora Saks**, host and producer of MPR's podcast "Richest Hill," to examine some of the underlying assumptions, limits, paradoxes and possibilities involved in cleaning up Butte.

## Wellness Works

- 29. Trust Your Gut** Explore the human biome, the symbiotic function of the microbes in our gut and the role probiotics play in our health, including our immune and digestive functions, as well as our mood and weight management. **Dr. Michael Bergkamp**, ND, LAC of Naturopathic Acupuncture Clinic brings to this digestible discussion 38 years practicing and studying Chinese medicine with an emphasis on the role of clinical nutrition and its role in human health to this digestible discussion.
- 30. An Attitude of Gratitude** Gratitude is one of the most important emotions that we can share with others. Research indicates it improves physical and psychological health in many ways. Can we bring more real gratitude into our lives? **Steve Yoshimura, Ph.D.**, professor of interpersonal communication at UM, studies how people communicate emotions in their relationships with others, and the effects that those emotions have on health and well-being. So communicate with Steve over dinner and go home "wanting what you have."
- 31. The Parent Trap: Work/Life Balance** Does holding a job help or hinder a child's development? What about the parents—are there physical or psychological risks to being a working parent and if so, are the risks the same for women and men? Join **Leslie Angel Ph.D.** to learn about the personal and parenting impacts of working moms and dads and what parents can do to improve work/life balance. Leslie is an associate professor in Experimental Psychology at Carroll. She teaches Gender Studies, Cognitive Psychology, Lifespan Development and Human Sexuality.
- 32. Take Care of Yourself** Mindfulness is a state of active, open attention to the present, but sometimes the present is overwhelming. **Michele Zentz**, counselor at Jim Darcy School, recently completed a sabbatical to help integrate her passion for mindfulness into the school setting. Learn about how mindfulness works for our students and adopt some successful coping strategies in your own life.

## Wanderlust and Wonder

- 33. Off the Beaten Path** Joan Miles and Jerry Wells and their spouses have traveled on several continents—sometimes together, traveling lightly, exploring out-of-the-way places, staying flexible and finding ways to stretch budgets. Pick up some of their travel tips and share some of yours. Both longtime Helenans, they agree with Mark Twain, "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts."
- 34. For the Birds** After his retirement from 30 years with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, **Bob Martinka** has become an avid birder and photographer, traveling throughout Montana, the US, and to numerous countries to pursue these interests. If you are interested in birding, this is the conversation for you—What do I need? Where should I go? A recent study revealed bird populations are declining in North America; it's time to pick up those binoculars and go!
- 35. CBD—Miracle Drug or Snake Oil** CBD is all the rage in states with legalized medical marijuana. The non-intoxicating extract is used by some as treatment for myriad medical issues, but it is produced without any regulation which raises concerns. **Marah Connole** is a mental health professional who incorporates holistic health and nutrition in her practice. With masters' degrees in Clinical Health Psychology and Nutrition, she keeps up with the latest research in treatment modalities. Ask Marah about this elixir from the "weed from the devil's garden."
- 36. Buried Treasure** For this discussion you will be transported back 250 million years...then fast forwarded to the last ice age for a lively discussion about fossils and meteorites—what they are, how they formed and where to find them. Fossil collector **Robert Worthy** will share over 45 (a mere portion of his collection) different kinds of fossils from around the world, along with his passion for natural history and exploring the mystifying secrets of the world.

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