

Great Falls Gazette

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Vol. 4, Issue 23 February 3rd, 2026



Great Falls Symphony Presents Romantic Journey

Living By Tia Kanigan: January 29, 2026 - Great Falls, Mt



Robert Kahn. Photo courtesy of Great Falls Symphony

The Great Falls Symphony invites you to celebrate Valentine's Day with Romantic Journey, conducted by music director candidate Robert Kahn. Join us for a night of romance on Saturday, February 14, at 7:30 PM in the Mansfield Theater. Hear Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Romeo & Juliet Fantasy Overture, one of the most iconic musical expressions of love and fate in the orchestral repertoire, with its unforgettable love theme that has resonated through

decades of films and television.

The evening also features the lyrical brilliance of violinist Matthew Hakkarainen as guest soloist in Max Bruch's beloved Violin Concerto No. 1, a work treasured for its heartfelt melodies and virtuosic flair. Whether you're planning a special night with someone you love or simply want to be swept away by an evening of rich, expressive music, this Valentine's performance is the perfect way to make the day memorable.

About Robert Kahn

Dutch conductor and recipient of the Solti Career Assistance Award, Robert Kahn is currently serving as the Assistant Conductor at the Academy of Vocal Arts. Conversant with both symphonic and operatic repertoire, Robert has served as cover conductor for the New

(Continued on page 6)

Governor Gianforte Honors DNRC Search and Rescue Team

State By Kaitlin Timken, February 2, 2026 - Helena, Mt

Governor Greg Gianforte recently honored nine Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) employees with his Outstanding Service Award to recognize their efforts during an October 2025 aircraft recovery mission in the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

"On October 18, 2025, a tragic aircraft incident occurred deep in the Bob Marshall Wilderness - the terrain was remote, the conditions were challenging, and the mission required skill, coordination, and resolve," Gov. Gianforte said. "In a unified response, DNRC flight crews, ground support

staff, and air operations personnel worked together to ensure the safe recovery and transport of the remains of the three occupants and their beloved dog."

When he took office, Gov. Gianforte created the Outstanding Service Award to recognize state employees who go above and beyond to support the citizens of Montana, whether with exceptional customer service, strong leadership, or a commitment to excellence.

During a ceremony held at the DNRC Aviation Hangar in Helena, the governor presented each

(Continued on page 6)



Gov. Gianforte recognizing DNRC employees with his Outstanding Service Award during a ceremony held in Helena. Photo credit Office of the Governor



Your source for local news and information

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Great Falls Gazette®

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Editor: Karen Anderson
Publisher: Andy Anderson

Subscription coupon is located on page 3

City

GFFR Call Report for January 2026

GFFR Call Report for January 2026
Operations Division:



Fire calls = 14
4 vehicle fires
4 structure fires
2 grass fires
2 trash fires
2 outside fires

Hazardous Situations Found = 30
1 bomb threat

4 power lines down
5 motor vehicle collision, no injuries
13 Fuel/Gas/Carbon Monoxide-related calls
7 Smoke or Odor related call

Medical Calls = 314

Public Service Calls = 107

Rescue Calls = 2
1 Motor Vehicle Extrication
1 Water Rescue

No Emergency Found or False Alarm Calls = 88

Law Enforcement Support = 3
TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE 558

Fire Prevention Bureau:
172 Fire and life safety inspections conducted
3 Fire sprinkler systems hydro tested
3 Fire sprinkler systems accepted
3 Fire alarm systems accepted
3 Kitchen hood systems accepted
4 Special event inspections

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Crime Report From January 26th - February 1st

Great Falls Police crime data report from January 26th - February 1st includes 62 records.

- 3 - Aggravated Assault
- 14 - All Other Larceny
- 2 - Arson
- 3 - Burglary/Breaking & Entering
- 6 - Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property
- 6 - Disorderly Conduct
- 4 - Driving Under the Influence
- 1 - Drug Equipment Violations
- 1 - False Pretenses/Swindle/Confidence Game
- 4 - Liquor Law Violations
- 4 - Shoplifting
- 10 - Simple Assault
- 2 - Theft From Motor Vehicle
- 1 - Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts or Accessories
- 1 - Weapon Law Violations

Source crimemapping.com



After 2024 and 2025, it's time for some DEFLATION!

Here at the Gazette, we've decided it's high time that Great Falls Experience a little deflation after all the inflation we've dealt with for the past few years.

We're announcing lower cover prices, with more publication days starting in February, 2026. The Great Falls Gazette has proven that we are all about Great Falls, and we are already the go-to source for local information, life stories, events, and all the news we can all use. The little paper that did will finally be a daily that you can look forward to, with news that matters to you!

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Living

Great Falls Public Library Foundation Launches Citywide 'Love Your Library' Valentine Box Project

By Jake Sorich, Great Falls Public Library: February 2, 2026 - Great Falls, Mt

This February, the Great Falls Public Library Foundation invites the community to share their love for the Great Falls Public Library through a citywide Love Your Library Valentine Box initiative. Running February 1-10, 2026, the project encourages residents of all ages to express appreciation for the library through handwritten Valentine messages, while enjoying a creative, community-wide display of decorated Valentine boxes.

A Celebration of Community Connection

Libraries are places where stories begin, connections are formed, and lifelong learning takes root. The Love Your Library Valentine Box project offers a simple, joyful way for the community to celebrate the role the Great Falls Public Library plays in daily life—from early literacy and student success to workforce development, technology access, and lifelong enrichment.

Community Spirit in Every Box Community members, organizations, and local businesses have partnered with the Foundation to decorate and host Valentine boxes throughout Great Falls. These boxes will be placed at the library, local businesses, and public spaces across the city, each serving as a drop-off point for handwritten Valentines celebrating the Great Falls Public Library, its staff, and its programs. From young

children to longtime library supporters, everyone is invited to participate and share what the library means to them.



How to Participate

The decorated Valentine boxes will be on display from February 1 through February 10, 2026. Box locations will be announced online and updated regularly through the Great Falls Public Library Foundation's website and social media channels. Community members are invited to participate by visiting any Valentine box location, picking up a Valentine card, and writing a message of appreciation for the Great Falls Public Library before dropping it into the box. Prompts will be available to spark ideas, but personal messages and reflections are warmly encouraged. Participants are also invited to share photos of their Valentines or

box visits on social media using #ILoveGFLibrary, helping spread the celebration throughout the community. Participants can also send a Valentine message through the Foundation website at gflibraryfoundation.org/lyl.

Bringing the Messages Together

At the conclusion of the project on February 10, the Foundation will collect all submitted Valentines and transform them into a collective artistic display that reflects the community's shared appreciation for the Great Falls Public Library. The completed display will be showcased at the library, where the public can view and celebrate the messages throughout February. The Library will also host a Love Your Library Celebration event on February 17 from 5:00-6:30 pm on the second floor of the Library.

Patrons are invited to enjoy a dessert reception, view the Valentine's card displays, and meet the new Great Falls Public Library director, Amy Dissmeyer.

For More Information and Interview Requests

Brianne Laurin, Executive Director
Great Falls Public Library Foundation
Phone: (406) 453-0349
Email: brianne@gflibraryfoundation.org



Is there a previous issue you really enjoyed and would like to see again? We have digital archives of all previous issues that can be reprinted upon request. Call us at (406) 952-3021 or email us at info@gfgazette.com for more information.



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**** Location carries
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Contract Bridge

By Steve Becker

THINK FIRST, PLAY LATER

North dealer.

Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH

♠ Q 10 6 3

♥ Q J 4 3

♦ K 7

♣ A Q 5

WEST

♠ 7 2

♥ 10 9 5

♦ J 9 4 3

♣ J 8 7 6

EAST

♠ —

♥ A K 8 7 6 2

♦ Q 6 5 2

♣ K 10 3

SOUTH

♠ A K J 9 8 5 4

♥ —

♦ A 10 8

♣ 9 4 2

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
-------	------	-------	------

1 ♣	1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass
-----	-----	-----	------

2 ♠	Pass	6 ♠	
-----	------	-----	--

Opening lead — ten of hearts.

The importance of planning the play is well-illustrated in this deal, where South failed to justify his leap to six spades by not finding the way to make the contract.

West led the ten of hearts, covered by the jack and king and ruffed by South. Declarer then drew trump and led a club to the queen, losing to the king. There was now no way to avoid losing another club, and South finished down one.

Declarer could have made the slam had he given more thought at the outset to how he might avoid staking his chances solely on the club finesse. He knew from both the bidding and opening lead that East had the A-K of hearts and could have capitalized on this knowledge to assure the contract.


The simplest approach (a similar variation also works) is to refrain from covering the ten of hearts with the jack at trick one. After East also follows low, South ruffs, draws two rounds of trump, cashes the K-A of diamonds and ruffs the ten of diamonds in dummy.

The stage is now set for the decisive play. Declarer leads the queen of hearts from dummy's Q-J-4 and, after East covers with the king, discards the club deuce!

This places East in a hopeless position. If he returns the ace or a low heart, dummy's jack becomes a trick on which South can dispose of his other club loser. A club return from East into dummy's A-Q is equally fatal, and so is a diamond return, which allows declarer to discard a club as he ruffs in dummy.

Many declarers would fail to appreciate the value of dummy's hearts as a means of endplaying East and would sooner or later resort to the club finesse, just as the actual declarer did. But that's not the right way to play the game. Think first, play later!

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Great Falls Symphony (Continued from page 1)

York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Opera Philadelphia. As a guest conductor, Robert led the Mannes School of Music's (Un)Silent Film production, as well as Music On Site's production of Don Giovanni.

Robert recently conducted Così fan Tutte with the Academy of Vocal Arts and returned to The Mannes School of Music to conduct a contemporary opera. Robert holds a Professional Studies Degree in Orchestral Conducting from the Mannes School of Music and a Double Bachelor's Degree in Physics and Clarinet from The Johns Hopkins University and Peabody.

Tickets & Information

Tickets, venue details, and program updates are available at www.gfsymphony.org/robert-kahn.

This performance is made possible

through the generous sponsorship of SpringHill Suites by Marriott, with the 2025-26 Season proudly sponsored by D.A. Davidson Companies. Robert Kahn is sponsored by Bruce & Marty Cowgill, and all of our candidates are sponsored by the Gibson Hotel, City Motor Company, and Montana's Rib & Chop House.



Matthew Hakkarainen.
Photo courtesy of Great Falls Symphony

About the Great Falls Symphony Association

The Great Falls Symphony Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching the cultural life of north-central Montana through exceptional live performances and music education. The Symphony presents six dynamic concerts each season at the

Mansfield Theater, features world-class guest artists and a diverse repertoire that ranges from classical masterpieces to innovative contemporary works. Our six Symphony series concerts this season are each conducted by finalist candidates for our open Music Director position. Our Youth Orchestra, Sinfonia, and Chamber Music students perform in the Mansfield Theater twice a season. All tickets to youth performances are free, and concerts are open to the public.

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DNRC Search and Rescue Team (Continued from page 1)

recipient with a letter recognizing their efforts and a flag flown over the state capitol in their honor. The nine recipients of the award included: AJ Angelo, Jay Lindgren, Amy Helena, Tal Williams, Chris Bryce, Luke Eidt, Harrison Backer, Glade Markland, and Tyzer Smith.

The governor added, "By

maximizing every available minute of daylight, these DNRC personnel helped bring the mission to a successful and respectful conclusion under very difficult circumstances. This operation reflects the professionalism, teamwork, and compassion demonstrated by DNRC employees who went above and beyond the

call of duty to support their partners and serve Montana."

Montanans may learn more about the award and nominate a state employee for his or her outstanding work at <https://governor.mt.gov/Contact/OutstandingServiceAward>.




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Obituaries

Obituary of Steven Dennis Mehan

Steven Dennis Mehan, of Great Falls, MT, passed away peacefully, surrounded by loved ones on January 26, 2026.

Steven was born November 17, 1944, in Whittier, CA, to parents Ned and Martha Mehan, along with his siblings, Pam, Glenda, and Terry.



He spent his life working as a mechanic at Electric City Brakes, he also enjoyed working out at the marina in Great Falls.

Steven loved to eat Grandma Grace's home-cooked meals, dining at the Prospector and Maria's, enjoyed watching his westerns, took pride in keeping his lawn cut, you could see him lounging on his porch swing outside their home in his cutoff jeans and T-shirts, feeding the squirrels and birds, or reading a book. He reveled in being athletic, fishing, traveling, and taking camping trips at Kern River in California and in Sun Canyon Lodge in Montana. Enjoyed summers in California with his grandchildren, going to amusement parks.

Steven married the love of his life, Grace, in 1975, and just celebrated their 51st anniversary.

Steven was an extraordinary husband, father, uncle, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Proceeded in death by his loving wife, parents, and siblings.

He survived by his daughters, Tammy Mileage, Susan Richardson, Sherry Halal and Laurie Brasher; son, Douglas Mehan; and we couldn't be any more grateful for his loving selfless niece Cara Ireland who has spent the last 3 years being his helping hand and just simply keeping him company every day; grandchildren, Madison, Morgan, Taylor, Hannah, Joshua, Aaron, Chloe and Sarah; and great-grandchildren, Arianna, Mason, Emersyn, Nyla and Raylan.

Steven was selfless, caring, kind, and funny. His laugh and smile could light up the room. He loved a good dirty joke and helping anyone in need. He spent his final days surrounded by family and friends, he sang songs, told us jokes, and smiled until the very end. He will be deeply missed.

Condolences for the family can be submitted to www.SchniderFuneralHome.com.

Obituary and death notices are a difficult fact of life. They are a reminder of those we have loved and lost. The Great Falls Gazette does not require payment for submission of local obituaries or death notices, however, you are welcome to donate to our many programs to help people in our community to receive newspapers that they can enjoy. To submit an obituary or death notice, email them to info@gfgazette.com or call us at (406) 952-3021



You can pick up a Super Sunday issue for just \$1.75, which includes everything from the regular Sunday issue, along with all the obituaries from the previous Monday - Friday. This is a great way to get all the Obituaries you may have missed from the previous week. Call us today at (406) 604-0323 for more information.



Fun-E-Pages



GO FIGURE!

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	-		÷		=	1
+		+		+		
	-		×		=	16
+		÷		-		
	-		+		=	11
=		=		=		
16		1		1		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 8 9

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Puzzle answers can be found on page 11.

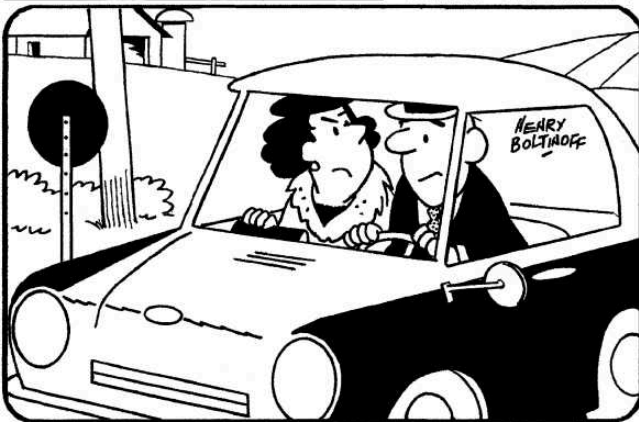
Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps

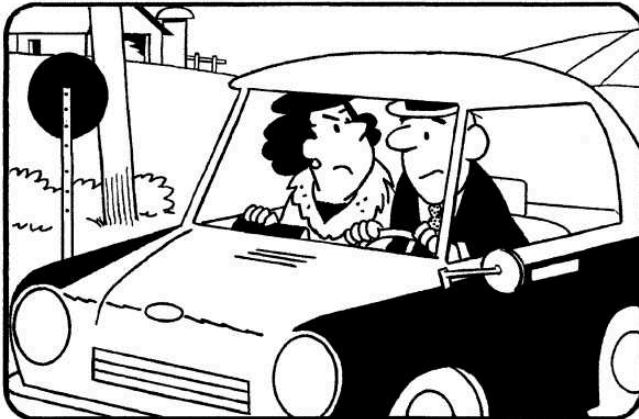


HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Side mirror is moved. 2. Grille is different. 3. Sign is taller. 4. Door handle is different. 5. Fence is different. 6. Headrest is added.

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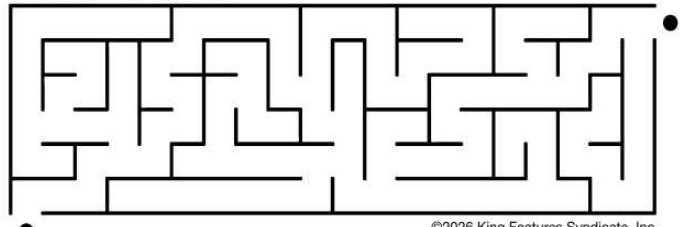
MINI SUDOKU

			1	
4			6 3	
		2		5
			6	
5				
	6 4		2	

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 6-box square contains all of the numbers from one to six.

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Kids' Maze



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THE MISADVENTURES OF TIPPER

TIPPER HAS CAT NIGHTMARES!

Created by Patricia Hahn Schlaeger - 2026



Tipper hears awful noises coming from his back yard. He runs outside and finds a large number of cats who have gathered in the alley and are feeding on garbage!

He scares them away and goes back inside to call his neighbors to remind them there are laws regulating the number of cats* you can have and they should not feed feral cats!

* Great Falls City Code: It is unlawful for any person, persons or family to keep harbor, or maintain in or on the same premises a total of more than **two (2) cats** or two (2) dogs of four (4) months of age or older without first obtaining a multiple animal permit as provided OCCGF 6.1.090. However the biggest problem is the underlying cause of the EXPLODING cat population...*feral cats breeding!* Spay and Neutering your cats will help as well as catching feral cats so they can be spayed, neutered and re-homed. *Animal Control is fighting a loosing battle without your help!!*

Local Weather For Great Falls

NWS Forecast for: Cascade County below 5000ft
Issued by: National Weather Service Great Falls, MT
Last Update: [9:37 am MST Feb 2, 2026]

Tuesday Mostly sunny, with a high near 53. West southwest wind 7 to 10 mph.

Tuesday Night Partly cloudy, with a low around 32. West northwest wind 6 to 8 mph becoming south in the evening.

Wednesday Partly sunny, with a high near 67. South southwest wind 10 to 18 mph, with gusts as high as 28 mph.

Wednesday Night Partly cloudy, with a low around 38. Southwest wind 8 to 13 mph, with gusts as high as 21 mph.

Thursday Sunny, with a high near 70. Southwest wind 8 to 10 mph.

Thursday Night Mostly clear, with a low around 31. West northwest wind 5 to 7 mph becoming light and variable after midnight.

Friday Sunny, with a high near 67.

Friday Night Partly cloudy, with a low around 37.

Keep an eye on the weather all week long, you can get a monthly subscription to Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday of the Gazette for about the price of three large lattes!



Gospel Music Concert

The Johnson Brothers
Winter Gospel Concert

February 15th, 2026
Potluck Dinner 5pm
Concert 6pm

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Free Family Event!



Celebrations

Celebrations is a great way to say "Happy Birthday", "Happy Anniversary", "Congratulations", or other positive messages to share with the whole city. It's a great way to be positive in a challenging world; it's fun, and it's FREE! You can even include a small (tastefully fun) photo! Just email info@gfgazette.com or call 406 952-3021, and we'll get the positive word out.

Go Figure!

answers

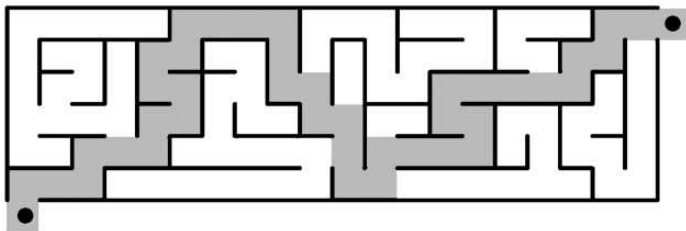
3	-	1	÷	2	=	1
+		+		+		
6	-	4	×	8	=	16
+		÷		-		
7	-	5	+	9	=	11
=		=		=		
16		1		1		

MINI SUDOKU

Answer

2	3	6	1	5	4
4	5	1	6	3	2
6	1	2	3	4	5
3	4	5	2	6	1
5	2	3	4	1	6
1	6	4	5	2	3

Kids' Maze Solution



Did you miss an issue? Need more to share with friends, family and that person you just love to drive insane? Call or come to the **GREAT FALLS GAZETTE** office and we can fix you up with any issue of the **GAZETTE** going back to the very first one.

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Winkler, Luvena Dawn: 38 yoa, Native American female, 5'4", 180#, brown eyes, brown hair, wanted on: theft (greater than \$1,500), felony, accountability to theft by common scheme (greater than \$1,500), felony. Total bond \$7,500.

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- Gig workers have first option at other jobs at the Gazette.
- We respect seniority as well as understanding that for most, this is a side hustle. We work with you to get routes that let you make extra cash and still keep your "day job"

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- Candidate should be able to run most office software as well and use a computer properly. Will work with computerized order systems, business phone system, filing, story copywriting/reporting, customer service, light inside sales, and product ordering and fulfillment.
- Minimum of 15 hours per week. At times you may be offered additional hours. Our office opens at 8am, Generally we prefer people who work in the afternoon.
- Gig workers have first option at other jobs at the Gazette.
- Successful candidate must have a positive personality.

Call (406) 952-3021 for more info about these jobs!