

Fort Benton's 43rd annual Summer Celebration happening this weekend

By Connlee Gray

Make your way around town for Fort Benton's 43rd annual Summer Celebration this Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 28, 29 and 30.

This year's theme is "All One Under the Light of the Stars and Stripes." Fort Benton native and renowned Montana artist Brian Morger painted a scenic picture with fireworks exploding over the walking bridge especially for this year's Summer Celebration promotional materials. His painting appears on the Summer Celebration t-shirts, which will be available for sale all weekend.

CHALK ART

Children and adults are invited to decorate the sidewalks of Fort Benton with chalk art on Friday from noon to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for the Chalk

Up Fort Benton art contest. Chalk Up Fort Benton is sponsored by Prairie Rose Gallery and Gifts. Visit Prairie Rose Gallery and Gifts at 1410 B Front Street to sign up. Children 5 and under are free, ages 6 to 10 are \$5 and 11-99 are \$10. Prizes will be awarded to the winners of each age group on Sunday.

FOOD

The pig roast lunch sponsored by First Bank of Montana will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Friday at 1502 Main St. Enjoy live music while indulging in a free lunch.

U.S. Bank at 1304 Main St. will host a free ice cream social Friday from 1 to 3 p.m.

An assortment of food vendors will be available at the Front Street roundabout and Old Fort Park

and at the evening street dances, starting Friday at 5 p.m.

Start the morning off right on Saturday from 7 to 10 a.m. with a pancake and sausage breakfast at the log cook shack in Old Fort Park. A biscuit and gravy breakfast will be served on Sunday from 7 to 10 a.m. Children 12 and under are \$4 and 13 and up cost \$8. Proceeds from the breakfasts support the community swimming pool and the local volunteer ambulance service.

The Club House will host breakfast after hours from 1:30 to 3 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday for \$10 per person, following the street dances.

LIVE MUSIC

The Lucky Valentines of Fort Benton will kick off the entertainment during the free lunch at First Bank of Montana on Friday from 11:30 a.m. to noon, followed by the City Band from 12 to 12:45 p.m.



RIBBON CUTTING – The Fort Benton Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting and open house last Friday in honor of the three new businesses that opened in the Courtyard in 2018. From left, Montana Fruit (Chamber board member), Arianna Reeves, Amanda Reeves (co-owner of The Nutty Korean), Jean Johnson (co-owner of Rustic Mercantile), Toni Duvall (owner of Lefty's Designs) and JoAnna Smith and Kim Kotthoff (both Chamber board members) cut the ribbon to celebrate the new businesses. Bethany Monroe DeBorde photo

EMT course equips locals & law enforcement with life-saving skills

By Bethany Monroe DeBorde

Thirteen students started an emergency medical technician (EMT) training course at the Memorial Ambulance of Fort Benton last week, including all four members of the Fort Benton Police Department.

Upon completion of the 10-week intensive course, the participants will be prepared to take the required tests to secure state licensing and national EMT certification.

Loren Deichman, chief operating officer of Best Practice Medicine, led Saturday's lab in Fort Benton. Best Practice Medicine is a Montana-based company serving the whole state.

"We have the largest network of clinical educators in the state of Montana," Deichman said.

Their EMT program focuses especially on rural areas where finding enough volunteer EMTs to staff the ambulance crews is a challenge, Deichman said.

"All the rural states are having the same issue. People are aging out," Deichman said.

And as the veteran EMTs retire, there aren't enough younger EMTs to fill their shoes. The Memorial Ambulance of Fort Benton is no stranger to this challenge.

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Senate candidate and former refugee stops in Fort Benton to share his story

By Bethany Monroe DeBorde

Wilmot Collins arrived in the United States in 1994 with just 25 cents to his name, ready to reunite with his family in their new hometown: Helena, Montana.

Today, the former Liberian refugee is serving as Montana's first black mayor, elected in 2017 to

lead the city of Helena. Last month, he announced his candidacy for the 2020 U.S. Senate race, running as a Democrat against Republican incumbent Steve Daines.

Collins visited Fort Benton on Sunday evening to attend the Chouteau County Democratic Central Committee meeting, where he shared his story with more than 30 people gathered at the Memorial Ambulance of Fort Benton.

"This is the largest group of Democrats that we've had together in Chouteau County in 50 years," said Gar Wood of Loma, who coordinated the meeting along with Casey Bailey of Fort Benton.

Along with Collins, the group also welcomed guest speaker Ron De Yong, former director of the Montana Department of Agriculture.

Collins opened his talk with a brief history lesson on his native country of Liberia, a West African nation populated by former American slaves in the mid-1800s. The former slaves brought the English language and Christianity with them, and both became the norm in their new home country. Liberia's capital is Monrovia, named for former U.S. President James Monroe.

Liberia was the first African nation to gain independence, all the way back in 1847, and for many decades it was a model country for the continent, Collins said.

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EMT TRAINING – Coystal and Aaron Conner of Fort Benton take a closer look at a pig's heart held by Matthew MaCoy of Best Practice Medicine during a lab for their EMT course at Memorial Ambulance of Fort Benton on Saturday. Aaron Conner, an officer for Fort Benton Police Department, is one of the five local law enforcement officers taking the 10-week training. The class includes a total of 13 students. Bethany Monroe DeBorde photo



PIE PERFECTION – Josh Rollans and Kimberly Taylor measure ingredients during a pie crust making class offered by Chouteau County MSU Extension Agent Janell Barber at the library on Monday evening. The class came just in time for those interested in entering a pie in the GFWC Fort Benton Woman's Club pie contest this Friday. Pie entries should be delivered to the Community Bible Center between 1 and 2:30 p.m. Friday for judging. They will be sold at the pie auction at 5:30 p.m. Friday at Old Fort Park. Bethany Monroe DeBorde photo

"The Voice" contestant among Summer Celebration entertainers

By Zach Meyer

Anthony Arya from season 15 of NBC's "The Voice" is set to perform three live shows at this year's Summer Celebration – all free to the public.

"I'm so excited. I've never been to Montana before," said singer/songwriter/guitarist Anthony Arya. "From what I've heard, the Fort Benton community is super awesome, so I can't wait to share my music with them."

Arya is one of many exciting acts playing at this week's Summer Celebration festivities. The Lucky Valentines from here in Fort Benton are kicking the music entertainment off for the weekend at 11:30 a.m. Friday at the First Bank of Montana stage, during the bank's free pulled pork lunch.

"I'm thrilled and honored to open up the entertainment portion of this fantastic weekend," said Jamie Carrier of The Lucky Valentines.

She will be joined on stage by her husband, Shaun Carrier, and drummer Zach Meyer.

The City Band, featuring local musicians and directed by Erik

Lenington, will perform on the bank stage Friday at noon, followed by a 1:30 p.m. performance at the Golden Age Center and a 4:45 p.m. show at the gazebo in Old Fort Park.

Anthony Arya's first performance will be at 12:45 p.m. Friday on the First Bank of Montana stage.

Later Friday evening at the corner of 14th and Front Street, acoustic singer/songwriter Chad Lantz will perform at 7:30 p.m., followed by the Friday night street dance featuring live music Bozeman's Comstock Lode, a classic rock and country band.

Arya plays twice more on Saturday: at 1:15 p.m. in Old Fort Park and at 8:30 p.m. at Grand Union Square, prior to the fireworks show and street dance.

In January, Arya released his album, "Going to California" and he plans to have CDs available to purchase at Summer Celebration.

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COMMERCIAL IN THE MAKING – Shaun and Jamie Carrier of The Lucky Valentines, joined by Zach Meyer on the drums, perform on the Visitor Center deck as Ryan Kymera shoots video. Kymera and Gary Trotchie of Kymera Films collected footage of live music, canoers and paddleboarders on the river and Monday evening's picturesque double rainbow to use in a commercial for Boats, Brews & Blues, a brew fest and free outdoor concert coming up in Fort Benton on July 20. The video will be shared on the ChoCo Fun Facebook page once it's complete. Bethany Monroe DeBorde photo

The River Press

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Published Weekly/Wednesday
Periodical Postage Paid at
Fort Benton, Montana
USPS 466-740

Subscriptions:
Must be paid in advance;
1 year ... \$32
In Chouteau County
1 year ... \$36
Out of County/in MT
1 year ... \$40
Out of Montana
1 year ... \$28
Online edition only

ALL ADVERTISEMENTS,
CLASSIFIEDS, & ARTICLES
DUE 6 PM ON MONDAY
Postmaster send address
changes to: P.O. Box 69,
Fort Benton, MT 59442



SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS – From left, Amanda Reeves, Jean Johnson and Toni Duvall each opened a small business in The Courtyard mini mall on Front Street last year. They celebrated with an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony hosted by the Fort Benton Chamber of Commerce last week. Reeves' shop, The Nutty Korean, offers homemade fudge and candy, Johnson's Rustic Mercantile offers home décor and antiques and Duvall's Lefty's Designs offers t-shirt printing and other custom merchandise.

Bethany Monroe DeBorde photo



BREATHING EXERCISES – Loren Deichman, center, chief operating officer for Best Practice Medicine, teaches a class of EMT students how to ventilate a patient using a pig's set of lungs as the model. From left, Fort Benton Police Officer Aaron Conner, Sahara Scott of Fort Benton, Deichman, Josh Miller of Havre, Matt McCoy of Best Practice Medicine, Kia Hanning of Highwood and Fort Benton Police Officer Erica Stanley. Thirteen people started the new EMT course last week. The 10-week course is being offered in Fort Benton through Best Practice Medicine.

Bethany Monroe DeBorde photo

EMT course ... from Page 1

The Memorial Ambulance of Fort Benton received a "classroom in a box," including the technology to view Best Practice Medicine's Bozeman-based EMT classes live from the ambulance barn's meeting room. The training is a mix of virtual classes and hands-on labs. Fort Benton's veteran EMTs help lead the class, with Deichman visiting a few times over the next couple months to provide

instruction.

Over the course of the 10-week program, the students will clock 160 hours in class time and assignments. They meet a couple evenings a week, plus Saturdays.

Saturday's hands-on lab included learning to ventilate a patient by practicing on a pig's lungs. Students also examined a pig's heart.

The 13 students include 11 from Chouteau County and two who commute from Havre. Five members of law enforcement—Seth Broesder, Riley McDermott, Erica Stanley and Aaron Conner from the Fort Benton Police Department, plus Deputy Adam Jacques from the Chouteau County Sheriff's Office, are all taking the class. Two spouses of law enforcement officers are also enrolled.

Best Practice Medicine runs four EMT classes each year and is happy to work with rural communities needing their services, Deichman said.

Fort Benton Police Chief Seth Broesder said their participation in the class stemmed from a conversation with Nancy Lachapelle from the Chouteau County Health Department. She approached him about grant funding that was available for opioid overdose prevention and asked if he had any ideas for Fort Benton.

The volunteer EMTs have to drop what they're doing and drive to the ambulance barn when an emergency call comes in, so the police officer on duty is typically the first to arrive on a scene. Broesder noted it would be helpful if the officers each had basic life-saving training and equipment.

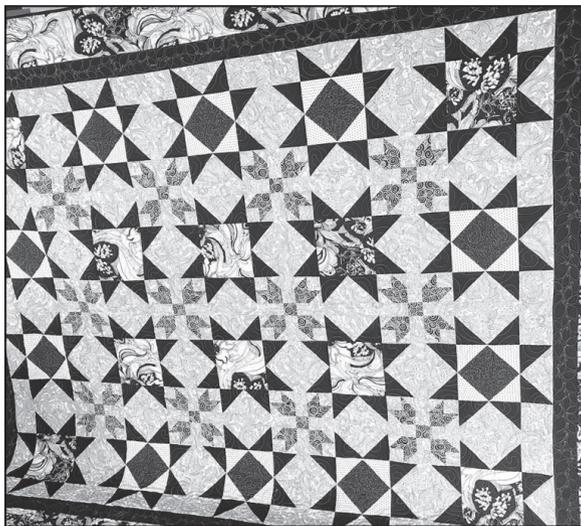
The grant is part of the Opioid Prevention Project, a Data-Driven Prevention Initiative sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services, Lachapelle said. The funds will pay for the officers' training, plus some of the equipment they will need to carry in their patrol cars.

"The goal is that all four of us will end up licensed EMTs and it's up to my officers on an individual basis if they want to volunteer with the ambulance service," Broesder said.

Either way, they will carry bag valve masks and other emergency aid gear in their patrol cars and will be trained in how to respond. The officers had previously been trained to carry oxygen tanks and Narcan, a drug used to counteract an opioid overdose.

Officer Aaron Conner's past CPR training helped him save a man's life just a few weeks ago, Broesder said. There's no telling when their new emergency response training might be put to good use.

Informal get-together for Geraldine School alumni & teachers of 1970-1979
 Friday, July 5, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
 319 Brewster, Geraldine
 Bring your own chair, food and drinks.
 For questions, call DeDe at 406-231-2764.



GERALDINE QUILT – A lovely black and white queen size quilt titled "Sleep Under the Stars" was donated to the Geraldine Celebration by Geraldine quilter Dee Spencer and is on display in various places around Geraldine for the next two weeks before their big Celebration. Robyn Scribner photo

Quilt donated for Geraldine Celebration

By Robyn Scribner
Dee Spencer of Geraldine pieced together and donated a lovely "Sleep Under the Stars" quilt to the Geraldine Celebration.

The queen-size quilt is made from beautiful black and white materials, artistically selected by Dee. The machine quilting was done by Pam Peterson of Great Falls. The quilt will be displayed at the Fresh Start Co-op and the bank.

Readers in Fort Benton would recognize Dee if she was wearing her former uniform; Dee worked in the Fort Benton Post Office for many years and worked for the USPS for 29 years altogether. We in Geraldine know Dee as a sweet, hilarious, creative lady who helps wherever and whenever she can.

Dee learned how to sew at about 14 years of age in 4-H and home

ec class. When I was asking, Dee thought she has probably made about 35 to 40 quilts. She especially loves quilting and making table runners and wall hangings.

Dee is one of the first members of the Eye of the Needle Quilt Guild of Fort Benton. She also helps make quilts for the Chouteau County Cancer Support Group, who graciously give these homemade quilts to anyone in the county with cancer.

Dee and her late husband Bob have four children, and when she's not quilting, Dee also spends time chasing grandkids around attending their events.

Thank you, Dee, for your lovely donation.

Raffle tickets to win the quilt will be sold by committee members and at the Geraldine Celebration.

TWO OPEN HOUSES!
SATURDAY, JUNE 29TH
 Hosted by **TOM WILLSON**
 DAHLQUIST REALTORS
 Mobile - (406) 621-5592
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COME CHECK OUT THESE AMAZING PROPERTIES!

1:00 PM: 901 Franklin St., Fort Benton, MT
 • \$144,900 • 1,542 sq. ft. • MLS#3182624
 A well taken care of 4 bed (1 non-conforming), 2 bath house - all on the main floor! Corner lot w/ mature landscaping. Spacious kitchen including all appliances. Nice dining area. Smaller basement area includes furnace, water heater, water softener & storage. House has central air, too! Laundry room also located on the main floor. One car garage and super nice storage shed.

2:15 PM: 1001 Chouteau St., Fort Benton, MT
 • \$99,900 • 1,824 sq. ft. • MLS#21908284
 Peaceful, turnkey home. Great sized lot with big backyard and gorgeous mature lilac bushes all the way around the backyard! 3 bedrooms on the main level with a nice cool summer bedroom in the basement. Main floor laundry. Nice open floor plan from the den to the kitchen to the living room.



DOG WASH – Brooke Rodgers bathes Rolo, a Jack Russell terrier belonging to Ed and Cynthia Lenington, at the Dedman Foundation Animal Shelter's dog wash fundraiser on Saturday. Etta Wicks photo

Benton Funeral Home
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
 We welcome you to stop by anytime during office hours or call us for an appointment.
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 Visit our website: www.bentonfh.com

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PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES DUE:
2019 PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX
 is due by **June 30, 2019**
 at the
 Chouteau County Treasurer's Office,
 P.O. Box 459, 1308 Franklin Street,
 Fort Benton, Montana 59442
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