



## ***ELECTION DAY: NOVEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2020***

As we are all probably aware it's nearly time again for the general election coming on November 3, 2020, but this time some things will be different. Due to the pandemic, all Montana counties have the option to utilize all-mail ballots for the first time in history, and 46 of Montana's 56 counties have decided to do so. There will indeed be some changes but the good news is that Montanans with disabilities still have the opportunity to vote independently using adaptive voting machines or other options.

In the 46 counties implementing all-mail ballots, ballots will be mailed October 9, 2020 to the addresses of voters registered by October 2. For those registering after October 2, ballots will be mailed ASAP after registering up until October 26. A person may still register after October 26 and as late as election day, November 3, but must do so in person at their local county election office, obtain a ballot, and submit it in person. Anyone registered who receives a ballot in the mail may complete it and mail it or choose to complete and take it in person to their local county election office or a designated drop box. County election offices and drop boxes must be staffed by county election employees anytime they are available. In short, the all-mail ballot process is very much like the absentee process used by many Montanans already. Within Summit's service region, only one of seven counties has opted out of conducting an all-mail ballot election and will be doing in-person poll voting. Mineral County will be in-person while Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, Missoula, Ravalli, and Sanders Counties will be all-mail.

Individuals with disabilities, regardless of how they receive a ballot, may take their ballot to their local county election office, or select drop locations, to use an accessible voting machine to mark a ballot independently or utilize other options. All county election offices in Montana have either an AutoMARK or ExpressVote machine, depending which county, that provide the same accessibility options. Both machines provide multiple accessibility features, including: touch-screen voting for those who cannot write, alternative switch or touch-screen voting for those with limited dexterity, sip & puff voting for those without hand or arm function, and blind/low vision options of screen contrast changes and/or text-to-speech audio voting via headphones. Election officials are also available to provide physical and/or instructional assistance as needed or requested. Any voter without a disability is also welcome to request to use the same voting technology. Voters with disabilities may also register and use the Electronic Ballot Request System (EBRS) to access and complete a ballot via computer, print it, and mail it back or deliver it in person. That service is available beginning 30 days before and up through noon the day before election day, November 3. For other options, including designating someone to assist you in the process, please see the voting checklist links on page 2.

Hopefully the upcoming 2020 election will proceed

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# 2020 Voter Checklist

## Confirm voter registration

Check the "My Voter Page" at <https://app.mt.gov/voterinfo/> for your current registration status and to ensure that your residential and mailing addresses are correct.

## Options for convenient voting

Apply for an absentee ballot, if you wish to, at <http://www.sos.mt.gov/elections/> or, if you are a person with a disability, you may request an email ballot by filling out the EBR form at <https://sosmt.gov/Portals/142/Elections/Documents/Officials/Absentee-Application-for-Electronic-Ballot-for-Individual-with-Disability.doc>. Please be aware that many counties will be conducting an all mail ballot election this year so you may automatically receive your ballot in the mail.

## ID requirements at the polls & mail ballot verification

If voting at a polling location, know what to bring to the polls on Election Day. Montana law requires a form of photo ID or government document with name and address. If you are voting absentee ballot or mail ballot, be sure to insert your ballot into the secrecy sleeve and then place it into the larger return envelope making sure that you sign your name on the envelope's so that your County elections office can verify that it is your ballot and that your vote will count.

## Voter registration & late registration

Visit your county election office Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and complete a registration form.

Download a registration form at [https://sosmt.gov/Portals/142/Elections/Forms/Voter\\_Registration\\_Application.pdf](https://sosmt.gov/Portals/142/Elections/Forms/Voter_Registration_Application.pdf), print, complete and return to your county election office by October 26, 2020 for the November 3, General Election OR

Late register on October 27, 2020 at your county election office or the designated location up to and including on election day, except from noon until 5:00 p.m. on November 2, 2020. Visit <https://sosmt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020-Late-Registration-Locations.pdf> to find out where you can register to vote during the late registration period.

**To avoid lines, do not wait until Election Day to register to vote! If you need help, call or email Summit.**

## Know your polling places & hours of operations

If voting at the polls on Election Day, know where to go ahead of time. Polls open at 7:00 a.m. and close at 8:00 p.m.

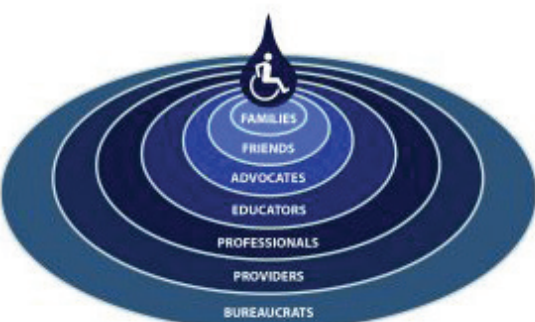
## Accessible voting

Polling places and some mail ballot drop off locations are ADA accessible and equipped with either an [ExpressVote](#) or [AutoMark](#) voting machines, allowing individuals to independently mark their ballot. Other forms of accessible voting also exist such as requesting an electronic ballot or designating an agent to help you throughout the voting process. To learn more about your accessible voting options, please visit <https://sosmt.gov/elections/disabilities/>.

## Become acquainted with issues and candidates on the ballot

Ballots can be reviewed prior to Election Day. Review the sample ballot online in order to familiarize yourself with layout and selection. The 2020 Montana Voter Information Pamphlet should be mailed out around October 5<sup>th</sup> but in the meantime, you can visit [https://sosmt.gov/elections/ballot\\_issues/2020-2/](https://sosmt.gov/elections/ballot_issues/2020-2/) to review the list of ballot measures on the 2020 general election ballot, [https://app.mt.gov/cgi-bin/filing/index.cgi?ACTION=LIST\\_LEG](https://app.mt.gov/cgi-bin/filing/index.cgi?ACTION=LIST_LEG) to find who your legislative candidates are, and [https://app.mt.gov/cgi-bin/filing/index.cgi?ACTION=LIST\\_NON\\_LEG](https://app.mt.gov/cgi-bin/filing/index.cgi?ACTION=LIST_NON_LEG) to see a list of federal, statewide, and district candidates.

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THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF THE  
DISABILITY VOTE

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smoothly even with the planned changes. Montana's all-mail election might not ultimately seem much different than those in the past to many due to Montana's historically high rate of absentee ballots including 73% of voters in 2018. By knowing how the process works, participating in your civil right, and taking advantage of available options, we hope your voting experience will be as fulfilling and liberating as possible.

To check your voter registration status, find information about your specific location, or to learn more, please contact your county election office, the Montana Secretary of State's office, or visit the Voter Checklist links on page 2.

### **Important 2020 Election Calendar Dates**

- October 2 - Date absentee ballots available for voting for counties doing mail ballots
- October 5 - Absentee ballots must be available for voting in person for those counties that are conducting a polling place election
- October 9 - Ballots are mailed to electors on the absentee list and for counties conducting a mail ballot election, ballots are mailed to all active registered voters
- October 26 - Close of regular voter registration
- October 27 - Late voter registration begins
- November 3 - ***Election Day!***

## **Links to reliable information related to COVID-19**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

<https://www.coronavirus.gov>

World Health Organization:

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/covid>

Social Security and COVID- 19:

<https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/>

The ADA and Face Mask Policies:

<https://www.adasoutheast.org/ada/publications/legal/ada-and-face-mask-policies.php>

Your Local County or Tribal Health Department:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/FCSS/countytribalhealthdepts>

**SUMMIT STAFF****Missoula County****Executive Director**

Mike Mayer

**Program Support Specialist**

Mike Giddings

**SD-CFC/PAS Program Manager**

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**SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator**

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**SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator**

Patti Montgomery-Stewart

**SD-CFC/PAS Assistant/Insurance**

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**Advocacy Coordinator**

Travis Hoffman

**Peer Advocacy Coordinator**

Chris Clasby

**Independent Living Specialist**

Donna Graham

**Independent Living Specialist**

Tyler Stosich

**Community Living Specialist**

Bronwyn Troutman

**Youth Specialist**

Becca Gervais

**Youth Coordinator**

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**BASE Coordinator**

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Victoria Lahr

**Flathead County****Coordinator**

Lynae West

**Independent Living Specialist**

Bernadette Caron-Taylor

**Independent Living Specialist**

Dianna Kintzler

**SD-CFC/PAS Specialist**

Aleyna Raymond

**Ravalli County****Coordinator**

Becky Fleming-Siebenaler

**Independent Living Specialist**

Anna Barnes

**People First Advisor/IL Specialist**

Mary Millin

**Lake County****Coordinator**

Susan Morris

**Independent Living Specialist**

Betty LaFountain

**New Summit Staff****Bernadette Caron-Taylor,  
Independent Living Specialist, Kalispell**

Hello! Greetings from Kalispell. My name is Bernadette Caron-Taylor, and I started working as an Independent Living Specialist at Summit's Kalispell office in July, 2020. I have been back in Montana for 19 years and am very happy to be joining the team at Summit IL. My husband, David, and I enjoy the summers here, and we like to get out on the water as much as possible.

We also enjoying going to Mexico in the wintertime for a couple weeks to visit my family. I love to garden, quilt, cook/bake, watch movies and enjoy our aging pets! I have a BS in Social work from UM, and I previously worked in the mental health field. I'm really looking forward to this new learning opportunity, and working with the youth!

**Patti Montgomery-Stewart,  
SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator, Missoula**

Hello! My name is Patti Montgomery-Stewart and I'm from Missoula. I'm married to my high school sweetheart and we have six adult children. My hobbies are fishing, camping, watching movies, and listening to music. Since I was young I knew I wanted to be able to help people so I went on to be a caregiver for five years and worked with SDMI adults in a group home setting for the last three years. I also managed fast food restaurants for nineteen years, so I suppose if you can handle that kind of stress you can handle just about anything! I'm excited about working as a SD-CFC/PAS Coordinator at Summit's Missoula office and I look forward to meeting everyone.

**SUMMIT BOARD**

Steve Hackler

Molly Blair

Jenny Montgomery

Mark Cash

Peter Drakos

Michelle McLane

Susanne Meikle

Kelly Sellars



## Service Update

**Due to the COVID-19** pandemic, Summit continues to provide independent living services by phone, email, and virtual means since we have not yet opened our offices to the public. We are monitoring COVID-19 activities in our local communities closely but are proceeding slowly with plans to gradually reopen our offices out of an abundance of caution. Many of Summit's staff members are at elevated risk for Covid-19, as are the individuals with disabilities who we serve.

We are happy to announce that Summit has received grant funding through the **CARES Act** to provide **additional independent living services** to people with disabilities in our service area who have been impacted by COVID-19. These services include access to affordable and accessible housing, transitioning from institutions or nursing homes into the community, access to necessary technology, improving safety and independence, and access to PPE ...

**For more information or questions regarding eligibility, contact your local Summit office in Missoula, Hamilton, Ronan or Hamilton.**

Visit [www.summitilc.org/contact](http://www.summitilc.org/contact) for local Summit office contact information.



### Summit Mental Health Counseling

These are unprecedented times, and Summit Independent Living is in the position to extend more services. Summit can provide time limited, solution focused mental health counseling at no cost during this pandemic. Our staff include individuals with Masters Degrees in Social Work, who operate under a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. In order to work within our areas of competence, we may need to refer to another mental health specialist outside of our agency.

**Please contact Chris Clasby for more information at [cclasby@summitilc.org](mailto:cclasby@summitilc.org) or 406-728-1630 ext.115.**

### B.O.S.S.

**(Building Occupational Success Skills)**

Would you or someone you know between the ages of 14-24 like support transitioning into the workforce? Summit Independent Living and BASE can help! John Howard and Becca Gervais will be offering a FREE class called B.O.S.S. (Building Occupational Success Skills), which is open to all individuals from all of Summit's service area.

Classes will be held over Zoom and will focus on job readiness skills such as filling out applications, cover letters, informational interviews, role-playing interviews, and much more! Additionally, individual meetings can also be scheduled if group format is not preferred.

**Please contact Becca Gervais for more information at [bgervais@summitilc.org](mailto:bgervais@summitilc.org) or 406-728-1630 ext.126**

# Great American Outdoors Act



Written By Chris Clasby

Throughout the current pandemic, business closures and social distancing, political debates, and hurricanes and forest fires, did you hear the great recent news about US conservation? Even amidst the widespread difficulties, the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) legislation passed Congress with bipartisan support, was signed into law by President Trump August 4, 2020 and was activated into Public Law five days later. That's great news for all Americans as it expands on a previous federal law to ensure appropriate funding to benefit public lands and programs from which we can all benefit.

The Great American Outdoors Act was initially introduced to Congress by Representative John Lewis (D-GA) and then reintroduced with some amendments and a title change by Senator Cory Gardner (R-CO). The law has been called, "a conservationist's dream," is considered the largest land conservation legislation in nearly a generation, and will provide billions of dollars for overdue repairs and maintenance to US national parks. The preceding Land and Wildlife Conservation Fund (LWCF) was established in 1965 to provide funds and matching grants to federal, state, and local governments to purchase land and water, easements on that land and water, and to benefit all Americans. Its main emphasis was to preserve and protect national treasures like national parks, protected forests, and wildlife areas for public recreation opportunities. However, the original authorization of \$900 million for that law was not permanent, so its funding fluctuated annually by Congress and has typically been only a small percentage of that amount. The new law, the GAOA, permanently funds \$900 million annually through fees and royalties paid through oil and gas drilling efforts in federal waters. Ultimately, Americans will benefit through enjoyment of national parks, public land and wildlife, and even in such places as local playgrounds, soccer fields, and baseball diamonds.

The GAOA is additionally beneficial because, aside from improving public lands, it will now permanently annually boost the US economy as it did by \$40 billion last year and the support of 340,500 jobs. The new law and funding in place is also expected to create an additional 108,000 new jobs related to the repair of national park infrastructure through improvements and maintenance of access roads and bridges within and around the national parks and adjacent communities.

Especially in tumultuous times, it's very refreshing to see those across the political spectrum work together on a good effort to pass legislation to benefit Americans. We all have probably noticed a dramatic increase in people recreating outdoors this summer due to business closures, layoffs, and social distancing requirements, which perhaps created an opportunity for us to remember to enjoy the natural outdoor recreational beauty and opportunities around us.



# BASE EVENTS

725 West Alder, #4 Missoula, MT

BASE stands for home base, like in hide and go seek. In life, you have to establish a BASE first, that's where we come in.

## BASE Virtual Activities

**YODA (You Opening Doors through Advocacy)**

Tuesdays YODA 4-5:30pm on Zoom

**All Abilities Yoga**

Wednesdays Yoga 4-5pm on Zoom

**BASE Wrestling Foundation BWF**

Wednesday BWF every other week 5-6pm

(next meeting 9/30)

On Zoom and Facebook

**Audio Book Club**

Thursdays 12:30-1:30pm at Little McCormick park across from BASE, weather permitting (SOCIAL DISTANCING & MASKS REQUIRED) if interested please RSVP.

**BASEment Improv**

Thursdays BASEment Improv 5-6:15pm

**Role Playing Games RPG**

Mondays RPG 5-7:30pm

Fridays RPG 5-7:30pm

For BASE schedule updates and additional events go to

[www.summitilc.org/calendar](http://www.summitilc.org/calendar)

or check the BASE Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/base725>

To get involved or to share ideas of new BASE programs, contact BASE

[jhoward@summitilc.org](mailto:jhoward@summitilc.org)

or

[mbeers@summitilc.org](mailto:mbeers@summitilc.org).

To donate go to: <https://goo.gl/80NWq7>

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**Silver Spring wheelchair ramp  
10' L x 36" W**

Made of high-strength light weight aluminum. \$297obo. Contact: [tamera144@gmail.com](mailto:tamera144@gmail.com) or 406-363-4898

**1997 Ford Econoline  
Wheelchair Accessible Van**

Miles: 213,737

Call Twyla 231-818-0065

**Victory 10 LX scooter**

New! \$2500, Call or text Nina 880-2855

**Smart Talker text scanner**

Slightly used, \$700. Contact Larry at 406-633-4036 or [ketch1969@gmail.com](mailto:ketch1969@gmail.com)

**Nova Walker, Quantum 600 power wheelchair, Commode, 2 Transfer Benches, Beezy Manual Wheelchair.** Call Gary (406) 224-5527 or [garylee032051@gmail.com](mailto:garylee032051@gmail.com)

**Symmetry Stander**

Comfortable, easy-to-use seat stander Call Madison (406) 865-0221

**Garaventa Super-Trac Portable Wheelchair Lift for stairs.** Purchased new for \$12,000 and used only a few times. Will sell for \$2,500 OBO. Contact Jacob Francom, Troy Public Schools, [jfrancom@troyk12.org](mailto:jfrancom@troyk12.org), (406) 295-4520.

**Acorn Stair lift**

For going up to 6 stairs while seated. \$300 OBO. Call John at 546-7003.

To get listed contact Tyler Stosich at (406) 728-1630 or email [tstosich@summitilc.org](mailto:tstosich@summitilc.org).

Or, list and find items on the MonTECH exchange:

<http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/mtddb/>

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# SUMMIT INDEPENDENT LIVING

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*Building Awareness, Advocating Change*

THE SUMMIT INDEPENDENT

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This publication is available in alternative format on request. Please call 1 (800) 398-9002.



## Fresh Food Box

Summit Independent Living and Missoula Food Bank & Community Center are working collaboratively to make the Fresh Food Box program available to more people with disabilities.



### Eligibility requirements:

- must have a physical or mental disability that impacts your ability to live independently;
- live in Missoula
- sign up for Summit service;
- be experiencing challenges to your health, safety, ability to live independently, receive vital services, gain or continue employment, or participate in community activities due to COVID-19;
- be experiencing food insecurity due to lack of income, and
- need home delivery of food due to sheltering in place or lack of transportation/assistance to obtain food in the community.

For more information or to apply please call the Summit office at 406-728-1630 or send an email to [missoula@summitilc.org](mailto:missoula@summitilc.org).



You can always sign up to get this newsletter by email by visiting [www.summitilc.org](http://www.summitilc.org) and signing up