

POLITICS

WHITE HOLDS ON TO MONTANA HOUSE DIST. 64 SEAT



First-time candidate Denise Albrecht gave veteran Kerry White a run for his money, but came up short. Still, Albrecht fared much better than White's challenger in the 2016 election, who he defeated by 1,363 votes. The latest tally put White ahead of Albrecht by fewer than 300 votes.

It looks like Rep. Kerry White is headed back to Helena to represent Big Sky during the 2019 legislative session. PHOTO COURTESY THE CAMPAIGN

SO YOU STILL THINK YOUR VOTE DOESN'T COUNT?



Big Sky appears to have sent a new state senator to the Montana Legislature, but the race between Republican incumbent Jed Hinkle and Democrat Pat Flowers is so close, the result may change in the coming days.

On the morning after election night, Flowers clung to a three-vote lead. That's right—just three votes. That margin started to widen hour by hour and will apparently put Flowers in office.

In Big Sky's 64B voting precinct, Flowers received around 250 more votes than Hinkle, who may have turned off some local voters when he helped shoot down an effort to increase the local resort tax to pay for expanded housing options.

Democrat Pat Flowers, pictured here fishing in a green jacket, may have less time for hobbies if he holds onto his tiny lead over incumbent Sen. Jed Hinkle.

PHOTO COURTESY THE CAMPAIGN

COUNTY COMMISSION RACE A BATTLE BETWEEN SKIERS



Incumbent Republican Steve White once ran a ski shop in Helena where he employed a young man named Scot Schmidt. Schmidt went on to revolutionize the sport and embody the "extreme sports" revolution. He's now the Yellowstone Club's ski ambassador and remains friends with White.

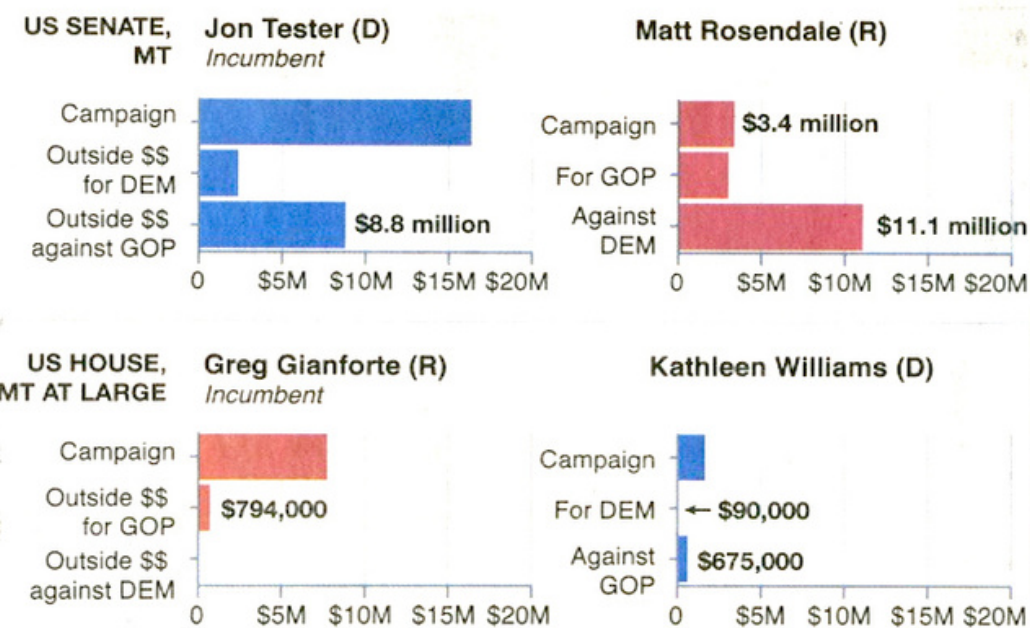
Challenger Scott MacFarlane moved to Bozeman to attend Montana State University on a track scholarship and ended up spending more time at Bridger Bowl than in the classroom. On the stump during his campaign to unseat White, he told crowds, "When I realized I wasn't going to be a professional skier, I went back to school and learned to fly helicopters."

MacFarlane is now a facilities manager for the Belgrade School system, but—if his lead in the vote tally holds—he will leave that job to become the lone Democrat on the Gallatin County Commission.



Avid skier and trail runner Scott MacFarlane is a big fan of spending time outside in Big Sky. He also could be a voice for the community when it comes to issues like affordable housing, commuter traffic and developing new subdivisions. PHOTO COURTESY THE CAMPAIGN

Outside spending versus campaign spending, major party Montana candidates for federal office



Data: Center for Responsive Politics, FEC. Current as of Oct. 12, 2018

LONE PEAK LOOKOUT

BRI

Tester on Trump tariffs and more

Jon Tester is the U.S. Senate's only working farmer. This lets him communicate in a sophisticated yet folksy way. It's a skill that was on display during a June 19 conference call with reporters from around Montana.

Martin Kidston with the Missoula Current asked for Tester's take on Trump's tariffs and the budding trade war. The wheat and pea grower from Big Sandy recalled how he recently met with the Montana Chamber of Commerce and officials from Saskatchewan. From both he encountered concern about Montana agriculture—the state's biggest industry—because it's particularly vulnerable to the ill effects of counter tariffs issued in response to Trump's.

Most of Montana's ag products are exports and that's why the unfolding situation, "Is going to noodle agriculture in Montana." No one on the call asked for a clear definition of "noodle," but it was taken to mean something that rhymes with "duck."

Tester went on to echo a warning to Big Sky developers—the tariffs could lead to higher prices on steel and other products used to construct new homes. As for the economic well-being of all industries potentially impacted by the tariffs, Tester said, "When it starts sliding, it doesn't turn around real quick. We got to do better. This is crazy."

Montana's senior senator also offered updates about where he stands on:

Trump vs. Canada—"To get in a fight and start calling people names is not helpful. We are alienating some of our basic allies who've been around and with us since World War II."

Trump vs. immigrant children—"It needs to be bipartisan, but the bottomline is the

"There are places to mine. There are places to drill. The doorstep of Yellowstone National Park is not one of them. We need to get this done. If you ruin that ecosystem, it's a billion dollars out of Montana's economy."



From his office in Washington D.C., Sen. Jon Tester recently fielded questions from the Lookout and other community newspapers around the state. PHOTO COURTESY OF U.S. SENATE

administration started a policy that must stop. You cannot rip children away. It's not making this country safer. The Secretary of Homeland Security and (Attorney General) Sessions could stop it. The administration set it up. They can pull it down. Our phones are lighting up and they should be. Montanans are not happy. You pull my kids away and I go crazy. It's not the right thing to be doing."

Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act—"There are places to mine. There are places to drill. The doorstep of Yellowstone National Park is not one of them. We need to get this done. If you ruin that ecosystem, it's a billion dollars out of Montana's economy."

Tester went on to note the U.S. Senate has had a hearing on his version of the protection act, but hasn't sent it out of committee. Another bill pushed by Rep. Greg Gianforte contains identical language and has a U.S. House subcommittee hearing scheduled for Thursday, June 21.

The legislation aspires to protect 30,000 acres of public land in the mountains north of Yellowstone.

ELECT



His kind of guys—Did President Donald Trump's visits to Montana push Rep. Greg Gianforte over the top vs. Democrat Kathleen Williams? And what about Matt "Flattop" Rosendale? As of press time, it appeared Rosendale lost his race against incumbent Sen. Jon Tester. The president, Rosendale and Gianforte are pictured here at the Nov. 3 rally in Belgrade. PHOTO BY MIKE COIL

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FREE

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LONE PEAK LOOKOUT

Big Sky, Montana

Election 2018 PREVIEW

Issue by issue breakdown inside



Sen. Jon Tester, Auditor Matt Rosendale, Kathleen Williams and Rep. Greg Gianforte all approach campaign communications locked-and-loaded. Williams parodied Montana's political infatuation with guns in an early campaign ad. Rosendale produced a self-parody television commercial at one point in his political career where he shot a drone in the sky. Tester boasts about shooting gophers. And given Gianforte's body-slammng skills, who needs a shotgun? ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF THE CAMPAIGNS

At gunpoint

Candidates all raise a weapon looking for votes—will voters respond by actually showing up?

BY DAVID MADISON
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General rifle season is underway around Big Sky and the rest of the state as many stalk deer, elk and other game, looking to fill their freezers and maybe score a trophy mount. It's a big deal for many local families, with some depending on harvested game as a major food source through the winter.

Hunting and firearms are also a big deal for candidates running to represent Montana in the U.S. House and Senate. They all support the Second Amendment and they all appear in campaign

photos holding a firearm. This kind of imagery has become a box checked by many aspirants for higher office. Seems a fly rod or bucket for picking huckleberries won't do—when it comes to running for Montana's elite elected seats in Washington D.C., you need to pack heat on the campaign trail.

The political season parade of camo and safety blaze orange might drive more hunters and anglers to the polls, but many voters tune out and fail to show up on Election Day.

Here's a list of countries where citizens turn out to vote at a higher rate than the United States: Belgium, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, South Korea, Netherlands, Israel, New Zealand, Finland, Hungary, Norway, Germany, Austria, France, Mexico, Italy, Czech Republic, the UK,

Greece, Canada, Portugal, Spain, Slovakia, Ireland, Estonia—and coming in at 26th is the U.S.

In Belgium, around 87 percent of the eligible, voting age public values democracy enough to vote. Here at home, the Pew Research Center reported this year, "Nearly a fifth (19.6 percent) of registered voters—about 37 million—cast ballots in House primary elections, according to the analysis of state election results. That may not sound like a lot, but it was a 56 percent increase over the 23.7 million who voted in 2014's House primaries; turnout that year was 13.7 percent of registered voters."

In Montana's June 5 primary election, 679,333 Montanans were eligible to vote, but just 282,704—42 percent—participated. Gallatin

County saw only 25,598 voters get active. That's 34 percent of the 74,666 registered voters in the county.

One excuse offered by non-voters is "I didn't know anything about the candidates, so how can I decide between them?"

Attention Big Sky voters: You no longer have that excuse. Our election preview coverage continues this week with a full grid breakdown of the big issues facing the contenders for Montana's top political offices—the seat in the U.S. Senate currently held by Sen. Jon Tester and Rep. Greg Gianforte's spot in the U.S. House, which he won in a special election after Ryan Zinke left to become Secretary of the Interior.

Coverage starts on pages A6 & A7

