



MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**NORTHERN**

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## Northern Network News

The Official Newsletter of MSU-Northern - January 30, 2026

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### Student Spotlight: Makaela Kelly

*Student  
Spotlight*

**MIKAELA  
KELLY**

*"Where my path became clear"*

 MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
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Click on the photo to watch her testimony

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## Havre Lions Club Celebrates Brandy Kurtz's Impact and Service



On Jan. 16, between basketball games, the Havre Lions Club honored **Brandy Kurtz** with the distinguished **Melvin Jones Fellowship Award**, one of the highest forms of recognition within Lions Clubs International.

Named after Lions Club founder Melvin Jones, the award recognizes individuals who exemplify the organization's motto, "*We Serve*," through outstanding commitment to their communities. Kurtz was selected for her lifelong dedication to serving Havre and the surrounding area.

An active member of the Elks and a strong supporter of veterans, Kurtz is known for her involvement at the local, state, and national levels. She has also contributed her time and energy to numerous community efforts, including support for MSU-Northern and its students, as well as volunteering during Bear Paw events and the Montana State Fair.

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## Northern's Chi Alpha Connects with Region at S.A.L.T. Conference



Sixteen MSU–Northern students in Chi Alpha traveled to Pocatello, Idaho over MLK weekend for the four-day Student Activist Leadership Training (S.A.L.T.) conference. The event brought together more than 200 college students from Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah to grow in faith and leadership.

Students participated in morning and evening teaching, worship through music, prayer, and breakout sessions focused on real-life challenges. The weekend also included fun activities like a trampoline park, bowling, pickleball, basketball, tennis, and pool.

The conference helped Northern students see Chi Alpha's wider campus impact while building friendships with students from other schools. Chi Alpha is an interdenominational Christian club that focuses on community and connection. The group meets Thursdays at 7:30 PM in the Morgan Hall Red Room.

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## From the Olympics to the Boardroom: Sherry Winn Inspires at Chamber Event



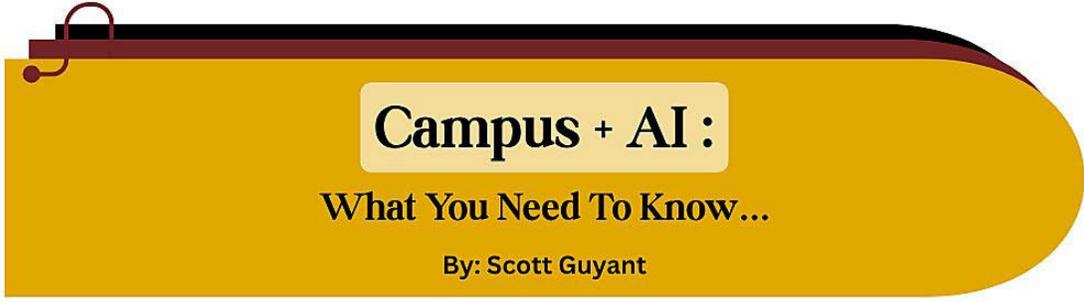
MSU-Northern welcomed community and business leaders for the **116th Annual Meeting of the Havre Area Chamber of Commerce** on January 21, 2026. The lunch-hour event included a welcome, the Chamber's annual report, and highlights from the past year along with goals for 2026, reinforcing the strong partnership between the university and the local business community.

The keynote speaker was **Sherry Winn**, CEO of Winning Leadership Company and one of Northern's most successful former coaches. An Olympic-level athlete and longtime college basketball coach, Winn won a national championship and led teams to three Elite Eight appearances during her 23-year coaching career.

Since 2012, she has delivered more than 3,800 hours of leadership training, speaking to audiences as large as 14,000 and working with major organizations such as Dell, McDonald's, Adobe, and Edward Jones. Her message focused on intentional leadership, teamwork, and excellence — values that connect athletics, business, and community.

By hosting the annual meeting, MSU-Northern continues to serve as a key partner in the growth and success of the Havre area.

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## Campus + AI :

### What You Need To Know...

By: Scott Guyant

## From Carbon Cost to Climate Tool: AI's Environmental Upside

*Part 2 of 2 on AI and the environment*

In the last column I touched on the uncomfortable side of AI's footprint – the rising electricity demand, heavy water use, and lots of uncertainty about future growth. In this part I look at the flip side: when, and under what conditions, AI might actually *help* with climate action rather than just deepen the problem.

Some international bodies are already framing AI as a potential “enabler of climate action.” A recent UNFCCC technical paper highlights how AI can cut emissions by optimizing power grids, smoothing demand, improving integration of solar and wind, and spotting inefficiencies in industry and transport while also strengthening our early-warning systems for floods, droughts, and storms in climate-vulnerable countries (UNFCCC, 2025). Work at the University of Chicago's AI for Climate Initiative (AICE) is using machine learning to improve hurricane track forecasts, detect wildfires earlier, and model urban heat islands, all aimed at protecting people and infrastructure from climate extremes (Editorial Team SDG13, 2025).

Moving on to organizations, survey research in *Technovation* finds that firms are using AI strategically to improve data quality, analytics, and climate-risk assessment, which is allowing them to see better climate-change performance, especially when “responsible AI” practices (governance, transparency, human oversight) are in place (Nadeem et al., 2025). So, although AI isn't a magic wand, it can strengthen mitigation and adaptation when embedded in our broader climate strategies.

At the data center level, even the modeling of environmental impact of AI servers offers a conditional path forward. Xiao and colleagues estimate that rapid AI growth in the U.S. could add tens of millions of tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and over a billion cubic meters of water use annually by 2030 but also show that smart siting, aggressive efficiency gains, and faster grid decarbonization together could cut those impacts by up to 73% (carbon) and 86% (water) (Xiao et al., 2025; PEese, 2025).

For campuses and classrooms, the takeaway is not “AI is green now,” but “AI is *conditionally* useful.” Tools that help us analyze utility data, optimize building schedules, plan renewables, model local climate risks, or teach climate literacy may justify their footprint in ways a generic essay or column writer never will. Frameworks like MIT’s proposed “Net Climate Impact Score” push us to evaluate AI projects on their full balance sheet of emissions *and* climate benefits (Zewe, 2025). So, the question going forward should be not just “How big is the model?” but “Is this particular use of AI making the climate problem better or worse?” It is up to each of us to determine how much we want to use AI given these impacts. Whether it is a good thing or not, AI has escaped Pandora’s box and likely is here to stay.

**Full references and further reading for this column are available at:**

<https://libguides.msun.edu/c.php?g=1502960>

As always please reach out to me with questions, comments, or topic you would like me to address next.

**Scott Guyant**

Research Librarian



## **Memorial Scholarship to be Established for Dr. Joyce Mphande-Finn**

Friend and colleague Dr. Joyce Mphande-Finn passed away in Salt Lake City, Utah on December 15th, 2025 after a lengthy illness. Originally from Malawi, Joyce lived in the United States since the early 90's, where she pursued her dream of teaching at the university level. Joyce graduated with her PhD from the University of Montana in Missoula in 2004 and went on to teach at Oregon State University in

Bend, OR, Kean University in Elizabeth, NJ, and City University of Seattle in Seattle, WA. In 2020 she moved to Havre and joined MSU-Northern where she was a valued professor in our Counselor Education program. Joyce’s passion for teaching, commitment to students, and genuine kindness left a lasting impact across campus and throughout the Havre community. Northern held a special place in Joyce’s heart, and she was deeply dedicated to supporting students as they prepared to serve others through the counseling profession. Her work reflected the values of compassion, inclusion, and care that define MSU–Northern.

A memorial scholarship has been established to honor Dr. Mphande-Finn’s legacy. If you would like to contribute, please send a check to the MSU–Northern Foundation, P.O. Box 1691, Havre, MT 59501, or contact the Foundation office at 406.265.3711.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Library Hours (Spring 2026):

- Sunday: 1–9 p.m. (starting January 25)
- Monday–Thursday: 8 a.m.–9 p.m.
- Friday: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
- (Holiday hours may vary.)

## Open Gym – Mon. – Thurs. (8-10 PM)

Come to the Armory Gym and enjoy playing pick up games of basketball, volleyball, ultimate frisbee and more. Gym is open Monday - Thursday from 8-10 PM.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## We Love Northern Ball – Jan. 31



Prepare for one of Northern's most anticipated and beautiful nights of the year. For three full days, the MSU-Northern Foundation team has been transforming the SUB Ballroom into an elegant, space — creating the perfect atmosphere for an evening you won't forget.

The 2026 We Love Northern Ball takes place January 31, 2026, and supports scholarships for Northern students. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for a night filled with live music by Plowed Under, exceptional catering from Bomgardner Catering, and an exciting lineup of live and silent auction items. This is a sold out event.

## Voices from the Canyon – Feb. 6, 7, 13, 14 (7:30 PM)

### A Tribute to the artists of Laurel Canyon

For this fifth tribute, the series turns its focus to Laurel Canyon, the unlikely hillside neighborhood that became a creative epicenter in the 1960s and '70s. Voices from the Canyon features music by artists such as The Byrds, The Mamas & The Papas, Crosby, Stills, Nash (& Young), Buffalo Springfield, Neil Young, Joni Mitchell, James Taylor, Eagles, Jackson Browne, and Carole King whose harmonies, honesty, and songwriting helped define a generation. February 6, 7, 13, & 14 - 7:30pm MSUN/MAT Theatre

[Click here for Ticket...](#)

## Vande Bogart Library's MicroMakerspace:

Winter Wellness Series 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

<b>February 5<sup>th</sup></b> <b><u>Paper Making</u></b> Recycle old or unused papers to create something new. Imbed seeds or flower petals to shake things up!	<b>February 12<sup>th</sup></b> <b><u>Book binding I</u></b> Learn how to turn your paper into a text block, additional paper will be available for new arrivals and as needed	<b>February 26<sup>th</sup></b> <b><u>Book binding II</u></b> Continue your adventure into book binding by creating your cover! Need refreshers? I'm here to help you learn	<b>March 26<sup>th</sup></b> <b><u>Mindful Journaling</u></b> Get scribbling, with tips for mindfulness, stencils, and journaling prompts to start using your new book
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No experience needed - all materials provided - walk-ins welcome!

## Winter Wellness Workshop: Papermaking – Feb. 5

Date: February 5<sup>th</sup>

Time: 4:00 PM-6:00 PM

Location: Vande Bogart Library Makerspace (Main floor by the study rooms!)

Kick off the Winter Wellness Workshop Series with a hands-on papermaking session in the library makerspace. Participants will learn the basics of making paper from recycled materials and create their own handmade sheets to use in later workshops or take home.

This session is beginner-friendly and designed to be low-pressure, with plenty of time to experiment and work at your own pace. All materials are provided, and no prior experience is required.

## **Winter Wellness Workshop: Bookbinding I (Signatures) – Feb. 12**

Date: February 12<sup>th</sup>

Time: 4:00 PM-6:00 PM

Location: Vande Bogart Library Makerspace (Main floor by the study rooms!)

Continue the Winter Wellness Workshop Series with the first bookbinding session, focused on preparing signatures for binding. Participants will learn how to fold, trim, and punch pages to create the interior structure of a handmade book.

This session is beginner-friendly and designed to be low-pressure, with time to work at your own pace and ask questions along the way. All materials are provided, and no prior experience is required.

## **Winter Wellness Workshop: Bookbinding II (Binding & Covers) – Feb. 26**

Date: February 26<sup>th</sup>

Time: 4:00 PM-6:00 PM

Location: Vande Bogart Library Makerspace (Main floor by the study rooms!)

In the second bookbinding session of the Winter Wellness Workshop Series, participants will assemble and bind their books. This session focuses on sewing signatures and adding covers to complete a simple, handmade book.

The workshop is beginner-friendly and designed to be calm and approachable, with guidance available throughout the process. All materials are provided, and no prior experience is required.

## **Winter Wellness Workshop: Mindful Journaling – Mar. 26**

Date: March 26<sup>th</sup>

Time: 4:00 PM-6:00 PM

Location: Vande Bogart Library Makerspace (Main floor by the study rooms!)  
The Winter Wellness Workshop Series concludes with a mindful journaling session using the handmade books created earlier in the series. Participants will explore journaling and mindful doodling as creative, low-pressure ways to reflect and unwind.

This session is beginner-friendly and open to all, with no expectation to share or write in any particular way. All materials are provided, and no prior experience is required.

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## CAMPUS SCHEDULE

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### Friday, January 30

- Skylights Basketball @ Dickinson State University - 5:00 PM
- Lights Basketball @ Dickinson State University - 7:00 PM

### Saturday, January 31

- Skylights Basketball @ Bismarck State College - 4:00 PM
- We Love Northern Ball - 5:30 PM
- Lights Basketball @ Bismarck State College - 6:00 PM
- Lights Wrestling (at home) vs Southern Oregon - 6:00 PM

### Sunday, February 01

- Spring Deferred Payment Schedule: 25% Due

### Friday, February 06

- Northern Indoor Track @ Carignan Classic
- Skylights Basketball vs Mayville State University - 5:00 PM
- Lights Basketball vs Mayville State University - 7:00 PM
- Voices from the Canyon: A Laurel Canyon Tribute - 7:30 PM

### Saturday, February 07

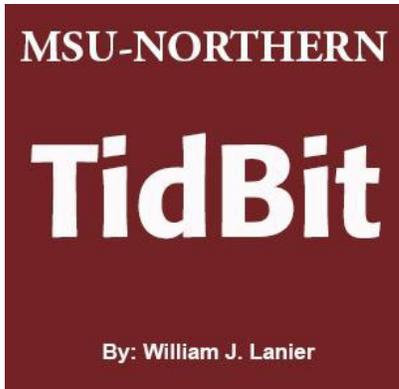
- Lights Wrestling @ Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University - 2:00 PM
- Skylights Basketball vs Valley City State University - 5:00 PM
- Lights Basketball vs Valley City State University - 7:00 PM
- Voices from the Canyon: A Laurel Canyon Tribute - 7:30 PM

### Friday, February 13

- Skylights Basketball @ Rocky Mountain College - 5:00 PM
- Lights Basketball @ Rocky Mountain College - 7:00 PM
- Voices from the Canyon: A Laurel Canyon Tribute - 7:30 PM

### Saturday, February 14

- Skylights Basketball @ Carroll College - 5:00 PM
- Lights Basketball @ Carroll College - 7:00 PM
- Voices from the Canyon: A Laurel Canyon Tribute - 7:30 PM



## (#450) The Original “We Love NMC Ball”

With the 2026 “We Love Northern Ball” coming up this weekend, I thought I would go back and check out the first one, held 39 years ago. The very first “We Love NMC Ball” was held on Valentine’s Day in 1987. The ball was organized by the Soroptimist International of Havre with the help of various community organizations,

campus organizations, faculty, staff, and students. The January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1987, Havre Daily News stated that Sharon Caven was the chair of the “We Love NMC Ball”.

In a letter to the Editor in the January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1987 Havre Daily News, Roger Barber and Mary Van Buskirk stated that the purpose of the ball was two-fold, one to show support for Northern Montana College in a “very visible way” and second to raise funds for student scholarships.

**Letters to the Editor**

**Rally for NMC**

Dear Editor:

Many of the service organizations in Havre are sponsoring a major fund-raiser and rally for Northern Montana College on Valentine's Day. The festivities include a prime rib dinner and an old-fashioned dance, with lots of extras planned to make the evening unique.

The purpose of the event is two-fold:

1) Many people in the community felt that something needed to be done to show support for the college, and a celebration seemed to be the answer. Northern Montana College is a major employer and economic force along the Hi-Line, and its loss or diminishment would have enormous repercussions. Despite the recent decisions by the Board of Regents, which could have been much more sweeping, the college is not home free. The Legislature will have to make some difficult choices in future weeks, and unless the community gets behind Northern Montana College, it could be hurt. Attendance at the “We Love NMC” Ball is a very visible way for everyone to show support for the institution.

2) Proceeds from the event will be used to set up scholarships at the college. The reality is that numbers count. The state funding formula is based on the number of students enrolled at any institution. One way to insure enrollments is to have scholarship money available to bring students to the campus. Part of the ticket price will go to that fund, and if more tickets are sold, even more money can go to the scholarship fund. You will also have the opportunity to spend more money at the dinner and dance itself, by checking your coat, buying a corsage for your date, or craving a sumptuous dessert. Spending money is another way to support the college.

The event is scheduled for Saturday, February 14, at 7 p.m. on the Northern Montana College campus. Tickets cost \$25 a person. If you already have plans for that weekend, don't shrug your shoulders and say sorry. You can still buy a ticket and then not attend. Your money will still go into the scholarship fund.

We urge you to buy your tickets right away, because the sponsoring organizations need a head count soon for planning purposes. Just call the Havre Chamber of Commerce, 265-4383, for reservations. And if you don't like the idea, the Northern Montana College Foundation is always glad to take contributions any time and for any amount for scholarships.

Roger Barber  
Mary Van Buskirk

Lynda Patrick-Hayes was quoted in the February 13, 1987, issue of the Havre Daily News: “...the tickets were priced at \$25.00 and that the 250 tickets were sold out.” Lynda was the Executive Vice-President of the Havre Chamber of Commerce,

In case you were wondering, the first “We Love NMC Ball” raised about \$6,000.00 dollars (per Lynda Patrick-Hayes in the February 18, 1987 Havre Daily News). In 2026, that \$6,000.00 would equate to about \$17,100.00!

Here is a picture from the 1987 Northerner of the campus club, Delta Alpha Theta (D.A.T.). Delta Alpha Theta members are shown gearing up to serve wine at the first “We Love NMC Ball” in 1987.



To all who have helped, donated, assisted, and attended the “We Love Northern Ball” over the years, thank you!

Please continue to check back for more NNN TidBits! If you see anything that you would like me to highlight, please send it to me at [wjlanier1963@yahoo.com](mailto:wjlanier1963@yahoo.com)

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