

US SENATE

# Dems request one candidate exit race

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A group of Montana Democratic legislators on Wednesday urged two candidates running for the state's U.S. Senate seat to meet and, together, choose which campaign should back out of the race — and the sooner, the better.

In a letter sent Wednesday, 17 of the 60 Democrats in the Montana Legislature

asked Democratic candidate Alani Bankhead and independent Seth Bodnar to unify the opposition against the race's Republican frontrunner.

That either campaign will withdraw is far from a foregone conclusion. But the authors of Wednesday's letter said anything less would hand the election to GOP nominee Kurt Alme.

"Every week that passes makes it more

difficult to unify supporters, consolidate resources and mount the strongest possible campaign for November," they wrote.

This move is the latest example of the cracks that have formed within the Montana Democratic Party around how to navigate a Senate race that features a longshot political newcomer with little fundraising horsepower but a "D" next to her name, and an independent challenger

with millions in the bank and the support of party stalwarts like Jon Tester and Max Baucus.

"The stakes are extraordinarily high," the legislators wrote. "We hope you take them seriously, look beyond your personal ambitions and unite your efforts for the future of our state and country."

Please see **LETTER**, Page A2

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# MEADOWSWEET HERBS



SHANNA MADISON PHOTOS, MISSOULIAN

Cole Morse and Kaiya Steele stock up on bulk herbs at Meadowsweet Herbs on Thursday in Missoula. The shop will be celebrating its 30th anniversary on Saturday.

## One-of-a-kind, woman-owned shop to host 30th anniversary party

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Meadowsweet Herbs is one of those eclectic shops that just sort of makes Missoula such a special place.

Where else can you find cardamom facial cleanser, emu oil, lymphatic detoxifying seaweed gel, bulk beet root powder, and "Fu — the Patriarchy" herbal tea all in one place? (That last one is one of their best sellers, by the way.)

Located in the Hip Strip, an area that has long-contained an array of diverse businesses, the woman-owned small business is holding a 30th anniversary party on Saturday, July 11 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the shop at 180 S. 3rd St. W.

There'll be free samples and raffle entries, snacks and beverages and the entire store is 10% off that day.

"This Saturday is the business's 30th birthday, which serves as a customer appreciation day and celebration," said owner Kelly Needs. "The wonderful citizens



Merchandise inside Meadowsweet Herbs, pictured on Thursday in Missoula.

of Missoula are an important key to Meadowsweet's success. Meadowsweet is more than a store, it is a gathering place for all who appreciate the gifts of nature."

She said the business started out

as a two-person shop owned by husband and wife John Goicovich and Elaine Sheff on South Russell. They sold the original business to

Please see **MEADOWSWEET**, Page A2

# Charging docs reveal details in stabbing

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A Missoula man has been charged with deliberate homicide after witnesses reported he stabbed a man to death during a fight, according to court documents.

Jeremy Luke Means, 39, was arrested Tuesday on one charge of deliberate homicide. Charging documents were filed in Missoula County Justice Court on Wednesday afternoon. On Thursday, Missoula County Sheriff and Coroner Jeremiah Petersen identified the stabbing victim as Vaughn Tlustosch, 41, of Missoula, in a press release.

According to charging documents, at around 2:30 a.m., a witness called police to report a stabbing that had just occurred on the California Street pedestrian footbridge. Officers arrived to find Tlustosch being attended to by the caller and another witness, known as Jane Doe in the charging documents.

Tlustosch had fresh stab wounds on his leg, torso and forearm. He was transported to St. Patrick Hospital, where he succumbed to his wounds.

The witnesses said that they, Tlustosch and several other people were together when Means, who is Doe's ex-boyfriend, approached the group, apparently looking for a fight. Tlustosch approached Means and threw the first punches, leading to them exchanging blows.

The witnesses said they saw Means stab Tlustosch, then flee on his bicycle.

Doe told law enforcement she was in a relationship with Tlustosch, and two days prior, Means had approached them and tried to start a fight, according to charging documents. Doe stated that Means had pulled out a switchblade knife and threatened to kill both of them, but the event deescalated.

Means was not found at the scene on Tuesday. At around 9 a.m. Tuesday morning, police tried to find Means in a residence on the 500 block of Spruce Street and issued a shelter-in-place order while conducting the operation. At around 9:30 a.m., a SWAT team began operations. The team used devices that made loud noises and broke a window. Means was not found there, either.

At about 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, a police detective located Means in the Dog & Bicycle Bakery and Cafe on the 800

Please see **STABBING**, Page A2

# Library to host free block party

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It's been five years since the Missoula Public Library opened to the public, and now the Missoula County government will host a free block party in front of the building on July 11 from 3 to 6 p.m. at 455 E. Main Street.

"The celebration will bring together community partners, local organizations, live music, food vendors and family-friendly activities to recognize the library's first five years in the downtown building and the community support that made it possible," said Missoula County communications

manager Allison Franz.

The \$37 million facility was built with a \$30 million bond approved by county voters in 2016, along with \$6.25 million in private funds from more than 550 private donors through a capital campaign and funds from other library partners. The Missoula Redevelopment Agency kicked in \$500,000 in Tax Increment Financing in 2019.

"Five years ago, our community opened the doors to a library unlike any other in the country," said library director Slaven Lee. "This building reflects what is possible when a community invests in learning, creativity and each

other. We are excited to celebrate this milestone with the people and organizations who helped make it happen."

Lee said that since the Library opened its doors in 2021, they've welcomed millions of visitors for "lifelong learning, civic engagement, creativity and community gathering."

Lee also credited the leadership and dedication of former director Honore Bray, as well as the Friends of the Missoula Public Library, the Library Foundation and the city and county governments

Please see **LIBRARY**, Page A2



BEN ALLAN SMITH, MISSOULIAN

The Missoula Public Library, pictured on its grand opening date in 2021, is hosting a free block party on Saturday, July 11 to mark five years in its current building.