

THE WEDNESDAY READER
December 20, 2023

Please note, today's Wednesday Reader is the last one for 2023; the Wednesday Reader will return Wednesday, January 3, 2024. Additionally, I will be out of the office beginning Thursday afternoon, December 21 and returning Wednesday, January 3. Enjoy the upcoming break, have a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year. ~Eric

Fall 2023 Stock Market Game Winners Announced

The [Montana Council on Economic Education](#) (MCEE) announces the [Fall 2023 Stock Market Game](#) winners and wished to thank all the teachers for what you do in the classroom and for participating in the Fall 2023 Stock Market Game.

This fall's competition had an exciting finish and with 546 teams competing—the highest participation numbers yet.

MCEE also thanks Glacier Bancorp and its family of six Montana banks for removing barriers to participation by paying all the team fees and also supporting an enhanced prize model providing more rewards deeper into the leader list.

Position	Portfolio Value	School	Teacher	Prize
1	\$135,101.12	Skyview High School	Hasquet, Jordan	\$500
2	\$126,544.74	Dillon Middle School	Anderson, Jeremy	\$300
3	\$121,940.28	St Regis High School	Stanek, Jeffrey	\$200
4	\$120,459.45	Billings Sr High School	Barreto Jeannette	\$100
5	\$118,851.58	Project for Alternative Learning, Helena	Rauch, Marie	\$75
6	\$117,944.98	Beaverhead Co High School	Konen, Bobbi	\$50 Visa Card 6-10
7	\$117,917.63	Baker High School	Beach, Pamela	\$50 Visa Card 6-10
8	\$116,693.38	Hellgate High School	Klimkiewicz, Steven	\$50 Visa Card 6-10
9	\$116,668.99	Hellgate High School	Klimkiewicz, Steven	\$50 Visa Card 6-10
10	\$116,575.16	Baker High School	Beach, Pamela	\$50 Visa Card 6-10
11	\$116,408.37	St Regis High School	Stanek, Jeffrey	Top Class C
12	\$116,326.20	Laurel High School	Condon, Lisa	Top Class A
15	\$114,964.76	Skyview High School	Hasquet, Jordan	Top Class AA
19	\$114,293.18	Manhattan H S	Swenson, Amanda	Top Class B
306	\$103,640.38	Laurel High School	Condon, Lisa	Most Improved from 11/13
23	\$113,154.85	Dillon Middle School	Anderson, Jeremy	Top Junior High

A brief story from a team from Laurel, by November 13 their \$100,000 starting balance had dropped to \$85,658.79 but they showed resiliency and through a number of decisions, pulled up their finishing balance to \$103,640.85.

MCEE believes there is a lesson to be learned in the grit it takes to bounce back and added a new prize category of rewarding the most improved to encourage others to stick with it, especially when facing challenges.

Congratulations to all of 1,470 participating students and 50 teacher/coaches in introducing investment principles to empower youth into the future.

The [spring competition](#) will be February 5 to April 12, 2024. [Registration is now open.](#)

Ring in the New Year with NGPF's First FREE Certification Training of 2024

[Next Gen Personal Finance](#) (NGPF) announced the opening of [registration](#) for Cohort #40 Certification Courses. Make 2024 the year of becoming more confident in the classroom, boosting your personal finance knowledge, and maybe even becoming an [NGPF Distinguished Educator](#) by taking an NGPF Certification Course.

[Certification Courses](#) are NGPF's most in-depth professional development format, offered as live courses as well as on-demand. Cohort 40 runs from January 9-February 8 with an exam window from February 9-16. Cohort

Cohort 40 will offer both live and on-demand course offerings. Live course offerings include [Investing](#), [Insurance](#), and [Paying for College](#) with [Banking & Budgeting](#) available on-demand.

Live courses will be offered on the following schedule.

- [Investing](#): Tuesdays, 3-5 pm
- [Insurance](#): Wednesdays, 5-7 pm
- [Paying for College](#): Tuesdays, 3-5 pm

The on-demand [Banking & Budgeting](#) will be available to complete January 8-February 7 with the exam window February 9-16.

How do the live courses work? Attend a two-hour virtual session twice each week during weeks 1-4 and attend a one-hour virtual session and a one-hour optional review session during week 5. During the exam week, take a one-hour self-paced exam and become certified with a score of 80% or higher.

How does the on-demand format work? There will be four (4) self-paced modules that will take two hours to complete and one (1) self-paced module that will take 1 hour to complete. All five modules will be available on January 8 and must be completed by February 7. There will be no live instructor for the on-demand modules nor a review session. The exam window will be from February 9-16.

If you participate in the [Cohort #40 Certification Courses](#), work with your school/district to receive OPI Renewal Units for your time. As NGPF is an out-of-state provider, local schools/districts can award the OPI Renewal Units.

Want more details on what you'll learn in each course? [View the Course Catalog.](#)

December 31 is the Last Day for WBEA 2024 Conference Early-Bird Registration

The [Oregon Business Education Association](#) invites you to this year's [Western Business Education Association's Conference](#) to be held in Eugene, Oregon, February 15-18, 2024. The conference committee has been busy at work and continues to do so to provide educators with high-quality professional development in Personal Finance, Economics, Marketing, Accounting, Computer Science, Entrepreneurship, and more.

Reasons to attend: Dynamic speakers, breakout sessions, viticulture experience, certification workshops, networking, and vendors. Available tour include University of Oregon Hayward Field

Museum, NIKE, Cascade Raptor Center, 5th Street Market & Alley, and a Viticulture Business Seminar and Tour.

[Registration](#) for the WBEA 2024 Conference is now open and can be online with a NBEA-member early bird rate of \$375.00 if paid by January 1, 2024. After January 1, 2024, the NBEA-member early bird rate increases to \$425.00.

Rooms can be reserved at [The Graduate Hotel](#) online at a conference rate of \$159.00 plus tax/fees.

For travel planning, a [conference overview and schedule](#) is available.

Save the Date for the [WBEA 2025 Wild Card Conference](#), *Path to Collaboration and Discovery*, February 14-16, 2025, at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Billings, Montana.

Perkins Fall CTE Data Collection Due December 31, 2023

The fall is the time to contact graduates of the Class of 2023 identified as CTE Concentrators to determine and report their post-graduation placement.

Graduates are identified by one of the following post-graduation status categories.

- Post-secondary Education or Training: attended(ing) a post-secondary program or additional training
- Employed: currently employed, not enrolled in a post-secondary program or in the military
- Unemployed: after graduating, student became/remains unemployed
- Military: student joined the military
- Not Known: student's status after graduating from high school is not known
- Other: student's status after graduating from high school is something other than above options

For assistance in completing the data collection, a [User Guide](#) is available for entering the data in AIM.

Applications Now Being Accepted for Perkins Rural Reserve Grants for 2023-2024

Purpose: To create career awareness, recruit, and retain students within a CTE Secondary Program of Study that leads to a high skill, high wage, or in demand occupations.

There are currently 176 schools offering over 260 Career and Technical Education courses to students in grades 5-8 in our Montana schools. The most offered course is in career exploration. Montana does not allocate Perkins's funding for middle school programs this year's Rural Reserve Grant will be to encourage pathway work for the middle grades.

Schools could use the funds to help:

- establish innovative delivery methods for career exploration,
- expose students to employability skills earlier,
- establish foundational elements for work-based learning,
- improve transitions from middle grades into secondary Career and Technical Education pathways.

High School Awards: Grants of **up to \$5,000** each will be available to secondary Perkins eligible: school districts who receive less than \$15,000 in Perkins funding Schools will have had to complete the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) and E-Grant application as well.

Middle School Awards: Grants of **up to \$5,000** each will be available to secondary Perkins eligible school districts to support CTE work in the middle grades (5-8). Schools will have to complete the

Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) and E-Grant application as well for the 2023-2024 Grant cycle. Middle School programs will need to apply through their high school district to submit the application.

Districts are only eligible for a total of \$5,000 in awards, must have completed the Perkins Grant Application for Fiscal Year 24 and receive an allocation of less than \$15,000. Grant winners notified on an ongoing basis. First reviews will be January 2, 2024.

Use of Funds: Applicants need to show a middle school/ secondary program partnership. Money will be granted to the Secondary Program to use for Middle School CTE Development/Support.

Click [here](#) for the application.

WBEA 2024 Professional Development Leadership Training—Register to Participate Today

Each year, the [Western Business Education Association](#) (WBEA) hosts the Professional Development Leadership Training (PDLT) as part of the yearly conference for Presidents-elect, Membership Directors, and other new and emerging leaders from the western region's states, territories, and provinces (S/T/P) business education organizations.

The PDLT is a great opportunities for S/T/P leaders, and those identified as future/potential leaders, to learn more about the Business Education profession and the role the National Business Education Association (NBEA), WBEA, and the local S/T/P associations play in the development and support of Business Educators and the profession of Business Education.

Participation is open to anyone interested in taking advantage of this unique professional development opportunity by completing the [PDLT application](#). Please submit your application by February 1, 2024.

PDLT participants will meet Saturday, February 17, from 7:30-9 am. A continental breakfast will be provided. PDLT participants will also be recognized at the WBEA Awards Banquet on Sunday evening.

The WBEA leadership team looks forward to seeing you at this year's [WBEA 2024 Conference](#) in Eugene, Oregon, February 15-19, 2024. Register today.

For questions, or for more information, regarding the WBEA PDLT, please contact Chris Liebelt-Garcia, WBEA's Representative to the NBEA Executive Board, at chrisliebelt_garcia@yahoo.com.

Youth Serve Montana Scholarships 2024 Applications Now Open

The Governor's Office of Community Service, [Reach Higher Montana](#), and [Montana Campus Compact](#) are pleased to offer \$125,000 in scholarships for 2024 graduating seniors via the [Youth Serve Montana Scholarship](#) program.

Up to 100 seniors will receive scholarships for completing volunteer service hours in the 12 months prior to submitting their application. Students who have completed 50 hours are eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship, and students who have completed 100 hours are eligible for a \$1,500 scholarship.

Applications are now being accepted and closes January 31, 2024.

Visit the [Youth Serve Montana Scholarship](#) page for complete details and to apply.

ACTE's New Online Entrepreneurship Institute for Middle & High School Teachers

The [Association for Career & Technical Education](#) (ACTE) announces an online professional learning opportunity focusing on [entrepreneurship and preparing students for the new Innovation and Gig Economy](#).

The Innovation and Gig Economy requires students to graduate with an entrepreneurial mindset (opportunity recognition, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, innovation, initiative, collaboration, etc.) even if they do not start their own business. 40% of Americans have a side hustle and nearly 50% of today's youth say they intend to start their own business someday.

Entrepreneurial skills are an increasingly essential part of workforce development and overlap with the workplace readiness skills employers say they want in new hires in a rapidly changing, innovation-based workplace. Communities also thrive when its members are empowered to become change agents by offering business-centered solutions to unmet community challenges.

Using experiential learning and a field-tested curriculum, this all-new [Entrepreneurship Institute](#) runs in two parts—February 19-March 22 and April 8-May 17—and offers participants instructional best practices, classroom-ready resources, and assignments they can use with their students.

Easily customizable, the Institute's online modules are self-paced. Live Zoom classes feature introductions to community partners and grassroots entrepreneurs who share lessons learned, and breakout groups for national networking, resource sharing, and lesson planning.

Attendees will receive 55 hours of professional development or an optional three hours of undergraduate or graduate credit. [Learn more](#).

NBEA's 2024 Convention Registration for Myrtle Beach is Open

Registration is now open for the [National Business Education Association](#) (NBEA) 2024 Annual Convention. The [NBEA 2024 Convention & Expo](#) will be held Tuesday-Friday, March 26-29, 2024, at the Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center Hotel in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Both in-person and virtual participation options are available.

Get ready for a one-of-a-kind conference experience at the picturesque beach destination of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Join us for the 2024 NBEA Convention & Expo to combine learning, networking, and perhaps a little bit of sand. Soak up the sun, build valuable relationships, and gain invaluable knowledge as NBEA goes to the beach.

Now included with the in-person registration:

- Continental Breakfast Wednesday, Thursday & Friday
- Lunch Wednesday, Thursday & Friday Awards Luncheon
- Wednesday evening welcome reception
- Transportation on Wednesday evening to [Broadway at the Beach](#)
- Thursday Networking Event: Rooftop Dinner at RipTydz

Virtual registrants can attend sessions from the comfort of their own homes. Sessions will be broadcast live via ZOOM! Select whether you plan to attend the event live, in Myrtle Beach, or virtually when you register.

All attendees will have access to session broadcasts, and most concurrent sessions will be recorded and posted for later viewing for convention registrants.

The Early-bird, NBEA-member rate for in-person registration is \$499 and \$349 for virtual registration. The early-bird rates end February 27, 2024.

If participating in-person, rooms at the [Sheraton Myrtle Beach Convention Center Hotel](#) can be booked for \$159+taxes & fees. The convention room block ends February 26, 2024.

Visit the [NBEA 2024 Convention & Expo](#) page for complete convention details.

Announcing the 2024 National STEM Festival—April 11-13

The U.S. Department of Education and EXPLR are excited to announce their public-private partnership to co-present the first-ever [National STEM Festival](#), a nationwide effort to identify and encourage the next generation of innovators in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, the U.S. Department of Education has prioritized rigorous, relevant, and joyful STEM education for the nation's students to engender a sense of belonging in STEM and to ensure 21st century college and career readiness. The U.S. Department of Education and EXPLR are committed to creating equitable opportunities for STEM learning for students from all backgrounds.

The National STEM Festival will take place in person, April 11-13, 2024, at The Square, 1850 K St., NW, Washington, DC. The schedule to date follows:

--April 11: the Department will host a 2nd You Belong in STEM Convening (invitation only)

--April 12: student innovators will exhibit their projects for the media and federal VIPs. (invitation only)

--April 13, 12:00-5:00 PM: student innovators and federal STEM agencies will exhibit for the public (open invitation)

"The Biden-Harris Administration is thrilled to have the U.S. Department of Education team up with EXPLR to host the first-ever National STEM Festival," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. "To Raise the Bar in education, we must provide all students with rich and engaging STEM learning experiences that unleash their love of learning and problem-solving skills. This event is an exciting opportunity to celebrate our future scientists, creators, and innovators, and to help more students recognize they that too belong in STEM."

"EXPLR is passionate about helping kids realize their potential," said EXPLR CEO Jenny Buccos.

"Through the National STEM Festival, we are shining a spotlight on this nation's brilliant young minds, including those from underrepresented backgrounds. Genius should never go overlooked.

AP Business Principles Course Under Consideration by the College Board

Earlier this month, [National Business Education Association](#) (NBEA) Executive Director Joseph McClary shared some preliminary information about a potential [AP Business Principles](#) course being considered by the College Board.

Through an engaging, full-year course that parallels the content and rigor of introductory, college-level business coursework, AP Business Principles is designed to prepare a diverse group of students for business careers, while also giving them the college credit and placement benefits of AP. AP Business Principles is designed to prepare a diverse group of students for careers in business and to improve readiness for subsequent courses in Marketing, Finance, Accounting, and Entrepreneurship. In the course, students explore how businesses operate and the role of business in society, and they apply their learning through case studies and a through-course business canvas project of their choosing.

A presentation with additional details about the AP Business Principles course can be viewed [here](#).

If you are interested in learning more about the course and/or interested in being involved through the course development process, please complete the [AP Business Principles Interest Form](#).

First Submissions for The Prospects 2024 Began Friday, December 1

The [Montana Chamber Foundation](#) is excited to announce the 2024 edition of [The Prospects](#), an entrepreneurship competition. With over \$75,000 in cash, prizes, and scholarships available, this is a great opportunity to get your students' ideas exposed to business leaders in Montana.

[Tiana Yates](#) (tiana@montanachamber.com), the Montana Chamber Empowered Coordinator, will be your main contact for this year's competition. You do not have to be teaching [Empowered](#) to participate in the contest.

[The Prospects](#) includes both a high school and a middle school division. The Fall competition is open now with submissions being accepted beginning December 1, 2023. Submission will be judged as they are submitted with finalists being announced on February 1, March 1, and April 1. The 2024 Virtual Awards Ceremony will be held April 24, 2024.

Key Dates for The Prospects 2024

- December 1: First Submission Date
- February 1, March 1, & April 1: Advancements Announced
- March 15: Final Submission Date
- April 25: Virtual Awards Show
- May 19-21: In-person competition in Bozeman for the Grand Champion prize

The Prospects categories for the High School level include

[Existing Business Idea](#): Any high school students already running their own small business. Pitch your business and how you intend to grow and sustain it moving forward.

[New Business Idea](#): Do you have the next big thing? We want high school students to reach for stars and come up with the next amazing, new idea.

[Hack My State](#): Take time to help us come up with solutions for one of our state's biggest concerns right now, Childcare. Come up with a solution that could help solve the problem for finding childcare all across Montana.

[School Enterprise](#): Does your school, class or club run a business? If so, tell us why it exists and ways to improve or expand to benefit your school.

At the Middle School level, the Junior Prospects competition categories include

[Design Challenge](#) (6th grade only): 6th graders will be tasked to combine three items and let their creativity shine. Create the next big thing and help innovate Montana.

[Hack My School](#) (7th & 8th grade): Let's be solution makers. We want you to take a deep dive into your school and come up with a realistic and attainable solution to make your school better for everyone.

[Vacant Lot](#) (7th & 8th grade): Like Hack My School, but we want you to look at your community to be the next generation of change makers. Look at the vacant lots, existing buildings, and other areas of your community and pitch to us your solution to make your hometown better.

[Existing Business Idea](#) (6th-8th grade): Any middle school students already running their own small business. Pitch your business and how you intend to grow and sustain it moving forward.

Eligibility: Any of Montana's high school and middle school students are encouraged to submit their innovative ideas and solutions or enter their existing businesses.

Submissions: Pitch Video (2 minutes or less), Business Summary (1,000 words max.), a Waiver Form signed by an Educator and/or Parent or Guardian, and a completed W-9 Form.

Complete contest and submission details can be found on [The Prospects page](#) of the Montana Chamber Foundation website.

For questions, please contact Tiana Yates at tiana@montanachamber.com.

Each participant will receive an extensive digital resource handbook specifically designed for this seminar. The handbook includes:

--Sample prompts and strategies for using AI tools to create engaging and personalized business lessons that cater to individual student learning needs

--Ideas and resources on how to make the best use of AI tools in your classroom

--Descriptions and overviews of the AI tools covered in the seminar as well as additional tools to consider for specific business ed content areas

--Ways to use AI to automate routine administrative tasks, allowing more time for teaching and student learning

--Practical strategies and tutorials to more effectively introduce AI tools to business ed students

Using AI Tools To Enhance Student Learning In Business Education

Presented by Diane Marsh (former Business Educator at Columbia Falls High School) for the Institute for educational Development, [Using AI Tools To Enhance Student Learning In Business Education](#) is an exciting opportunity for Grades 6-12 business teachers to explore the latest developments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and their specific applications in the world of business education.

Participants will learn how to create a learning experience that strengthens students' critical thinking, creativity, and engagement. This seminar is designed to provide teachers with practical, actionable strategies and skills you can implement immediately to enhance your existing business curriculum, making it more interactive and impactful for your students. Join Diane for a highly practical day filled with ways to make best use of AI tools to strengthen your students' business learning, streamline grading and assessments, enhance your instruction, and improve your own productivity.

Each participant will receive an extensive digital resource handbook specifically designed for this seminar. The handbook includes:

--Sample prompts and strategies for using AI tools to create engaging and personalized business lessons that cater to individual student learning needs

- Ideas and resources on how to make the best use of AI tools in your classroom
- Descriptions and overviews of the AI tools covered in the seminar as well as additional tools to consider for specific business ed content areas
- Ways to use AI to automate routine administrative tasks, allowing more time for teaching and student learning
- Practical strategies and tutorials to more effectively introduce AI tools to business ed students

The [Using AI Tools To Enhance Student Learning In Business Education](#) virtual seminar will be held January 29, 2024, from 7 am-1:30 pm (MST), with additional options to participate on February 2, 2024, or March 1, 2024.

For complete details and to register to participate in one of the three offerings, please visit the [seminar page](#) on the Institute for Educational Development website.

NCCCE 2024 Conference Offering Half-Day Tracks—Including a CTE

the [Northwest Council for Computer Education](#) (NCCCE) 2024 [Conference](#) will be held in Seattle, February 14-16, at the Seattle Convention Center.

New this year, the NCCCE 2024 Conference will be offering four (4) half day summits on Wednesday, February 14.

- [Future Ready Librarians Summit](#), 8-11:50 am
- [Building the Pipeline with CTE Opportunities Summit](#), 12:30-4 pm
- [IT Cybersecurity Summit](#), 12:30-4 pm
- [Leading with Intention for Innovative, Sustainable Change \(Leadership\) Summit](#), 8-11:50 am

Visit the [NCCCE 2024 Conference](#) for details regarding [registration](#) and [housing](#) at the Hyatt Regency Seattle.

[Scholarships](#) are also available for first-year and preservice teachers attending the NCCCE 2024 Conference for the first time.

AWS K-12 Cyber Grant Program

Recognizing the need for the K12 community to enhance cybersecurity protection against intrusion, ransomware attacks, and data breaches, AWS created a non-competitive [K12 Cyber Grant Program](#) and is investing \$20 million in AWS promotional credits for new and existing customers.

The grant is open to K12 public school districts, regional education service agencies (ESAs), and state departments of education (DOEs) to implement cloud-based cybersecurity solutions to increase their security posture. Grant awards take into consideration the type of entity, student enrollment for districts, and students supported (ESAs and DOEs).

In addition to the grant funding, AWS has committed to upskilling staff through no-cost training, and providing no-cost cyber incident response assistance to AWS K12 customers in the event of a cyberattack.

Click [here](#) for complete details and to apply. The application deadline is December 31, 2023.

Encourage High School Seniors to Apply for the Cutler-Bell Prize

The [Computer Science Teachers Association](#) (CSTA) has opened applications for the [2023-2024 Cutler-Bell Application](#), which looks to recognize up to four high school senior students residing in the US for their projects in computer science.

Winners will receive a \$10,000 prize to go to their college/university of choice.

Applications are due by January 19, 2023.

[Share the application](#) with your students. Have questions about the award? [Join the CSTA Awards committee](#) for one of their three Q&A sessions about the award. These sessions are open to students as well.

Hawaii ACTE Invites You to Join Them for the ACTE Region V 2024 Conference

The Hawaii Association for Career & Technical Education is hosting the [ACTE Region V 2024 Conference](#) in Honolulu, April 9-12, at the [Ala Moana Hotel](#) in downtown Waikiki.

[Registration](#) for the conference is now open and can be completed online. The early-bird registration rate is \$475 which includes tour options for Wednesday, April 10; breakfast each morning Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; lunch on Wednesday; and receptions Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The early-bird registration rate ends February 1, 2024.

If the 2024 conference is your first time attending an ACTE Region V conference, [apply](#) for a [First Timer's stipend](#) of \$450.

Rooms can be booked at the [Ala Moana Hotel](#) at the conference rate of \$169 or \$189 depending on tower selected.

To help with travel planning, a [Schedule At-a-Glance](#) is available along with a [letter](#) to help justify your attendance at the conference.

To be part of the conference program, submit a [Call for Presentation](#) to present a session. Calls for Presentations are due February 1, 2024.

Montana Perkins State Plan Review Survey

The Carl D. Perkins Act is federal legislation that provides funding for the specific purpose of developing career and technical education training and employability skills for secondary (high school) and postsecondary (college) students.

The State of Montana is asking you for your help in developing the state's vision and goals for career and technical education and workforce training. This [survey](#) will take five minutes or less to complete.

The deadline for taking this survey is February 1, 2024. Please share this survey widely with friends, family, colleagues, classmates, etc.

Fun Facts & Trivia

Glacier Bay National Park is located on the Southeast Alaska coast, about 65 air miles northwest of Juneau.

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve can be reached only by boat or by plane.

Glacier Bay became a National Monument on February 25, 1925, and was established as a national park and preserve on December 2, 1980.

It was designated Wilderness on December 2, 1980, designated a Biosphere Reserve in 1986, and a World Heritage Site in 1992.

World-famous Scottish-American mountaineer John Muir is credited as the first naturalist to visit the park, perform research, and share the discovery with the rest of the world.

Muir first came to Glacier Bay in 1879, led by the local Tlingit guides who traced their ancestors back to the region, in order to study the movement of glaciers.

After writing about the beautiful landscape and wildlife he found, Glacier Bay began to attract tourism and scientific attention during the late 1880s and 1890s.

The father of Glacier Bay National Park was William Skinner Cooper, an ecologist from the University of Minnesota.

Mr. Cooper studied the plants that first began growing in the rocky, barren soils uncovered by the retreating glaciers.

William Cooper's plant studies impressed the Ecological Society of America.

Eventually with the society's help Cooper convinced President Calvin Coolidge to proclaim Glacier Bay as a national monument in 1925.

The park encompasses a total area of 3,280,198 acres, making it larger than the entire U.S. state of Connecticut.

The elevation changes from 0 feet on the Pacific Ocean all the way up to 15,266 feet on Mount Fairweather, one of the tallest mountains in the United States, which also marks the border between Alaska and Canada.

The fjord making up the majority of the park was covered by the 40-mile-wide Grand Pacific Glacier as recently as 200 years ago.

Today, 27% of the entire park is covered by ice.

In 1992, the park received greater protection on its northern boundary when the Alsek-Tatshenshini Park in Canada was formed.

This new park joined Glacier Bay National Park and Wrangell-St. Elias National Park in Alaska and Kluane National Park in Canada to create the largest internationally protected area in the world.

Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve commands a glacier-crowned, maritime wilderness that stretches northward from Alaska's inside passage to the Alsek River, encircling a magnificent saltwater bay.

The 3.3-million-acre park derives its name and much of its biological and cultural significance from this great bay, which harbors spectacular tidewater glaciers and a unique assemblage of marine and terrestrial life.

To the south and east, the landscape fragments into the timbered islands and winding fjords of the Alexander Archipelago and the Tongass National Forest.

To the west, the Park's pristine outer coast opens to the Gulf of Alaska, and beyond to the Pacific Ocean and Asia.

To the north, the St. Elias Mountains reach across the new Tatshenshini-Alsek Provincial Park (British Columbia) to connect two more vast protected areas; Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve in Alaska and Kluane National Park in Canada.

A mountain-guarded, maritime sanctuary, Glacier Bay National Park thus secures the coastal flank of the largest internationally protected area on earth.

Issues of the Wednesday Reader are archived on the Montana Business Education Association (MBEA) website at www.mbea.info. The Wednesday Readers are under the Newsletter section and listed most recent first.

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"You don't make decisions because they are easy; you don't make them because they are cheap; you don't make them because they're popular; you make them because they're right." ~Rev. Theodore Hesburgh