

Writing for Flathead Memo

Flathead Memo welcomes well written essays no longer than 2,000 words, accompanied as necessary by supporting graphics. All authors must write under their real names.

About Flathead Memo

Established in 2006 by James Conner, Kalispell based *Flathead Memo* is a liberal, nonpartisan, online publication that specializes in political analysis, energy policy, redistricting, and, to borrow the title of [Edward Tufte's wonderful book](#), the visual display of quantitative information.

Flathead Memo's readers includes elected officials of both major political parties, members of Montana's news media, community leaders (the people C. Wright Mills described in his book, [The Power Elite](#)), political activists, and students of politics.

Approach

Flathead Memo believes that all people, regardless of their political affiliations and inclinations, enjoy the same human rights. Therefore, stick to the issues instead of sticking it to people. In your essays, supply the facts and let the readers supply the indignation.

Style

Flathead Memo's house style is a hobo's stew of the [Chicago Manual of Style](#), the current stylebooks for the [New York Times](#) and the [Associated Press](#), and James Conner's personal preferences, which reign supreme. Your copy will be fact checked, proofread, spell checked, and reviewed for defamation. We may request changes and will work with you to arrive at a solution satisfactory to everyone.

Assume you are writing for intelligent, well informed readers. Sparingly employ slang, words that have not been added to a mainstream dictionary, and words so exotic they would have sent Everett Dirksen and W.F. Buckley, Jr. lunging for the zoo sections of the [Oxford Dictionary](#). Serial commas are not just accepted: they are preferred. Help readers by keeping your paragraphs short. If you don't, they may be shortened for you.

39 **Profanity.** A rare “damn” or “hell” is acceptable, but dirty language *ist verboten*. Clever
40 euphemisms and workarounds for naughty words or phrases will be admired or rejected
41 on a case-by-case basis.

42 43 Links

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45 **Form.** Copy links by right clicking on them and using the Copy Link Address
46 function. Place the URL in parentheses after the words to which the link applies.
47 Underline those words. Example: Writing for Flathead Memo
48 (http://www.flatheadmemo.com/author_guidelines/writing_for_flatheadmemo.html).

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50 **Legislation.** *Always* provide numbers and links to the bills, resolution, or ballot
51 measure you are discussing, and the title, chapter, and part numbers for the [federal](#),
52 [state](#), and local laws you mention.

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54 **Litigation.** *Always* provide links to, and if possible, copies of, complaints, briefs, and
55 court orders and decisions.

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57 **Facts.** *Always* provide links to the sources for your facts. Your sources *must* be
58 reputable. James Conner decides whether a source is reputable.

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60 **Public figures.** For elected and major appointed officials, provide links to their official
61 pages. For prominent citizens, provide links to reasonably neutral biographies (the
62 *Wikipedia* sometimes is acceptable as a last resort).

63 64 Formats

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66 **Photographs and graphics.** The minimum width is 700 pixels. Format continuous tone
67 graphics as JPEGs. Maps, line art, and charts, can be JPEG or PNG. Include
68 copyright information, or a link to the website where the image was obtained.

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70 **Text.** Plain text is best. Otherwise, please use RTF or Microsoft’s .docx format. Do
71 not use line numbers.

72 73 Send Your Stuff to:

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75 Attach your text and graphics to an email addressed to flatheadmemo@gmail.com.

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Obtaining Feedback from Your Readers

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Flathead Memo does not publish comments. *Flathead Memo* posts on [Twitter at #mtpol](#) a notice that your essay is online. If you would like to hear from your readers, we suggest that you provide an email address for an email account dedicated to receiving feedback. *Flathead Memo never* publishes the addresses or phone numbers of guest essayists.

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