

Bud Nicholls name d the winner of Paris Gibson Award

City of Great Falls

Bud Nicholls has transformed the music community in Great Falls over the many decades of his life. He has won the 2022 Paris Gibson Award which is exemplified by the vision and excellence of Great Falls founder Paris Gibson. He was chosen from a list of nominees by former winners of the Award.

Bud started as a teenager in the public schools and has been the lead music director and organizer of the Great Falls Municipal Band since the mid-1980s. From his dad's (Harold Nicholls) Big Band to the Great Falls Municipal Band, he has made music accessible and fun in Great Falls.

Prior to his leadership, he performed with the Municipal Band on trumpet. The joke of the band is that he was around for the founding of the Municipal Band in 1896. Not only has he directed the band, but he has spent countless hours picking out music, arranging rehearsals, putting together the programs, recruiting musicians, all while drumming up community donations to keep the organization afloat.

Hundreds of audience members have shown up for the opening concert at the Mansfield Convention Center and then to Gibson Park each Wednesday night at 7 p.m. during the summer to listen to the band perform. Bud has transformed a bunch of random musicians into an amazing band to listen to, with only one rehearsal per concert. He has picked music that not only the audience enjoys, but that the band can perform well with limited rehearsal time. Bud's favorite has been Henry Mancini which the audience has loved.

Bud has organized and performed with the Harold Nicholls Big Band, a jazz band dedicated to his late father. The band has performed at the Ozark Club in the History Museum and other venues in and around Great Falls.

Although Bud still runs a music store on Central Avenue in downtown Great Falls, due to health reasons, he has passed the torch to the Great Falls Municipal Band board with details coordinated by Dusty Molyneaux and John Gemberling. Work formerly done by Bud will now be done by five people.

To be eligible for the award, selected by previous Paris Gibson Award winners, a nominee must meet the following criteria: currently a resident of Great Falls; provided significant impact to the City of Great Falls; provided leadership for the community through volunteerism; and performed selfless action for the betterment of the community. The award winner will receive a \$500 check provided by Jimmy and Debbie Filipowicz of Steel Etc, which may be given to a local charity of the winner's choice; a tree, donated by Steve Tillaas of Tillaas Landscape Nursery, planted in West Bank Park in their honor, with a granite marker donated by Montana Granite; a plaque donated by Greg and Leanne Hall; a dinner for two at P. Gibson's, donated

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by P. Gibson's Sports Grill; and a ride in a 1918 Model T Ford at the Fourth of July Parade provided by Kurt Baltrusch of the Skunk Wagon Club.

Formal announcement of Bud Nicholls as the winner of the 2022 Paris Gibson Award will be made at the first concert of the season by the Great Falls Municipal Band at 7 p.m. at the Mansfield Convention Center on Wednesday, June 29, 2022. Susie McIntyre, Chairman of the Paris Gibson Month Celebration Committee will make the announcement. The concert is free and open to the public.

Former winners are: Doug Wicks, 2010; Norma Ashby, 2011; Greg Hall, 2012; Ian and Nancy Davidson, 2013; Gene Thayer, 2014; Bill and Joan-Nell Macfadden, 2015; Arlyne Reichert, 2016; Sheila Rice, 2017; Brad Talcott and Linda Caricaburu, 2018; Chuck and Gerry Jennings, 2019; Judy Ericksen, 2020; David and Tanya Cameron, 2021.

For further information about the award, contact Norma Ashby Smith, 406-590-6798.



Nicholls



The trumpet section of the New Harold Nicholls Big Band performing in 2013. TRIBUNE FILE PHOTO

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