**Sample Press Release**

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*or include name, address, and phone number of organization at top of release*}

**For Immediate Release**

**THE [SPONSORING ORGANIZATION] HOSTS MONTANA CONVERSATION “THE MAURICE EFFECT: HOW AN UNLIKELY FRIENDSHIP SERVES AS A UNIQUE PATHWAY TO LOVE” WITH DAVID CHARPENTIER**

[City–date]

The [sponsoring organization] hosts Montana Conversation program “The Maurice Effect: How an Unlikely Friendship Serves as a Unique Pathway to Love” with David Charpentier on [date of program]. The program is at [location and time of program]. The presentation is free and open to the public. Funding for the Montana Conversations program is provided by Humanities Montana through grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Montana’s Cultural Trust, and private donations. We are funded in part by coal severance taxes paid based upon coal mined in Montana and deposited in Montana’s cultural and aesthetic projects trust fund.

David Charpentier will read passages from his recent memoir, The Boy Who Promised Me Horses, and discuss how his friendship with Maurice Prairie Chief can serve as a model in our attempts to love and understand those around us. The author will take the audience on a journey that explores his adventures with Maurice Prairie Chief, revealing how the two of them developed an understanding and trust, illustrating that even though their backgrounds differed, on deeper and ultimately more important levels, they were so very much alike. This awareness allowed a cross-cultural understanding and gave space to compassion, acceptance, and admiration, a pathway that serves as an example that can bring people across Montana together. Ultimately, David Charpentier will reveal what Maurice’s friendship meant to him, and how his understanding of it has affected his embrace of friendship and love ever since.

“The Maurice Effect” was defined by a reader as the author’s ability to evoke the “spirit of play and adventure.” The author will read several passages where he describes their adventures, exploring how they physically and imaginarily departed from the setting of Ashland as they left the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and the St. Labre Mission behind. In essence, they created their own “time and place” for their adventures. The poet Rainer Maria Rilke writes, “Each blind lurch of the world leaves its disinherited, to whom no longer the past and not yet the future belong.” Shortly after getting to know Maurice in the fall of 1990, the author realized that Maurice was living on the margins of an already marginalized community. “The Maurice Effect” gave the author and Maurice the opportunity to connect on a different level, in their own “time and place,” which was fundamental to their unique and special friendship. This connection permitted them to balance the “blind lurch” that Rilke wrote about—Together, they created the moments where Maurice and the author belonged. The author will also read the most intense passage of the book, a moment that put their friendship to the test, a moment that without “The Maurice Effect,” could have ended their friendship. At the end of the presentation, the author will discuss with the audience how “The Maurice Effect” can work in their lives, how they can create the “time and place” to connect with people, either those they are attempting to love, or others they hope to understand better.

David Charpentier worked in Indian education his entire professional career, which began in 1990 when he traveled (fresh out of college in Minnesota) to Ashland, Montana to teach high school English at St. Labre Indian School on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. After ten years in the classroom, he established St. Labre’s College Mentoring Program, with the goal of helping more St. Labre alumni attend and graduate from college. In 2003, Charpentier founded the non-profit *Bridge Foundation,* which provides cultural, leadership, and educational programs for Native American Youth in southeastern Montana. He is currently the co-president of the Bridge Foundation and is partnering on projects with young tribal leaders on both the Northern Cheyenne and Crow Reservations. Charpentier has presented at state, regional, and national education conferences, most recently at the Native American Student Advocacy Institute (NASAI) on “Creating a College-Going Culture.”

For more information, please call [sponsoring organization] at [phone number].

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Contact person: [project organizer and phone number]