

RESIDENTS OF THE MONTH

East Campus

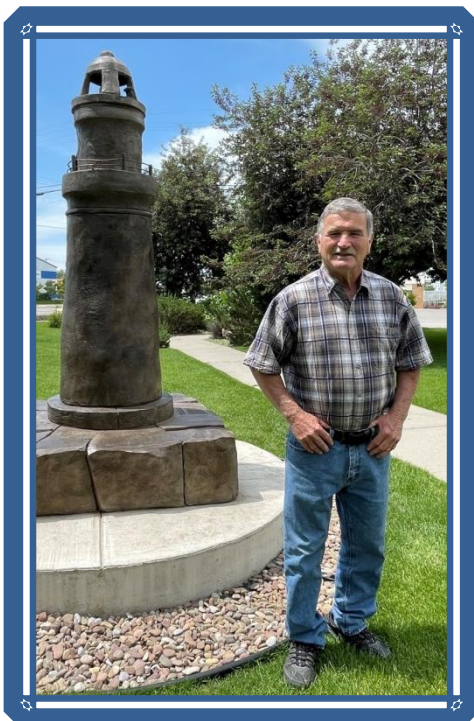
Nominator states: Mr. Bear completed his IW program in good fashion. He carried over his success from IW to resident status. He has maintained compliance with his CD Treatment agreement with his LAC and except for the minor IR has maintained clear conduct. Mr. Bear has completed all of his required group programming and has been paying on his restitutions and fines since his arrival as an IW. Mr. Bear has paid off his fines with Havre City Court and is now paying more towards his felony restitution. Mr. Bear has not let events outside of the center distract him and has used them instead to motivate himself to continue on his path of self-improvement. Mr. Bear has done everything asked of him without complaint, maintained a very positive attitude and is helpful to staff and other residents alike. He is always pleasant to deal with and looking for ways to improve his life and help his fellow residents.



Tyrel Bear

Added note from Sheena: Tyrel is on the "third try is the charm" at the pre-release and indeed it is! Tyrel has really focused in on what he needs to do and is putting so much energy into bettering his life. Tyrel also has a big heart for others and is always ready to offer encouragement and support. He has a range of Recovery Based Activities to help keep him stable, motivated and increase his healthy self-worth. Tyrel has a solid plan for his future and we wish him all the best.

West Campus



Steve Norred

Nominator states: Mr. Norred has received no write ups and has earned 4 positive IRs for his help around the center. He has successfully completed Thinking for Good. He has shown a positive attitude since his arrival and is focused on creating a better future for himself. He is a highly valued employee at Liggett Construction and has been noted as being responsible and hard working. Mr. Norred has set a solid example for others to follow.

Added note from Sheena: Steve Norred will be releasing soon and returning to his family after a long incarceration. Steve, however, bears none of the negative signs of those many years. In fact, it is just the opposite. Steve is such a positive and helpful person. He willingly picks up extra duty details and does such a fine job. He adds so much value to the life of West Campus and he is always encouraging and positive to both residents and staff. Steve is a kind person with excellent situational awareness. He has a terrific work ethic, and never gives in to negativity. We wish him the best going forward.

RESIDENTS OF THE MONTH - continued

Women's Center

Nominator states: Darnell Champagne has been doing a great job! She is serious about her program. She has completed two groups and she is attending two groups. Her attitude is what stands out as she maintains a positive attitude. She seeks out what groups will benefit her. She wants to learn and save money. When struggles come her way, she looks for ways to deal with the issues and then faces them head on. She is respectful to others and actively participates in her groups.

2nd Nominator states: Darnell Champagne is a quiet person, who is introspective and insightful. Darnell stays to herself and does work her own program – all in a good way. She is a woman forging her own path and working through her difficulties. She seeks to be honest with herself about her healing journey with grief and is working on her recovery. Darnell is determined, honest and straightforward. She is making the most of her pre-release time and would make a great Resident of the Month.

Added note from Sheena: Darnell has the unique honor of being a member of the first and only Montana Native Women's wild lands firefighting crew! This was in 2013 and she said it was a very proud time in her young life. This all Native women crew, which was made up of 20 women from Rocky Boy, fought fires in Showdown Ski area, among other places. Darnell said there is a plaque in Denver acknowledging their accomplishments. We would also like to acknowledge Darnell's accomplishments and wish her the best for her next phase in life.



Darnell Champagne

Angelo Moreno – Honors Member



Congratulations to Angelo for being accepted into the Honors Program!

Angelo can often be found out and about at the East Campus helping new residents with their schedules and giving them helpful advice.

Angelo enjoys mechanic work, bowling, and spending time with his family.

Angelo stated, "If I can help anyone in any way, I do my best. I've helped people with adjusting stuff on their bikes so they will run better and safer. And if someone is stressed, I give them the feedback of how I've been handling things positively."

Jesse Baker – Honors Member



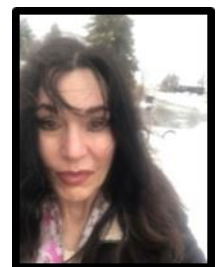
Welcome to new Honors member Mr. Jesse Baker. Jesse was motivated to apply for Honors, “To show myself I could do well.” Having this tangible marker of success furthers his goal of having more peace of mind. Having struggled for years with chemical use and mental health, Jesse was more than ready to continue on his wellness journey which started when he became sober in 2017.

When Jesse became honest with himself about his drug use, he began to see the damage more clearly. He has worked hard to put his life into perspective and to really understand what would increase his mental well-being. Jesse realized, “I am only here for a short time and there is not enough life to live it angry.” Jesse now practices an intentional mindset of, “patience, tolerance and understanding, as opposed to anger, chaos and unnecessary worry”. Jesse gets that contented, secure feeling when he realizes that many of the self-imposed barriers that he had built in his life are gone. Cleaning up messes feels good. For example, the worry about being pulled over by the cops is no more, because he is not doing anything illegal, he is not wanted and has no more warrants.

Jesse was wanted, however, for around eight years when he was on the run. To make this work, he kept a low profile, avoiding actions that would draw attention. In the end, his wife convinced him to turn himself in. Although at times he has had second thoughts (but, too late for that), overall he knows he is much better off and his life has improved. As Jesse told me, “I take responsibility for everything in my life. I’m here because of what I did. Because now, I’m more mature. I am fortunate and extremely grateful for all I have.” Jesse paused and said, “I see it now.”

Jesse is also very much a realist. “I don’t always enjoy dealing with my emotions now that I’m clean and sober.” Jesse still wrestles with his anxiety and his mind often leaps to the worst case since life can hit hard and if a person is used to a chemical shield, raw life and raw emotions can definitely pack a harsh punch. But Jesse knows that dealing with life’s realities is a process and that he needs to look at his overall gains. “I have made more progress with being healthy, starting at CCP. I really had to focus on my mental health and the reality of my depression and anxiety and other co-occurring disorders.” Jesse took a breath and said, “So, I will always have to deal with myself.”

His recovery skill set includes self-talk, music, breathing exercises and wisdom such as the Serenity Prayer, to bolster his confidence and address his unease. Jesse also uses running a way to banish anxious thoughts and restore calm. “I feel better after a run. You know, those endorphins.” In this spring’s Ice Breaker, he took 6th in his age category and 49th overall, which is very impressive, especially since he didn’t have an opportunity to really train the way most runners are able to do. Jesse also likes cycling, camping, fishing and disk golf and has played the saxophone. Jesse attends 12 Step meetings at his church. Given his personality and how his emotions are close to the surface, Jesse is well aware that his path will not always be an easy one. But that’s okay, as he is ready to engage in the struggle.



NEWS BY SHEENA JARVEY

Jesse Baker - Honors Member – continued

By Sheena Jarvey

Jesse is both grounded and uplifted by his spirituality which is a very real and a significant strength in his life. He attends his LDS church every week. Attending a new religious service can be a nerve wracking experience and Jesse has always been open about his struggles with anxiety. But, gathering his courage and knowing he needed contact with his religious base, attend he did. The stereotype of a church congregation as being monolithic and closed off still exists, but what Jesse found was just the opposite. He was delighted to be greeted by a very diverse congregation who accepted him without question and without judgment. He felt at peace and at home and knew instantly he was where he belonged and would receive what he needed. Jesse's spirituality is highly important and he is direct in acknowledging this. "I am spiritual. God is my higher power."

Jesse has a big heart and looks for opportunities to help out where he can. His friendly, high energy personality keeps things real. He is quick to latch on to a joke or a funny situation. He is also a reflective, thoughtful person who seeks to understand his world, himself and others. Jesse's love for his wife is bonded by patience, understanding and hope for good things in the future. Another positive is his quality relationship with his folks. "They are excellent. I'm blessed, because I have really good parents. They are helpful and supportive". He said he gets his motivation to help others from his mom. After Jesse came clean to his mom about his drug use, they became even closer. Honesty proved to be the glue their relationship needed.

When asked what he felt was important for others to know, Jesse talked about the dangers of complacency. While we are familiar with the dangers of giving up, Jesse drew attention to being complacent as a precursor to the point where a person stops trying. Jesse sees complacency as the number one reason for relapse and recidivism. To stop this downward slide, Jesse said our self-talk needs to be firm. "Okay, so you made one bad choice. Do not give up."

Upon release Jesse is going sky diving, a sport he loves. He rates sky diving, out of all that he has experienced thus far, "the freest I've ever felt in my entire life." We wish Jesse continued freedom and all good things and the skills to deal with difficulties. We are proud of him for making Honors. As a final thought, Jesse compared his new life to sky diving. "Once you have jumped, you have jumped. There is no going back."

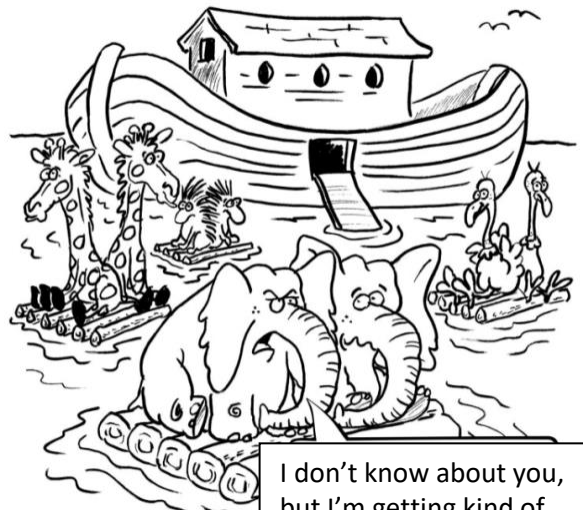


PRE-RELEASE PRESS

Editor: Brenda Demers



Residents: You are encouraged to submit something for the next newsletter - a drawing, poem, song, article, quote, advice, etc. Please turn it in to the CO desk with your name or contact Brenda. Any suggestions are also appreciated.



Resident Earns HiSET

By Brenda Demers



Congratulations to **Cindy Bright** for earning her HiSET! She said that she started the process in 2020 when she was in treatment. She commented, “I was kind of pushed to do it. I didn’t know if I really wanted to because I didn’t know what I wanted to do with my life. Going back to school felt scary because school was not a fun place for me. I fell through the cracks a lot. I just couldn’t grasp the concept of math and really fell behind so I didn’t want to feel like that again.”

She agreed to pursue her HiSET reasoning that it would help fill some time and make people happy with her. Her whole outlook changed when she passed all of the tests except math which she only missed by 2 questions. “That set a fire under my butt. I didn’t feel like giving up and I felt like fighting more. I was like, *you know what, I can do this!*” Cindy said that at the treatment center she had a really good tutor that helped her understand how important it is to know math and how it applies to everyday life.

Unfortunately, she wasn’t able to get that last test done while in treatment, so it hung over her head for several years. “I made a lot of excuses.” She started working on it again at Passages but didn’t pass, leaving her defeated.

Fast forward to Cindy coming to Great Falls Pre-Release where she came up with a myriad of reasons to put off finishing her HiSET, thinking she would get to it after her release. But she couldn’t escape Education Coordinator Allen Heisler from bugging her. She took the math test again and missed passing by only 1 question. That goal plummeted to the bottom of her list as she hoped it would be forgotten by staff and herself. To her chagrin, Karen called her into her office and Allen was sitting there. He said, “You are going to do this again next week, right?” She couldn’t disagree.

Cindy recalled that she didn’t get her hopes up and admitted that she is stubborn and procrastinates. She didn’t study, but she did change her attitude. She bowed her head and asked God for help. She took the math test and instead of getting the required 8, she got a 10! She was shocked because she figured she would fail again. All of Cindy’s scores are college ready so now she has a sundry of options and opportunities, including her desire to go to culinary arts school.

We are proud of you Cindy and wish you the best!

It is not the light that we need, but the fire;
It is not the gentle shower, but thunder.
We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.
Frederick Douglass

I believe that if one always
looked to the skies,
One would have wings.
Gustave Flaubert



Mayor Bob Kelly

DUI Task Force Law Enforcement Recognition Ceremony



DUI Task Force Coordinator **Julie Sangster** and Trooper **Dan Arnold**



Dan Arnold (Trooper) - Montana Highway Patrol

John Brothers (Prosecuting Attorney) - Cascade County Attorney's Office

Alec Lugo (Deputy) - Cascade County Sheriff's Office

Cory Purves (Probation & Parole Officer) - Adult Probation and Parole

Randi White (Staff Sargent) - Malmstrom Air Force Base

Jacob Walmsley (Prosecuting Attorney) - Great Falls City Attorney's Office

Patrick Levitt (Senior Police Officer) - Great Falls Police Department

Education Center Schedule for the Month of June 2023

Special Note: HiSET testing is conducted on Tuesdays, and TABE testing on Mondays and Wednesdays at GFCMSU. Ed Center hours will be adjusted pending resident registration for testing. HiSET testing will end on June 20th for summer break and resume August 29th.



**By Allen Heisler,
Education Coordinator**

Monday 6/19: Ed. Center Closed

Tuesday 6/20:

Ed. Center Hours 0800 – 1200 and 1300 – 1700

Wednesday 6/21:

Ed. Center Hours 1030 - 1200 and 1530 - 1700

Ed. Coord. Visit to East Campus 0830 - 1000

New Resident intake, Ed. Center 1300 – 1330

Computer Learning, Ed. Center 1330 - 1530

Thursday 6/22:

Ed. Center Hours 1030 – 1200 and 1500 - 1700

Computer Learning, Ed. Center 0830 - 1030

Staff Meeting 1400 - 1500

Friday 6/23:

Ed. Center Hours 1200 -1800

Computer Learning in the Ed. Center 1800 - 2000

Monday 6/26:

Ed. Center Hours 1030 – 1200 and 1300 - 1700

Ed. Coord. visit to Women's Campus 0830 - 1000

Tuesday 6/27:

Ed. Center Hours 0800 – 1200 and 1300 – 1700

Wednesday 6/28:

Ed. Center Hours 1030 – 1200 and 1530 - 1700

New Resident Intake, Ed. Center 1300 – 1330

Computer Learning in the Ed. Center 1330 - 1530

Thursday 6/29:

Ed. Center Hours 1100 – 1200 and 1530 - 1700

Computer Learning, Ed. Center 0830 – 1030

Friday 6/30:

Life Skills in the Education Center

Writing a Solid Cover Letter

East Residents 1330

West Residents 1530

Women Residents 1830

Special Notes:

- 1) If you need any assistance prepping for, beginning, continuing, or completing the HiSet, please contact Allen Heisler - Education Coordinator to schedule with Great Falls College MSU, and discuss the necessary steps.
- 2) The above schedule is not all inclusive and is subject to change. If you need to use the education center, or discuss anything with the education coordinator, please call 406-455-9346 or stop in to schedule availability.
- 3) If you wish to discuss any post-secondary options for pursuing college courses, training, etc. please feel free to contact Allen Heisler - Education Coordinator. 406-455-9346.
- 4) Computer based learning opportunities are available to all residents through the Ed. Department. This includes everything from HiSET preparation, to online courses, as well as career exploration and pathways. Interested individuals should visit the Ed. Center, or contact the Ed. Coordinator for more information.
- 5) Life Long Learning through the Great Falls College MSU offers many **opportunities** such as the CNA licensure, CDL training, and construction trades. These courses vary in days and times as well as cost. Interested individuals should contact the Ed. Coordinator for course availability. Also, the Life Long Learning Scholarship is available to help fund the cost of these courses. Applications are available through the Ed. Center.

Erin Seidler - Honors Member

By Brenda Demers

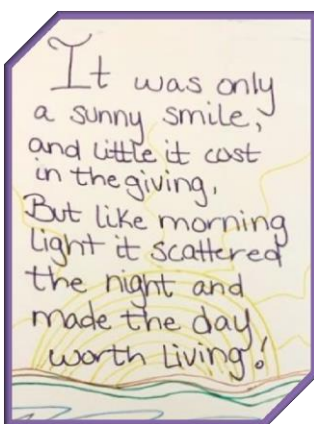
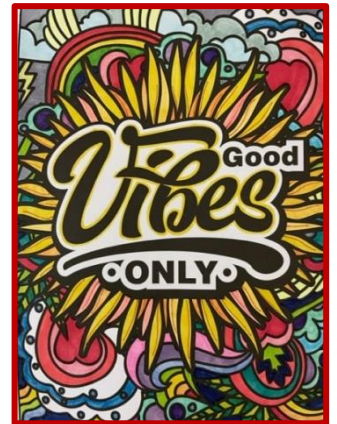


Erin had always been told that she could do anything she put her mind to. She believed this up until the age of 34 when drugs overpowered her and self-doubt set in. Erin had everything little girls and women dream of – a house with a fence, a car, a marriage, kids, dogs -- “I had it all.” She had never even been in trouble, but something was missing. She became bored with her nearly perfect life. An innocent visit with a friend and accepting the invitation to smoke meth quickly snowballed and changed the course of her life.

Erin’s marriage was turning into a disaster, and the people surrounding her were clingy and sucking the life out of her. She has always been one of those people that sees the good in everyone, gives them the benefit of the doubt, and does all she can to help. She found out that the predatory ones take advantage of her personality type.

Erin knew she needed treatment, but as far as going through pre-release and being an inmate worker, she told her therapist and probation officer that she would rather die. “I felt like I was being forced against my will and I didn’t think it would help, I thought it would hurt. I was absolutely terrified when I got here, and it did hurt. I knew I had to purge all of those toxic people out of my life, but I didn’t know how. They made me feel guilty about leaving my old life behind.”

Erin shared, “My strength was tested soon after my arrival, being housed with a predator as a roommate. I was faced with what they call exploitative reciprocity in MRT, so I quickly set boundaries to protect myself. After that experience, the tone for the rest of my program was set. I knew I could do it. I figured out that if I didn’t want to be miserable for the entirety of my program I had to change my perspective.”



Shanna Peterson, the Clinical Director at Elkhorn Treatment Center in Boulder, came to Great Falls Pre-Release and spoke to a group of the ladies. Erin was inspired by her story and has her sights set on becoming a Licensed Addictions Counselor. Erin commented, “I know that in order to help people absolutely I’ll have to know what I’m talking about. I want to tell people I went through the depths of hell and made it, so they can too.”

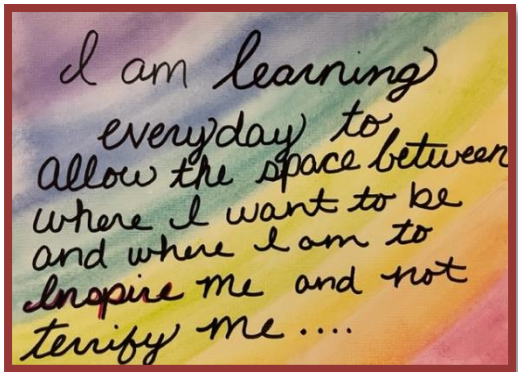
Erin feels good about the program she is running and knew applying for Honors would give her something to build upon. She also wanted to prove her probation officer wrong after he scoffed at her in the booking room when she told him that one day he would look at her and be proud of her. He had the right to scoff because he had already watched her go through the motions – doing community service and all those things that look good on the outside – but she just couldn’t stop doing drugs.

Erin Seidler - Honors Member - continued

By Brenda Demers

Erin is creative and loves all kinds of art. With a mind that is constantly racing, she needs to keep it occupied with all that is good. Journaling helps her stay focused. Although many passages from her past are painful to read, they are essential to the path in front of her. She looks back at the time she begged God every day to get her home to her husband and not make her be an inmate worker. She didn't think she needed to do it. Once she got here and became comfortable with her surroundings and figured out who she wanted to be, she found the Inmate Worker program to be a lifesaver.

Erin's time here is finally coming to a close and she is looking forward to sitting at her kitchen table for hours with her mom and sewing. Erin didn't understand why her mom "disowned" her in the midst of her addiction. Now that Erin is in her shoes with daughters of her own, it all makes sense – she had to. Erin expressed, "I am truly grateful for this program. I don't know where I'd be without it. This place taught me to set boundaries, and I'm learning to allow the space between where I want to be and where I am to inspire me and not terrify me." She went on to explain, "No one really enjoys being here – separated from family and what life was – which is a good thing. I absolutely needed to be separated from the life I was living. That wasn't life – that was merely surviving. Now I don't depend on any other human being for my happiness."



We are proud of you, Erin, and wish you continued success!

Congratulations to **Joe Marten** on reaching his 15 year milestone working at GFPRC. Joe was a C.O. for 5 years before moving into the Booter wing for 4 years. Joe has been in the Community Service Office since 2017. All of this gives him a pretty broad knowledge of the workings of the Center. Joe has a special way with being able to connect with the residents and direct them in the right path while still being kind.

Joe's biggest advice to new staff is, "**Just remember that the residents are no different than yourself. We just took a different path in life to which that is why they are here ... so that they can have the chance to take a different path like the rest of us did.**"

Joe has seen many people from his past come through the system to include relatives, that didn't at the time have the option to go a different path. It is really special to Joe to be able to see different people from different walks of life be able to change their life for the better and that is why he says this is the best career he has and will ever have. "Everyone deserves a second chance and that option to change their life."

Staff Anniversary



GREAT FALLS PRE-RELEASE SERVICES, INC. PRESENTS LAW DAY AWARD

This year the board of directors chose to recognize the **Cascade County Critical Incident Stress Management Team** for their annual Law Day award ceremony. Most people are not aware this team even exists. The group was organized in 1987 in response to a growing awareness that emergency services personnel were responding to incidents that were particularly stressful. Critical Incident Stress Management, or CISM, is an intervention protocol developed specifically for dealing with traumatic events. It is a formal, highly structured and professionally recognized process for helping those involved in a critical incident to share their experiences, vent emotions, learn about stress reactions and symptoms and given referral for further help if required. It is not psychotherapy. It is a confidential, voluntary and educative process, sometimes called 'psychological first aid'.



On behalf of the Cascade County Critical Incident Stress Management team, Dr. Foley accepts the Law Day award. Team members that attended the ceremony are pictured. **Nichole Anderson, Lori Muzzana, Dr. Foley, Jane Rogers, Jenny Woods, Wayne Bye, and Mike Stimac.**

They Walked the Walk



Brian Dolatta & Devin Braulick



Liz Davis, David Border, & Liz Drahos



Devin Braulick
David Border
Christina Temple
Cree Lamere
Brian Dolatta



Christina Temple, Cree Lamere, Brian Dolatta,
David Border, Devin Braulick



Christina Temple & Cree Lamere

Seed, Soil, and Sun: Discovering the Many Healthful Benefits of Gardening

From Healthline.com



Early in the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, as lockdowns put millions out of work and headlines forecast food shortages, anxious Americans picked up their rakes and spades.

Many people were cut off from social gatherings. They were worried about bare shelves and contaminated grocery stores. And they needed something to occupy schoolchildren.

In response, record numbers of people began cultivating coronavirus victory gardens. In a matter of weeks, seeds, seedlings, and fruit trees sold out online and in gardening centers.

As it turns out, the impulse to garden is actually a great idea — whether or not you're coping with a crisis — because gardening is one of the healthiest hobbies you can develop. Keep reading to learn about the many benefits of gardening, for you and your community.

Outdoor gardening can help your body fight disease

You're more like a plant than you may realize. Your body is capable of photosynthesis — the process where plants make their own food using sunlight.

Your skin uses sunlight to make one of the nutrients you need: vitamin D. Researchers Trusted Source estimate that a half hour in the sun can produce between 8,000 and 50,000 international units (IU) of vitamin D in your body, depending on how much your clothes cover and the color of your skin.

Vitamin D is essential for literally hundreds of body functions — strengthening your bones and your immune system are just two of them. Studies Trusted Source have also shown that being out in the sun can help lower your risk of:

breast cancer colorectal cancer
bladder cancer prostate cancer
non-Hodgkin's lymphoma multiple sclerosis

If your vitamin D levels are low, you have a greater risk of developing psoriasis flares, metabolic syndrome (a prediabetes condition), type II diabetes, and dementia, as well.

All of these factors have to be balanced against the risk of skin cancer from overexposure to the sun's rays, of course. But the science is clear: A little sunshine in the garden goes a very long way in your body.



Bobbie Rule enjoys some outdoor therapy while she trims up the indoor plants.



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