

# RESIDENT STANDOUTS



He is relatively new to the program, but **Shawn Durham** has stood out to me. His first day here he was working on his resume and looking ahead to his future both as a resident and beyond. He is a force for good, wielding his influence to encourage and uplift those around him as well as to be supportive and helpful around the center. He has personally been inspirational to observe and talk to, and I look forward to seeing him excel.

**Daniel Sherman** always makes sure to say hello, is polite at all times with CO staff, and has run a wonderful program throughout his time here. He will truly do well once he releases. We are proud of him and his program.



**Travis McLaughlin** recently went through a very hard time with his family and I feel like he really turned a new stone and felt comfortable enough to share his feelings with staff and tell us when he was struggling.



**Jamel Scott** always makes CO staff laugh, is very polite, and is just a warm spirit at all times. From the time he was an IMW to currently being a resident he has always been a standout individual.



**Crystal Moore and Tracie Park** decorated the two cork boards in the Great Room. I would like to highlight their efforts to bring some new color and holiday themes to our campus. They showed initiative doing so on their own time and without being asked to do so by staff. Miss Moore and Miss Park have been very pleasant to interact with, and seeing them get creative and let their own colors shine is a beautiful thing to see and experience.

# RESIDENT STANDOUTS



**Ronald Evans** is very humble and did quite a few dishes last week until I could find someone with extra duty and or alts to help. He has kept his same job at the Holiday Inn and is always appreciative of the rides.



I would like to shine a light on the bright light that is **Crystal Moore**. Ms. Moore is unstoppable. Whether it is her positivity, humor, or drive, she takes each day as an opportunity for self-improvement and nails it every time. She's run a solid program while here, but hasn't lost sight of what comes next. She set her mind to get trained in welding to make a better future for herself, and she did. Three people were waiting to get into the class, but Ms. Moore swooped in, got everything done faster, and got the spot. She is an absolute rock star. I could not be more proud of her, and I am honored to have met her and worked with her. She is an inspiration to anyone who thinks, "What if I can't?", "What if I should just wait?", "What if I fail?" At the risk of copyright infringement, just do it. Be like Crystal!

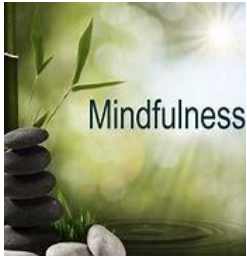


I would like to recognize **Blade Sorenson**. He is quiet and shy and stands out as an individual that is striving to do what's right. I've taken note of his good work ethic and integrity. Blade's talents include music and art. He did an electrical apprentice and plans to continue in that career field after his release.

# Mindful Questions

Mindfulness can be a savior. Amidst the deafening chaos, it's a breath of fresh air and calm. Posing insightful questions is a kind of superpower. A few skillfully crafted words can dispel doubt, put a stop to a disagreement, and occasionally offer an entirely new viewpoint.

Some mindful questions you can ask yourself:



- ❖ What emotions am I experiencing?
- ❖ How do I feel about my life?
- ❖ Which recent choice most accurately expresses who I am at this moment?
- ❖ In the overall scheme of things, what matters most to me?
- ❖ What makes me feel incredibly happy and fulfilled?



Sandra Bearchum

You can develop your own questions that you feel you need at the moment to reflect what is going on with you at any given time.

## Structural Welding Graduation



Photo courtesy of GF College MSU Facebook page

**Leonard Hilton** (far left), **Crystal Moore** (3<sup>rd</sup> from left), **Troy Nelson** (easily identifiable), and **Tarran Mathews** (3<sup>rd</sup> from right).

Congratulations to four of our residents that graduated from the structural welding program at Great Falls College MSU!

The GF College MSU Facebook page reports: *The program started in July 2023 as a first-of-its-kind partnership with industry helping design the curriculum to provide a short course aimed at getting students trained quickly in structural welding to make them eligible for the high-wage, high-demand field while also helping industry fill a critical workforce void. Some of the partners include the Department of Labor and Industry, Job Service, Vocational Rehab, Pre-Release, Opportunities Inc., and ADF International. Most of the graduates already have jobs lined up for the future.*

## Inmate Worker Completes program and Transfers to Resident



**Jon Green** said his whole life he's been called Jongreen. He said, "It could be Billy, Jack, or Joe, and then when it comes to me it's Jongreen." This picture says a lot about the person Jon Green is. He loves to joke around and make people laugh, and at the same time he cares about others. We took the picture right after the Saturday snow squall. He said the tissues were for people to wipe their tears if they didn't like the snow.

Jon is a people person. As an inmate worker he made it a point to communicate with everyone and learn their names. It was evident to me that he truly does care about others when he commented, "**Everyone has their own struggle.**"

Jon is full of energy, talks a mile a minute, and has a hard time sitting still. Through the years of being in jail and treatment centers and taking groups he learned the art of harnessing that energy and focusing it on doing good things.

Jon stated, "I've been to almost every pre-release, but there are still two I'm not trying to go to. This is my last one." I asked him what is different about this one, and he responded that he had never been an inmate worker before. During his other pre-release stays he was wild, didn't follow the rules, and was in a rush to get the program done. This time he made a conscious decision to stop and think about what he wanted in life. "Do I want to keep doing this or do I want to have a normal life and a stable home?"

Jon graduated from Two Eagle River High School in Pablo followed by Digital Arts and Design courses at the Salish Kootenai College. Jon considers himself to be a leader. He said, "I'm good at guiding other people. I believe we are all in it together." He wants to use that forte in the field of Wildland Fire Science to prevent wildfires and lead crews in fighting them. Jon said it feels good coming out of the fire line and having people thank him for saving their lives and their homes.

What does Jon like?

- ✓ *I like singing. When my daughter and I have phone calls we play You Tube and sing together. The only music I don't like is elevator music.*
- ✓ *I like sports a lot, specifically riding and fixing BMX bikes. I like and can drive anything with a wheel.*
- ✓ *My favorite place is Seattle. I like the rain and the diversity.*
- ✓ *I like to travel.*
- ✓ *I like to charm people and make them happy.*
- ✓ *I don't mind washing dishes. Seeing work get done is the best.*
- ✓ *My favorite job of all time was fixing fence.*

And out of the blue Jon told me the one thing he doesn't like.

- ✓ *I don't like chocolate one bit! I despise chocolate.*

Jon looks forward to taking an active role as Dad to his daughter who is busy participating in gymnastics and boxing.

Congratulations, Jon, and thank you for having such a positive attitude!

## Local Man's Death Linked to Vaping

By Chris Peterson, Hungry Horse News, February 7, 2024



Jude and Sabine Samuelli  
(Courtesy photo)

On Jan. 6 Sabine Samuelli of Columbia Falls took her husband Jude to the emergency room at Logan Health in Whitefish.

The man had been suffering from a cold and now had shallow breathing. Over the course of a few hours, his condition worsened greatly. He was transferred to the intensive care unit at Logan Health in Kalispell. He was intubated and by 8 p.m. he was life flighted to a hospital in Spokane.

Jude Samuelli's lungs were failing, and as the days passed it became clear that they would never get better. Mr. Samuelli, whose life was now supported by an extracorporeal membrane

oxygenation machine (called ECMO) needed a double lung transplant to survive. Mrs. Samuelli said doctors looked for a donor pair of lungs for him, but because he was unconscious and regressing, he was not a good candidate and he was ultimately denied by the donating hospitals.

On Jan. 26 Mr. Samuelli was taken off of life support. He died that same day. He was just 22. The couple had been married just three years.

Doctors said that vaping contributed to his Mr. Samuelli's death, Sabine Samuelli said.

Vapes are battery-operated devices that people use to inhale an aerosol, which typically can contain nicotine (though not always), flavorings, and other chemicals. Sabine Samuel said that her husband began smoking when he was about 18, but had decided to quit, so he turned to vaping. He didn't vape nicotine even, just the flavored smokes.

He enjoyed the process of vaping with his fellow workers at RBM Lumber, where he worked in the yard for the past six months or so. "He wanted to blow rings with the smoke and stuff," she recalled in a recent interview. The whole idea of vaping for him, at least, was to quit smoking and while he knew there were risks, "It was one of those situations that 'it will never happen to me,'" Sabine Samuelli recalled.

In Jude Samuelli's case, vaping, along with the infection from the cold, had made his lungs "sticky" doctors told Sabine and thus they eventually failed.

While vaping is generally considered slightly safer than smoking cigarettes, it is still not without its risks and researchers say there's still a lot they don't know about how the chemicals used in vaping react with the body.

In 2019, for example, the Centers for Disease Control noted that 2,668 people were hospitalized related to e-cigarette, or vaping, products. Of those cases 82% were linked to THC vaping products with Vitamin E acetate mixed in. After the cases were widely publicized, the number of incidents dropped dramatically. But those cases differ from Jude Samuelli's in one key way — THC is the active ingredient in marijuana — and Sabine Samuelli said he wasn't using that — he was simply vaping flavors.

Even so, the National Institute of Health notes that vaping, even without nicotine and THC, presents risks. "E-cigarette use exposes the lungs to a variety of chemicals, including those added to e-liquids, and other chemicals produced during the heating/vaporizing process," the NIH noted in a recent paper.

"A study of some e-cigarette products found the vapor contains known carcinogens and toxic chemicals, as well as potentially toxic metal nanoparticles from the device itself. The study showed that the e-liquids of certain cig-a-like brands contain high levels of nickel and chromium, which may come from the nichrome heating coils of the vaporizing device. Cig-a-likes may also contain low levels of cadmium, a toxic metal also found in cigarette smoke that can cause breathing problems and disease."

Sabine Samuelli recalled her husband as a caring person. "He just enjoyed being with family and experiencing things alongside the people he loved," she said.



Robin Castle

Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor  
455-9333 robin@gfprc.org

# New Honors Members



Congratulations to **Brandee Morris** for being accepted into the Honors Program!

Comments from those that work with Brandee include: *She has come a long way in her program. I think she is a great example of what comeback looks like. She is committed to running a positive program after a few hiccups. She is showing a desire to change and move forward with her life.*

In response to the question in the Honors application asking for additional information, Brandee stated, "I have gained a sense of hope and structure being in this program."

Congratulations to Gerald Belgarde for being accepted into the Honors Program!

Comments from those that work with Gerald include: *If you knew him before, this is a different Gerald Belgarde. He is making great strides in personal development and has gained a lot of self-insight. He has been an outstanding resident who always goes above and beyond mentoring new residents and doing extra duty support for the CO's.*

In response to the question in the Honors application asking for additional information, Gerald stated, "Three lines isn't enough to tell you how well things have been going for me. I feel incredible and very happy with who I have become."



## The Great Snow Squall of Saturday March 2, 2024

I witnessed some awesome teamwork as **George Fode, Jeremy Smithson, and Reno Seminole** shoveled snow.

Pictured on the right is **Randall Fritz**.



## STAFF MILESTONE



**Tim Schultz, Correctional Treatment Specialist – 5 Years:** Tim’s extensive background in law enforcement and security combined with his quirky personality equal a great fit at Great Falls Pre-Release.

Tim spent 10 years in the Navy as a Sonar Technician. He shared an experience of being aboard *USS Yorktown* on the Black Sea as it passed through Soviet territorial waters. The Soviet frigate *Bezzavetny* intentionally shouldered into the Naval cruiser two consecutive times. Tim was in charge of the berthing quarters on the side that was hit. He thought they hit a sandbar, but after the second bump he knew something bad was happening and directed his crew to evacuate to general quarters.

Another incident Tim experienced was being aboard *USS Yorktown* as it crossed Muammar Gaddafi’s Line of Death and destroyed one of Gaddafi’s ships. *USS Yorktown* was the first ship to launch a harpoon missile in combat fire.

Tim followed up his active duty in the Navy Reserve law enforcement division as a Master-At-Arms. During his time in Chesapeake, Virginia, he also worked as a Reserve Deputy Sheriff.

Tim returned to his home state of Montana and served in the Montana Army National Guard as a Forward Observer Scout in Mechanized Infantry. He served as a Reserve Deputy Sheriff in Powell County followed by 15 years of employment at Montana State Prison with 12 of those years as a Corrections Sergeant.

Tim moved to his hometown of Great Falls and obtained his college degree in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Forensic Investigations. He worked for Homeland Security for 5 years as a federal building security officer.



Having to wear bullet proof vests for almost the entirety of his career, Tim was ready for a desk job where he could sport a tie and display his college degree on the wall. By accepting the job offer at Great Falls Pre-Release, he was able to check those boxes.

**Why do you like working here?** “I like directing the residents in the right direction so they can be more successful members of the community.”



**What is challenging about working here?** “The paperwork; I’m not a paperwork guy at all.”

Tim loves magic and is a semi-professional magician. He also makes and sells custom GI Joes. One he recently sold was Tom Cruise as Maverick. Tim has two daughters and four grandchildren.



## Richard Lawrence – Honors Member

By Brenda Demers



**Richard Lawrence's** life as a child consisted of bouncing between birth mother and family members. It was hard seeing others his age living a normal life.

Richard said he did really well in school but he dropped out in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade because he wasn't showing up to school consistently. Fast forward to Pine Hills where he took all of the HiSET testing and passed each module. Naturally, he assumed he earned his high school equivalency. When he got here, he learned that he was 1 point short of the overall required score to be awarded the HiSET. With Noel's help, he is scheduled to retake the math module so he can get the required certificate. Richard said his favorite subjects are math and science. He plans to go to college for computer technology and take courses to become a counselor. Richard shared that he has been very involved in NA and AA in the past, including chairing meetings and being a sponsor.

After gaining a significant amount of sobriety after graduating treatment court, something tragic happened. As many addicts do, Richard turned to his demons to deal with the grief that snuck up and overturned the serenity he established. Stemming from age 7, tragedy knocked on Richard's door a number of times due

to the loss of family members. The latest was just a few months ago when he awoke at 1:00 a.m. to a phone call from his sister breaking the news that their mother unexpectedly passed away. His sister was understandably apprehensive about calling him because he had been doing so well, and she didn't want him to lose the sobriety he had painstakingly gained.

Richard candidly talked about his relapses and time in recovery centers. Richard relapsed on Thanksgiving - the day after he got back home from treatment. "I'm super grateful that it happened to me because it brought a lot to my attention. I'm an isolator and tend to run from my problems. People need a longer period of time doing inpatient treatment. First I would set a goal to reach 60 or 90 days. I knew if I passed 6 months without hanging out with certain people I tended to do well. When I got the phone call about my mom I was way past the point of 6 months' sober." Now Richard has gained a significant amount of sobriety again in his life.

Richard spoke positively about his time at Pine Hills. "I worked very hard in the program and was able to become acquainted with myself." He was a peer support counselor, worked in the kitchen, and was part of the crew that got to go to the ranch outside of the facility and work in the garden and with the horses.

"Seeing the growth in myself I got to looking at my spirituality. I started going back to church when I got here and that filled the spiritual void I felt. I know my mom is really proud of me for doing the things I've been doing."

Richard said he was supposed to go to Billings Pre-Release. He had support there and everything figured out. He's glad that didn't work out, commenting, "Everything happens for a reason. I believe that. Coming here gave me the opportunity to spend time with my mom." After the news of his mother's death, Richard is appreciative of the support GFPRC staff gave him and for being able to take passes to mourn and attend her celebration of life. Looking back, he is thankful he was sober and able to do video visits with his mom while he was at Pine Hills.

Richard shared the exciting news that he was recently baptized. He is focused on doing service work. Being in honors provides extra passes so he can get more involved in the community. Through his journey to sobriety, Richard gained a lot of new friends. "My whole contact list on my phone is completely different now."

Richard's Hobby: One of Richard's favorite things to do is ride BMX bikes. He said, "It's therapeutic for me to go out and jump 10 stairs and grind the rail!"

Congratulations on your success, Richard!



# EDUCATION

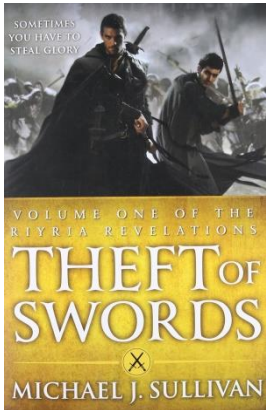
Things are really moving in the Education Center! The new and improved Future Build construction training and certification program has wrapped up, and a new session is going to begin soon. If you would like to know more, come see me in the Education Center.

Also, a lovely resident has kindly donated some new books, including some titles from well-respected authors. Come on by to see if there is anything to interest you.



**Noël Walker**  
EDUCATION COORDINATOR

No one will argue that writing effectively is incredibly helpful. Your online job application might have spell check, but it doesn't have comma check. If you would like to strengthen your writing skills, consider joining us at 1900 every Tuesday for Creative Writing. We have worked our way through sentence structure, and how commas are used to join sentences and clauses. We are moving toward how punctuation can help you communicate your intent EXACTLY. If it sounds boring, I promise you it isn't. But, maybe it could be made even better by your presence.



Just a reminder, March's Book Club meeting will be at 1500 on March 15. April's selection will be *Theft of Swords* by Michael J. Sullivan. This is the first book in the "Riyria Revelations" series. In this first book, we meet a mercenary and a skilled thief who find themselves in a tangled web of murder, political intrigue, and magic. Three copies will be in rotation. Stop by the Education Center and pick one up!

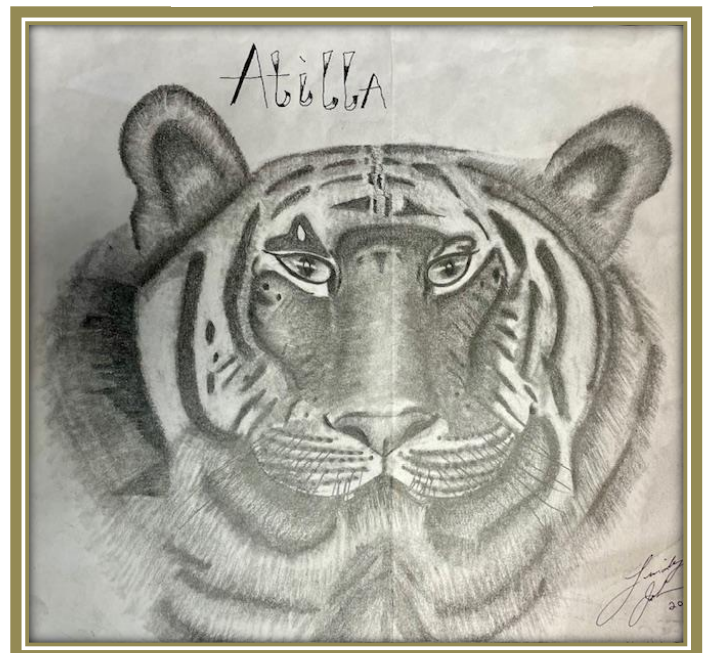
Lastly, congratulations to the recent Structural Welding Program graduates. Your motivation and leadership in taking control of your present and, more importantly, your future are an example to all of us. I am extremely proud of you and wish you all the best!

## Artwork by Lindy Johnson

**PRE-RELEASE PRESS**  
**Editor:** Brenda Demers



**TRANSITION CENTER**  
GREAT FALLS PRE-RELEASE SERVICES INC.



**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 455-9323** [brenda@gfprc.org](mailto:brenda@gfprc.org). Any suggestions are also appreciated.

## “Peace! Be Still!”

By Chris Marez

One of my favorite stories from the Gospels involves a storm.

Jesus and His disciples are crossing the Sea of Galilee. They are moving from the Jewish side to the Gentile side, from the side where they're at home and where life is familiar to the side where life is new and different.

We've been in life situations like this. This is not just a story about the weather and a boat trip. It is a story about life. It's a story about faith. It's a story about fear.

Sometimes the sea of life is rough. The wind is strong. The waves are high. The boat is taking on water and sinking. We all know what that's like. Each of us could tell a storm story.

Storms happen. Regardless of when or how they arise, storms are about changing conditions. Life is overwhelming and out of control. Things don't go our way. Circumstances seem too much for us to handle. Order gives way to chaos, and we're sinking. The water is deep and the shore a distant horizon.

In the midst of this particular storm, Jesus seems, perhaps, uncaring. He's asleep. How can He sleep at a time like this? A sleeping Jesus is not what they want. Certainly not what we want.

He is in the same boat and the same storm as the disciples. He is surrounded by the same water as the disciples, blown by the same wind, beaten by the same waves. His response, however, is different. While His disciples fret and worry, He sleeps.

The disciples want busyness and activity. Jesus sleeps in stillness and peace.



His sleep reveals that the real threat is not the wind, waves, and water around us—the circumstances in which we find ourselves—but within us. The real storm, the more threatening storm, is always the one that rages from within.

That interior storm is the one that blows us off course, beats against our faith, and threatens to drown us. Fear, vulnerability, and powerlessness blow within us. And, too often, fear is the shelter we seek.

This is not helpful.

“Peace! Be still!” Jesus speaks to the wind and the sea. He isn't changing the weather as much as inviting the disciples to change. He's speaking to the wind and the waves inside them.

“Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” He says. Jesus's words are more about us than the circumstances of our lives and the storms we meet. Faith does not eliminate the storms of our lives. Faith does not change the storm. It changes us. Faith does not take us around the storm but through it. Faith allows us to see and know that Jesus is there with us. Faith is what allows us to be still, to be peaceful, in the midst of the storm. In every storm Jesus is present and His response is always the same, “Peace! Be still!”

## Life Long Learning Scholarship Recipient

Congratulations to **Kyra Kirk** for her efforts to pursue her ServSafe Management Certification. Because of her dedication and perseverance, she has been awarded the GFPRS, Inc., Life Long Learning Scholarship, which will cover the cost of her course. The Scholarship committee is so proud of you, Ms. Kirk. Keep up the good work!!



Kyra Kirk exhibits a breath of fresh air. She was ecstatic to learn that she was awarded a Life Long Learning Scholarship to help her obtain her ServeSafe Management Certification. *Getting help with this certification is definitely a blessing and is going to help me move in the right direction to meet my goals to better my future.*

Kyra explained: *I've had a deep passion for working in the restaurant industry for quite some time now. I have over nine years of experience. I started as a waitress in 2015 and worked my way up to assistant kitchen manager in 2022. Having my ServeSafe Management Certification will benefit me so I can go further in my career.*

The seed for Kyra's love of baking was planted when she made cookies with her grandma as a young girl. She plans to obtain her Culinary Arts degree in Las Vegas. Kyra said her big dream is to open her own bake shop and make wedding cakes. She even has a name picked out for her business – "Kyra's Cakes and More".

Kyra experienced domestic violence in her marriage and turned to alcohol as her crutch. With determination and perseverance, she was able to escape the relationship. Kyra learned how to react to trauma and trials, both big and small, in a healthy way.

Kyra is a go-getter and a positive, goal-oriented person. In learning about people with addictions, Kyra discovered that she needs to take time for herself. She is now focused on her mental and physical health. The first thing she accomplished after arriving at Great Falls Pre-Release was to change her last name back to Kirk. She schedules Self Care Saturdays where she gets together with a friend for pedicures and manicures, hair styling, playing video games, watching movies, and listening to music.

If you are interested in applying for a Life Long Learning Scholarship, contact Education Coordinator Noel Walker.

The pessimist complains about the wind. The optimist expects it to change. The leader adjusts the sails.

John Maxwell



*You don't have to be great at something to start, but you have to start to be great at something.*

**Zig Ziglar**

# Temporary Home

By CO Danni Altenburg

I decided to run a Cornhole tournament and game day on Saturday 3/2/2024 to let the guys know that I appreciate all of their hard work cleaning up East and keeping it clean by doing their chores and helping one another keep their temporary home clean.

**Danni Altenburg**



**Donald Farrar**

**Nathaniel McDonald**



**Jon Green**

**Michael Temple**

**Reno Seminole**



**Jeremy Smithson**

**Luis Zayas**



**Greg Anderson**

**Zack Herrell**



**Cameron Miller**

**Melvin Heavygun**



**Larry Espinosa**

**Donald Farrar**

**Nathaniel McDonald**

**Nathan Racine**

# A Great Day

by Staff Cook Liz Davis

We had a great Saturday on March 2, 2024. Danni and our CO's set up the dining room with Cornhole games and called the guys down to play. They had a great time and it gave them something to do for about 3 hours. We gave out cookies and then played some music and kept it low. There was no yelling and no bad language, just laughing and joking around.

Danni has been keeping them busy with chores and deep cleaning and today was a positive day for all of the hard work they have been doing. I thought what a great way to show them if you do good, good things are returned to you. I don't know if anyone else cares, but I do. I think we need a little more give and take and to show these guys we do care.



**Melvin Heavygun**



**Jeremy Smithson**



**J. Lee Anderson    Larry Espinosa**



**Cameron Miller                      Jon Green                      Michael Temple                      J. Lee Anderson**

**Donald Farrar**  
**Nathaniel McDonald**  
**Cameron Miller**



# JEFF'S TRIVIA, SCIENCE, AND SAFETY CORNER



**Jeff Barnhart**  
Facility Services Director



10% of the world population is left-handed.

# 8%

Around 8% of the world population has an extra rib.

## DID YOU KNOW?

FACTS



The average bear will have 42 teeth.



Rabbits eat their feces.



Birds require gravity to swallow.



The blood of lobsters is colorless.



The most commonly used letter in the English alphabets is E.



The Hawaiian alphabet contains only 13 letters.



The majority of plant life is located in the ocean.



Spiders are not insects.



A cat spends most of its life sleeping.



Australia is the only continent without an active volcano.



Honey never spoils.



The fortune cookie was invented in America.



The human brain is 78% water.



A giraffe cleans its ears with its tongue.



Koalas sleep 18 hours a day.



You share your birthday with 19 million people.



Sponges hold more cold water rather than hot.



Cats have a hundred vocal cords.

# FUN & GAMES

## Jungle Animals

Find and circle the words.

CROCODILE	GORILLA	LION	SNAKE
ELEPHANT	HIPPO	MONKEY	TIGER
GIRAFFE	LEOPARD	RHINO	ZEBRA

Q E L E P H A N T S Q U J  
 C W J Y K L G U H I P P O  
 G C R O E G O R I L L A M  
 I R B F V Y P P G A I E Q  
 R O L X N L T I G E R H G  
 A C I N S E K W K H R Z N  
 F O O X N O J L W J H E T  
 F D N O A P C G O I I B U  
 E I F Y K A B I Z X N R H  
 Q L A B E R C A M F O A Z  
 Q E O N Z D X M O N K E Y

