

TRANSITION TIMES



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The Spice and Kratom Epidemic

Surprisingly, these items can be legally purchased at a number of stores in Great Falls. However, rightfully so, the residents of Great Falls Pre-Release are banned from using or being in possession of them. Staff recently received the following training from Compliance Officer Supervisor Ron Spry:

- Spice is also known as K2, synthetic cannabis, fake pot, legal weed, herbal incense and potpourri.
- Spice is sold under more than 600 different names. Some are: MOJO, Scooby, Snax, Black Mamba, Nuclear 19, Herbal Kush.
- Spice is actually made from dried plant material and chopped up herbs coated with synthetic cannabinoids (over 700 research chemicals) in a mixture of colors.
- Some synthetic cannabinoids are 100 times stronger than THC.
- Spice/K2 now comes in liquid that is used in vape pens.
- Spice is labeled "NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION" and "DO NOT BURN".
- Symptoms/Side Effects: mimics marijuana high, hallucinations, seizures/tremors, coma/unconsciousness, vomiting, numbness/tingling, increased respiration rate, elevated blood pressure and heart rate, increased level of anxiety/agitation leading to panic attacks or possible suicide attempts.
- Some claim that ending an addiction to spice or K2 can be as difficult as quitting crack or heroin.
- Kratom is heavily promoted as a legal, undetectable, safe drug that can be used to come off stronger drugs.
- Kratom is a tropical tree (*Mitragyna Speciosa*) native to Southeast Asia, with leaves that contain psychoactive (mind-altering) opioid compounds. The tree's bitter leaves are consumed for mood-boosting effects and pain relief and as an aphrodisiac.
- The leaves of Kratom are consumed by either chewing, or by drying and smoking, putting into capsules, tablets or extract or by boiling into a tea.
- Traditionally the stimulant effect was used by Thai, Malaysian and native workers to increase stamina, energy and limit fatigue.
- Kratom side effects: sedation, nausea, sweating, dry mouth, increased urination, loss of appetite, itching, constipation, dizziness, confusion, hypothyroidism, liver injury, addiction, withdrawal, psychosis, hallucinations, seizures.
- Kratom can currently be bought at, Walmart, Walgreens, Target, GNC and multiple convenience stores in Great Falls.
- Kratom now comes in liquid form that can be used in Vape pens and E-cigs. It can also be used as a drink much like 5 hour energy drinks.
- Most Kratom users are middle aged and well educated people.
- In 2016 there were 660 calls for to the Poison Control Center for Kratom related exposure.
- Between November 2017 and February 2018 there were 44 reports of Kratom related deaths.



Great Falls Pre-Release Volunteer Juanita Rosales Completes Mission trip to the Philippines



Juanita Rosales ministers to female inmates at the Pampanga Provincial Jail in the Philippines. More than 600 inmates are housed at the 300 capacity



Juanita Rosales shares pictures from her mission trip to the Philippines with GFPRC volunteer Maxine O'Neil and GFPRC Volunteer Coordinator Sheena Jarvey

Juanita Rosales has volunteered at Great Falls Pre-Release for 18 years now. At 92 there are no signs she is letting up. Anyone reading Juanita's life story, published as My Journey with the Good Shepherd, cannot help but be strengthened by her tenacity. After completing the 4th grade, she was insistent on furthering her education rather than spending her days making pots or sewing as was the norm in her homeland of the Philippines. As a young girl, during World War II, she and her family raced to a rice field seeking refuge as they were being "machine gunned" by the Japanese. After the war, Juanita earned her degree as a registered nurse and bravely ventured to the United States to put her skills to work in Great Falls.

Juanita knows that God physically saved her to be His instrument to spiritually save others. In 1963 when she visited her village in the Philippines she noticed that her brother and other believers had bought hollow blocks in hopes of building a small church. Time passed and they just lay their crumbling. Juanita thought to herself, "Someday I will help build a church in my village." Fast forward twenty five years. Juanita's dear friend, Marie I. Knutson, appointed Juanita as trustee of her estate. A portion was pre-designated to be distributed to specific ministries. The remaining was willed to Juanita to do as she pleased. Rather than using these funds on herself, Juanita began fulfilling her burning desire to build churches (8 so far) in her homeland with the goal of renouncing denominational barriers and providing sanctuaries where all Christians could worship in unity.

Juanita Rosales preaching at a church in the Philippines that was built with the help of her non-profit organization Helping Hands International



Juanita has made many mission trips back to the Philippines, and at 92 did not expect to go again. She did and was surprised that she had the energy to speak at 5 different church services. One of the churches she helped build has grown to 600 members that holds 3 services in a day. The trip was fulfilling to her as well as to the people she ministered to. She was comforted to find out that the job God started that she thought was complete is continuing. "Everything that happened was God's timing."

By Brenda Demers

Secret Cupid

by Brenda Demers

Participation in the 3rd annual Secret Cupid has been catching on and expanded to eighteen staff members this year. Participants fill out a short questionnaire about things they like which are put into a basket. Each person draws a questionnaire and unanimously sneaks small gifts to the person they've drawn during the week leading up to Valentine's Day. Everyone has a great time trying to figure out who their Secret Cupid is. Staff enjoyed a luncheon and final gifts on "reveal" day.



Joe Smith and Julie Sangster



Reveal Day



Linsey Shannon



Joe Marten

A Blast from the Past

By Brenda Demers



Keith Eldridge worked at Great Falls Pre-Release for about 5 years starting in 1991. He recently stopped in at the Transition Center to reminisce and catch up with Paul. After a quick introduction to a few staff in the office, Keith revealed a sense of humor when asked what he did here. A smile crept out and he pondered, "I don't know..... picked my nose, scratched my butt..."

The truth is he was a counselor. When the DOC asked Great Falls Pre-Release to put together an Aftercare program for the Boot Camp (which at that time was located at the Swan River Forest Camp) Keith immersed himself in researching and building a program with no model to follow. He gave some advice that would be advantageous to anyone willing to humble themselves. In hindsight, he said he wished he would have been open to suggestions and input from others.

Later, Keith went on to work as a probation and parole officer. He specialized in the Intense Supervision Program and also supervised sex offenders.

Keith has worn many hats throughout his working and personal life. Apparently he worked for Coca-Cola at one time because he commented that he overheard his son telling someone, "My dad was a cop all those years and now he's a 'coke' dealer!" Keith and his wife of 40 years are now settled in Havre where they own Fivehead's, a customized t-shirt/sweatshirt store complete with a coffee shop.

GFPRC Residents Entertain at the Mansfield Center by Sheena Jarvey

On Sunday, Feb. 25th, the original stage play, **“Love Don’t Know No Color”** was presented at the Mansfield Theatre. Written and directed by Executive Producer Marcus Collins, this play examined perceptions of race, class, sexuality and power in American society. Two high powered lawyers, from different racial backgrounds, fall in love. And, of course, the less accepting members of their respective families oppose this romance. So we, the audience, celebrated their love story as we celebrated the high spirited mingling and dancing at the Diversity Club (Scene 4) where the audience saw western line dances, same sex inter-ethnic couples slow dancing, and hip-hop artists energizing the stage. We saw the challenges to money, power and position in the inner workings of the law firm and what people give up in their rise to the top. But there was one thing that the audience didn’t immediately see. At the end of the first scene, while the sets were being changed, we were entertained by the janitor at the law firm. A bit older, a bit chunkier, he pushed his broom across the stage while dispensing some home grown wisdom and divulged his plot to find the maple bars hidden in the office food stashes. It was an amusing segment to transition into the real action on the stage. After all, it was just the janitor.

As the play progressed, the audience continued to celebrate the romance, with its challenges and rewards. But the janitor kept appearing between scenes. Only now he’s in sharper clothing, now he’s rapping, now he’s giving more in-depth insight into life. Wait, now the janitor is in the scenes themselves, and what is he doing trying to save our hero from a hate crime? How did he know and why was he there... oh, wait. OK so the audience had not stereotyped the main characters. But had we missed something? Or, rather, someone? Our cultural stereotypes had failed to recognize what the janitor might and could be. Was he just a janitor, older and slower, a background to the more important players on the stage? Or, was he an angel, a spiritual being, a person of strength in times of danger, hiding in plain sight?

The Mansfield Theatre has hosted a stunning array of famous and accomplished entertainers through its long history. Snoop Dogg performed on stage (OK so he showed up late, but he did show!) as did Yo-Yo Ma. The audience held its breath as the esteemed Itzhak Perlman took the stage.

And so, on Sunday night, the audience saw our own Gregory Boyd and Theodore Whitford perform on the Mansfield stage. Theodore and Gregory did not let any stereotypes of incarceration stand in the way of their performance. They proudly took their turn. Mr. Boyd and Mr. Whitford honored their potential and gave back to the community with their creativity.



Theodore Whitford and Gregory Boyd

My thanks to Marcus Collins, all the cast and crew, the support of Mayor Kelly, the Mansfield, and all others who made this evening possible. A special shout out to Theodore Whitford and Gregory Boyd for their part in this quality production. Gregory Boyd enthusiastically promoted this event, and, as he noted, “We had a blast doing the play!” Director Collins, in his appreciation for Gregory and Theodore and all the actors who took part, wrote, “To everyone that played a role in any scene, thank you. You were more than just an “EXTRA” in the play, you were the “EXTRA” to the play!”

In a complex and often unfathomable universe, be aware of the spiritual presence of those who may suddenly appear or those we are more familiar with. No one is ever “just a janitor”. Plus, we ourselves are never “just a janitor”; we want to be aware of our chances and potential to be so much more to those around us. We can be the extra to the lives of others.

STAFF NEWS

New Staff

We would like to welcome our newly hired Compliance Officers **Rachel Boyken** and **Nick Reiser**.

Staff Changes

Congratulations to **Kyle Steger** who started out as a Compliance Officer, was then promoted to a Correctional Treatment Specialist, and has since been chosen to be the Correctional Treatment Specialist for our new Montana Veteran's Reentry Program.

Milestones



10 Years – Dave Pickle: Maintenance Coordinator

I was born in California and raised in Butte. I have a son and a daughter that live in Butte. I have worked all types of jobs over the years from working for the Department of Transportation, Montana State Prison, Youth Dynamics as a group home advisor and moving into taking over the maintenance department. I enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, and last year getting into hiking.

I moved to Great Falls in March of 2008 and went to work for the Great Falls Pre-Release as their Maintenance Coordinator. I have met a lot of good people that either work for the pre-release or live in our community. While working for the pre-release I have seen a lot of changes; some good, some not so good. It is always a good feeling knowing that you may have helped a resident through a rough time in his or her life. We have to remember that we are all people and put our pants on one leg at a time. We can all make a difference. We just have to put our best foot forward. I have enjoyed working at the center and hope that we continue to help the population that we work with.



5 Years – Shawna Paranteau: Compliance Officer

Shawna was born in Colorado Springs but moved to Great Falls at an early age. She was raised by her mother and her step-dad, who worked in the oil fields. Shawna and her husband of 29 years have 3 children and 4 grandchildren. Shawna has no time to spare because she is raising 3 of her grandchildren – a 4 year old, a 2 year old, and a 3 month old! Prior to coming to work at Great Falls Pre-Release, she traveled much of the state providing transportation to railroad workers. She also worked the switchboard at Benefis.

Shawna enjoys working with the residents because each one is different. She is soft-spoken, even tempered, and pleasant.

By Brenda Demers

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Inspirational quote

The first to apologize is the bravest. The first to forgive is the strongest.
The first to forget is the happiest.



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Providing re-entry services since 1984

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MISSION STATEMENT

Great Falls Pre-Release Services, Inc. provides a cost-effective alternative to incarceration for offenders through a variety of community-based correctional treatment programs. Great Falls Pre-Release Services, Inc. is dedicated to public safety and trust through professional, quality services which facilitate personal growth through positive change and individual responsibility of assigned offenders.



gfprc.org

Vision Statement

Dedicated to providing resources and opportunities that safely and successfully restore offenders into society.

Statement of Values

- *Motivation:* A desire to help others reach their full potential.
- *Professionalism:* Maintain proper interactions with staff, residents, and the community.
- *Accountability:* Take ownership for successes and shortcomings, to ourselves and others
- *Equality:* Ensure equality by expressing, in attitudes and actions, respect for all.
- *Dignity:* Model behavior in a respectful manner to instill a sense of self-respect and to bolster a positive self-image.
- *Community:* Develop a positive environment that facilitates healthy change as the residents integrate into the broader community.