

"April showers bring May flowers," or so they say. With that in mind the theme for this month's newsletter is the beauty after the storm.

Resident Standouts



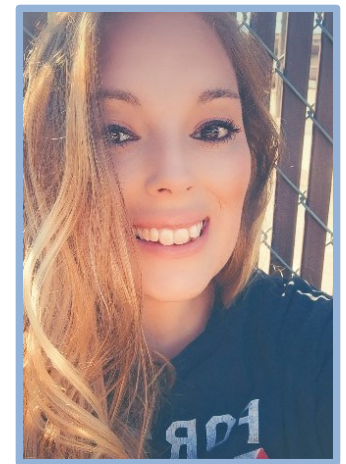
John Dailey (left) found and turned in CO Engram's gold bracelet. CO Engram had performed a bag check, and the bracelet fell off inside his bag. John found the bracelet inside his backpack, realized it was hers, and returned it to her directly. CO Engram and the entire staff appreciate his integrity and honesty. Such characteristics go a long way and show that honor and corrections can easily coexist.

We would like to nominate Ms. **Rhiannon**

Chaffin for the resident stand out this month. She was here once before and has come such a long way from then to now. When she faces setbacks, she always stays positive and respectful. When she was here before, she was dark, gloomy, and



negative (she knows this). This go around, she is bright-eyed, smiley, positive, helps others, and is embracing the program.



I know we already nominated **Ms. Chaffin** but I wanted to elaborate on just how much this lady is a Resident Standout. She was here before a couple of years ago. As she says, she was highly medicated and angry at everybody/everything. This go around it only took me a couple of weeks to notice the wonderful

changes in her (and I told her so...she cried telling me how grateful she was for me noticing). She is so sweet, smiley, kind to everyone, and cooperative. She is always helping other residents and actually excited about her future this time. I'm super proud of her!



I would like to nominate Julian Ruiz. He is always smiling and helping residents with their paperwork. He always is willing to help and I've seen him blossom in these past few months.





Brenda Demers, Cheryl Haynes, and Sonja Roberts sport Ray's favorite team.

Take Me Out to the Ballgame: Staff Celebrate the Start of Baseball Season



Shellie Babinecz sports her favorite team.

Show the COs Some Love

Ray McClelland, UA Supervisor:

1. What is your favorite holiday? **4th of July**
2. What was your favorite class in school? **History**
3. What is your favorite color? **Bright Green**
4. What is your favorite board game? **Axis & Allies, Diplomacy; Monopoly**
5. Do you have any pet peeves? **Leaving a mop bucket full of mop water**
6. What is the most interesting/exciting place you have visited? **Djibouti, Africa; Greece**



Ray organized the "Baseball Shirt" day for the Pre Release staff on March 21st.

Welcome, New Staff!!

Cassandra Hall Treatment Services



My name is Cassandra Hall and I have a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice with a focus of Human Services Advocacy. I am a United States Air Force Veteran. My main hobby is reading, I love to read anything, really, from thriller novels to autobiographies. I will read just about anything. Some of my interests include watching hockey, going to Voyagers



games and bowling with my husband on the co-ed bowling league we joined. I also like going on walks or jogs with my family to spend time together and to enjoy the weather when it is warm outside.



Bridget Tighe, East Campus CTS

I love everything about books- reading them, writing them, and crafting with them. I write crime fiction, and cozy mysteries. I am a crafter- I doodle, Cricut, paint rocks, and make junk journals.

My family is very important to me, which includes my six furbabies- five toy poodles and a shorkie (shi tzu/yorkie).

I have a diverse background starting as a Military Police-Investigator in the US Army for eight years in Germany; Ft Knox, KY; and Ft Hood, TX. My first job when I got out was as a Correctional Officer when Crossroads Correctional Center first opened, and I worked my way up to Unit Manager. I've worked at Nexus Treatment Center in Lewistown, MT, as a case manager, and was the Drug Treatment Court Coordinator here in Great Falls. Before coming to the Great Falls Pre-Release Center, I worked for Probation and Parole as a Presentence Investigation Writer.

I try to remember every day how truly blessed I am. Because of this, I also try to choose joy every day. Joy is a state of mind and not an emotion. I am grateful to be working here and to try to choose joy every day. Joy is a state of mind and not an emotion. I am grateful to be working here and to be a part of so many people's journey to becoming your best selves.

Fred Nashookpuk—Honors Member

Fred Nashookpuk, new Honors member, is navigating his new reality with dignity and a sense of peace. He is meeting his challenges and taking charge of his future. Fred is a member of the Inupiaq, a subgroup of the Inuit people, who have traditionally lived throughout Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. Fred's ancestral home is the ancient settlement of Tikiġaq or Point Hope, Alaska.



"Tikiġaq, or Point Hope is located on the western coast of the Arctic Slope region. Scientific studies confirm Tikiġaq is the longest continually inhabited area in North America. The Iñupiat came to this area to hunt bowhead whales some 2,500 years ago." Source: Arctic Slope Native Association 2025

The population of Tikiġaq has stabilized at around 800. Fred said that approximately half of the people leave for other areas, but the other half choose to stay, where they continue to enhance and build their cultural legacy in place. However, those that leave Tikiġaq bring their cultural heritage with them and, like Fred, share the beauty of their traditions: respecting others,

relationships and caring for people.

While Fred has no immediate plans to live in Alaska, his visits are a joyful way to reconnect. There he can tap into the solitude of being out in the open land, where he can, yes, view the Northern Lights. This solitude brings him solace and peace of mind - a very different concept than loneliness. He looks forward to eating traditional foods, such as whale blubber and bowhead. This is the land and sea which nurtured his ancestors for thousands of years and where Fred's family traditions of hunting and whaling goes back into time.

From his father, Fred inherited his art talent and his love of a variety of art forms, including drawing, painting and etching and scrimshaw done on whale baleen. His dad was especially skilled at carving and this is also Fred's favorite medium. He studied art at the University of Fairbanks and later at Stone Child College (SCC) in Rocky Boy, with an early career goal to become an art teacher. However, his plans got derailed when Fred started drinking in college and this continued with jobs such as firefighting and work in the oil fields. Alcoholism rates in Alaska are disproportionately high and this was exacerbated when Fred was growing up by the standard approach at the time, which was the use of the "drunk tank". Fred said when he started getting arrested he would be thrown into the drunk tank and then released without charges, which left him free to do it all over again. This helped nothing and only perpetuated the problem by pushing consequences, treatment and recovery out of the equation.

After his move to Montana, Fred was sober for 5 years following the birth of his first son. But then he began traveling more for his job in the oil fields, going back and forth, living in the man camps. Their work schedule was 12-hour days for 7 days straight. The pent-up fatigue and stress took a severe toll and this pressure cooker environment led to heavy drinking as a way to try to cope. It became too much. His sobriety faltered and then fell off completely. Blacking out was happening more and more often and it happened quickly. Fred said that when he is sober he is the nicest guy, but this drastically changed, as it does for most, when drunk. And being drunk was becoming his normal.

However, even when Fred's drinking left him living rough on the streets, he kept true to his traditional values and shared what resources he had. He never expected anything in return, because that's not how blessings work. But blessings did return to Fred, for even at his lowest, passed out in the street, he awoke to find a big plate of food, along with a \$50-dollar bill. And to make this even more remarkable? "It was Chinese food - my favorite."

Fred is now committed to his sobriety. His sobriety is anchored in his unbreakable love for his kids and Fred said that honestly, "Without my kids I wouldn't be here." His commitment as a dad keeps his sobriety straightforward and true. Fred's children are his entire world. His oldest son is 10, followed by his daughter who is 8 and his youngest son who is 5. They are taking the family reunification slowly, but Fred says he has found peace whatever the outcome. He realizes his most important contribution to his family now is his continued sobriety and stabilization.

Fred was raised by his grandparents, who have since passed away. The far reaching and devastating desecration of the Indian boarding schools impacted Fred's grandparents, and, as collateral damage from the brutality of this cultural disruption, Fred's parents. "I never had my father or mother, so the most important thing for me is being there for my kids. Fred continued, "I want to teach my children values, like my grandpa did to me. I want them to know the value of helping others and of thinking of others first, before yourself."

Anxiety

Destinee Hardesty

Heart racing

Sweat begins to bead

Hands starting to quake

Head swims with fear & doubt

What do I do?

How to make it stop?

Where can I turn or go?

Who can ease these thoughts?

I take a breath

Then I remember it

Another deep breath in

I am in control, I make it stop

Being on Honors is a time not only for celebration of accomplishments, but also of reflections of how a person's journey can help others. Fred had this to offer, "Listen to advice. Listen, open up your ears and take it into consideration. It's critical to change your mentality." Also, Fred advised to stay out of the drama, the mix. "Stay out of people's way, work out, go to work, come back. Keep it focused."

The person whose kindness of heart left Fred the food and the money, will probably never know of Fred's success. But then again, possibly. Because anyone who has ever given a gift freely and with care will instinctively know that the good we do moves forward on its own spiritual path, with its own timing, locating the right recipient. Being a spiritual man, Fred understands these dynamics and actively gives back. Fred uses his special Honor's leave passes to volunteer at the Angel Room at St. Vincent DePaul. With his volunteer

work, he offers help and encouragement to those in the community who are in need, using his unique brand of caring and spirituality.

Even in his pain over the disruption in his marriage, Fred remains kind and wise and is philosophical about staying calm no matter what direction his marriage may take. All he wants is what is best for his kids. That's it. He can live with the rest, and if he and his wife can be happier apart, so be it. The love will always be there and the bond and support he shares with his wife and kids will always remain.

Even though Fred now lives thousands of miles from Tikiq̃aq, it is easy to sense the deep cultural and

2nd Chance

Olandtha Ford

Anyone can have their life go horribly astray,
Make a wrong turn on the road of life and end up going the wrong way,
Life going to pieces, the wreckage falling where it may.
All it takes is one bad day.
We walk through life with personal grievances,
Fighting wars with their personal demons.
Feeling like they're in a battle they just can't win,
Always on the outside looking in.
But all we need to do is hold on and keep moving forward.
Heading for that one goal we are moving toward.
Leaving the darkness behind us and moving toward the light.
Not ready to give up a 2nd Chance without a fight.
Be it in the first round or the last,
We all have our battles against the ghosts of our past.
But with determination and perseverance we will succeed and advance,
And prove that we earned our 2nd chance.

spiritual roots that the Inupiat culture has imparted. Carvers often speak of discovering what the medium they are working with wants to become. In other words when, say, when carving a block of wood, what the wood wants to reveal soon becomes evident. Fred, loving father, talented artist and hard worker, has taken away the outer layer of issues that needed to be discarded. Clearing away the negative left a young man with his future ahead of him and his cultural roots keeping him firmly focused.

We are very proud of Fred and wish him and his family continued happiness.



News by Sheena Jarvey



Authentic

Destinee Hardesty

I try and try and try, so hard
Every single day, I try
I get up early, put on my smile
Do everything I need to do
I do the things I should do
I take care of my body right
I get the all support I need

But still there's a part of me
A small little voice inside
One that cries out for me
To listen, just hear me out
You're missing something
Something so very important
I feel so damn alone in here
Please just help me, don't forget
Stop ignoring me, I won't disappear
I'll keep growing louder & louder
Until the time you finally hear
When it happens I hope it's not too late
Because that's when you let drugs in
To cover my voice up, to drown me
To make the overwhelming pain
My screaming inflicts on you
When all you need to do is.....
Listen
Hear me
Be real



Planted Seeds...

O'landtha Ford

No one will sing songs for us when we are gone.
But for some of us, the endearing memories we make allow
us to live on,
Forever immortalized for the more virtuous of our deeds,
So that our minds can be a peace in the thought that we at
least planted seeds,
Inspiring others to a greater future we may not see,
Looking in on dreams that may come to be,
A lasting lesson showing that no matter how much a person
may be lost in the night,
All it takes is a little hope and hard work to again find our
way back to the light,
Our destiny is not set in stone,
Through both deed and action, we can atone,
And through hardships earned,
We can inspire others through the lessons we've learned...



Why Is



So Late This Year?

Easter Sunday for both orthodox and non-orthodox Christians will this year fall on Sunday, April 20, making it one of the latest dates for the holiday in recent memory.

According to Timeanddate.com, the latest Easter Sunday can ever be is April 25 — only five days beyond the date in 2025. The reason? A combination of the moon's elliptical, (Easter) egg-shaped orbit of the sun and the date of a rare "blood moon" total lunar eclipse on March 13-14. This eclipse — visible across North America — is the final full moon before the spring equinox, setting the stage for a later Easter by delaying the "Pink Moon" or "Paschal Moon," the full moon used to calculate Easter's date.

Unlike Christmas, which is fixed to the Gregorian solar calendar, Easter is a lunar festival determined by a combination of the moon's phases and the spring equinox. The rule is simple: Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the spring equinox (as it's called in the Northern Hemisphere). This year, the spring equinox is on March 21. The next full moon after the equinox is the "Pink Moon" on April 12 (in North America) and April 13 (in Europe), which is also this year known as the "Paschal Moon" in Christian tradition. Easter is observed on the following Sunday, April 20.

Orthodox Christians celebrate Easter later than Western Christians because they use different calendars, according to History.com. The West follows the Gregorian calendar, while the Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar. Orthodox Easter also depends on Passover, falling on the first Sunday after the first full moon following it. This places Easter Sunday between April 4 and May 8.

In 2025, for the first time since 2017, both traditions will celebrate Easter on the same date.



SANDRA'S CORNER

Fred Fatz - Honors Member



Fred Fatz, new Honors member, is focused on his family and his future. He is running a strong program to keep this future firmly in his sights and recognizes the urgency. Fred quoted the Kenny Chesney song, "Don't Blink:" "Trust me friends a hundred years // Goes faster than you think, so don't blink".

Fred is a detailer by trade and worked for Billings Auto Auction for 4 years, as well as Bison Ford here in town. He now works for Big Iron Truck and RV Wash. "I like it—it's a line of work that I like doing. Having a job you like to do and you want to be there. That's the best." After he was hired on, he found his boss was one of his childhood friends, making his employment even better.

Big Iron Truck and RV Wash can accommodate everything from semi-tractor & trailers, RVs, horse trailers, to SUVs and cars, in wash bays up to three stories tall and 90 ft. long. The job pays well and he likes the physicality of it. He often climbs 35 ft. ladders over 100 times per day. Fred experiences the satisfaction of his work when the rigs pull out, with their lights and their logos glistening and sleek, ready to get back on the road and take on the miles.

Fred's skill set, however, doesn't stop with detailing, as he has a license in irrigation and is also a certified butcher, which carries on the family meat cutting trade.

His personal goals totally revolve around his family. What Fred wanted most was to regain contact with his children and through perseverance and grace, this recently happened. "In March 2025, I started talking to my kids. Nine years had passed since we had contact." He shook his head, still in disbelief at this miracle in his life. His proud dad's smile lit up the room as he told me his daughter is placing in her swim meets, as well as playing volleyball. His son is in baseball, a sport close to Fred's heart, as he enjoys fast pitch baseball. This family reunification is bringing a rush of happiness and new nicknames, as Fred said his daughter now calls him her Superman.

Another of Fred's family goals is to, "Spend more time with my father. I talk to him all the time. He is my dad and I need to be there." Eventually, Fred will buy a home. But for now, upon release, he will live with his father so he knows that his dad will be well cared for in his final time on earth.

Fred is well aware, however, of both the joy and the pain that comes from loving his family. When his mom died on Valentine's Day in 2016, the pain loosened his grip and rocked his sanity. "When my mom passed, I lost it." Before his mom died, however, she told him "I am so proud of you that you don't drink anymore." Fred said his mom also was ready to rejoin her husband that she had married on Valentine's Day in 2000, saying, "I will go and be with Robert." His mom's acceptance of her life after death brought Fred some peace. Still his grief was relentless and he wanted something tangible, something he could experience in real time. Fred explained what happened next:

"When I was locked up, I missed my mom so intensely, so I kinda said a prayer that I sent up to my mom, asking her to show me a sign if she heard my prayer. I was sitting alone in my cell and it was quiet and still. When I finished my prayer, all the papers on my table fell to the floor.

Before Fred's mom died, she told him she had counted all the time Fred had done in (CCDC) Cascade County Detention Center and it came up to an astonishing 17 and a half years. But that was then. Now?

"I'm done with all the B.S. I'm thankful I had another chance. Glad I had the opportunity to be here. But if you don't want to be here, don't be here. But you need to realize to make a change you need to change everything, meaning your thoughts and actions". Also, "Treat people the way you want to be treated and it will work well."

Fred is excited to get back out in the community and to give back. All the summer events now take on new importance including the Fair, the 4th of July, the truck show. He doesn't want to miss out on a thing, including kayaking, fishing, dirt bikes and camping and lifting weights to stay in shape. Being a baseball fast pitcher coach is also an option, as Fred said he is good at the game. Other community involvement could be with the Set Free Ministry. Or really anywhere there is the opportunity for good interactions with people, which as Fred noted, "is everywhere."

But most of all and best of all: spending time with his family.

His step dad Robert's nickname for Fred was "Gummbhaa." At first Fred didn't know what it meant, until his step dad explained it is Italian for "tough guy" honoring Fred's Italian heritage. Now Fred has it proudly tattooed on his knuckles. It's true: Fred is a tough guy in all the best senses of the phrase. Tough enough to love his family, to withstand loss, and tough enough to give back to the community and to prosper in the life he has chosen to live. And then this: "I don't have to have substances in order to function."

We are proud of Fred and wish him and his family much happiness.



News by Sheena Jarvey

Nerd Alert: A Monthly Column Bringing You the Nerdiest of News

Noël Walker

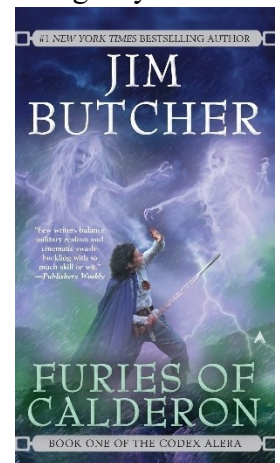
The Nerd Alert is a little different this month. The word *Alert* indicates something newsworthy, so this month I am writing on something that is worthy of news. This month will see two new, complete series getting added to the Education Center's rotation. At the risk of sounding self-indulgent, they are the two most recent series I have read and can personally vouch for.

The first series is called *The Scythe Series*. Written by Neal Schusterman, the series explores what happens when man's reliance on technology goes too far. In this imagined future, technology has solved all of earth's biggest problems: hunger, disease, boredom, and even mental health. People have the opportunity to live high-quality and unending lives, aging to whatever age they desire then regenerating back to a youthful prime.



However, once death is conquered, the only key issue that seems beyond the reach of technology is population growth. Enter man's solution: Scythes. These are people elevated to live above the rules of decency, and personally immune from the death they deal. The famous philosopher, Nietzsche, said "Absolute power corrupts absolutely." This very statement is the central theme of the book. What happens when morality and power go to war? What happens when people place their blind trust in an agency that is meant to be evolved beyond such petty concerns as "right and wrong"? The morality of death, life, and everything between becomes the issue addressed in this compelling trilogy.

The second series is one that was actually recommended to me by a former resident. Written by Jim Butcher, the *Codex Alera Series* features six books that travel through a masterfully created fictional universe. For a thousand years, the Aleran people have united with the elements of earth to face the tide of aggression each day brings. Now, as the last heir to the aging king lies buried, and the king's own strength fades, who will take over? Whose guiding vision will prevail: that of coexistence and equality or that of utter domination?



It might seem silly, but I am very excited about these books. I love new additions, fresh materials, and whatnot...so much so I had to rearrange entire sections to have room to add to the SciFi/Fantasy section. So, if you are bored and looking for something with which to entertain yourself...Or, if you are wanting to expose yourself to new thoughts, ideas, or even just vocabulary, come on by.

In addition to Fred Nashookpuk, Terry (TC) Stripling, and Fred Fatz, (whose articles are published herein), the Center would also like to congratulate **Christopher Manges, Billy Curtis, Tony Esparza** as well as another unnamed individual for being welcomed into the Honors Program. Positivity now plants seeds for positivity for the future. Thank you for being a light and an example.



Christopher Manges, Honors



Also deserving of recognition are the three Inmate Workers who have graduated into Resident Status. Congratulations **Philip Brown**, **Matthew Daychief** (left), and **Katrina Brady**!

Terry (TC) Stripling—Honors

By: Noël Walker

On the scrubby eastern banks of the Trinity River, in rural East Texas, you will find Trinidad, Texas. Barely a stop on Texas Highway 31, Trinidad was home to a Dairy Queen, a gas station, a discount store, fields and fields of sorghum, and self-

professed “scrappy fat kid”, Terry (TC) Stripling. The only reason this little blip of a town even merited a flashing light on the highway was because it was at the dead end of a road that connected to the highway that ran to Dallas. That road also serviced the water treatment plant at one of the largest lakes in Texas, what locals called “Tweaker Creek”, but what anyone else can find on the map as Cedar Creek Lake. “Why Tweaker Creek?” you ask. Well, because Henderson County, Texas, used to be the meth capital of the U.S. Ironically, so was Billings, MT, where TC spent the other half of his childhood.



Mural depicting the history of Trinidad, Texas, on the front façade of the local mercantile.

TC said he learned the word “clandestine” from reading his father’s rap sheet when he was a kid. He traveled back and forth between his mom in Billings and his dad’s, coming back to find salvation in Texas’s most hallowed church: football. He said he went to nine different schools his freshman year of high school, getting kicked out of schools for the violence that sprang from being an angry kid. At his mom’s he lived with his grandmother and his younger two siblings, but altogether, he has 14 sisters and 3 brothers. “Dad was a go-getter,” he jokes.

Despite his humble beginnings, or maybe because of them, TC has found a sort of peace, of wisdom. He said he wanted to apply for Honors because ‘it is an outward show of the progress I have made. It is something I can show my kids...it isn’t just words. I didn’t do it for them, but I can tell them, “I want you to know you are worth changing everything about myself to give you something to be proud of.” It is an accomplishment; I don’t have a lot of those in my life.’

Indeed, TC talked about how his addictions pulled his focus into less constructive directions, how he struggled to separate the addictive thought patterns from his true self. His sobriety has given him the gift of that perspective and discernment. He talked of recognizing that his codependency craved unhealthy relationships, that his addiction colored clearly terrible decisions a rosy hue. He says he has work to do, but that he looks



forward to being the man his mother and grandmother raised him to be. “They didn’t raise me to be this. I believe in living amends. I want to do better to do justice to the work they put into me.”

When I asked him what the work he needed to do looked like, he said, “I wish I could save the world, but I have come to the conclusion that I cannot. I know my worth now. I have to stop sipping that poison...Nothing changes if nothing changes. You are not going to change until you want something different. You don’t change who you are; you change what you want. With *that* comes the change to yourself.”

And, he does want different things. He wants relationships in his life that bring him meaning. He shared about the last time he saw his oldest daughter. She was pregnant the last time he got in trouble. She was frustrated with him, experiencing the grief and anger children feel when they are left to parent their parents. She told him, “You are never going to meet my baby. You will never even know her name.” TC said, “I know it sounds cliché, but when you start doing good, good things happen.” He went on to say that he had recently met and held his baby granddaughter.

Despite the struggles and unhealthy choices as well as the losses of time, freedom and self, TC looks at the lessons learned with stoicism and poise. He said, “bad lessons are a small price to pay to learn someone’s character. Oh, someone owes you \$20? That’s money well spent” if it shows that person to be untrustworthy. Twenty dollars, a year of time, whatever, is better than losing yourself, your family. He said he almost looks forward to those bad times now, instead of medicating himself against them. He sees them as an opportunity to prove his ability to work through them, to be stronger than them, and to love those that matter the most through them.

Reporting Symptoms of Communal Diseases in Residential Centers: A Crucial Step for Health and Safety

In light of recent health concerns, residential facilities, including the GFPRC, are emphasizing the importance of quickly reporting symptoms of communal diseases among residents. Communal diseases are illnesses that tend to spread quickly and freely in an environment where people function close to one another. These kinds of facilities are starting more complete and strict monitoring standards to identify potential outbreaks of illnesses like Influenza, COVID-19, Norovirus, Hantavirus and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.



According to health officials, early detection is key to preventing the spread of infection within these communal living environments. Residents and staff are highly encouraged to report any signs of illness, including fever, cough, gastrointestinal symptoms, or respiratory distress, to healthcare providers, your CTS or Facility Registered Nurse and your Work Supervisor.

To support this initiative, residential facilities are increasing staff training on recognizing symptoms and adhering to hygiene protocols, such as regular hand washing, use of PPE and sanitizing. Additionally, educational discussions and training are held to inform staff and residents about the importance of reporting their symptoms without fear of stigma. By fostering an environment of open communication and vigilance, the GFPRC aim is to protect the health of all residents and staff, ensuring a safe and supportive atmosphere for transition into the community.



From RN Hunter and Jeff Barnhart

Discerning Truth Series: The Backfire Effect

By: Raymond Berry; Noël Walker, ed.

Have you ever tried to correct someone's wildly incorrect belief, only to watch them double down harder than a chocolate-smearing toddler refusing to admit they've eaten the last cookie? You pull up clear facts, you show them the evidence, and what do they do? They cling to their belief even tighter, as though your facts are the problem. That, my friend, is the Backfire Effect in action.

The Backfire Effect occurs when someone is confronted with evidence that contradicts their belief, and instead of going, "Oh, wow, I didn't know that," they become even more convinced they were right. It's like telling your buddy his favorite football team lost, and instead of accepting the score, he insists the referees were biased, the scoreboard is malfunctioning, and the whole game was a sham—despite all the evidence.

Why does this happen? It's because our brains are hardwired to protect our sense of self. When we're presented with information that challenges something deeply tied to our identity—whether it's politics, religion, or that one friend who still thinks pineapple belongs on pizza—our brain reacts like it's under attack. We don't just defend our beliefs; we hunker down. This leads to twisting facts or outright ignoring them, as though they never existed.

The Backfire Effect is why trying to correct misinformation can feel like pushing a boulder uphill with a toothpick. People become so entrenched in their beliefs that the truth bounces off like a ping-pong ball.

So, how can we handle this tricky situation?

First, recognize that we all fall prey to the Backfire Effect—not just that stubborn friend. When you find yourself clinging to a belief, ask: "Am I rejecting this because it's factually wrong, or because it makes me feel uncomfortable?"

Second, focus on respectful conversation, not confrontation. If you treat someone like they're wrong and you're right, you're just fueling their defense mechanisms. A friendly, curious approach has a much better shot at getting through.

Lastly, stay curious. If we want others to embrace the truth, we need to be genuinely open to it ourselves. After all, if we all stay open-minded, maybe—just maybe—one day, pineapple-on-pizza enthusiasts and anti-pineapple people can finally live in harmony.



The “Discerning Truth Series” is a collection of short articles designed to encourage readers to evaluate the accuracy of information in a complex world.

Navigating Seasonal Allergies: A Nurse's Guide to Self-Care

As the seasons change, many people find themselves battling the uncomfortable symptoms of seasonal allergies. From sneezing and itchy eyes to congestion and fatigue, these reactions can disrupt daily life. As a nurse, I want to share practical tips to help you manage your allergies and take care of yourself during this challenging time.

Understanding Seasonal Allergies

Seasonal allergies, also known as hay fever or allergic rhinitis, are caused by allergens present in the environment. Common triggers include pollen from trees, grasses, and weeds, as well as mold spores. Understanding what triggers your allergies is the first step in managing symptoms effectively.



Self-Care Strategies

1. Limit Exposure

Stay Indoors: On high pollen days, try to stay indoors, especially during peak hours (usually in the morning).

Keep Windows Closed: Use air conditioning to filter out allergens if available or a small room air filter machine rather than opening windows in your own home.

2. Clean Regularly

Dust and Vacuum: Regular cleaning can help reduce indoor allergens. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter and dust surfaces frequently.

Wash Bedding: Wash your sheets, pillowcases, and blankets in hot water weekly to eliminate dust mites and pollen.

3. Personal Hygiene

Change Clothes: After spending time outside, change your clothes to avoid bringing pollen indoors.

Shower and Wash Hair: Taking a shower and washing your hair can help remove allergens from your body.

4. Stay Hydrated

Drink Plenty of Water: Staying hydrated can help thin mucus and alleviate congestion, making it easier to breathe.

Stay healthy and breathe easy!

RN Hunter

Q: **Why did the pollen break up with the flower?**

A: [Because it found someone who really "nose" how to make it sneeze with joy!](#)

Another Successful Financial Literacy Course!

Thank you to Alana Haynes with Clearwater Credit Union for sharing her wisdom and expertise with us. If you missed this most recent session, the next one will be the 4 Fridays in June. Same Bat time; same Bat Channel. If you are wondering if it would be useful for you, the consensus is “YES.” In fact, here is a testimonial from a participant. **“For all those being released from custody, this program will help you get a new perspective on how to handle your money. No more shoe box. I greatly enjoyed this opportunity, and I recommend it to others.”** -George Geraldo

5. Use Over-the-Counter Remedies

Antihistamines: Non-drowsy antihistamines can help relieve sneezing, itching, and runny nose.

Nasal Sprays: Saline nasal sprays can help flush out allergens and keep nasal passages moist.

6. Consider Allergy Testing

If your symptoms are severe or persistent, consider consulting with an allergist for testing. They can provide personalized advice and treatment options, including allergy shots.

7. Practice Stress Management

Allergies can be exacerbated by stress. Engage in relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or yoga to help manage stress levels.

8. Seek Medical Advice

If your symptoms are interfering with your daily activities, or if you experience severe reactions like difficulty breathing, it's crucial to seek medical attention immediately. Your healthcare provider can help you determine the best course of action.

Managing seasonal allergies requires a proactive approach and self-care strategies. By understanding your triggers and implementing these tips, you can minimize your symptoms and enjoy the beauty of each season. Remember, you're not alone in this – reach out for help when needed, and take care of yourself.



Great Falls Public Library Visits the Center



Karl Two Moons completes his application for a library card.



We had another great turnout to welcome Sara Linder-Parkinson from the Great Falls Public Library. She was very complimentary about both the interest and politeness of our residents. Thank you to all who make this partnership so strong. If you missed this visit, we aim to facilitate a visit quarterly, which means the next one will be in July. Or, you can get a library card from the Great Falls Public Library in person.

Feeling triggered by something? Is something making you anxious? The National Institute of Mental Health suggests following the 3-3-3 Rule:

- *Look around and find 3 objects*
- *Listen for 3 sounds*
- *Move 3 body parts*

Many people find this technique helpful to calm nerves and improve focus when life seems overwhelming.

FUN FACTS ABOUT AGING!



Sure, you can no longer sleep past the crack of dawn (whyyyyyy?) and your upper arms are starting to look like your grandmother's, but on the plus side . . .

- Pain builds character! Especially back pain. And knee pain.
- You lived through the rise and fall of Vine, so you know not to waste any time getting involved with trendy new apps until the majority of the people using them are at least thirty years old.
- You can learn to crochet with zero irony.
- You can randomly scream "WHAT THE [blue bubble] ELSE WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO TO SOMEONE WHO STOLE ALL MY MONEY?!" in public, and people will likely just keep on going.
- You get to say exactly what you think about people, even if what you think is that they're the worst, because what are they going to do, hit you?
- Staying at parties past 10 p.m. is lame.
- You technically have more money, even though you also technically have much more crap to pay for. (Focus on the "more money" part.)
- Trying to remember words is kind of like a game!
- Instead of wondering how your life's going to turn out, now you can just wonder how it would have turned out if you'd made better choices.
- You look at your parents and experience empathy, as opposed to rage.
- You realize that grown-ups are just large children.
- You realize that everyone is in it together.
- It's fun not to give a [blue bubble] about being cool.

Robin Castle
Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
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JEFF'S TRIVIA, SCIENCE, AND SAFETY CORNER

Fun Facts to Know!



Green eyes are among the rarest in the world, occurring in less than 2% of the population. Unlike blue or brown eyes, which have a stable pigmentation, green eyes exhibit a fascinating phenomenon known as Rayleigh scattering—where light interacts with the iris, causing their hue to shift depending on lighting, emotions, and even weather conditions. This dynamic quality makes green eyes appear more blue, gray, or even golden at times.

One astonishing fact about green eyes is that they contain no actual green pigment. Instead, their color results from a combination of low melanin levels and how light scatters within the iris. Additionally, the world's highest concentration of green-eyed people is found in Northern and Central Europe, particularly in Ireland and Scotland, where up to 86% of the population has green or blue eyes.



Jeff Barnhart

Facility Services Director

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH



Remember, one of the most frequent injuries experienced throughout all recorded mediums (industrial, domestic – home, office, land or sea) are due to slips and falls.

WATCH YOUR STEP

Are you gold, blue, orange, or violet?
Take this quiz to learn more about how you see yourself and how others see you.



<https://my-personality-test.com/img/backgrounds/true-colours-variation-one-1960.webp>

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 **Noel 455-9346** noel@gfprc.org. Any suggestions are also appreciated.

PRE-RELEASE PRESS

Editor: Noël Walker



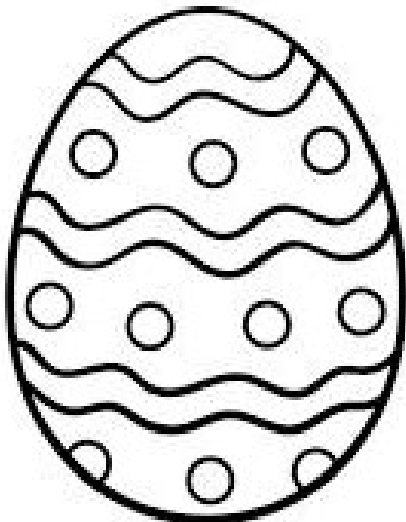
**TRANSITION
CENTER**
GREAT FALLS PRE-RELEASE SERVICES INC.

Fun and Games



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	5	8					6	
4	3			8			7	

<https://www.rd.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Sudoku.jpg?fit=700,700>



Word Scramble EASTER

- gEg utHn
- rsatrco
- ebyjslnlea
- dnyuSa
- kstabe
- iyoalhd
- ilsutp
- nyubn
- tsraEe nyuBn
- ikhcc
- ufn
- asrgs
- uthn
- tsraEe
- areapd
- esepp
- eroetcd
- gseg
- rlpAi
- octelhoca

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