

Resident Recognition



Robert Screws (left) is consistently supportive of his peers. He is polite across the board. AND Congratulations to **Robert Screws** for making the Dean's List last semester! Most examples fall into two categories: "what not to do" or "how to." The example he sets is very clearly the latter.

the point where he lets his daughter paint his toenails. He knew he might catch flak for it, but he put his daughter and bonding with her over the opinions of his peers. That is true parenting. He is running his program without wavering. My hat's off to him.



Jassie Westerman (right) is focused on what matters most to him: his recovery and doing the best he can for those who are counting on him. He has consistently pursued opportunities to grow and improve himself as a person, a responsible adult, and a loving parent, even to



I saw Resident **Derick Vigil** (left) while he was at work at Chili's. He didn't see me for a while but I saw him working hard, doing great with customer service and when he saw me he engaged very professionally with respect. He has been respectful to me (opens the door), reports on his progress, and seems proud of the job he is doing. But what I like most is that I think he can see himself being successful when he leaves here.

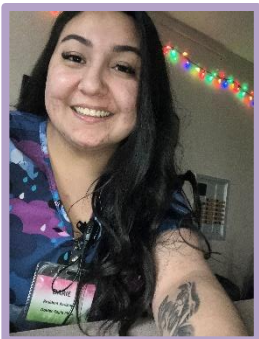
I would like to recognize **Dillon Bird** (right). It impresses me that he has not let the physical limitation of only having one leg deter him. When he first arrived he somehow managed to get up and down the stairs on crutches without complaint. Then, when he got his prosthetic leg, he could be seen walking miles for job search when he had to be in pain. Mr. Bird is always pleasant and exhibits a great attitude. He does not make excuses; he is a man to get the job done.



I think **Fred Nashookpuk** (left) is a standout. Always has a smile on his face, he's polite, pleasant, has his paper work completed and turned in on time. AND I recommend Mr. Nashookpuk. No matter how many times I have to ask him how to pronounce his last name, he never gets upset, and he patiently helps me with the pronunciation.

Resident Recognition

Jeffrey Pierce (right) has been a good resident that just falls under the radar. He does not get write-ups. He goes to work every day with little complaint and runs a good program here. He is looking forward to a sober life and reconnecting with friends and family. He is polite and sincere about his drug use causing him to be here. I believe he is a resident standout.



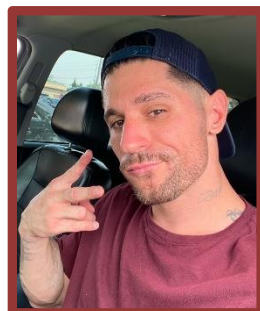
Darie Green (left) deserves recognition. She always has a smile, carries herself well, and is working hard to set herself up for success after she leaves. She encourages others and doesn't get in her own way, even when she feels overwhelmed.

Katrina Brady (right) is always looking for ways to grow. She has sought out ways to improve her circumstances both when she transfers to resident status as well as when she releases. If you ask her about her plans, she will give you a well-thought-out answer. She is always pleasant and has the self-awareness to know when she needs to take a break from all her plans rather than burn herself out. That is a grown-up skill I could stand to learn myself.



I would like to see **Kenneth Oschmann** (left) recognized in the newsletter. He has been here since June of 2024. He had no IRs for disciplinary in that time. He has 6 positive IR that have been written on him. He is currently in Phase 4. He is helpful to staff and residents. He is respectful and always positive. He is working a good program and encourages other residents to do the same.

This is **David Getner's** (right) third time at the Center and he is determined to make this count. He is putting good effort and a great attitude into getting his needed change ready to launch and is taking his programming seriously. David is taking a realistic look at his life and using these lessons to build his future, setting a great example.



The first thing a person notices about **Ray Head** (left) is his great attitude. He appears to be genuinely excited to participate in programming and to get a fresh start on his life. Even in a large therapy group, Ray takes time to present well thought out and insightful answers. He doesn't cut corners and sees the value in taking stock of his life – he is making his time at the Center count.

Angel Perez (right) is on a roll. Focused and energized, he is looking at his future honestly and likes what he sees. He knows the road won't be easy, but he is ready to tackle whatever comes his way. Also, it should be noted that Angel and all the other hard workers at Sonic did their part to save Christmas! Since Sonic was one of the few places open Christmas day, they were slammed. Angel and the rest of the crew kept their cool, worked hard, found the humor in the situation and made Christmas dinner happen for the hungry folks of Great Falls. Angel and all the Sonic crew who worked Christmas, deserve recognition for their hard work under pressure.



Show the COs Some Love

Meet some new faces!

Kaitlyn Boberg: I am currently a senior at the University of Providence, working toward obtaining my bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. In the future, I want to either be an FBI Investigative Specialist or a parole officer. When I'm not working or studying, I enjoy writing music, adventures with my corgi (Milo), and Concerts. Definitely a big music nerd.

Questions: 1. What is your favorite holiday? **My favorite**

holiday is Halloween., I enjoy all of the cool costumes and of course, dressing up my dog, Milo.

2. What is your favorite color? **My favorite color is gray.**

3. Coffee, tea, or cocoa? **Definitely coffee. Iced coffee is my favorite, even on the cold days in winter!**

4. What is something simple that brings you peace? **Something simple that brings me peace would be a good candle.**



Michael De la Rosa:

Questions:

1. What is your favorite holiday? **Halloween**

2. What is the best meal you have ever eaten? **Ribeye and King Crab (cooked by me)**

3. What was your favorite class in school? **Wood Shop**

4. What excites you most about the future? **Retirement**

5. What is your favorite color? **Tangerine**

6. What is your favorite game? **Chess**

7. What is something simple that brings you peace? **Camp fire**

8. Coffee, cocoa, or tea? **Tea**

9. What is your favorite movie or book? **La Mission**

10. If you were an animal, what would you be? **Bear**

11. Most interesting place you ever visited? **Cancun, Mexico**





CO Standouts

I would like to nominate **Dominick Thompkins**. He works hard, keeps his cool, and has held it together through stressful circumstances. Not only that, but he will be the first to tell you that he doesn't take himself too seriously. But, when it is go-time, he is ready to go. He works hard and has his sights set on the US Marine Corp.

Dan Goetschel deserves to be recognized. He knows his duties, and he does them. He isn't a flashy guy, but he is one you can go to when you need help. If he doesn't know the answer, he will find it out. He brings a calm presence, but is always ready to get the job done.



CO Spotlight



Congratulations to **Steve Hurd** for being recognized for his unwavering dedication and cool under pressure. Steve recently received an award for thinking quickly on his feet and administering life-saving medication in a dire situation. There is a big difference between being trained to do something and being equipped to do that thing. Fortunately for all involved, Steve was (and still is) equipped and ready.

When asked about himself, Steve said he's worked at the Center for two and a half years and has no plans to go elsewhere. He said the highlight of his career at the Center has been twofold. In addition to receiving the aforementioned award and the glorious mug bestowed upon him, he said the best part of his job is watching residents grow and complete the program before leaving to go continue the work they've started. He said one of the things that he really appreciates is how cooperative and collaborative his coworkers have been. He mentioned Jessy specifically, thanking him for taking the time to train him on procedures for Shift Lead.

It's not all serious, though. He will be the first to tell you he loves a good laugh. He shared a story of giving as good as he got. One of his coworkers was joking during a staff meeting about Steve's slow typing holding him back from new, more streamlined procedures. He crossed paths with her later in the day and brought up her comment. He said her face was so concerned, thinking she'd hurt his feelings. Instead, though, he told her that "SLOW is a definition of speed, and there is absolutely NO speed in my typing." One can imagine the relief on her face when she realized he was teasing her back instead of being offended was hilarious, and the whole office joined in on the laughs.

Regarding his future plans, retirement is always a goal, but he's not quite ready to take that step. When he does retire, he looks forward to packing up his "old RV" and hitting the open road with his wife, Eva, the love of his life. The two of them look forward to many years of traveling, exploring various fly-fishing hot spots, and taking in all the sights.

Items to Work on When You First Arrive

We know it's stressful to arrive at a new place. Learning the rules and just getting

SANDRA'S CORNER

around in the building is a lot of information. Add orientation to the mix, and the overwhelming feelings begin. Still, you need to start on your release as soon as you can. You first want to get IDs and birth certificates as they are the documents you need to work. If you have a valid driver's license, work on getting a duplicate as they will void it if you try to get an ID. You need a picture ID and at least a birth certificate or social security card to work. However, there is one more item few people think about, and that is your Credit Score.

No matter where you release to, you will most likely be looking for an apartment. Felons are not a protected class, but to be safe in protected class compliance, most landlords will ask for a credit check as well as a background check. A negative credit check will be a strong reason cited not to rent to you.

Red Door Properties, for example, asks that credit scores are at the 600 mark. The website annualcreditreport.com will allow you to make a free account to access your FICO credit score weekly without penalties or charges. Creditkarma.com is also a very convenient option with an app you can download to your phone, but that agency scores your information differently using a Vantage score, so you might not be looking at the same thing as a landlord or lender. Regardless of what you choose, you can see how good or bad your credit is and where to adjust to improve it. If you have debts with collection agencies you can contact them. Explain why you're in debt, for example, because you've been incarcerated. Say that you're sorting out your credit situation. Explain how much you can afford to pay each month. Ask them to freeze any interest and charges as long as you continue to pay the amounts you're suggesting. Keep the plan as low as you can as not to impact other payments you will have to make. Once you have made a payment or two, your credit score improves. Slowly your credit will improve as you make steady payments on the date you and the creditor have agreed upon.

A good credit score opens many doors. It will play a strong role in your life and just maybe open the door to your new apartment.



Life Long Learner Scholarship Awards



Congratulations to **Paul Amyotte** and **Jassie Westerman** for applying for and receiving the Life-Long Learning Scholarship to pursue their educational goals!



Paul Amyotte walked through the doors of the Pre Release looking for ways to reach his long-term goals. He was awarded \$140 to obtain his OSHA 10 Certification as well as First Aid/CPR/AED training. He is very focused on preventive measures and sees it as his duty to make sure his workplace is as equipped as possible to keep everyone safe. If that involves him taking extra classes, then he is willing to step up.

Jassie Westerman is absolutely killing it at his job. He is wanting to skill build and open himself up to more responsibilities at work. That means taking courses in Project Management, both on the Software and Bookkeeping side. With that goal in mind, he applied for and was awarded funds to take two separate courses on those very topics. Congratulations!

Nerd Alert: You Can Be Positive with Appositives

If I had a nickel for every person who has told me they struggled with commas, I would have, like, \$20 (HiSET Math Pop Quiz: how many nickels is that?). This month, my goal is to delve into one reason why commas are used: appositives, the details that explain the noun before it.

Let's back up. Just as a refresher, we have talked about adjectives when we talked about their order. Adjectives, if you recall, are words that give details about a noun, a person/place/thing. The difference between adjectives and appositives, though, is that adjectives only describe while appositives define. Let me give you an example. Let's say you are sick, God forbid. You need a specialist. Luckily, you know someone who can recommend a doctor in your exact area of need. You ask, "Whom do I need to call?". If your friend tells you, "The tall, dark, and handsome doctor," that information, while interesting to some, is fairly useless to you. You aren't asking for a description of the doctor; you are asking for the name of the doctor, the location of the office, or some other detail that will help you get an appointment. You would hope your friend would give you something more like "You need to call the best oncologist in the state, Dr. Maxwell," or "You should call Dr. Maxwell, the third one down on this list." Now what do we know about the best oncologist in his field in the state? His name is Dr. Maxwell, and he is the third name on the list.



What does this have to do with commas? The simple answer is that there is a comma between the noun and the appositive that defines it. *If I don't know appositives, how will I know where one is?* Well... May I blind you with some science? As you are reading this, do you hear your voice in your head reading the words to yourself? This is called *audiation*. This is the brain's ability to look at something on the page and understand what it sounds like. So, read this sentence again. "You need to call the best oncologist in the state, Dr.



Maxwell." When you read this, your voice copies the same tone with the words "you NEED" and "doctor MAXwell." Even without knowing what an appositive is, your brain fills in that this is a separate section from the rest of the sentence and starts the tones over. Even if you never truly learn what an appositive is, you can still identify that *SOME* kind of punctuation goes there because your voice starts over.

However, I would hope that after this you are able to pick an appositive out of a lineup. Otherwise, what is the point? So, let's look at some more. "Can you order me my favorite soda, Fresca?" (*order* and *Fresca* have the repeated tone; *Fresca* defines the favorite soda). "The book, which was really more of a pamphlet, wasn't worth the \$40 sales price." The section, "which...pamphlet," defines the book and explains the reason why it is overpriced, and the tone drops because this section isn't necessary to complete the sentence...just extra info. Other, more common examples include "Great Falls, Montana," in which "Montana" defines which Great Falls you are talking about, Montana's city instead of, say, Virginia's. Likewise, it is why there is a comma before the year in dates given. Knowing which year is important. Is it August 8, 2025, or is it August 8, 1588, the day that marked the fall of the Spanish Armada?

Appositives are a fun little part of speech. Once you get the feel for them, they are some of the simplest commas to master. And, to make them more fun, I have a piece of candy for the first three people who can point out three appositives hidden in this article.

Jennifer Gruce—Honored in Honors

By: Noël Walker

Congratulations to Women's Campus Resident, Jennifer Gruce, for being accepted into the Honors Program. Talking with Ms. Gruce, it is easy to see how she would be a prime candidate for the accolade. She spoke to me with wisdom and a unique blend of no-nonsense truth and compassion about the circumstances that led her here. More than that, though, she shared about the things that have brought her the most joy and perspective.

If you spend any time talking with her, you will find that Jennifer is a devoted mother of four adult children. Even talking about her kids brought a glow of emotion to her face. She is very open about the value she places on motherhood, and the pride she takes in being a good mother to her kids. "My kids are my world," she says. She went on to talk about how close they all are, that they regularly reach out to her. She even showed her phone, the wallpaper of which is a "love letter" her son wrote her, thanking her for all the sacrifices she has made, all the barriers that he sees in relationships with others that don't exist in their own. She spoke proudly of all her children, the oldest and youngest of whom are both active enlisted in the United States Marines. When she releases, she plans to go live with her oldest, who just bought his first home in Nevada.

Her pride in her sons in no way diminishes her pride in her daughter. Tested as a genius at 5, her daughter completed all the testing and was selected to participate in the Space Program...just to see if she could. Jennifer laughed when she told this story, "She has no interest in going to space. She just wanted to prove she could do it." This detail is funny because, when I asked her what she wanted to do with the benefits that come with being in the Honors Program, she replied, "I didn't apply for that reason. I just wanted to see if I could do it."

Her biggest goal in life is just to be where her kids are. She said they all plan to buy a plot of land to develop as a family neighborhood. She joked that they knew better than to all live together. They might be close, but they are still uniquely individual. They want to be together but not *together*. Even her plans to interstate compact to Nevada includes plans to eventually get her 5th Wheel moved from the Reno/Tahoe area down to Vegas. As much as she looks forward to being with her son, she knows that having his mom under the same roof might cramp his style as a young Marine. "I know better," she joked. "And," she added, "I don't ever want to be a burden to my kids."

When I asked about goals, Ms. Gruce talked about opening a family business. In the past, she was a territory supervisor for Hallmark, supervising every store from Helena to Havre. She talks fondly of that job but fears her legal involvement has ruined any chance of going back to work there. Instead, she is looking further back to when she worked at a wholesale beauty supply store here in Great Falls. She said her ability with sales brought in more profit to the store in her time there than they had experienced in their entire period of operation. With that in mind, she dreams of opening a similar store, calling it Ace's Beauty Supply. She had already filed for and acquired her LLC license before going to jail.

When not planning her future and talking with her kids, Jennifer has been on a journey of self-discovery. Her youngest is in his twenties, and she is

Before (top), chipped, with paint, varnish, broken hardware. Stripped, filled and patched (middle), and refinished to resemble an antiqued patina, with handmade knobs (bottom).



painfully aware that, while she will always be their mother, and they her kids, they don't need her in the same capacity as they did as children and teens. She is excited to find out who she is on her own outside her role as sole parent and provider. With that in mind, she has started pursuing different artistic talents with drawing and sketching. She stated, "I started taking these little classes on my phone," and she is excited to see her skills grow from "barely stick figures" to actual shading. More than anything, though, she enjoys decorating and repurposing. She speaks with pride about the RV she gutted and redid, bringing it out of the past into a peaceful and beautiful home she continues to be proud of. She recalls taking damaged furniture she bought cheaply and mindfully restoring it to a finish that would look nice in any home. Regardless of what she does, regardless of where she goes, Ms. Gruce has been a joy to have at the Center. Her quiet calm, sense of humor, and far-sighted focus on her goals has enabled her to face the obstacles she has encountered and rise above them. She is the embodiment of Proverbs 31: 25-28, "She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed..." I thank her for all she has brought to the Center.

Discerning Truth Series: Carl Sagan's Baloney Detection Kit

By Raymond Berry; Noël Walker, ed.

Have you ever come across a claim that seemed too good to be true? Or heard a wild story and thought, *How can I tell if this is real?* Renowned astronomer and science communicator Carl Sagan had a solution: The Baloney Detection Kit.

This kit isn't a physical toolbox but a mental framework for evaluating the truth behind what you hear, see, or read. Sagan introduced it in his book *The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark*. It's a collection of simple tools designed to help you separate fact from fiction and avoid falling for misleading claims or outright nonsense.

Here are some of the tools from Sagan's kit:

1. Check the evidence – Is there actual proof for the claim? Bold assertions require strong evidence to back them up. Without evidence, it's just an opinion.
2. Encourage debate – Are differing viewpoints welcome, or is questioning discouraged? Healthy discussion is often a hallmark of a strong idea, while shutting down debate can signal weak reasoning.
3. Beware of personal attacks – If someone dismisses criticism by attacking the person instead of addressing the argument, it's a sign of faulty logic.
4. Look for peer review – Have experts reviewed and tested the idea? Peer-reviewed studies show

that claims have undergone scrutiny from knowledgeable professionals.

5. Follow Occam's Razor – The simplest explanation is usually the most likely. If a claim requires wild leaps or unnecessary complications, it's probably not accurate.

6. Be wary of anecdotal evidence – "It worked for me" isn't proof it will work for everyone. Personal stories can be compelling, but they aren't substitutes for data or comprehensive studies.

Sagan's Baloney Detection Kit encourages us to think critically and avoid being misled by pseudoscience, conspiracy theories, or manipulative arguments. It teaches us to ask crucial questions like: Where is this information coming from? What evidence supports it? Could there be another explanation?

In today's world, where incorrect information is common and convincing, Sagan's approach is more relevant than ever. Whether the falsehoods are accidental or deliberate, they have the power to shape how we view the world and make decisions. By equipping ourselves with our own Baloney Detection Kits, we can learn to recognize and live in truth.

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

Valentine's Day: A Celebration of Care and Compassion in a Unique Setting

RN Hunter

As Valentine's Day approaches, the world is filled with flowers, chocolates, and expressions of love. While many celebrate this day in traditional ways, within the walls of a PreRelease correctional facility, it takes on a different meaning. As a nurse working in this environment, I have the unique opportunity to witness how care and compassion can thrive even in the most challenging circumstances.

A Day of Reflection and Connection

Valentine's Day at our facility is not just about romantic love; it's a day for reflection and connection. The individuals here, often separated from their loved ones, find solace in small gestures of kindness. Whether it's a nod of approval, a shared smile, or a moment of understanding, these acts can significantly impact their emotional well-being.

Fostering Relationships

As a nurse, I emphasize the importance of emotional health. I often encourage residents to reach out to family members and friends, reminding them that relationships can be nurtured even from afar. On this day, many take the opportunity to send letters or make phone calls, reconnecting with those who matter most. It's a reminder that love transcends physical boundaries.

Acts of Kindness Within the Facility

Valentine's Day also inspires acts of kindness among residents. Some organize small group activities, creating handmade cards or crafts to share with one another. These activities foster a sense of community and remind everyone that they are not alone in their journey. The bonds formed here can be powerful, providing support during a challenging time.

Self-Care and Healing

In the healthcare setting, we also emphasize self-care. I often use this day to remind residents of the importance of self-love and forgiveness. Many individuals struggle with feelings of guilt or shame about their past. Valentine's Day can serve as a catalyst for healing, encouraging them to embrace their worth and recognize that they are deserving of love and compassion.

Looking Forward

As we celebrate Valentine's Day, I am reminded of the resilience of the human spirit. Love and compassion can thrive in unexpected places, and it is our responsibility to nurture these qualities. In the end, it's a day to celebrate not just romantic love, but the broader human connections that sustain us all. As a nurse in this unique setting, I am grateful for the opportunity to support individuals on their journey toward healing and transformation. Together, we can create a more compassionate world, one small act of kindness at a time.

RN Hunter

Test Question:

Q: Why did the Valentine's Day card go to prison?

A: Because it was caught sending too many sweet nothings!



Heidi Hunter
Registered Nurse

Family Connections

A Community Resource Column by DeeAnna Briggs

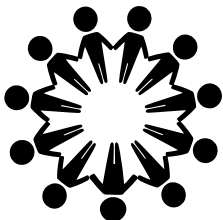
Today's families are complex and meeting the needs of children while both parents are working remains a priority for many families. That's where Family Connections can help. Founded in 1986, Family Connections provides support to child care providers and families in 23 Montana counties.



For providers, Family Connections offers support in how to start, maintain, and fund a childcare business. Staff provide resource assistance with everything from the Best Beginnings Portal that assist with billing and business needs to training and continuing education through National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and other providers. The goal is to make sure that Child Care businesses have everything they need to be successful so that they can provide quality care for Montana's children.

Families are the focus for Connections and they are able to aid children and families by connecting parents with Family Engagement Coordinators. These Coordinators help parents navigate a variety of support services such as the Early Childhood Services Bureau which provides scholarships and funding resources for parents needing assistance paying for childcare, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies, and Child Care Plus for children with special needs.

The Family Connections website also has an Emergency Resources page. This page directs people to helpful websites in case of natural disasters and other types of emergencies. They promote use of the CodeRED app that puts assistance at your fingertips.



For more information, please contact Family Connections at (406) 761-6010 or go to familyconnectionsmt.org.

A Story to Inspire

By Noël Walker

Resident Brian Batt came to the Great Falls Pre Release in a crisis. Throughout his time here, he has approached every obstacle with grace and dignity. So much so, his church asked him to share his testimony to help others, and he agreed. Now, his entire life is available to anyone who wishes to see it. This is an extreme show of vulnerability, openness, and accountability not just to the state or the courts, but to his congregation, to his community, and to anyone with a connection to the internet and an ounce of curiosity. For this reason among others, for his desire to help others, for his willingness to lay himself bare, Mr. Batt is exemplary.

He jokes now about how far from his comfort zone he is with the positive attention. He describes his previous self as angry, a shy kid with a bent toward trouble. "I was from the North Side [of Missoula]. I grew up with the Northsider mentality." Introduced to meth by a family member at 14, he never really learned the coping skills many people pick up throughout the social gauntlet of high school. He met his ex-wife when he was 23. She was beautiful, smart, motivated, and had her act together. He knew that if he wanted to stand a chance with her, he would have to get himself clean and sober, so he did just that. Being a husband and provider then a father was just what he needed. He recalls those times fondly, "I coached my kids' baseball games. I

umped at their games, read to them nightly.” However, when his marriage finally fell apart after almost eleven years, that anchor did, too.

He shared about this time, about his three boys coming over to his new apartment and being so angry, embarrassed by their peers’ teasing, so hurt by all of the upheaval that they lashed out at him with words and fists. He talked about his youngest begging him to come home and having to explain that this was his new home. He tells about hugging his child, not letting go until his son’s anger broke. The next day, his son painted a picture for him, and that very picture is now tattooed on his right forearm to remind him of that moment, of his son’s forgiveness and love.

After his divorce he felt crushed and heartbroken, and Brian did what a lot of people with a history of drugs do when things get hard: he relapsed. It was during this time, this altered thinking, that he committed his crime. If his kids struggled with his divorce, they really struggled with his descent into drugs and crime. Through a couple of detours, he found himself at the Work Reentry Center through MSP. He speaks fondly of his time there. Despite making only \$4 a day for dawn-to-dusk ranch-handing, he said, “I am a workaholic, so it was awesome...It got me out of a prison and into the outdoors, so I loved it.” He got paroled in April of 2024 on condition of pre release. He was hoping to go to Missoula to be near his family, but he was denied. Then, in June, in the midst of his rejection from Missoula and applying to other places, he got the call no parent should ever get. His fifteen-year-old son, his firstborn, had shot himself, taking his own life.



He talks about that time in broad strokes that paint a pretty clear picture of the blur and haze of those first days. He said the prison brought a pastor in who talked with him and told him he would get mental health counselling. He said of that counseling, “I don’t want to knock them, but they just brought in some puzzles and left me to it.”

In August, Mr. Batt arrived at the Great Falls Pre Release. “I got here, saw my friend from WRC, Robert Screws, told him what had happened with my son. I told him I needed help and he told me about New City Church.” He said he went at the first opportunity and filled out a visitor’s card. They reached out almost immediately, he recounts, and set him up with a counselor as well as a now-friend who started out as just a stranger willing to help another stranger in a time of need. He said, “I have met *a lot* of good men through church.” He added, ““I want to say about my church, how thankful I am that they never judged me. They do so much work with the Pre Release, but they never judge. They only want to help.”

Through everything, as hard as it has been, with the losses he’s experienced, the positivity radiates off him. “Through church, worship, and praying every day, it has given me a peace. I don’t get angry anymore. So many points in my life, I was so angry, reacting to things as they came.” If ever there were an excuse to rage against the universe, he would have it, but instead Brian shares about a dream he had of his oldest, Tegan, after his passing. His son came to him, told him everything was okay, was going to be okay, and expressed love and forgiveness. Brian says he woke from that dream and felt absolute peace. “That dream, it was like, don’t let the enemy get in your head anymore.”



Scan QR to watch
Brian’s story

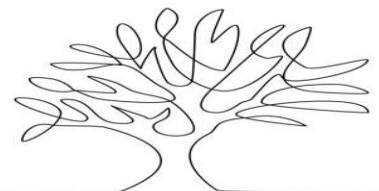
Truthfully speaking, this might not be the first time you have heard someone say, “God changed my life,” then you see them turn around at the very first opportunity and do their best to prove otherwise. However, when Mr. Batt came to share the video of his testimony with me, he shared about some of his current struggles. He was looking down the barrel of a potential delay of seven months. Instead of panicking, much less pitching a fit, he simply said, “If my time here is longer, that’s okay. It is longer to be in my church, to grow, and to serve. God knows what He’s doing.” He now reports, “I will only be here an extra month and a half. That just means I can be here and do more at my church.” His church has helped him in ways immeasurable, and he wants to be there for others in the way they were there for him. “The outreach of so many strangers when I was struggling in a time of need was incredible. I had no idea who to talk to, what to ask for, but they knew. The fellowship at the church has been amazing. I go to a men’s group. It’s about half a dozen men. I go to a prayer group Saturday night, and serve all day Sunday. I go to the early service and get to greet people for the next two services. It is amazing. I like to put a smile on people’s faces. I love to make people laugh. Laughter is good for the heart.”

His church has given him a place where he feels seen and valued just for being himself. He is no longer alone. His merit is no longer what he brings to the table, what need he fulfills for some other person. He is simply Brian Batt. Certainly, he is a man with a story to tell, and he feels called to tell it, but not for himself. He wants others to know the peace that passes his own understanding. His hope is simply that others find that love, that peace. He knows there are people who are burning with anger toward him, his middle and youngest son chief among them. But, for all the changes he has felt, he acknowledges he deserves their anger. He just hopes that by being there for them, loving them, helping them purge that anger and grief will guide them to a place of peace.



With his perspective comes a sense of purpose. He is a man with a purpose because he is a man on gifted time. While working as a logger twelve years ago, he was crushed by a tree. His face was crushed, suffering 27 fractures around his eyes and temples, a crushed nose, and multiple brain bleeds. He was found unconscious, bleeding, hanging upside-down off a cliff by his boot, which was snagged on a tree two inches in diameter. His coworker who rescued him said the minute his weight was taken off the tree, the wood snapped. He sees now that his life was saved for a reason. Looking back on the pain of surgery, recovery, memory loss, physical therapy, all of it, he views it as proof that God is just as much in control of his life as He ever was

This peace Brian has found is an absolute gift. When asked what he wanted to tell others, he stopped and gave thanks that he is here to tell his story. He has had every excuse to crumble, every reason to just quit trying, but he refuses to. “God has totally changed me, changed my life, my thinking, my thinking of others, judging others. I don’t judge others. I think of them, what they are struggling with, and I wonder if I can help. I want others to know there is power to keep you from addiction. I have zero desire to look at a drug or take a drink. **It has given me more strength to do the best I can, be the best man I can be, the best father I can be to my sons.**”



Great Falls Public Library Visits the Center



Residents Brianna Four Colors (back left) and Sawntae Hoffman (front left) receive their library cards.

engaging entertainment. If you have any further questions or would like to talk about what those options might be, feel free to talk to Noël Walker in the Education Center.



IW Katrina Brady (back left) and residents Larissa Sunell (front left) and Jessica Hirst (front right) are ready to hit the ground running with the ebooks and audiobooks available through Libby.



MATCH THE PHOBIA TO THE FEAR

Everyone's got a phobia. Maybe they're scared of the dark, or of being trapped in an elevator, or of spiders. You know what those phobias are? AMATEUR HOUR. If you want to impress anyone, you'll have to freak out when you see belly buttons.



Match the name of the phobia to the locus of its fear.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Trypophobia | A. Fear of peanut butter sticking in your mouth |
| 2. Globophobia | B. Fear of having a phobia |
| 3. Aibohphobia | C. Fear of long words |
| 4. Papaphobia | D. Fear of bathing |
| 5. Sesquipedalophobia | E. Fear of opening your eyes |
| 6. Heliophobia | F. Fear of not having your mobile phone |
| 7. Ablutophobia | G. Fear of elbows |
| 8. Triskaidekaphobia | H. Fear of sunlight |
| 9. Nomophobia | I. Fear of clowns |
| 10. Optophobia | J. Fear of falling asleep |
| 11. Coulrophobia | K. Fear of belly buttons* |
| 12. Somniphobia | L. Fear of the pope |
| 13. Omphalophobia | M. Fear of balloons |
| 14. Phobophobia | N. Fear of holes |
| 15. Ishicascadiggaphobia | O. Fear of the number 13 |
| 16. Arachibutyrophobia | P. Fear of palindromes |

RacecaR



**If you have this one, you can consider yourself a queen, because so does Oprah.*

Bonus question: Which fear(s) is/are fake? _____

Answers: You can tell that aibohphobia—the fear of palindromes—is fake because (1) palindromes aren't scary and (2) the name of the phobia is a palindrome itself. And even though you'll see arachibutyrophobia on lots of "weird phobias" lists, it was made up for a Peanuts comic strip and just sort of caught on.

1. N, 2. M, 3. P, 4. L, 5. C, 6. H, 7. D, 8. O, 9. F, 10. E, 11. I, 12. J, 13. K, 14. B, 15. G, 16. A



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JEFF'S TRIVIA, SCIENCE, AND SAFETY CORNER

Fun Facts to Know!

1 | There are almost 8 million possible seven-digit phone numbers per area code.

Each area code has 792 possible prefixes or NXX codes (for example, NXX-XXXX or 555-1234), explains the Public Utility Commission of Texas. And each "NXX" has 10,000 possible phone numbers attached to it. So, with a little math, we know that theoretically, there are 7,920,000 possible seven-digit phone numbers in each area code. Obviously, not all of these numbers are put into use, so you don't have to try nearly 8 million numbers if you want to randomly dial a friend who lives nearby.

2 | Spaghetti, confetto, and graffito are the singular forms of spaghetti, confetti, and graffiti.

Although it might sound a little strange, the word for an individual piece of spaghetti is spaghetti. The same goes for a single piece of confetti, which is confetto, as well as a single piece of graffiti, which is graffito, according to Merriam-Webster.



Jeff Barnhart

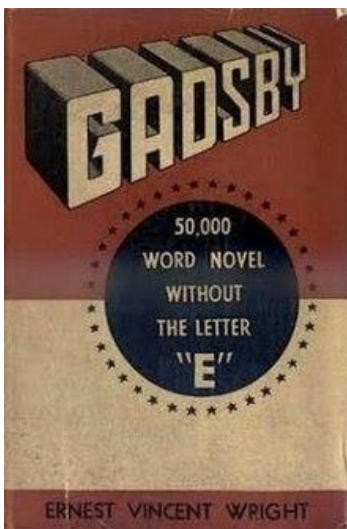
Facility Services Director

3 | McDonald's once created bubblegum-flavored broccoli.

McDonald's is always introducing new items for their loyal customers. And obviously, some are more successful than others. But their bubblegum-flavored broccoli, which the fast-food chain developed in 2014 as a tastier version of the leafy green for children, was a complete failure. McDonald's CEO Don Thompson admitted that kids were confused by the taste.

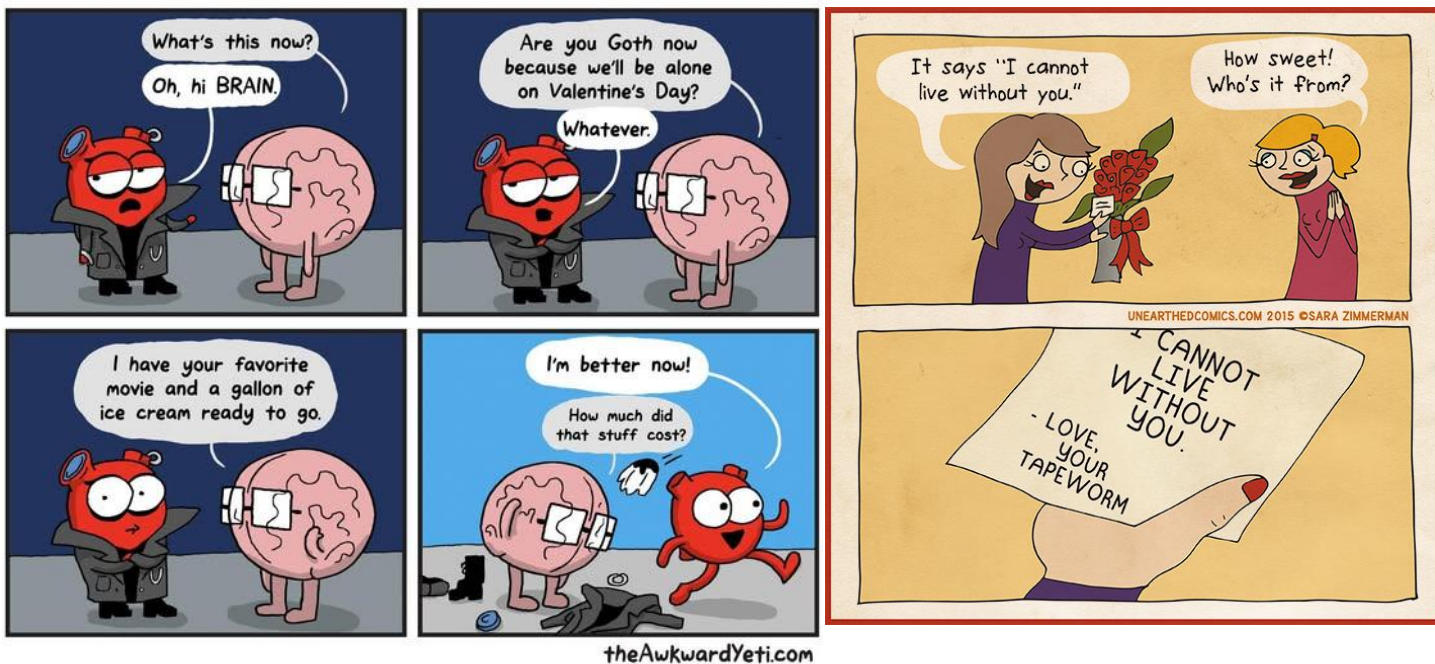
4 | The average U.S. household has 300,000 things in it.

Whether you've been inspired by Marie Kondo or not, you probably still have close to a third of a million items in your home. One report found that the average U.S. house has around 300,000 things in it. Yeah, we like stuff. Lots of stuff.



5 | The 1939 novel Gadsby is the longest book ever published that doesn't contain the letter 'e.'

Back in 1939, American author Ernest Vincent Wright published *Gadsby*, a 50,000-word novel that doesn't use the letter 'e' once. What's more, it's not the only novel that ditched the letter. Author Georges Perec also wrote the French-language book, *La Disparition* without the letter 'e' in 1969. That's even more astounding when you consider that "e" is the most commonly used letter in the English (and French!) language.



Are you a Lion, an Otter, a Golden Retriever, or a Beaver? Take this personality test and find out your core behaviors. Scan, complete, and compare.



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



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