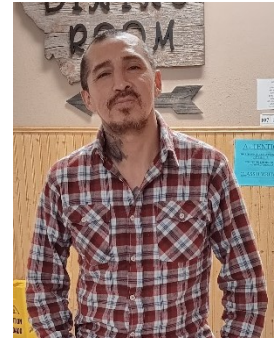


Resident Recognition



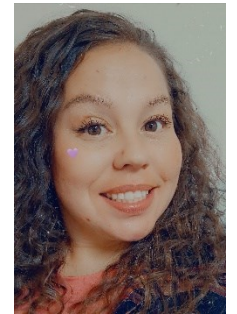
Resident Jeanette Voss's Resident Standout in December went to print with the wrong picture attached. She didn't say a word; she just went with it. For that, I want to say a very personal "I'm sorry" and a thank you for your flexibility and graciousness. As a testament to her worthiness last month, she has been nominated again for being helpful to others. If she sees a need, she works to meet it. She is also polite across the board.

Resident Chanler Whitegrass has really worked hard to advance himself. He deserves a Most Improved Player trophy for all the work he has put in, from working toward his HiSET, sticking with the same job throughout his stay, to getting on the paying-attention-to-the-details bandwagon. He is actively trying to do his best to have a smooth release.



Resident Trinity Hatico (no photo) is running an excellent program, having completed a welding course while working full-time, consistently meeting expectations, and maintaining a conduct-free record. He is also diligently working towards releasing the hold on his license.

Resident Chandris Woods (right) is a ray of sunshine. She is helpful, respectful, and very focused. I appreciate her willingness to acknowledge when she needs help, and I admire her strength. She has been very open about her past and is genuinely excited to start her life anew.



Inmate Worker William Madla (left) has been very positive and uplifting towards staff but also with his overall demeanor even though he has only been here for a month. I would like to nominate him.



Resident Jennifer Gruce (right) stands out just by being herself. She is polite, smiley, and helpful. She is easy to talk to, both with staff and residents, is very focused on her future, and has the tools in her belt to be successful in reaching her goals.



Michael Harper (left) has remained focused on his treatment and overall program. He is in the Honor's Program and provides direction to fellow residents when needed. He is a good role model for others.

Resident Terry Stripling (right) stays to himself and is respectful towards staff and others. He always has a positive outlook on life. He really wants a better life for himself. He talks very highly about his job and how they encourage him for better opportunities while in the center and when he gets out. He is very humble about the progress and new things that continue to happen for him!



Incarcerated Fire Fighters Provide Crucial Help in California Wild Fires

Among the thousands of firefighters working in the Los Angeles area are approximately 1,100 incarcerated persons on the front lines of the fires that have torn through the area. Thank you for all you are doing and we recognize your service to the community.



Photo:

<https://www.latimes.com/california/newsletter/2025-01-19/incarcerated-firefighters-offer-aid-find-potential->

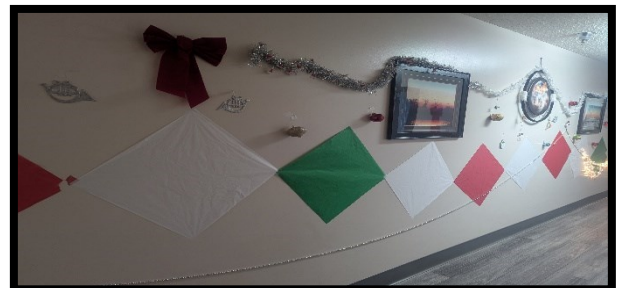
Contributed: Sheena Jarvey

Staff Standouts

Another holiday season has gone by, and once again **Dawn Pierce** has brought the spirit of joy and giving to the Great Falls Pre Release. Thank you for being such a source of support and kindness to the residents!



A special thank you to all the women who participated in the festivity and decorated their doors. The hallways were a sea of cheer through your efforts and energy.



A selection of door and hallway decorations for your viewing pleasure.

Passing the Torch: Brenda Demers Steps Down as Newsletter Editor

By: Noël Walker

After a resoundingly successful eight years, Brenda Demers has stepped down as Editor of the Pre Release Press Newsletter. She did not make this decision lightly, but she is ready to focus her attention elsewhere. When asked what she enjoyed most about working so tirelessly to create an engaging and encouraging resource *every month*, she gently corrected that there were also quarterly newsletters until recently. Over the course of 8 years, that would put her close to, if not over, 120 publications.

Regardless, Brenda stated that her favorite innovation to the Newsletter has been moving past Resident of the Month to Resident Standout because she gets to know more of the residents. She said she particularly enjoys interviewing residents and was proud of instituting the Inmate Worker to Resident Transfer Articles. She said, “I get carried away, I think. It makes it look like an obituary. I just like to have the full picture of people’s lives. I like finding out about people’s backgrounds.”



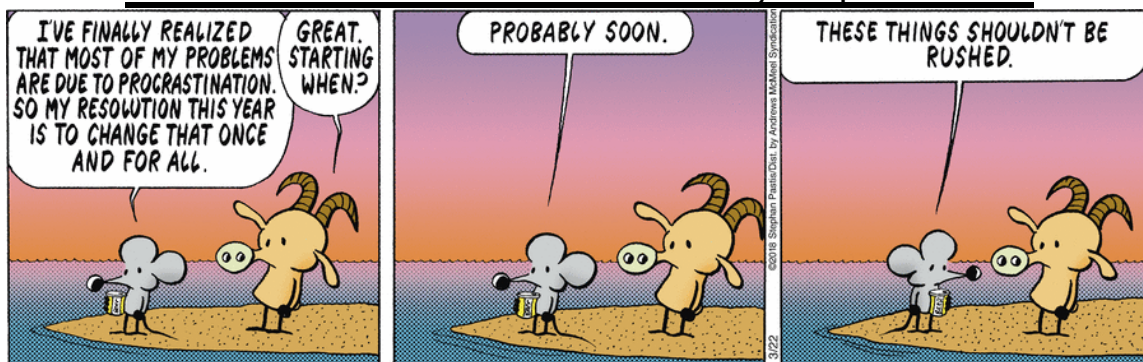
If you have ever been interviewed by Brenda or have talked with her personally, interacted with her gentle spirit, you can feel the love and peace she brings. She stated, “Everyone is unique. We can look at someone, but we don’t know them. Once you get to know a person, you find something to like about them. I don’t think there is a person I have met that I didn’t like once I got to know them.” For that reason, she has been an ideal representative to encourage residents and offer them the congratulations, the pat on the back they deserve.

And, she truly feels like the people highlighted deserve the recognition. Even after twelve years at the Center, she still firmly believes that criminal records and solid character are not mutually exclusive; she believes at her core that they can and do exist in the same space. People who have made mistakes “are still an individual, and we can either learn something, or they can help other people.”

Looking back, her favorite part of the Newsletter has been seeing residents’ faces when they feel seen, when they feel valued. She smiled as she talked about witnessing first-hand “just the glow on their face, when they find out they are being recognized as a stand out.” She spoke of a recent instance with a former resident. That month she wanted to recognize residents who had just run a good program. They didn’t necessarily have to be showy or do anything spectacular, but they were working on themselves, running a solid program, and staying focused. One of the residents joked that he had never been noticed for being unnoticed, which she still thinks of as funny, clever, and a testament to the power of positive reinforcement.

Moving forward, Brenda is eager to continue interviewing residents. She enjoys getting to know all people, and she particularly likes painting pictures with her words. Each month she has brought encouragement, support, and light to areas that might have otherwise gone unseen. They say that art is in the eye of the beholder, and she has been beheld by countless, both at the Center as well as around the community. We have seen your art, Brenda, and we are thankful for the light and joy you have brought to the thousands you have touched with your gifts.

Pearls Before Swine by Stephan Pastis



<https://www.gocomics.com/comics/lists/1722363/new-years-resolutions-2018?page=5>

Dohnavin Stanley - Honors Member

Dohnavin Stanley, new Honors member, now knows he can live life on life's terms and do so with compassion and insight. He wants to pass on the lessons he has learned on his recovery journey, as a way to give back.

Dohnavin set an apartment building on fire in 2021. No one was injured in the fire, per se, but that doesn't detract from the fact that he set an apartment building on fire. Now Dohnavin works for Rocky Mountain Treatment Center. He is on Honors and he goes about his day with a dignity and sense of purpose that comes from the startling fact that he is not dead, he is not responsible for any deaths, nor has he been buried in long-term incarceration.

At the point where he started the fire, Dohnavin's thoughts became separated from reality. He wants to make it clear that the actions were his, and he alone is responsible. He owns his crime. But what is also true is that his disconnect from reality had become unsustainable. With his thoughts detached and swirling unhinged, Dohnavin said that he remembers spreading tobacco on the bed prior to starting the fire. After the fire got going, Dohnavin said he felt an eerie calm. At that point, "I really believed I was possessed, that it wasn't actually me that set the fire." But it was Dohnavin who set the fire, and he realized this when he went to the hospital with burns. He told the officer on duty, "I just did something bad," and he was immediately arrested. They asked if he was high. Yes, he was most definitely high and was gone enough that, even when he had a moment of clarity while he confessed to the crime, his mind continued its descent into chaos when he was taken into custody.

When Dohnavin's mom had heart surgery, his precarious mental state took a turn for the worse. The thought of his mom dying imploded his world, "I lost it." He rapidly deteriorated and realized he was facing a terrifying break from reality. The solution? More meth use and more isolation. He was able to maintain employment, but, as he pointed out, he knew his job so well that he was able to go through the motions, even while wrestling with his mind. Visions of a house fire had

come to Dohnavin way before he started the actual fire. In the mental mishmash of a mind losing its moorings, fueled by ever increasing drug use, Dohnavin entered another realm, where he remembers, "I was hearing voices, but at the same time, I wasn't alive. I wasn't alive because I had died in a house fire, where 16 people also died. I needed to sacrifice something or someone. When my fear about this situation really began to intensify, I started seeing symbols. I was scared because the symbols were all around me, but I couldn't interpret them."

Dohnavin was spiraling in a meth induced psychosis. Still holding a job, he relied on his co-workers, who knew what to look for to pull him back from the brink. His life options became narrowed down to 1) suicide or 2) jail. He kept sinking lower, and at the point he set the apartment on fire, it was from a belief that, "something needs to happen." He now thanks God every day that, miraculously, no one was hurt.



His road to recovery, however, was anything but a straight line. He continued being arrested, continued his meth use. But, slowly, something was happening and he was being handed a life line. A glimmer of hope here, a glimmer of hope there. His mom's visits, sometimes a Bible study. He began outpatient treatment, and began attending AA/NA with surprising results. "I didn't take into consideration it might actually work. I began to take treatment seriously."

Another mental break followed, or more accurately, a mental breakthrough, which arced into a different dimension. Rather than sinking lower, Dohnavin realized that his previous lifestyle was not what he wanted. This realization was a spiritual awakening. There were no demonic forces, no indecipherable and frightening symbols. But rather, "There was hope for healing." At this point

Dohnavin realized, "I can actually do this." That changed everything.

Dohnavin's job at Rocky Mountain Treatment Center is just what he needs at this point in his life. He works in housekeeping, which gives him time to interact with the clients. He obviously relates: "Addiction is so strong. I know what they are going through." The vast majority of the staff is in recovery and this helps Dohnavin stay in his own recovery. "They understand me and can watch my patterns for any signs of concern".



Dohnavin said his connection with his family, his mom and brother, has grown strong and they believe in him. He believes in himself as well and this is essential, because without self-care and self-love, the connections with others are weak. "Connection is the opposite of addiction."

What's next in his life? Dohnavin wants to start a family and live his life. Just live his life as an ordinary person and find his own happiness and joy. Will it be easy? No, of course not, for as Dohnavin noted, "There will be trials and tribulations but it's OK; it's a part of life." He now knows he can navigate life's challenges, even when

it is difficult, and that he is never alone. Dohnavin explained the gift of spiritual peace that he is experiencing.

"I feel the love of God. I feel the serenity which is what I had always wanted. God has a plan for me. I can have a good life, if I trust in God and have faith. I feel spiritual power all around me now, all the time. It's a nice feeling."

As a part of his recovery and his healing journey, Dohnavin wants to encourage us to find compassion and insight for those who may be perceived as "different" from us. When we see people struggling and at their low point, Dohnavin reminds us to see the entirety of a person and understand them beyond narrow stereotypes. We need not put people in reduced status boxes, while we cling to the idea that "those people" could never be us and that, somehow, they are not even like us. Wrong. Here is what Dohnavin is asking all of us to realize:

"I thank God I came out of this. And people helped me along the way. So, when we see street people, that was me at one point. I was on the streets, talking to myself. That was me at a low point. But it still was me. When we see people on the streets, at their low point, keep in mind that at one time that person was innocent. They are someone's kid, someone's brother or sister, someone's loved one. Never give up on people."

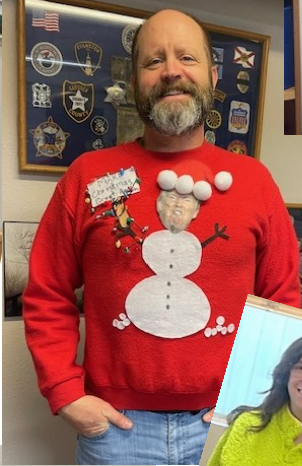
Dohnavin reads scripture every night before bed. His life is now guided by Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me".

Thank you, Dohnavin, for taking the time to share your story of recovery and insights for this article. We wish you all the very best for your future and are very proud of the person you have become.



News by Sheena Jarvey

National Ugly Sweater Day, December 20, 2024



Jeff Pierce-Honors Member

Jeff Pierce, new Honors member, is a multi-talented person who has worked in a number of skilled trades. He has no plans to slow down and has his sights set firmly on his future.

Jeff joined the Navy at 17 and moved from Montana to Chicago. When his Navy career ended, he stayed in the Chicago area for the next 10 years. Using his natural abilities and hard work he found a variety of jobs in skilled trades. Jeff's personality was well suited to his adopted city.

“Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive
and coarse and strong and cunning

Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job...”

--Carl Sandburg “Chicago”

As Sandburg's writing makes clear, Chicago has always been a city of constant muscular work. This suited Jeff just fine. His inherent talents and desire for the next best job opportunity was a perfect fit for what Chicago could offer. At one point, he was building and installing specialized machinery. In two and a half years, he flew to over 30 states, installing the machinery that had been sent ahead. Jeff thrived on the constant hustle and high expectations. The rush of the constant physical and mental challenges kept him engaged and energized. In a dynamic city that rewarded hard work with more opportunities, Jeff held over 40 jobs during his stay. During this time, he also began a long-term relationship.



In 2015, however, Jeff moved back to Montana. He and his father had a rough clash, and the negative repercussions lasted several years. Jeff hit what he described as the lowest point in his life when, as a result, he became homeless. Then his life took what can only be described as an even stranger turn. For complicated reasons of power plays and property disputes, he began to fight city hall in Kalispell. As in actually fighting City Hall, where, in his explosive anger, he would scream at the courthouse and try and provoke them in any number of ways. Remarkably, this episode did end with Jeff surviving to tell the tale, but he remained defiant, “I called them out, knowing I had the truth.” Unremarkably, however, he did pick up a felony for his efforts. But Jeff, being Jeff, retained a part of him that the system, any system, could never control. “I will never let the system defeat me.” Follow the rules, yes. Defeat him, no.

Now, however, many of the rough edges of Jeff's life are smoothing over. He is currently employed by



WMK, a small steel fabrication shop in Great Falls that employs around 10 people. He speaks highly of the company—he likes the work and his co-workers. It's a good use of his employable skills and talents while he is staying at the Center. Jeff found he had a natural ability for welding when, as a teen, he attended Trapper Creek Job Corp, studying welding fabrication. This skill has served him well through the years.

He and his dad have long had a contentious relationship. The short explanation is that, unsurprisingly, he and his dad are way too much alike. Stubborn, judgmental, unwilling to concede any ground, they were at an impasse. During his dad's visit in the fall of 2024, however, Jeff and his dad, after years of hostilities, were able to make a major revision in their relationship. But by the end of the visit, Jeff realized that things were changing between them. In subsequent phone conversations, they are making

substantial gains, bringing to life the father and son relationship that they both need. This new relationship with his dad is both healing and encouraging. “I’m glad I am having a breakthrough with my dad.” Jeff’s dad is taking further steps to break out of his rut by moving to a new home, a much-needed physical fresh start. Jeff is also making connections with his aunt and brothers. Family is starting to come together and it will only get better. Seeing his life come full circle, Jeff is now making plans to eventually find his way back to Kalispell.

Jeff’s new career goal is to be a EMT/paramedic. This is a career where his talents can be best used to help others. Jeff explained that the intensity of an emergency brings out the best in him, “I have clarity in a crisis.” His background is also extremely helpful. Jeff continued, “In a crisis, I can call upon my own understanding, knowledge and communication skills. I’ve been through a lot and this helps me understand what the crisis is actually about.”

Jeff will continue making his mark in the world. He is rightfully proud of his varied work history. “I have had a lot of success in my day with work.” Jeff is doing life his own way and he is far from done. Jeff’s personal guidelines for success are uniquely his, “If it prevents me from work, I won’t do it, so I do the next best thing.”

He will be free and clear in September of this year and has so much to look forward to. Anything could happen since he is, as he put it, “Working hard to move forward.” We are proud of Jeff and know that his future will be uniquely his, fueled by his ambition and his talents. We wish him all the best.



News by Sheena Jarvey

Discerning Truth: Mandela Effect

Raymond Berry; Noël Walker, ed.

Have you ever been absolutely certain about something, only to find out it never actually happened? Maybe you distinctly remember the Monopoly Man wearing a monocle, but when you check, he never had one. Or you could swear Darth Vader declared “Luke, I am your father,” when the line is actually, “No, I am your father.” If this sounds familiar, you’ve experienced what’s called the Mandela Effect.

The term comes from people remembering Nelson Mandela dying in prison during the nineteen eighties, even though he was alive and later became South Africa’s president. The Mandela Effect refers to shared false memories—when groups of people recall the same event or detail differently from how it actually occurred.

So, what’s going on? One explanation is that our brains aren’t perfect at storing or recalling information. Memories can shift over time, influenced by suggestions, similar events, or even pop culture. For example, the Monopoly Man might seem like he should have a monocle because he resembles other wealthy, monocled characters, like Mr. Peanut. Or, when Chris Farley was goofing off by talking into a fan in the movie *Tommy Boy* and misquoted *Star Wars*, that line became more memorable than the original.

Another theory is that the Mandela Effect shows how easy it is to misinterpret details and then spread those mistakes. Once someone confidently states, “I remember it this way,” others might adopt the same memory, especially if it sounds familiar.

While some claim the Mandela Effect proves alternate realities or glitches in the universe, the more grounded explanation is that it reveals how memory works—and sometimes doesn’t. It’s a reminder to question our certainty about what we “know.”

The next time you experience the Mandela Effect, ask yourself: Could my memory be playing tricks on me? By staying curious and open-minded, you’ll better navigate the quirks of human memory.



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

Adapted from **THC and the Adolescent Brain**

Mark S. Gold, M.D.—Psychology Today

Submitted: Robin Castle; Edited for Size: Noël Walker

Researchers have identified key risks from high-THC exposure for adolescent brains. For example, THC disrupts the hippocampus, a region critical for memory formation; disruption may lead to difficulties in learning and retaining information.

Long-term cannabis use initiated during adolescence is associated with a decline in IQ scores and cognitive performance. In addition, high-THC exposure can reduce gray matter volume in the prefrontal cortex, impairing executive functions like planning and impulse control.

THC also affects the brain's white matter, reducing connectivity between brain regions crucial for coordinated cognitive processes. THC interferes with development of brain circuits responsible for regulating behavior, leading to increased risk-taking and poor decision-making. THC use during adolescence can accelerate cortical thinning in the prefrontal cortex, increasing risks of cognitive deficits and heightened vulnerability to anxiety, depression, and psychosis.

Adolescents are more likely than adults to develop cannabis use disorder due to heightened neuroplasticity during this developmental stage, making the brain more susceptible to addiction. The resulting impaired cognitive and emotional regulation may lead to academic underperformance and difficulties in interpersonal relationships. Some neurobiological effects of adolescent cannabis use, such as reduced gray matter volume and altered connectivity, may persist into adulthood, even after use of the substance is stopped.

Every package of cigarettes sold in America carries strong standardized health warnings. Likewise, alcoholic beverage containers bear labels warning about risks to pregnancy. In contrast, state health warnings for cannabis use are not informative or universal. In Oregon, a label warns, "For use only by adults 21 and older. Keep

out of reach of children." New York State's Cannabis Control Board's warnings are less specific: "Smoking or vaping is hazardous to health" and "Keep out of reach of children

and pets." Deploying educational campaigns, labels, and restrictions on sales and marketing of cannabis could mitigate risks.

Science has a wealth of knowledge about the impact of cannabis use today as well as the effect of cannabis on the brain's affected receptors. As the potency of THC rises unchecked, so, too, do the risks of cannabis use disorder, cardiovascular issues, psychosis, accidents, depression, and impaired

driving. Experts specifically warn that cannabis should not be used by pregnant women, children, teens, and young adults. None of the research results have been particularly positive, and certainly none outweighed the risks, some of which include schizophrenia, psychosis, depression, and suicide.

Adolescents using high-THC products are at higher risk for developing cannabis-induced psychosis and long-term psychiatric disorders like schizophrenia, heightened anxiety and depression, and suicidal thoughts.



From Gas Pumps to Relapse: Why Are Convenience Stores Fueling Addiction?

Recent environmental scans in Great Falls have revealed an alarming increase in the availability and visibility of addictive substances such as Kratom, KAVA, THC products and mushrooms in local convenience stores, particularly Loaf 'n Jug (now rebranding to Brake Time) and Circle K locations. This issue poses significant risks to our youth, vulnerable populations and individuals in recovery programs.

Key Concerns:

- **Loaf 'n Jug Locations & Proximity to Schools and Vulnerable Populations:**
 - 3726 2nd Ave. N. (Near East Middle School & Lewis and Clark Elementary)
 - 900 1st Ave. N. (Downtown)
 - 601 Smelter Ave. NE. (Near North Middle School & Sacajawea Elementary)
 - 1225 Central Ave. W. (One block from West Elementary)
- **Violation of Agreements:** The Circle K near the Great Falls Pre-release Center is now selling Kratom, violating a long-standing agreement to protect those in recovery.
- **Visibility and Access:** These products are not secured and are openly displayed, often near entrances. This placement makes them easily accessible to minors, vulnerable individuals and those struggling with addiction.
- **Ongoing Issues:** Despite the Montana Cannabis Control Division removing numerous products from Loaf 'n Jug displays, there continues to be a constant stream of new addictive substances replacing them. This cycle remains unchecked and deeply concerning for our community's safety.

INDUSTRY INFLUENCE: The Kratom industry is well-funded and aggressive, with a strong presence in lobbying efforts. Their lobbyist has already registered to lobby at the upcoming 2025 Montana Legislature. This underscores the importance of voicing your concerns to ensure our communities remain protected from harmful and addictive substances.

WHAT IS KAVA & KRATOM?

- **Kava:** A traditional South Pacific root used as a mild sedative and increasingly marketed as a replacement for alcohol. Long-term use can cause liver damage.
- **Kratom:** An unregulated substance with opioid-like effects, highly addictive, linked to serious health risks including seizures and overdoses.

ACTION NEEDED: We must address this issue through community awareness, stricter legislation and continued environmental scans. **Proposed measures include:**

- Enforcing **age restrictions (21+)** on Kratom and similar products.
- **Limiting** the promotion and placement of addictive substances **near schools and recovery centers.**
- Strengthening laws and compliance checks.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS! The time to act is now. Let your legislators know about your concerns regarding the aggressive push by the Kratom industry and others and the impact on our community. Share this information, stay informed and advocate for stronger regulations. Let's work towards a safer Great Falls, Cascade County and Montana.



GFPRC Resident Jason Bianconi

Great Vacationer, Terrible Vacation

by: Noël Walker

We would like to issue a MASSIVE congratulations to **Jason Bianconi** for all of the work he has put in to not only get accepted into the CDL program the Continuing Education and Training Center at Great Falls College, but also for pursuing and receiving a \$1500 scholarship to help offset the costs of the course and its connected instruction.

If you have been on West Campus for two months or so, you are probably acquainted with Mr. Bianconi. He has been a frequent flyer in the Newsletter for various reasons, be they resident standout blurbs or for positively breezing through all of his HiSET testing. Or, maybe he is just someone whom he saw needed help and reached out to help because that is the kind of person he is. Regardless, I sat down with Mr. Bianconi to talk with him more about how and why his time here has been so successful.

First of all, Jason is very clear in his beliefs that everything happens for a reason. This philosophy is hard won, having clearly seen situations which are truly awful play out for the betterment of all. Does it stop him from stressing out about it? Well, you can ask him that personally, but his positivity and pragmatism have helped him tremendously throughout his life and particularly during his time here. “As corny as that whole ‘*second chance*’ thing is, it is something that I have to tell myself every day” that everyone has the capacity to improve themselves, to learn life’s lessons, to grow. “I have the perfect amount of freedom right now, with the right amount of supervision...I know myself and what I need...It has been a privileged opportunity to grow.” He clarified that the past year has been tough, but it has definitely had its wins. He went on to say that his time here has been filled with programming and personal goals to achieve, but he’s also had some “other stuff” he’s been working on. He credits some of the staff and their direct support and encouragement as part of why he feels like he’s gotten this far.



Regardless of who did what or how, the fact remains that Mr. Bianconi has risen above and taken the opportunity to advance himself during his time at the GFPRC. He sees the past several months as a necessary step to streamline his transition into his future. Has it been fun? No. Has it been important? Absolutely. With his unfailing sense of humor, he jokingly stated that this has been the worst vacation ever, but that the past year has put him in the right place to receive what life wanted him to have at this juncture, even if that wasn’t a tan. He stated, “Everything happens for a reason, the crap with the good. Sometimes the crap has to happen to put you in the place for the good.”

You’ve probably heard the phrase, “you can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink.” Well, if Resident Jason Bianconi were a horse, he would be the most hydrated horse this side of the Pecos. He can’t pass a puddle without stopping to take a sip. It makes sense when you stop to think of it. The more one drinks, the farther they can go through those periods of drought. Indeed, from the moment he walked through the doors, he has been uniquely focused on working to improve the future that awaits him. And, if the past few months have been any indication, his future is as full of potential as his belly is of that proverbial water.

GFPRC Welcomes Mike Silverman

I was born in New York City and raised in Denver, Colorado. I have lived in seven states and traveled to about 45 states, as well as two foreign countries. I have two children and two grandchildren, and we all enjoy skiing and snowboarding together. I have degrees in Biology, Psychology, Education and Business. I think anyone who wants an education should do whatever they can to get one. One of the most important things I have learned in life is that there is no substitute for persistence and hard work. Anyone can achieve their goals if they believe in themselves and don't give up. I spent a lot of time working in education and business and I am excited about this opportunity to work with everyone at GFPRC and use my knowledge and skills to help those who want it.



Here Are Some Tips for Creating Resolutions That Prioritize Your Mental Well-Being: From “New Year’s Resolutions: Building Good Mental Health Habits”

Date: December 27, 2023 Category: Mental Health

By: Anita Everett, MD, DFAPA, Director, Center for Mental Health Services

Contributed/Suggested by Heidi Hunter, RN

- **Pick a Goal that Motivates You:** You are more likely to stick to your goal if it motivates you or if it is influenced by others, such as a spouse, a workout partner, or a medical professional. If your goal is to exercise more, but you know going to a gym is not a motivation for you, then pick another exercise you can do outside of the gym.
- **Break Down Your Big Goals into Smaller, More Manageable Goals:** By doing this you'll be much less likely to feel overwhelmed. If your ultimate goal is to run a 5K race, but you have not yet run a lap around the track, start with walking a shorter distance and gradually begin to jog once you feel you're ready. It may just be a few yards or a lap around the track. Sometimes just signing up for that race is just the motivation you need to get started.
- **Focus on Progress, Not Perfection and Stay Positive:** Emphasize the journey and strive for progress rather than aiming for perfection. And reward yourself for the progress you made. For instance, if your goal is to lose 10 pounds, but you only lost five pounds, acknowledge the five pounds you lost were five more than before you started trying to lose weight. The way we talk to ourselves can foster a positive and realistic outlook and contribute to a healthier approach to both mental health and success in meeting our New Year's resolutions.
- **Lean on Others for Support and Motivation:** Achieving goals can be easier when done with others. Consider joining groups or communities with similar goals to connect with people who can provide encouragement and accountability.



Heidi Hunter, RN

- **Practice Self-Compassion:** Be easy on yourself. Acknowledge that setbacks will happen and that's okay. Just pick back up where you left off.
- **Set a New Date:** You do not need to commit to a resolution on January 1. Feel free to delay implementing your New Year's resolutions until the time is right. You can make them at any time you want. Under stress now? Why not resolve to make that change beginning in March or by another preferred date.
- **Don't Compare Yourself to Others:** Don't get too caught up in the New Year's resolutions of others. Set goals with only you in mind.
- **Know When to Ask for Help:** You are not alone. SAMHSA has behavioral health resources to help. Visit SAMHSA.gov, Find Help.

Here are a few New Year's Resolutions from your neighbors in the Center

Dillon Lane: My New Year's resolution is to enhance my roles as a husband, friend, coworker, and to improve my overall performance. I firmly believe that complacency breeds laziness, and one should continually strive for excellence, regardless of experience. Accountability, discipline, and coachability are the core principles that drive my endeavors.

Joe Marten: 1) To work out 2-3 times per week, losing 60-80lbs. 2) To find a gallery to put some of my bowls that I make, and further my woodworking business.

Dominic Thompkins: Usually a New Year's Resolution is something to improve on, but my New Year's Resolution would be to prepare myself to go into the Marines. I'll start by learning how to swim.

Noël Walker: To stop being so worried about the big picture that I ignore all little moments of magic. And to stop being so dang extra.

Brittany Engram: To keep building better routines and habits. To learn and build more to my creative arts. I want to make more time for my hobbies! Explore and continue to step out of my comfort zone. Motto to live by, "Living NOT Existing!"

Did You Register?

SANDRA'S CORNER



Almost all male US citizens and male immigrants, who are 18 through 25, are required to register with Selective Service. A man who fails to register with Selective Service may be ineligible for opportunities that may be important to his future. He must register to be eligible for state-funded student financial aid in many states, most federal employment, some state employment, security clearance for contractors, **job training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act** (formerly known as the Workforce Investment Act), and U.S. citizenship for immigrant men.

You are exempt from Selective Service registration if you can prove you were continuously institutionalized or confined from 30 days before you turned 18 through age 25. If you were released for any period longer than 30 days during this window, you were required to register with the Selective Service System.

For Selective Service to determine this exemption, the following supporting documentation is needed when you mail your status information letter request form:

- Proof that your dates of confinement or institutionalization are accurate.
 - Proof that you were continuously incarcerated, or never released for any period of 30 days or longer.
-

Nerd Alert:

Monthly Column by Noël Walker, Education Coordinator

If you are like me and think that English sometimes doesn't make sense, all I can say is, welcome to the club. For example, why do you say "I will go" for future tense, "I go/am going" for present, but "I went" for the past? Why do some verbs (action words) end in "ed" and others in "t". Shoot, why do some "-ed" endings sound like "ed" and others sound like "t" despite very clearly being spelled -ed? Well, there is a lot to unpack to get to the bottom of these questions. I will try to be quick, but I am not very good at being short-winded. The quickest answer is that English is just a hodgepodge that morphed together into one wacky tie-dye shirt of a language.



Let's look at some examples. We can start with a verb you use every day: "to go." Why do we say "went" instead of "goed" or even "gone"? The long and the short of it is that, oddly enough, there never was a true past tense version of "to go." Old English used "eode"ⁱ, but even this word comes from an unrelated and different verb in Old English. The word "went" was adopted from a different verb with a similar meaning, "to wend". While "I will wend" went out of fashion, we kept the past tense form for the sake of simplicity. Using a different word completely instead of changing the ending is called "suppletion"ⁱⁱ. Other examples include "better" and "best" instead of "gooder" and "goodest", or "I am/you are/it is" instead of "I be/you be/it bes."

That leads to the next question: "why 'went' with a t instead of 'wended'?" Taking it one step further, if we say "went" instead of "wended", why don't we say "ent" instead of "ended?" The basic answer is that the original root word from early German had different endings, so the two words morphed differently as time passed. It wasn't until Dr. Samuel Johnson wrote the first English dictionary in 1755ⁱⁱⁱ, that English spelling was made accessible. Before then, people how even *could* write *often* just sounded stuff out. Imagine how complicated reading old texts can be when the writer had a thick accent. Regardless, knowing the Vikings first landed in England in 793, that is almost 1000 years of unchecked evolution between English's start and the first dictionary. Slang had changed; pronunciations had changed. Other influences had been added to that early Germanic tongue, like the Greek influence on Latin, the Norman (French) rule of England. In fact, as you look through Old English, which is almost entirely German, through Middle English, which is difficult but largely readable, into Late English, the change is HUGE.

To answer my final question about past tense endings, why "fixed" sounds like "fixt", and even why "wanted" is two syllables, but "whined" is one, there is a surprisingly easy answer to all three examples: easier pronunciation. That is it. The ending follows the last sound of the original verb. If the end sound requires your voice (a voiced sound),

The Lord's Prayer (Old English)

Fæder ure

ðu ðe eart on heofenum

si ðin nama gehalgod

to-becume ðin rice

geweorþe ðin willa on eorðan swa swa on heofenum.

Urne ge dæghwamlican hlaf syle us to-deag

and forgyf us ure gyltas

swa swa we forgifaþ urum gyltendum

ane ne gelæde ðu us on costnunge

ac alys us of yfle.

ⁱ <https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=went#:~:text=The%20past%20tense%20of%20go,of%20the%20moder n%20verb%20wend>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/suppletion>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/library/files/special/exhibns/month/apr2007.html#:~:text=This%20month%20we%20take%20 aexamples%20from%20the%20best%20writers>

the “ed” sounds like “d”. If the final sound of the verb is unvoiced (s, p, f, sh, ch, k, or x sounds), the “ed” sounds like “t”. If the last sound is a “d” or “t”, it is easier to pronounce the “ed” as a separate syllable. If you aren’t sure if the sound is voiced or not, make the sound and touch your voice box. “F” doesn’t use your voice, but “v”, which is the same mouth shape, does. The same is true for “p” and “b”, as well as “k” and “g”—same shape but voiced and unvoiced.

I hope you don’t mind the history lesson. I think it is fun to know the reason *why* things are the way they are. You know pronunciation. You know past tense verbs. But, now you know *WHY*. So, next time someone asks you a question or even misspeaks, you are able to know *why* you are right and they are wrong. Nah nah ni boo boo.

Fun Facts to Know Jan 2025

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Prior to 1752 in England, the year began on 25 March (Lady Day). Lady Day is one of the Quarter Days, which are still used in legal circles. The Quarter Days divide the year in quarters (hence the name :-), and the Quarter Days are: Lady Day (25 March), Midsummers Day (24 June), Michaelmas Day (29 September), and Christmas Day (25 December).

So, in England, the day after 24 March 1642 was 25 March 1643. The Act changed this, so that the day after 31 December 1751 was 1 January 1752. As a consequence, 1751 was a short year - it ran only from 25 March to 31 December.

To throw some more confusion on the issue, Scotland had changed the first day of the year to 1 January in 1600 (in 1600, Scotland was a separate kingdom). When King James VI of Scotland became also King James I of England in 1603, the possibilities of date confusion must have been very large.

Historians have to be on their toes with dates prior to 1752. For example, in The Tower of London there is some graffiti scratched into a cell wall by someone imprisoned in January 1642 for his role in the Battle of Edgehill (which took place on 23 October 1642).

Why was England so late in getting up with the times?

Religion

The Julian Calendar was the accepted English Calendar since Julius Caesar enacted it in 45 BC.



Pope Gregory XIII

The Gregorian calendar was enacted in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII in Italy.

The English had intentionally broken away from the Roman Catholic Religion during the Reformation as early as 1534. They felt that giving in to something that came from the Pope was, in essence, giving in to the religious freedoms they had tried to get rid of.

Oddly enough, the Julian and Gregorian Calendars were almost identical, the difference in the average length of the year between the Julian (365.25 days) and Gregorian (365.2425 days) is 0.002%.

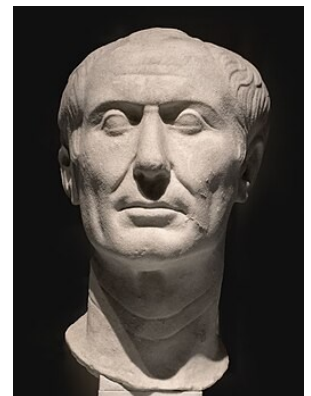
As a side note the Julian calendar is still used by the Berber people of North Africa, and on Mount Athos, in the form of the Alexandrian Calendar, for the Ethiopian Calendar, which is the civil calendar of Ethiopia.

Sir Gawain, King Arthur, the Green Knight along with the Knights of the Round Table at the Feast of Michaelmas.



Jeff Barnhart

Facility Services Director



Julius Caesar



For Your Pleasure

Winter Word Search

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

- BLIZZARD
- BOOTS
- COAT
- COCOA
- COLD
- DECEMBER
- EARMUFFS
- FEBRUARY

- FIREPLACE
- FROSTY
- HAT
- ICE
- ICICLES
- JANUARY
- MARCH
- MITTENS

- PLOW
- SCARF
- SHOVEL
- SKIING
- SLEDDING
- SNOW
- SWEATER
- WINTER



©CRAYONSANDCRAVINGS.COM

<https://crayonsandcravings.com/winter-word-search/>




		2	8	6			
	7		4				2
4	5			1			3
			2		3		1
			9			6	7
	1			5	9	3	
		6					
					4	1	

© LiveSudoku.com



PRE-RELEASE PRESS
 Editor: Noël Walker



TRANSITION CENTER
 GREAT FALLS PRE-RELEASE SERVICES INC.

Residents: You are encouraged to submit something for the next newsletter - a drawing, poem, song, article, quote, advice, etc. Please turn it in to the CO desk with your name or contact **Noel 455-9346** noel@gfprc.org. Any suggestions are also appreciated.