

RESIDENT STANDOUTS



Tisa Brien is on schedule to complete the Great Falls College MSU welding course and internship at ADF on August 8th. She jumped at the opportunity when it arose. Tisa is a repeat resident, and this time she is motivated to do well. “I figured if I don’t do well here, I won’t do well out there. I decided if I start something here, by the time I get out it will give me more motivation to succeed and keep doing good.” Tisa lost her brother while she was here, and it has hit her hard, so she is determined to prove that she can succeed.

Resident **Marty Shane**, from day one, has stood out to me. He has gone out of his way to set himself up for success after he leaves here. I know it is not fun to work a full, hard day then sit down to try to do more. But, that exact thing is what sets Mr. Shane apart. He isn't looking to take the path of least resistance, which I find to be as admirable as it is respectable.



I feel East Campus resident **Frank James** is an outstanding resident because he is very polite, comes in and does his chore on time and asks if we need anything. He is doing a good job here in the center and has a very POSITIVE attitude and wonderful sense of humor.



There are so many people I could commend, but I want to talk about Resident **Don Farrar** for a moment. He is not a showy guy. He isn't one to beg for the attention of the room. Instead, I see him quietly leading from the back. He uses his keen mind to help others and support those around him, pushing them forward and leading them to find the means to do so successfully. He is respectful, funny, and willing to assist in whatever way he can. It would be a shame for him to think he goes unnoticed.

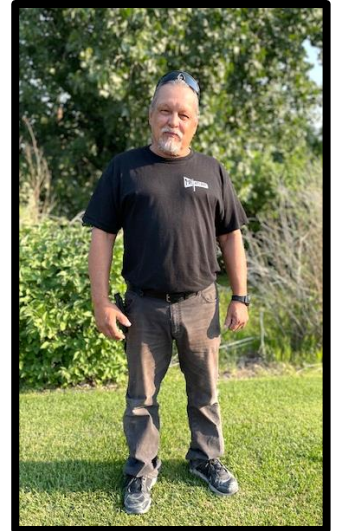


I think part of the purpose of resident standouts is to acknowledge sides of residents that other people may not see. I want to point out that I see Resident **Elizabeth Cook** consistently encouraging her peers. I see her working to make the world around her a little better and the loads of others a little lighter. This is a tough world, and we spend a lot of time talking about ripple effects in a negative light. I firmly believe, though, that positivity makes waves, not ripples, and Resident Cook has the power to be a tsunami.

RESIDENT STANDOUTS

When asked to think about a resident stand out, the first name that came to mind, and rightfully so, was Resident **Wayne Jones**. He is running an immaculate program, is consistently kind to others, and is more than willing to step up and be helpful when the situation calls for it.

2nd Nomination: Resident **Wayne Jones** is a delight. His cheerfulness and leadership mark him as a standout to staff and residents alike. He gets it done every day and makes it look easy, regardless of what "it" is. I am a pretty energetic person, but his boundless energy and joyfulness make me feel like I am consistently about three cups of coffee behind.



Mr. **Sam Smith** had to work really hard to get his driver's license issues taken care of. And on his 3rd try he passed his book test!!!! This was a huge success for him! He will take the driving part in the next few weeks and will leave the center with a license after never having one. I'm very happy that he pushed through all the obstacles and didn't give up before the finish line!!!

2nd Nomination: I would like to congratulate Resident **Sam Smith** on obtaining his driver's license. Sam has never had a driver's license before and with him getting it, this opens so many more doors for him with employment and life in general. This was a huge accomplishment for him and he should feel proud of himself as all of us here at the center are proud of him. Again, congrats to Sam and keep up the hard work and pressing on, as all of that hard work will pay off.

Inmate Worker **Luis Zayas** puts the "work" in "Worker". He is constantly going. Not only does he help facilitate the smooth running of the East Campus Kitchen, but he helps other residents with health and nutritional advice. If you ask almost anyone who has been on East Campus for a bit, they will say that Mr. Zayas makes their day better in some way. Just in the short time I have known him, he has emerged as a man who not only knows what he wants but is not afraid of the work it will take to get there. I see him managing his time and his resources effectively to make sure he is in the best place to keep moving forward. He is working on himself and will probably be the first to admit that he is a work in progress. But, he is goal oriented, and I have no doubt he will be successful at whatever he sets his mind to



TROY NELSON – Honors Member

By Brenda Demers

Troy Nelson has noticeably matured during his stay at GFPRC. When he first got here he was described as a toddler that didn't take ownership and always had an excuse. With time and direction, he is helpful, responsible, doesn't blame others, and is adulting wonderfully. If he needs reminded about his behavior or to follow through with something, he is respectful, polite, and follows through with the change. He has an uplifting personality and is willing to help other residents that are struggling.

Troy commented, *I went from a billion write ups to Honors. It shows that anyone can complete the program. Learn to follow the small rules here so the big ones out there don't become so complicated. There is a purpose for all the little rules. In real life you will have simple everyday tasks and guidelines to follow. The purpose of this program is to show you can hold a job and be a productive member of society. Some addicts leave here and get a taste of freedom and think they can do just a little, then it's game over. Even marijuana has its downfalls and that's legal. The path to absolute freedom is living life without a substance holding you back. It hinders your true enjoyment of life. Give yourself no rope to hang yourself with.*



Troy also attributes his fiancée, Kelly, for helping him along the path. He described the instant spark when they met. *We have the same interests and she is the joy of my life!* And they are getting married this month after Troy releases.

Troy has the option of taking his career in several directions. He is currently thriving at a restaurant where his quirky personality compliments his job as a server.

Another option is to go back to the medical field where he worked as a CNA. *I love hanging with old people and being there for the folks that don't have family come visit them.* As a CNA there are those duties that come with the job that some might find uncomfortable, but Troy looks at it this way: *It's part of life, and I take pride in helping them. It's what I would want done for me.*

As proof to Troy's determination to excel, he graduated from the welding course at Great Falls College MSU while working full time and doing all of the required programming here. Troy is creative and plans to keep that skill in his back pocket to use for projects at home.

Troy plans to augment his income using his passion of buying and selling second-hand goods. Troy describes himself as a patient person who loves learning things. *Knowledge is power.* He said he is always looking for better ways to do things. His niche is buying broken watches, repairing them and reselling. *It takes patience, time, and knowledge.*

Troy and Kelly have big dreams as they look forward to their life together. Troy explained that to reach the big dreams, you have to start small. *Think of going to the carnival and getting the little teddy bear, then trading it up to the big teddy bear. Or buying a 5th wheel, then selling it and getting a diesel pusher, then a small home. You just keep upgrading.*

Troy remembers when drugs were his priority and life or death was a daily event. He finds comfort in the knowledge that his past life is just that. Congratulations, Troy, we are proud of the person you have become!

Learn to Respond Not React

The main thing to learn is mindfulness and the pause.

Mindfulness means watching ourselves when something happens that might normally upset us or trigger some kind of emotional reaction. Pay close attention to how our minds react.

Then pause. We don't have to act immediately, just because we have an internal reaction. We can pause, not act, and breathe. We can watch this urge to act irrationally arise, and then let it go away. Sometimes that takes a few seconds, other times it means we should remove ourselves politely from the situation and let ourselves cool down before we respond.



Sandra Bearchum



Pause.

Watch the reaction go away.

Now consider what the most **intelligent, compassionate response** might be. What can we do that will help our relationship, teach, build a better team or partnership, make the situation better, calm everyone down, including ourselves?

At first, you might mess up. But in time, you'll learn to watch this reaction, and you'll get better at the pause. Don't fret if you mess up — just resolve to be more mindful when it happens next time. Take note of what happened to trigger your reaction, and pay attention when something like that happens again.

Be mindful, pause, then consider a thoughtful, compassionate response.

"As I was pulling into work, I was following this car. The sign in the back window says, "Learning stick sorry for any delay."

Knowing this information, I was very patient with their slow shifting, and honestly they were doing pretty well for still learning. Then I asked myself a tough question: Would I have been just as patient if the sign hadn't been there? I can almost definitely say no.

We don't know what someone is going through. We don't wear signs that illustrate our personal struggles. You don't see signs taped to people's shirts that say, "Going through a divorce", or "Lost a child", or "Feeling depressed", or "Diagnosed with cancer".

If we could read visually what those around us are going through we would definitely be nicer. But we shouldn't have to see signs and have reasons to treat strangers with kindness. We should do it anyway, whether we know what is going on or not. Whether they deserve it or not.

Let's give everyone an extra dose of patience, kindness, and love.

-Carrie Solomon

Maybe you think someone doesn't have a lot on their plate compared to you. But maybe their plate is smaller than yours and doesn't have a lot of room to begin with. Or maybe their plate is paper, and their flimsy paper plate can't hold as much as your sturdy ceramic plate can. Or maybe their plate was broken, and is now held together with glue.

CARL BEEBE - Honors Member



Carl Beebe, new Honors member, was a paramedic for over 13 years. Now in recovery from his addiction, he will soon restart his medical career.

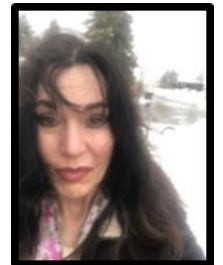
It quickly became clear that Carl has a natural ability for trauma medicine and that being a paramedic placed him right where his skills were the most valuable. Carl recalled that when, as a paramedic, he was training to do autopsies, many in his class, including those with more advanced medical degrees and training, quickly fell off. As he recounted, “some passed out, some walked out.” And the smell? “Like chicken left in the hot sun.” But Carl had what it took to perform an autopsy to determine the cause of death, whether the deceased was an adult, a child or a baby. When a person dies, someone arrives and takes care of what comes next. Carl was that professional that took care of what comes next.

Carl is concise and focused. He has a no-nonsense directness that defines his ability to do the difficult work of autopsies and trauma response. Nonetheless, I couldn't help but wonder what gave Carl his ability to be so close to death, to enter into its realm and accept its realities? When Carl told me about his family, however, I could see where his fortitude, compassion and determination came from. A piece of advice that Carl's father shared with him provided the emotional backdrop to his work. He told Carl: “Don't be afraid of death or growing old. When it's your time, be happy, you will be in a better place.”

Carl's dad worked for Harley Davison for a number of years. Carl said, with a chuckle, that his dad - bucking all stereotypes - doesn't swear nor does he have tattoos. Carl's mom has done many things in her life, including being an instructor at the Native American Studies program at the University of Montana and she is fluent in several Native languages. Carl said of his mom, “She is my best friend. She is so smart and she is so cool.” Carl continued. “My parents are my heroes. They are the nicest people you will ever meet.”

During his career in forensic autopsies and as a paramedic, Carl said he stayed calm in a crisis, quickly working out what needed to be done. He said he would begin triaging the casualty site from the air even before the Life Flight helicopter had landed. Carl was also there for the survivors. In those first horrendous moments of realization, Carl would stay with them, grieve with them, hug them and genuinely share their sorrow. He was all in.

But had Carl come to a point in his life where these skills, this career he loved, was all behind him? He thought about the babies he delivered, the lives he had saved, the survivors he had comforted, the forensic autopsies he performed that provided essential information. Would this all just be memories, especially given his circumstances? Would he now just have to make do? Except Carl, being Carl, would not accept this because he knew he had so much more to give. He didn't want to waste his gifts. He said his identity took a big hit when he lost his paramedics license in the throes of his addiction, when he couldn't quit using, sending him into a downward spiral to the point where he was picking up assault charges. Now in recovery, Carl doesn't want to let go of his self-identity a second time.



NEWS BY SHEENA JARVEY

So, even though getting back into the medical field with felonies can be an uphill battle, Carl went to work. He enlisted the advice of Pre-Release Nurse Heidi Hunter and Education Coordinator Noel Walker and they spent time with him discussing all of his options and helping him network. He connected with Vocational

CARL BEEBE - Honors Member - continued

By Sheena Jarvey

Rehabilitation, an ongoing source of funds, supplies, and encouragement. When Carl starts back to school to become an RN, he will keep the momentum going by immersing himself back into biology, chemistry, psychology, and anatomy. In a few years he will become a trauma nurse, with the goal of working in the ER. He can't wait!

But to ensure this happens, Carl prioritizes his own well-being, as he is very aware of the reality of his situation. He keeps things in his life tight including his mental health, appointments with counselors and psychologists, going to church, and social times. He makes time for himself, like the Honors passes so he can go out and about "on the fly." A bit of unexpected freedom to make life better. He works out at his gym: Raud Dogz House of Power, whose mission is to encourage heavy lifting as a way to build not only strength, but resilience and personal integrity. Carl told me he is now on the right meds, which help keep his mind clear. Going to church gives him spiritual sustenance. His love for his parents keeps him strong and grounded.

Another grace note in Carl's life is his 14 year old daughter. During their phone calls, she keeps him updated on her softball wins, like hitting home runs. She was excited when she heard her dad was going back to school and offered to help him study. Carl said his daughter knows some of his addiction struggles, but doesn't judge, telling him "it's all right. Hopefully it is behind you." (How kind and wise is that!) In due time, they will reconnect in person.

So, time. Time is a gift we all have but can be taken away at any moment. Carl has seen so much death that he believes once your time is up, it is up. So, this makes time all the more precious. He paused for a moment then smiled, "I've got more lives to save. I'm excited to get back out there and have people go: "Damn!" Also, this: **"Don't give up. Life is too short to not love it."**

We are excited for you as well, Carl, and wish you all the best.

Honors Members



Staff that work with **Bryan Nutting** noted that he is positive, and he goes above and beyond to help the new residents.

Recently, Bryan's release plans to Kalispell were denied, so he decided to work out a plan to stay in Great Falls. Bryan is taking it in stride. He remarked, "Everything happens for a reason."

Those that work with **Joe Wandler** commented that he is respectful, polite, and proactive. He maintains a good attitude about everything and asks questions when he reaches a standstill or a road block.



TRACIE PARK – Honors Member

By Brenda Demers



Tracie Park can be described as one who is positive and upbeat and makes the most of her time here. She sought out the Life Long Learning Scholarship on her own to get her flagger certification. Her group facilitators commented that she was an active and engaged participant and her maturity and insight were complementary to the subject matter and curriculum. Additional staff comments were that she is always cooperative, works hard, and does what's asked.

In her application for Honors, Tracie expressed, "When I got to GFPRC, I was stressing on a job, all of the rules, and where I was going to live. I have just taken things one day at a time, asked a lot of questions, attended classes, go to meetings, and work a lot."

With determination and hard work, Tracy worked her way up to the head housekeeper at her place of employment. Tracy is thriving in her position where she is in charge of 25 employees, hiring, firing, employee reviews, laundry, and inspecting the lobby and the rooms for cleanliness and maintenance issues. She commented, "It can be a bit challenging, but that's alright; I'm up for it." Tracie was even awarded Employee of the Month! She shared that she has a good rapport with her employees, commenting that one told her that even if the day is bad she finds a way to make it good.

Tracie's advice to others is to stay positive. She admitted, "I was pretty negative before. Now I just do what I'm supposed to do. I'm too old to be a rebel now. Even when it sucks I just try to find the brighter side." What changed her outlook? "I was tired of being unhappy."

In both her Honors application and my interview with Tracie she focused on her love of dogs. She even found an apartment for her release that accepts dogs. "I can't wait to get out and get a dog! I love dogs. They are my peace and serenity, and they have unconditional love."

Tracie's advice is to "just follow the rules. It's not that hard to do what they ask of you. Just try to live like a normal human being – make your bed and don't have food in your room. My big thing is if you are going to be negative, be positive about it."

Congratulations on your success, Tracie!



Residents: You are encouraged to submit something for the next newsletter - a drawing, poem, song, article, quote, advice, etc. Please turn it in to the CO desk with your name or contact **Brenda 455-9323 brenda@gfprc.org. Any suggestions are also appreciated.**

EDUCATION



In addition to helping you reach your high school equivalency goals, a large part of the Education Department's purpose is to put you in touch with programs that can help you start your future on more solid ground. A HUGE part of that is increasing our earning potential. After all, money can't buy happiness, but it can buy choices. And, the further from desperate we get, the better the choices we can make.

That being said, let's talk about some choices that are available through the Continuing Education and Training Department at Great Falls College/MSU.



Noël Walker
EDUCATION COORDINATOR



CDL--If you are interested in a career in commercial driving, come see me. This course runs once a month. If you can secure funding, you won't miss the opportunity to complete this course. However, there is a mandatory information session prior to starting the class. The dates for that information session are August 5, September 3, October 7, November 4 & December 2, 2024.

If helping others is more to your liking, GFC/MSU's **CNA** course might be just what you are looking for. Like the CDL course, this certification program runs once a month. To meet the needs of a diverse learning population, the CNA course offers two classroom structures: Hybrid and In-Person. Unlike the In-Person option, which requires your presence every day, the Hybrid option is there to open up the book-focused sections to at-home learning, only requiring you to attend courses on campus for the hands-on portions. The dates are as follows:

- In-Person: Aug 2nd – Aug 20th
- In-Person: Sept 3rd – Sept 18th
- Hybrid: August 2, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, & 29
- Hybrid: Sept 3, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, & 26.



If you are more passionate about dental care, GFC/MSU offers a **Dental Assistant** course, which runs from August 26-December 20th. Full disclosure, you could get this same certification from on-the-job training. However, walking in with the certification gives you more power in salary negotiations. For example, walking in without a certification could garner an hourly salary of \$15, with a \$5/hour raise upon certification. However, walking in with a certification could allow you to ask for up to \$25-\$30 an hour. This course would pay for itself in a short amount of time.

Many people have expressed an interest in the **Structural Welding** course offered in conjunction with ADF. I can understand why as it is a remarkable opportunity. If you are interested, you still have time to secure funding between now and the start date of September 30th. This is a 4 night a week class that will end November 15th. With the current staff and the desired staff to student ratio, seats are limited to 10 as of right now. Likewise, your place is not secured until tuition is paid. Come see me so we can brainstorm options for covering the cost of the course.



EDUCATION

by Noël Walker, Education Coordinator

Lastly, if you have a knack, interest, or desire to learn more about construction. Or, if you have experience working in the construction industry but know that certifications can increase your marketability as an employee, you might be interested to learn more about **Future Build**. This course has been tailored for people, young and old, to walk into the job market with multiple certifications and high-level skills in a multitude of building areas. You will work with four community partners on full-scale builds to include skills like framing, flooring, siding, roofing, insulation, drafting, and reading plans. Due to the need in the community for skilled workers, Future Build is offering 2 separate sessions of its 10-week course. Those dates are August 19th – October 17th and October 21st – December 19th.



If you would like any additional information or would like to form a plan to act, please, please, please come see me. Let's get the ball rolling toward a more livable wage in this crazy economy.

Visit from Great Falls Public Library Personnel

Thank you to everyone who came and participated in the library event we held July 11th. The Great Falls Public Library was impressed by the amount of participation, and I could not be more proud of the residents who decided to take part. Of course, if you missed it, you can still get a library card. In fact, a library card with the Great Falls Public Library will open you up to check out more than books at the local library.



This library is networked with many libraries across the state. What does that mean for you? Well, in the simplest terms, it means one-stop-shopping. If you are looking for a book this library doesn't have, the libraries in-network can ship books around to meet the requests of the borrowers at no cost to you. You are not restricted to the books on the shelves of this particular facility. For example, if the book you want is in Polson, Polson will send it to this library, and you can pick it up and return it at the pick-up window without ever setting foot inside the building.

Additionally, a library card will give you access to a vast array of e-books and audio books you can borrow for free. Just for perspective, an Audible membership can run up to \$14.95 for one audio book a month. The library has no such limit. The only limit to what you listen to is the amount of time you can spend.



Also, if you are interested in language learning or diversifying your language studies, the library offers Mango, a free language-learning platform. Through other platforms, you can access career training and skill-building courses.

I'd love to meet with you to talk about options. Please come by, and we will see what we can do to set you up to reach whatever goals you might have.

Inmate Worker Completes Program and Transfers to Resident

By Brenda Demers

If **Chris Marez** was only allowed to share one thing with others, it would be his testimony of God. Chris said he is not the same person today as he was 8 years ago. "I've turned my life over to Christ, and he has slowly transformed me from the inside out."

I've witnessed Chris here at the center stop what he was doing in order to help another person. He pays attention to his surroundings and others that might need help. He commented that *something* inside him tells him to go help that person. When Chris told me he denies himself in order to help others, I questioned him. He explained that the order of hierarchy in his life is God, others, and then himself. We talked about the adage that says we must first help ourselves before we can effectively help others. His response was, "That *is* taking care of me. If you put God first, all things will be added to you after that. Maybe God put that in me because most of my life it was take, take, take. It's time to give back. I get joy inside and it helps my self-esteem."



The turning point for Chris was a terrible accident. Picture in your mind St. Patty's Day in Butte, America. Chris is speeding down the road on a stolen dirt bike as police, sirens blaring, chase after him. Suddenly a car appears in his path. The car is too close; it's too late to avoid the inevitable. Chris remembers, "I was above my body looking at it as it lay limp in a pool of blood. Then I saw a light. It was blissful. I could see people laughing and drinking. The images were distorted, yet the colors were vivid. It was if I was a piece of metal being tugged by a magnet toward the evil side, but the light was holding me in place. I felt pain and fright like no other. It was like a torment. I knew where I was going. Then I noticed a woman pushing a baby stroller. Her face showed concern for me. Suddenly I came to, and everything was extra bright. I cried to the Lord for forgiveness for all of my sins. I didn't want to die with regrets. God is as real as the air we breathe . . . and so is the other force. I saw both."

Now he appreciates all those things in life he used to take for granted down to the air he breathes, the water he drinks, the color of the trees and the chirping of the birds. He believes every insect and animal has a purpose in the circle of life.

Chris admits that his previous self only cared about Chris and that he was good at lying and manipulating. Now he seeks opportunities to make a difference. He said he has the gift of empathy where he can feel other peoples' energy or sadness. Chris is an advocate for living The Golden Rule: Treat others the way you would want them to treat you.

Being an inmate worker taught Chris patience and tolerance. "I'm saying that very humbly. I learned how annoying I was when I was on the other side." As anyone would, Chris would have preferred being an extended stay over an inmate worker, but the cards were stacked against him and now he realizes that the inmate worker program was meant to be. It has been a long time coming, but he also came to the realization that it was meant to be for Christy to be his CTS. "She helped me develop thicker skin and has become a role model for me. Now I tell other residents, 'I understand what you are saying, but she is going to look out for what's best for you.'"

As life moves on for Chris he continues to learn more about himself. He finds his profession as a server to be rewarding. "I've found out that I'm really a people person, and serving gives me the opportunity to connect with people and talk about God."

HEIDI HENDRIX – US Navy Veteran

By Brenda Demers



Those that served in the military, no matter the branch, share a comradery that some of us will never fully comprehend. Heidi Hendrix beamed as she recalled her time in the military. She wanted to make a career out of it, and she would return in a heartbeat if she were to be called back.

Heidi was a freshman in High School when she made the decision to join the Navy. The choice was fueled by her desire to explore the world. Her dad, a Vietnam era Army veteran, advised her of what was to come, both the good and the bad, which made her even more determined. Heidi took the initiative and fulfilled the ASVAB prerequisite, exceeding the required score. If you are wondering, ASVAB is the acronym for Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. After testing, it came to light that she wasn't old enough for the assessment to count, so she had to wait a year and retake the ASVAB. As soon as Heidi turned 19 in during her senior year of high school she signed the official enlistment papers.

A vital characteristic of military basic training is teamwork and reliance on one another. If one person gets in trouble, it's on the entire crew. Heidi related an incident where a sailor's boots were causing issues with her feet so she was issued a new pair. There was going to be an inspection the following day, and the new boots were not polished. All of the recruits took shifts polishing the boots to a glasslike shine. Heidi concluded, "You support your team. If one goes down, you all go down."

Heidi served as a deck crewman on the *USNS Grasp*, a rescue and salvage ship. Heidi explained that if a plane went in the water they got it out, or if a ship broke down they pulled it to safety. She recalled, "At the end of the Gulf War we pulled in to the coast of Italy and salvaged an F-14 Tomcat that landed in the ocean." Another time the ship towed a submarine through the Panama Canal. She stated that they often worked side by side with the Marines. A group of Marines noticed Heidi wandering by herself and decided it was their duty to teach her to protect herself. Heidi is forever grateful for the life skills they taught her.

Heidi shared an incident that nearly took the ship and the lives of the crew. They were involved in Operation Hope Haiti when the Dominican Republic and Haiti were involved in a border dispute. The *USNS Grasp* was anchored in the bay. "Not more than 10 minutes after we left the dock, they blew it up. Dying didn't cross my mind before. That brought it a little too close to home." Another incident that caused her to realize the fragility of life is when they went to Cuba and were told not to get too close to the fence because the Cubans would shoot them.

Heidi's memories carried her back to the time she was afforded the opportunity to go inside a stealth bomber and in a nuclear submarine. She recalled getting lost on an aircraft carrier. Their ship even sailed in the parade of ships through the locks near France. She experienced crossing the equator and the Bermuda Triangle.

Heidi is a physically small woman, so she was the one recruited to climb through the labyrinth of pipes to check the system on the ship. This and a high score on her ASVAB for engineering piqued her interest in the field. Two years into her enlistment she prepared to transfer her rating to engineering. The ship just returned to Norfolk from a 6-month Mediterranean tour. The other deckhands had disembarked, so the

HEIDI HENDRIX – US Navy Veteran – continued



commanding officer told Heidi that she couldn't leave the ship until she put the hydraulic wrench away. She followed the order, even rigging a hook and pulley system to hang it on the wall in its locker. The problem was that the piece of equipment weighed some 300 pounds. As soon as Heidi lifted it, she felt her back pop. At first, she figured she just pulled something and she would be okay, but the pain intensified. She had damaged her spinal cord. After intense physical therapy and talk of surgery with the odds stacked against recovery, she lives with the aftermath of the accident.

Heidi's military experience will forever affect her. "It was hard to adjust after I got out. The mindset never goes away. I even notice it now. You can hear your instructor yelling at you: *What are you crying for? Pick yourself up! You got this! You can do this! Move it! Push forward!* You have that drive that most people don't have. They totally re-program how you interact. The more stress they put on you the better you work. You might get 2 hours of sleep, then you're up for 24 hours, but you learn to function. When you don't have that stress it's like, *what do I do?* A lot of military veterans don't relax. They are always on guard, always watching; they won't sit with their back to a door; they are always ready to go. Sometimes when my body starts to relax my muscles will jerk to be ready."

A couple of doors have closed for Heidi, opening paths to better opportunities. "I cut ties with my ex, and it's time for ME now! I'm finally standing on my own two feet." Another exciting thing is after getting laid off from ServiceMaster, Heidi obtained a housekeeping job at Benefis where she will be paid well in addition to receiving benefits and a sign on bonus. Heidi said she has developed a good support system, which is important to transitioning into the community.

As for hobbies, Heidi discovered Diamond Dot art to help with her with her anxiety on her days off from work. She also enjoys cooking, fishing, hiking, and photography.

Heidi thrives on structure, so adapting to the program here at the center was simple. She conveyed some beneficial life advice: "Listen to each other; work with each other; communication is key. If there is no communication, the whole system falls apart. Be strong. You've survived to get here. You can survive making it through here. I learned to never give up. You put your big girl panties on and you keep rolling. Always have a back-up plan. Don't set your focus on one plan because it might fall through."

Thank you for your service, Heidi, and for sharing your story!

Here are some samples of Heidi's Diamond Art.



FRANK JAMES - Honors Member

Frank James, new Honors member, is a musician and a poet. His creative powers are growing stronger as his happiness increases, living in his new found sobriety.

Frank started using drugs around age 12, becoming a heroin user from ages 16 to 27. It became so ingrained in his life that he believed, "I had to do heroin to be a dad. I couldn't see a different way." But now, "I don't want to go back to it, ever." However, he also clarified, "I don't hate myself for my choices." Self-forgiveness is tough, but truly a sign of healthy recovery. Frank is proud to say he is 19 months sober at the time of this writing. So much has changed.

He now has a new girlfriend. In his previous relationships, he was dishonest about who he was, which was born out of uncertainty and fear. He explained, "I lied so much because I was afraid they wouldn't like me for who I actually was." But in his new relationship, Frank feels freer and much more authentic. He can be who he is, since, "I don't feel I have to lie to be around her."

Frank is grateful he still has the support of his family, even after all the chaos of his addiction. Frank said his family wants him to succeed, or to put it another way, "No one wants to help me fail." Frank treasures his mom, who he described as, "My rock, she is a sweetheart." Frank's message to his dad was equally loving. "You have been my superman. I love you, but it's time for me to save myself."

Frank remembers holding his daughter when she was a baby and whispering to her his promise to be sober. His daughter is now 8 and his son is 4. But Frank knows not to whisper promises. Instead, he is building a strong reality. As he put it, "I'm trying to have a life that my kids can be a part of. I want them in my life and they will want to be a part of my life." When he apologized to his eight year old daughter for his absence, she reassured him by saying, "You are always with us. You are in my heart." Then she asked, "How many times do you dream of me?" Frank took a moment to absorb this. "My little princess."

When I asked if he had grandparents, Frank sat back and smiled. "Oh, yes, my grandma, she gets me." When I asked about her advice, Frank smiled again. "She told me, 'Frank quit being a sissy. Pull your head out of your ass.'" Grandma is a counselor at a Middle School, which helps explain her direct approach. No need to mince words.

"I refuse to cheat on my future with my past."

Musicians and writers know well the power of words and how just a short phrase - several words strung together - can create such a fortress of strength and conjure up so many emotions. Creating on the spot. Frank spontaneously sang a few bars, weaving feelings into melodies. So it is no surprise that Frank finds the power in positive affirmations, a tool he started using in Nexus. He also began journaling and tapping into the potency of prayer. He keeps on building a relationship with his authentic self. He does a daily five things he is grateful for and we both laughed when he said it usually goes, "I am happy, I am happy, I am happy"...well you get the idea.



Sobriety is a choice. Being happy is a choice. Frank chooses both. "I have a choice to be happy or to be miserable." For example (wry laugh), "I don't miss having to lock myself in the bathroom." To keep his choices strong, he welcomes others to "call me on my 'crap.'" In a downward spiral it is easy to find those that tell you what you want to hear. But now Frank seeks out what is harder to find. "A genuine person who will tell you what you need to hear, out of love."

NEWS BY SHEENA JARVEY



FRANK JAMES - Honors Member - continued

By Sheena Jarvey

Frank is now discovering that everywhere he goes, there are people in recovery, and the rhythms of life are everywhere. Freed from active addiction and self-hate, creativity is flowing. The stuff that Frank has been through is now being transformed into lyrics and vocals, and he is pouring his feelings into the new music. This is just the beginning, as Frank will soon be recording and performing.

Toward the end of our interview, Frank shook his head, almost in disbelief. "There is so much to do in sobriety." He talked about trips to Glacier Park and Silverwood. And for now, he looks forward to his Honors passes to get out and enjoy the community.

Frank James is a creative, thoughtful and genuinely happy man. His goal is to build a life that his children will want to be a part of. Drug use damaged Frank's heart and it took away his joy, took away his connection with those closest to him, and it weakened his creativity. Sobriety and health is now flooding him with happiness and opening the doors to his heart and to his life. Frank is now building a strong foundation and he is doing so with purpose and joy.

STAFF STANDOUT

CTS **Christy Atakenu** is a rockstar! Not only has she taken on extra residents on her caseload in the absence of two CTS's, she is training two new CTS's and doing an amazing job at all of it!

I feel like everyone deserves a shout out for one reason or another, but I would like to especially thank Christy for all she does. Not only had she absorbed multiple caseloads increasing her own responsibilities, she does everything with such a standard of care and level of attention that she is the go to for training new-hires, which reduces the time she can allocate to her duties under even the most optimal conditions. And STILL nothing falls through the cracks. I can't imagine the stress. So, thank you, Christy.

Christy is taking on additional residents in the absence of CTS's, and now she is training and mentoring both of the new CTS's. It is an overwhelming responsibility, and she is handling it well and moving through the mentoring process with ease.

There are no favorites with Christy; everyone is treated the same. I've come to the conclusion that this woman is the best in doing what is most important to us. I see her work extra hours. I see her getting bombarded with other case loads. She takes pride in what she does, and I respect her tremendously. She goes by the rules and looks out for what's best for me. If there was an unsung hero, I would nominate Christy.

Descent into cannabis-induced psychosis: One Edmonton family’s horror

From the Edmonton Journal, by Jackie Carmichael

“When legalization came, I applauded it because I thought we were moving in the right direction. But no one told us about the potency levels of the THC products now being sold out there,” said Mike, the father of a teenage boy who has an episode of cannabis psychosis.

“Allen” was a normal teen — excelling in sports, headed for university after graduation, no signs of mental disorder — when his personality did a 180-degree turn over two weeks.

Uncharacteristic over-confidence and lack of sleep spiraled into rapid speech, a God complex. He was “the smartest being in the universe.” “He had it in his brain that he was going to be very famous, and anything he touched was going to be worth millions of dollars,” his dad recalled.

An Edmonton resident we’ll identify as “Mike” to protect his son’s privacy talked to Postmedia about his teenage son’s harrowing descent into cannabis psychosis.

“It’s like a storm’s coming your way. All of a sudden, as a parent, you don’t know what you’re dealing with. You have no idea — you’re so lost.”

At the emergency room, tests for cocaine and meth were negative.

“Allen” was hospitalized for three weeks.

A baffled medical team tried antipsychotics.

“Doctors are not equipped to understand cannabis psychosis in Canada, so when the kid presents a classic case of psychotic episodes, they automatically say that it’s bipolar disorder,” Mike said.

Two weeks in, Allen finally told him.

“Dad, this is what I was smoking.”

A second opinion from a University of Alberta psychiatrist revealed a classic case of cannabis-induced psychosis.

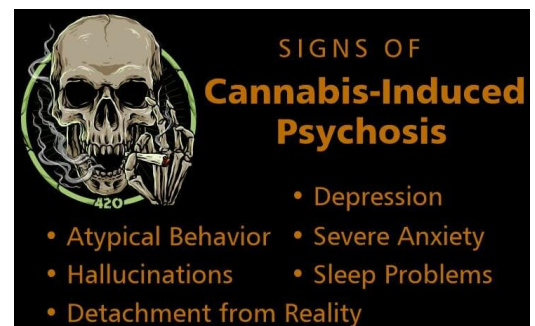
He’ll never forget Allen’s words after the episode subsided.

“Never in a million years did I think that doing this would cause a mental health break. No one ever talks about that.”



Robin Castle

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



25 Year Milestone



GRIEF

This is what grief is.

A hole ripped through the very fabric of your being.

The hole eventually heals along the jagged edges that remain. It may even shrink in size.

But that hole will always be there.

A piece of you always missing.

For where there is deep grief, there was great love.

Don't be ashamed of your grief.

Don't judge it.

Don't suppress it.

Don't rush it.

Rather, acknowledge it.

Lean into it.

Listen to it.

Feel it.

Sit with it.

Sit with the pain. And remember the love.

This is where the healing will begin.

Licensed Addictions Counselor Robert Kemp was recently recognized by Benefis Health System for being a member of their team for 25 years. Robert said when he was in college he was told a typical burnout for LAC's is 6 years. Robert, as a contracted employee through Benefis, has been here at Great Falls Pre-Release for the entirety of those 25 years.

Robert's livelihood was that of an ironworker until 1987 when an accident while working on the 9th Street bridge left him physically unable to return to that line of work. He went to what he calls The University Behind Target and obtained his degree to be a LAC.

Robert commented that he likes his job and the people he works with here. The hard part is seeing the residents he has worked with return.

Congratulations, Robert, and thank you for the difference you continue to make in people's lives!



Personality traits you exhibit from your zodiac sign

Noel Walker: **Sagittarius** Hyper. Jack of all trades; mistress of jack squat.

Sandra Bearchum: **Libra** I have a unique sense of style. I choose to dress that fits my mood and my way of life at the time.

























Ray McClelland: **Aquarius**

Strengths: Progressive, original, independent, humanitarian.

Weaknesses: Runs from emotional expression, temperamental, uncompromising, aloof.

Aquarius likes: Fun with friends, risky business, fighting for causes, intellectual conversations.

Aquarius dislikes: Limitations, broken promises, being lonely, dull or boring situations.

Aries			Mars	♂
Taurus			Venus	♀
Gemini			Mercury	♿
Cancer			Moon	☾
Leo			Sun	☼
Virgo			Mercury	♿
Libra			Venus	♀
Scorpio			Mars	♂
Sagittarius			Jupiter	♃
Capricorn			Saturn	♄
Aquarius			Saturn	♄
Pisces			Jupiter	♃

Carla Stein: **Aries** Strong willed, strongly opinionated, high energy, and honest.

Casey Babinecz: **Virgo** Detail oriented, organized, and motivated to help others.

Ruth Coles: **Aries** Loyal, competitive, independent and bold.

Ryan Konecny: **Virgo** Detail-oriented.

Gunnar Bolton: **Scorpio** Determined, obsessive honest, emotional.

Keith Davies: **Leo** Hot tempered, arrogant, extremely good looking.

Roosevelt Thompson: **Leo** I'd rather say nothing, than say something I don't mean.

Luis Zayas: **Virgo** Analytical, organized, perfectionist, creative, kind, modest, patient.

J. Lee Anderson: **Pisces** I'm kind of fishy.

Justice Switzer: **Libra** I tend to stay out and away from conflict. I prefer peace.

Brenda Demers: **Gemini** Can adapt and thrive in different environments.
Wants everyone to succeed. Indecisive.

JEFF'S TRIVIA, SCIENCE, AND SAFETY CORNER



Jeff Barnhart
Facility Services Director

Strange but true:

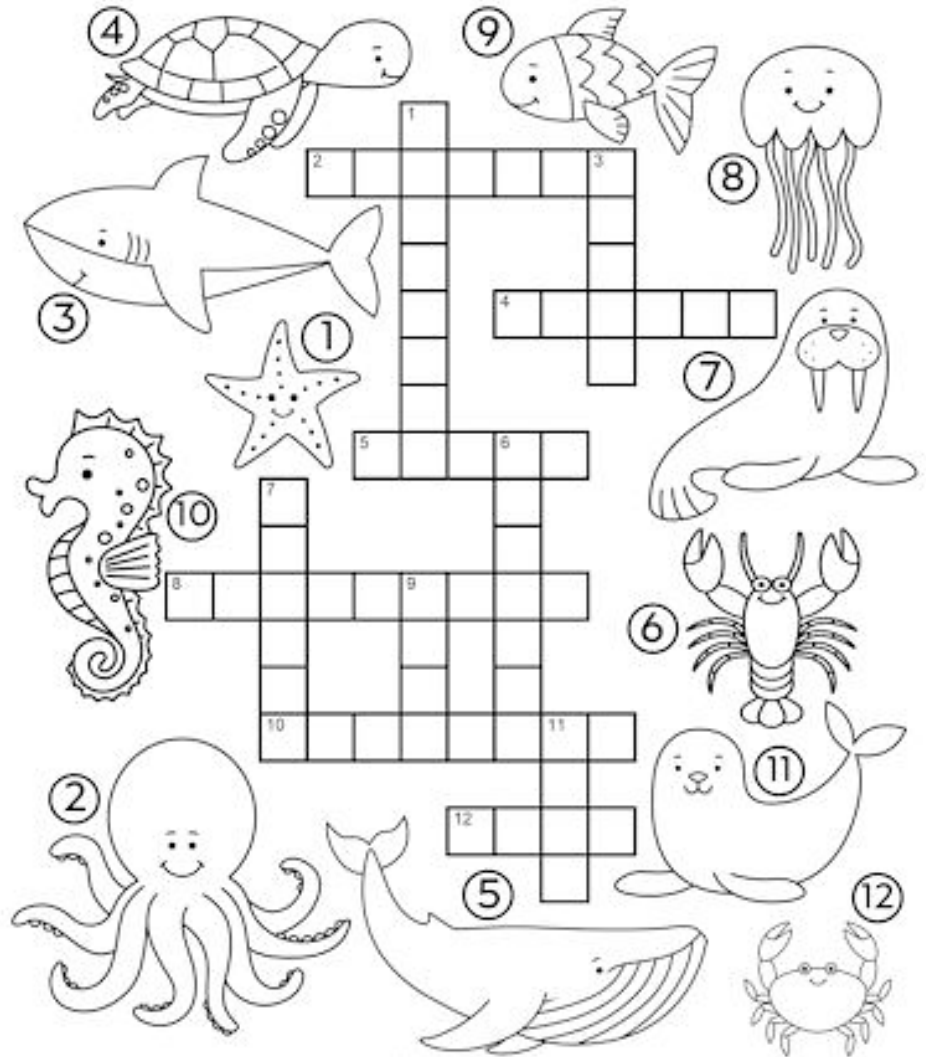
1. The medical name for the butt crack is “intergluteal cleft”
2. People can suffer from a psychological disorder called Boanthropy that makes them believe that they are a cow. They try to live their lives like a cow.
3. The name for the shape of Pringles is called a “Hyperbolic Paraboloid”.
4. There is a Mc Donald’s in every continent except Antarctica.
5. Mr. Potato Head was the first toy to be advertised on TV.
6. A duel between three people is actually called a truel.
7. The stage before frostbite is called “frostnip”.
8. In South Korea there is an emergency number (113) to report spies.
9. Japan is facing a ninja shortage. There is a high demand for “ninja shows” but it is a dying tradition and companies have trouble finding properly trained ninjas.
10. The process by which bread toasts is called the “Maillard Reaction”.
11. Snails have 14,000 teeth and some can even kill you!
AND
12. Even though Froot Loops are different colors, they all have the exact same flavor.

Don't forget the sun screen – keep it safe.

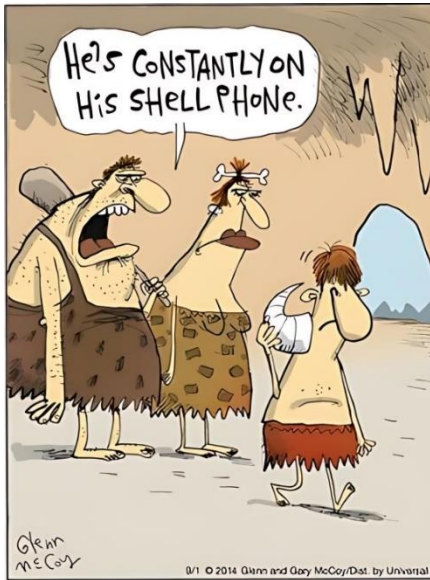
FUN & GAMES

Sea Creatures

Crossword Puzzle



Free printable courtesy of PrintFree.net



FUN
&
GAMES



At The Ocean

Word Search Puzzle



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



- | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| BEACH | SAILBOAT | STARFISH |
| BOARDWALK | SAND | SURFERS |
| CRAB | SEA LION | SWIM |
| DOLPHIN | SEAGULL | TIDE |
| JELLYFISH | SEAWEED | UMBRELLA |
| LIFEGUARD | SHARK | VOLLEYBALL |
| PELICAN | SHELLS | WAVES |
| PIER | SNORKEL | WHALE |

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