

## Resident Standouts

**Julien Stanley** (no photo) 100% deserves to be a resident standout. When given an assignment to help someone selflessly, this guy thought of, designed, then wrote the code for an app to streamline processes for an employee at the Center. His app is a gamechanger with widespread applications to help so many people. His helping one could help thousands. Thank you, Julien!



We would like to nominate **Mr. Randall Whistling Elk** (left). Anytime we ask him to help us out, it is done with no objection and to the best of his ability.

**Ethan Sadowsky** (right) received a positive IR for helping staff with another resident during a medical incident. I feel that a spotlight on him for his actions is worth a standout. He's fairly new...but already a great example of what an outstanding resident is.



### **AND**

**Ethan Sadowsky** is so helpful. He goes out of his way to help staff and other residents beyond what is expected. He is a great example to everyone: staff, residents, and beyond, of what it looks like to be a good person.



Congratulations to **John Sigala** (no photo) for making the Honors Program this month.

**Sean Kostad** (left) is willing to pitch in to make the Center operate smoothly in multiple ways. He pitches in to help maintenance, assists with tasks COs need accomplished, and can often be found helping out other residents with their chores. He exudes a positive mental attitude and is always fostering an encouraging atmosphere around the Pre-Release.

When **Timothy Journot** (right) sees something that needs done around the Center, he is quick and selfless in volunteering to tackle the task. He displays those same qualities in helping out his fellow residents. Resident Journot helps to guild a sense of community and his self-sacrificing nature is greatly appreciated.



Too many people overvalue what  
they are NOT and undervalue what  
they ARE. -Malcolm Forbes



## What People Are Doing

A massive and WELL-DESERVED congratulations to **Cherelle Walkingchild** for completing her HiSET! Was it challenging? You bet. Was it hard to stay focused? Most likely. Did she have to study? You know it. But, she prioritized her future over her present and got it done. I am so proud of you, Cherelle! Thank you for all the laughs as we plodded through it together.

Congratulations, **Alberto Hernandez**, on completing the coursework and testing to receive your Commercial Driver's License.



*"I would just say just take advantage of the time that you do have here. Don't settle for less and try to do your best to better yourself for when you get out..." ~Alberto*



**Alan Woodward** (front and center) is the most recent graduate of Great Falls College's Structural Welding Program. Mr. Woodward successfully completed the course, dedicating an additional 18 hours a week, above and beyond his regular employment. Congratulations both for your accomplishments as well as the opportunities you have created for yourself.



May 5<sup>th</sup> is the day of recognition for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. According to [culturalsurvival.org](http://culturalsurvival.org), Indigenous women are as much as 10 times more likely to be murdered or assaulted than elsewhere in the United States. The grassroots campaign,



#MMIW, is an effort to bring this epidemic to the attention and forefront of the public, law enforcement, and elected officials. The movement is represented by a red hand print which symbolizes the silencing, the violence suffered, and the frequently faint traces left behind.



Pictured left: Brandy Burton and Shawna Paranteau.  
Pictured above: Karen Workman, Roxi Stroth, and Karen Conley



## Show the COs Some Love

### Congratulations to Darrin Davenport on his 1-year anniversary at the Center!

#### Keith Davies, Compliance Officer:

1. What excites you about the future? **The sweet release of death**
2. What is your favorite color? **Green**
3. What is your favorite movie? **Tombstone**
4. Do you have any pet peeves? **People**
5. What is your favorite professional sports team? **Green Bay Packers**
6. If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be? **My house**

Congratulations, Keith, on your 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the Center!

#### Congratulations, Brandy Burton!

**Brandy Burton, COSL/COSM**, was recognized for passing her **10-year milestone** at the Center. Congratulations, and thank you for all you have done for the Center, your coworkers, and the residents and their families you have worked with.

In recognition for her service, and in addition to other honorary benefits connected to such tenure, Brandy was gifted a monogrammed maroon jacket.

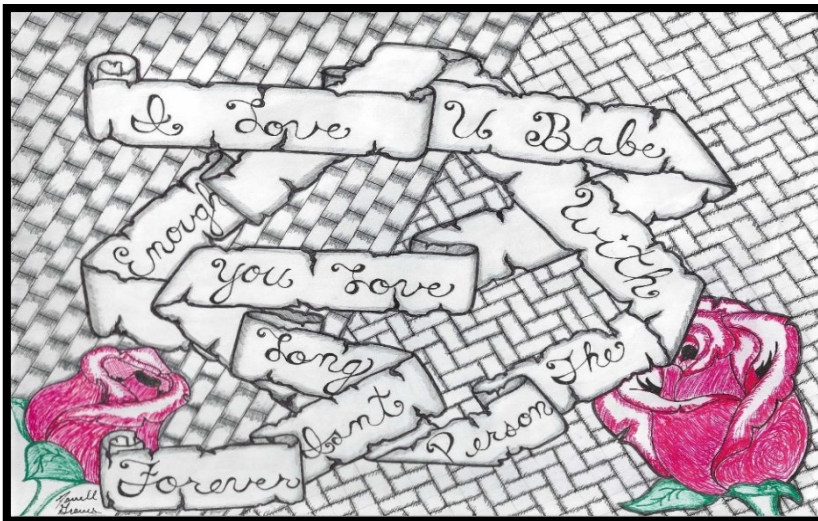
(Pictured here with Executive Director, Alan Scanlon)



#### Happy Mother's Day

Olandtha Ford

Women go through things men could never truly understand.  
Unbowed, Unbent, and Unbroken by all of life's demands.  
The can both carry and nurture life within them before bringing that very life into the world.  
Some spend years of their life fulfilling the role of both Mother and father.  
While also shifting through the roles of Psychiatrist, Provider, and Doctor.  
And most do this without thanks, or even a single hint of appreciation,  
But soldier on despite feeling very much depreciated.  
So, in this I hope they find the acknowledgement that they may feel they are sorely lacking.  
To know that there are truly those of us that wholeheartedly give you our backing,  
You are all very much loved and appreciated for each and every single thing that you do.  
And, I hope you know that in some ways there are quite a few worlds that do sorely revolve around you.  
No man on this planet can do some of the things you do.  
And all of us should remember that in a way, we would not exist if not for you.  
There would be more than one day to acknowledge you if there was a way,  
But, for now, please have a very Happy Mother's Day...



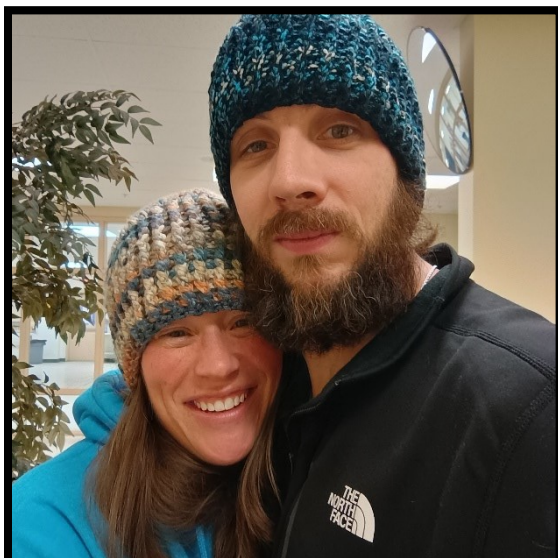
Artwork Submitted by Darrell Graves—Ink on Paper (above)



Cooking and Conversations with Karyl—is a monthly volunteer-led opportunity for the women’s campus to meet for therapeutic kitchen time. This Easter-themed coconut cake (below) is an example of what the women create during their hour together. Photo by Sawntae Hoffman.



## Anthony Esparza—New Honors Member



By: Anthony Esparza

We all need a reason why. Why do we need or want to change? Why do we feel motivated to change? For me, I've had an idea of a why, but it was fleeting at best.

When I got here, I went back to my old job; I went back to the same church as before. I figured I would be on the same hamster wheel as before, but my endearing girlfriend told me I had to have a *why*. So, over the next weeks in my classes to get baptized I took our readings and I thought more in-depth about two concepts I was learning, and I began to internalize them. My whys started becoming more visible, but they are so simple I would have overlooked them. I want to be needed, accepted, respected, and loved; and I want to help. So, I've spent my



recent bit of life putting forth effort into making these things a reality. I work hard at my job. I volunteer time at church, or with other parishioners, and now I am joining a public outreach program that helps the needy. I feel that to remain successful I had to stop just doing what feels quick and easy, so I forced myself to find new hobbies, like



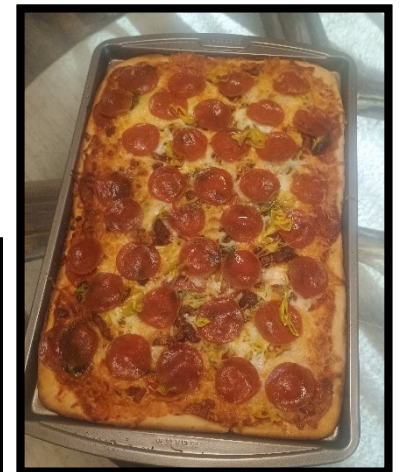
Our Pottery Project at Brush Crazy

crocheting (See photo of hats my girlfriend and I crocheted together), cooking (at my girlfriend's), fishing, escape rooms (coolest thing I've done in the Pre Release Center), pottery, and just keeping my every moment doing something. If I could pinpoint the things that'll be the biggest help to me not to recidivate, it would be this: find something to believe in, find a job that you love, find a place of peace and make it your own, donate time and talent to people, and never let yourself be idle.

My name is Anthony Esparza, and I am a new honors member because I believe I need to change not one thing but *everything* to be the man I need to become. I hope the people who have seen me face challenges and succeed in overcoming obstacles can learn from my successes to in turn become successful yourselves. Also, I would like to say thank you to Sheena and Noël for encouraging me to write my own honors paper. This was a rather interesting writing assignment.



Taking first Communion



Left, Mediterranean scallops on coconut rice; Center, Mediterranean Halibut tacos with mango strawberry salsa; Right, we wanted to try to make a homemade pizza, including the crust, from scratch.

## You Got This

O'landtha Ford

All of us learn through hardship that the struggle is real,  
Lost and confused, Unable to heal,  
Letdowns and disappointments, everything feels like crippling heartbreak,  
Finding yourself at a point where you don't know how much more you can take,  
Well, look upon these words when you feel yourself losing your way:  
Stop and take a breath, reset, and remember to live your life day by day;  
Remember those goals you've been working so hard for;  
Feed that fire burning at your inner core;  
Keep your eyes locked on that better future you're moving toward;  
And REMEMBER that you grow stronger after every hardship and keep moving forward.  
Just know that every day is going to be hit or miss.  
But stay strong friend, YOU GOT THIS.

## Lost and Found

In the immortal words of Cinderella (the band, not the princess), "You don't know what you got till it's gone." Well, it doesn't have to be that way. After all, all that is lost is not gone forever. What is lost can be found. And, the odds are good that what you have lost has already been found.

*Are you missing something?* That might seem like a silly question. Of course you are: family, friends, privacy, and a whole score of other things, no doubt. I should be more specific. Have you misplaced something while you have been here? Did you know there is a lost and found for just that scenario?



At the CO Desk, there is a bin overflowing with things that have been turned in: hats, sunglasses, and beanies, among other items

I won't list to make sure they get back to the correct owner. If you are missing something,

please stop by and make use of the honor and decency of your fellow residents.



**SANDRA'S CORNER**



## A Mark of Respect for Mark McGrew

Mark McGrew may or may not be a man of few words. My interactions with him haven't been enough to make that determination. However, he is a man that holds his cards to his chest. That says nothing of the quality of the cards, just his knowledge that not everything needs to be publicized or broadcasted.

That being said, when we sat down to interview for this article, he kind of made me work for it. I try to get a feel of the person for the direction in which the article should go. With Mr. McGrew, it took me a bit to find his overarching theme. In the past it has been art, family, personal growth. Usually the theme presents itself pretty quickly. In Mr. McGrew's slow and steady style, though, the theme eventually presented itself as "legacy."

Born in Pennsylvania, raised in West Texas, he relocated to Montana in the mid-2000s. He moved here with his mom and stepdad, who is from Montana. His mom opened a restaurant in Valier, Montana, and Mark came of age working as a cook there. He enjoyed it enough to pursue culinary arts both through Job Corps as well as a few semesters at the Art Institute. When he releases, he looks forward to resuming his place in the family business.

I asked if he would consider going back to school to finish his Culinary Arts degree. He laughed and said “no way.” He prefers the hands-on nature of being a cook. He pointed out that a cook is the one creating while the chef is the one telling others what to do then filling out the paperwork. He practically shuddered uttering that dreadful word: paperwork.

Realistically, though, for him, a degree in Culinary Arts is unnecessary. His place is secure. He doesn't need to prove himself to anyone but himself, and the time it would take to finish a degree would cost him more in time away from the things and people he looks forward to seeing again. Namely, his children.

Father to three children, a son and two girls, Mark is incredibly eager to build relationships with his children after being away for 9 years. Who in their right mind would give up time with the children he hasn't seen to take classes online that may or may not even be beneficial? Family comes first. And, how big a need can there be in Valier, Montana, for "fancy" offerings? Barring a few locations around the country, "Blanch" is just a character from *Golden Girls*, and "Bard" is, at best, that guy who wrote the play your freshman English teacher kept getting excited about, but you never really understood, about the codependent teenagers with mental illnesses. Only a few places or specialists might recognize these as culinary terms (even though they are pretty common techniques). Valier is no different than the majority of the country. Give me a burger, some fried chicken, and a solid bra

tuition for years to do that well. And Mark is confident he does

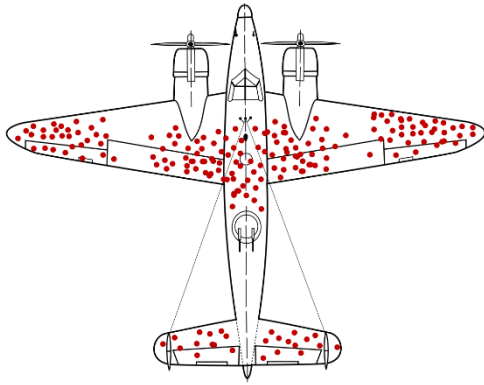


With that in mind, Mark plans to return to his hometown and resume working for his mother. He anticipates taking on more responsibilities to help his mom take some well-deserved time off. When I asked him if he thought he would take over and if he foresaw making changes, his face lit up. He looks forward to modernizing the front of the house as well as the back of the house. Being the only restaurant in the area, the kitchen has been going non-stop, feeding locals and tourists alike. He looks forward to a day when he can give back to the business with a newer, more energy efficient kitchen setup. Moreover, he looks forward to ensuring the continued success of the family business so he can, in turn, pass it on to the next generation, ensuring the legacy of his and his family's lives move ever forward and never backward. —Noël Walker

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

## Survivorship Bias—Noël Walker

As you look at the world around you, it is easy to make assumptions about what you see, problems that arise, and people making mistakes. Particularly in a correctional-setting like the Pre Release, it is very easy to fall back a judgmental outlook. However, if you consider the concept of Survivorship Bias, a new outlook starts to emerge.



Survivorship bias is where scientists, researchers, and so on, focus only on those that survive and ignore those that did not. In World War II, for example, leadership looked at planes that returned from missions to see what improvements could be made based on the damage to those planes. Initially, they thought to reinforce where the greatest number of bullets struck. This added an impractical amount of weight, making the planes harder to maneuver in combat. As the Allied military lost more and more airplanes, they called on the help of Abraham Wald, a statistician, to determine how to reduce losses. Wald pointed out that the assessment of damage only existed because those planes were able to still return to base. He

pointed out that the areas of the plane with no damage implied that bullets to those areas would crash the planes. The planes with that kind of damage never made it back. Because of this, he recommended that areas like the engine be reinforced, allowing planes to be better protected without the weight of unnecessary heavy armor.

Wald was able to look at the damage, at the destruction of the returning planes and see what others could not. These planes had *survived* hell when others had not. Instead of following the idea of burdening the next generation of bombers with the weight of prevention, he was able to look at the lessons they brought to the table.

When Wald looked around, he saw survivors. I encourage you to do the same. There are a lot of damaged wings and rudders out there, but every person here has survived a warzone of sorts and made it back to base. In war, damage is inevitable. It cannot be avoided. However, with all the hurts sustained, an untold number has not made it back or made it to where *you* are. There has been no “safe zone” for thousands. Really, as many people as you see around you, this is a fraction of those who flew too close to their enemy’s zone and were shot from the sky. Regardless of what guns that enemy used, addiction, violence, fear, trauma, neglect, etc., you made it back. You were stronger than the projectiles launched your way. And, even if you sustained damage, you still flew.

I encourage you to remember this as you go about your day, week, month, year, life. But also know that those planes weren’t joy riding into enemy territory. They felt they were justified getting within firing range. Maybe they were told to go by someone they trusted. Maybe they thought themselves exempt from the worst-case scenario. Maybe they felt they had no choice and were just a pawn in a bigger game. Realistically, there is no way to know what they thought. But, there is a way to know yourself. As you move forward toward your goals, understand that, yes, your enemy wants you there. It will try to lure you as close as you dare. It is your responsibility to safeguard your survival, though. It is your job to recognize enemy communication for what it is: a bid to take away your survivor status. Don’t let it. Instead of looking at something labeled a “bias” as a bad thing, let’s do as Abraham Wald did and allow it to steer us toward a greater success. Let’s focus on the survivor part and be grateful our enemy didn’t have its glasses on that day.



## Discerning Truth Series: The Backfire Effect

By: Raymond Berry; Noël Walker, ed.

“To the victor goes the spoils,” is a phrase we have probably heard more than once in our lives. And, realistically, it is a concept to which we are exposed daily. Whoever wins the argument, the war, the conflict in whatever way, they get the winnings. One of the areas frequently overlooked in terms of “winnings” is history. Whoever won the day gets to tell the story, and that story becomes the “truth” of what happened. That truth becomes the information others turn to when trying to understand or learn more.

You can see how this reality could twist future generations’ understanding of events. However, one person stands out as refusing to use information as a tool for manipulating perception. Sitting Bull, the revered Lakota Sioux leader, is celebrated for his pivotal role in the Battle of Little Bighorn and his steadfast commitment to personal integrity and accuracy. His practice of discussing only what he had personally witnessed underscores a broader cultural respect for truth within the Lakota Sioux community. This commitment was not just a personal trait but a cultural norm emphasizing the

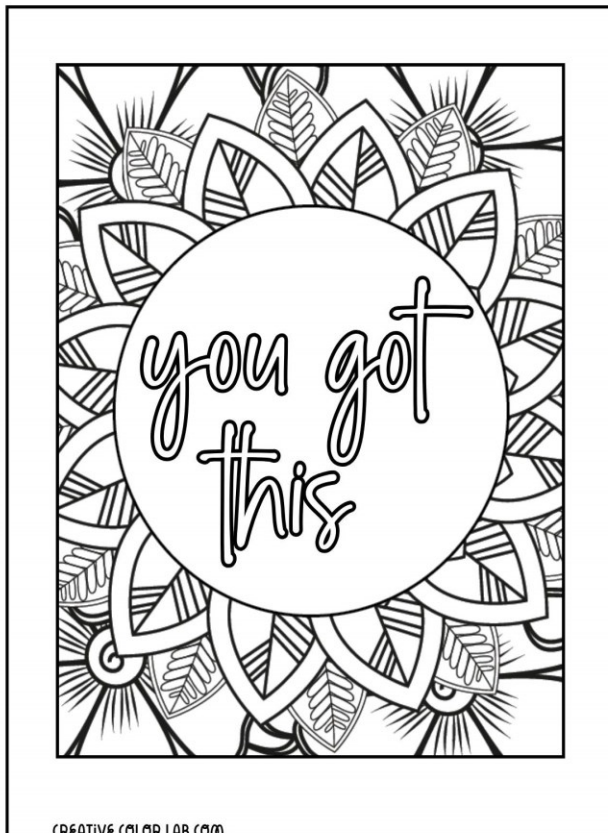
importance of preserving historical accuracy and ensuring statements were grounded in firsthand experience.

In today’s world, which is information-rich but often fact-poor, Sitting Bull’s approach prompts us to consider how we assess and

communicate truth. Reflecting on his adherence to accuracy, how can we ensure that our interpretations and communications are based on verified information? What practices can we adopt to emulate Sitting Bull’s dedication to truth in our own lives and discussions?



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



## Robin’s Meditation Station

Mental health refers to the state of our environmental, psychological, and social well-being. It impacts everything like the way we feel, think, and act, making it important to us all. Mental health plays an important role in the way we deal with stress, how we relate to others, and the decisions we

make in our daily lives. Without positive mental health,

it will be almost impossible to realize your full potential, work productively, make a meaningful contribution to your community, or handle the stress that comes with life.

**Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light—Albus Dumbledore**

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



Take a quiz to see how you process and manage your anger.



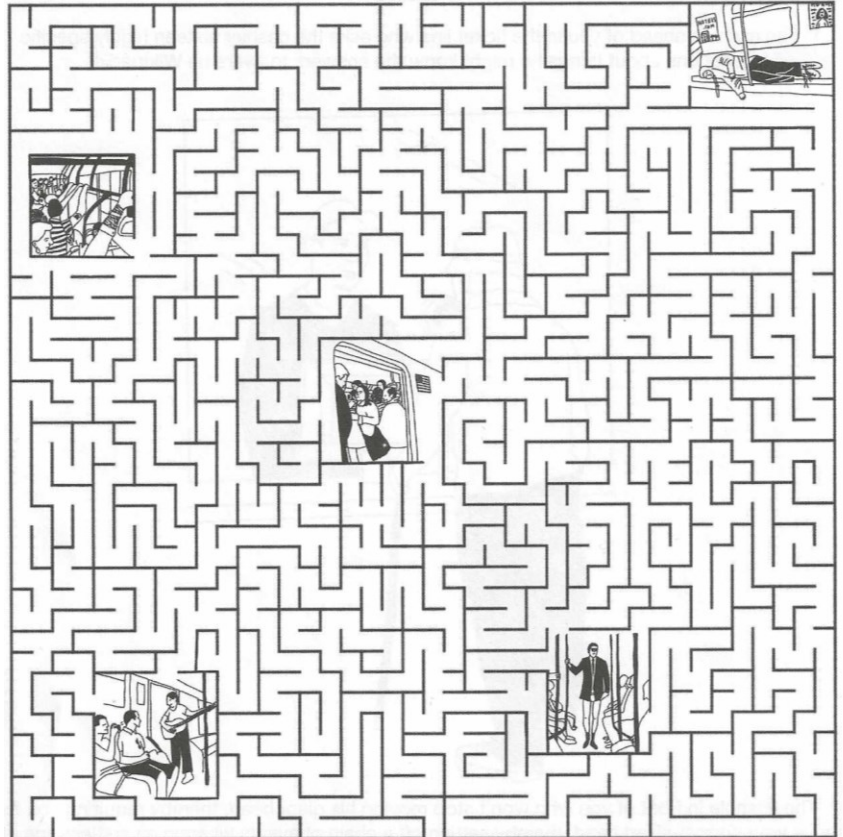
Test your mental health. How do you cope, do you cope, or could you benefit from professional help?



## RIDE THE SUBWAY WITHOUT TOUCHING ANYONE!

NOTHING GETS THOSE GERMAPHOBE JUICES GOING QUITE LIKE THE PROSPECT OF A NICE LONG RIDE INSIDE A STEEL COFFIN ALONGSIDE SOMEONE WHO HAS PEED HIMSELF, CHILDREN WHO ARE CLEARLY SUFFERING FROM THE BUBONIC PLAGUE, AND THE OCCASIONAL FLASH MOB.

START



END

### **JEFF'S TRIVIA, SCIENCE, AND SAFETY CORNER**

#### **Game of Thrones "Dire Wolf" De-Extinction Disputed, Colossal Pups Are Really Tweaked Gray Wolves**

70,000-YEAR-OLD DNA PRODUCE NEW DESIGNER WOLVES

BY: Sujita Sinha



If you haven't heard the news, scientists have utilized 70,000-year-old DNA to produce new "designer" wolves, which they claimed to be dire wolves brought back from extinction. However, experts argue the wolves are engineered hybrids with dire wolf-like traits, not true de-extinctions of the ice-age predator.

Two of the pups were created using ancient DNA extracted from fossil remains.





The bold claim by Colossal Biosciences has sparked worldwide attention — and sharp criticism from the scientific community. The \$10 billion biotech company declared it had “restored a once-eradicated species” after creating three pups that it said were genetically engineered dire wolves. But researchers say that’s not accurate.

The announcement included a pup named Remus, who even appeared on the cover of **Time** magazine under the headline: “he’s a dire wolf.” The company says the three animals, Remus, Romulus, and

Khaleesi, were bred using ancient DNA from fossils between 11,500 and 72,000 years old.

Colossal described the feat as the first successful use of “deft genetic engineering and ancient DNA” to reverse extinction. According to its website, “On October 1, 2024, for the first time in human history, Colossal successfully restored a once-eradicated species through the science of de-extinction.”

However, scientists argue that while the company has made a major technical advance, it hasn’t truly brought the dire wolf back to life.

Zoologist Philip Seddon from the University of Otago in New Zealand described the animals as “genetically modified grey wolves,” not genuine dire wolves. Paleogeneticist Dr Nic Rawlence, also from Otago University, explained that the fossil DNA is too degraded to recreate a full dire wolf.

“Ancient DNA is like if you put fresh DNA in a 500-degree oven overnight,” said Rawlence to **BBC News**. “It comes out fragmented – like shards and dust. You can reconstruct [it], but it’s not good enough to do anything else with.”

### How the wolves were created

Since fully replicating dire wolf DNA was impossible, the scientists turned to synthetic biology. They used the damaged DNA as a guide to identify important genetic traits and then edited those into the genome of the dire wolf’s closest living relative — the grey wolf.

“So what Colossal has produced is a grey wolf, but it has some dire wolf-like characteristics, like a larger skull and white fur,” said Rawlence. “It’s a hybrid.”

Dr Beth Shapiro, a biologist with Colossal, defended the company’s method, saying it still fits the definition of de-extinction.

## Fun Facts to Know!

1. Did you know it's illegal to feed pigeons on the sidewalks and streets of San Francisco?

2. Did you know the official bird of Redondo Beach, California, is the Goodyear Blimp?

In 1983, the coastal city made the Goodyear Blimp their official city bird in anticipation of the 1984 summer Olympics. They even presented a plaque to a team from Goodyear Airship Operations to help celebrate the decision!



3. Did you know the Eagles' stadium once had a courtroom?

Veterans Stadium, where the Philadelphia Eagles once played, had a stadium courtroom and jail to handle the team's notoriously rowdy fans. However, one of the judges for said courtroom reported that 95% of the "inmates" were actually not from the city itself!

4. Did you know the filling in Kit Kats is made from damaged Kit Kats? The folks at the Kit Kat factory sure know how to recycle! Whenever a Kit Kat bar is somehow made imperfect during production like air bubbles or some other issue, the chocolate bar isn't thrown out. Instead, they ground up into a fine paste and turned into a filling that's then incorporated back into the production process to create new Kit Kat bars.



### SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH



As we approach summer, it is easy to lose sight of the basics of safety as we rush to soak up all the sun we can. As you go out, don't forget your sunscreen, wear a hat or just stay out of the sun when you have the option. Don't believe the song that says "Summertime, and the living is easy." Sure, summertime might be easy living, but sunburns are not. Nor is premature aging. And, neither is skin cancer.

Ladies, feel free to sunbathe. Please limit it, though, to the north side of the building (the river side) and within the fences.

In other words, not the sidewalk or the smoke pit. Thank you.



**Jeff Barnhart**

Facility Services Director

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](mailto:noel@gfprc.org). Any suggestions are also appreciated.

#### PRE-RELEASE PRESS

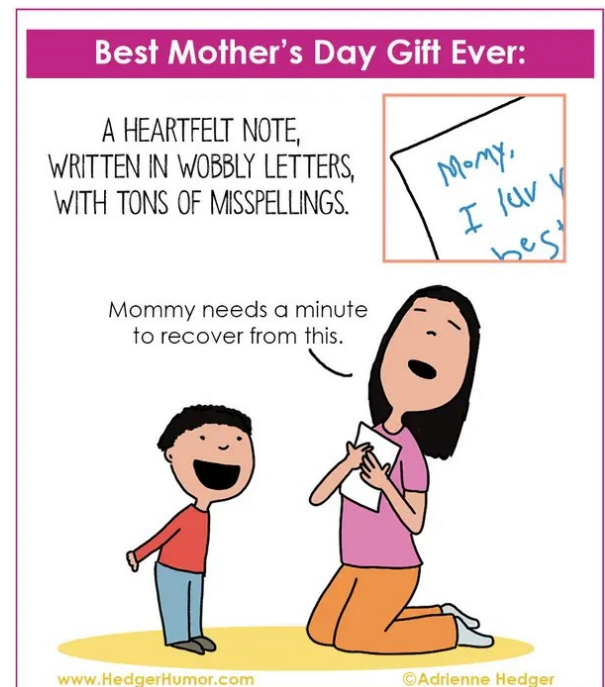
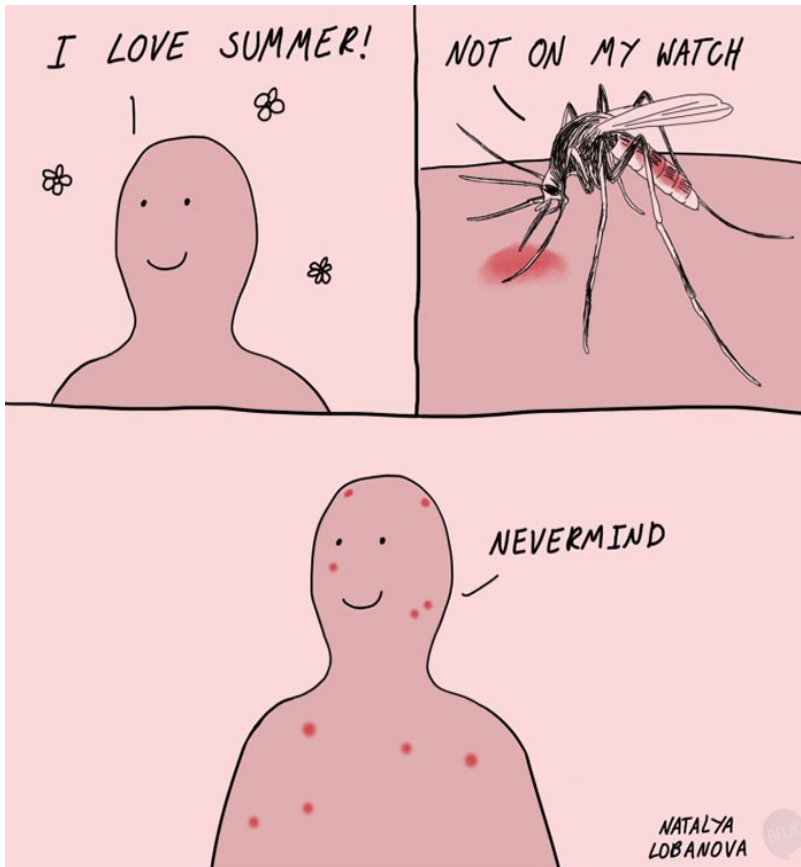
Editor: Noël Walker



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



# Fun and Games



## Springtime Scattergories



Name of __ beginning with the letter	F	L	O	W	E	R
Flower						
Vacation destination						
Outdoor activity						
Best thing about Spring						
A color found in nature						