

RESIDENT Recognition

Michael LeClaire stands out as one who is willing to get the job done. I commend him on the humor he brings to life's challenges. It makes it easier for him to process and, in turn, easier to approach with honesty and good intentions. I have never seen him get sideways and have only heard and seen him approach his time here with intellect and professionalism.



I would like to point out **Charity James** as deserving of resident standout. A little motivation goes a long way in my book. I don't see resident James lolling about. I only see her in motion. She works a difficult shift but still prioritizes her own goals and well-being, even when it means missing out on sleep. That is dedication and motivation. That is ownership of self. That is something you can't teach.

I'd like to commend **Joe Wandler** for all the work he has put in to get himself on a firm footing for his upcoming release. I've seen a lot of people coast as they approach the end of their time at the pre-release. Not Resident Wandler. He has jumped through a series of hoops well outside his comfort zone to ensure his success upon release. He's got a plan, and he's worked to get the resources to see it through in the best way possible.



Michael Harper loves music and playing his guitar. He also enjoys learning new things and is the go to person at Point S where he works. He is group complete and is running a great program. He is always willing to help anyone who is willing to help themselves. When he finishes his program he is looking to interstate compact to Oklahoma to be with his mom who is one of his biggest supporters.

I want to throw **Christopher Garza** into the ring of Resident Standout. He is consistently easy to work with, is open and honest about his past, but more importantly is on fire for his future. If you get the chance, have a conversation with him. He is knowledgeable on a variety of topics.



George Fode deserves to be recognized. His paperwork is clean, he participates actively in his programming, and is doing a great job overall. He isn't flashy, but he is the poster child for "gets the job done right".

RESIDENT Recognition



Tashina Carpenter has a good work ethic, a positive attitude, and is a happy go lucky kind of person. She is focused, polite, and helps other residents. She always ensures that her chore is done and does it with a smile. If she's having a bad day, she doesn't show it. Ms. Carpenter just received a raise at The Rainbow and a very good review. Her employer stated, "Tashina shows excellent cooperation and communication with staff, residents, and management. She looks for extra duties to stay busy and shows positive attitude always. She is well versed in all tasks of her position, she is reliable in the quality and accuracy of her position and in her follow through for completing tasks. Her energy is contagious and her work ethic is an example to others. She follows policy, procedures, and direction." Resident Carpenter has proven, both at work and at GFPRC, that she is serious about her recovery.

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HiSET Blast

By Noël Walker

There are not enough gold stars on the planet to convey how proud I am of **Marty Shane's** accomplishment: finishing his HiSET. I first met Mr. Shane when he came to orientation. He pulled me aside and told me he wanted to finish his testing, and that all he lacked was his math. Sounds easy enough, right? Not at all. He'd spent a full year before I ever met him, knocking out test after test, but leaving Math till the end because he knew it represented the most work. I watched Mr. Shane work for almost a year on EdReady, working through section after section, not moving on until he had mastered the skill. Now, with mere days left on his clock, he pulled a win out of his hat. In addition to reaching this milestone, he was selected by EdReady to share his story to inspire others. So, not only does Mr. Shane serve as an example to others here in little ol' Great Falls, Montana, his story can now motivate others statewide, and potentially nationwide.

With this MASSIVE achievement out of the way, Mr. Shane can now set his sights on his next goal: college. He wants to major in wildlife biology and minor in astronomy. "I am going to stick with EdReady to pursue my higher education." And, there is a very good reason for that. Both the University of Montana AND Montana State University utilize the EdReady Math Placement Test as their assessments of academic readiness. With Mr. Shane already having his EdReady profile complete and his studying documented, he is at a unique advantage when he moves forward into university.



HiSET Preppers!! It is finally here! **Duolingo**, the free language learning app, has added math. That means you can practice your skills from the comfort and privacy of your phone. Paired with Duolingo's tried and true course planning, this is a great way to beef up your skills to prepare for the rigors of your HiSET test. Likewise, Duolingo has added a music theory course to teach you the basics of reading music, including notes and meter. Both are great options if learning, say, Klingon isn't to your taste. Come see me if you need help downloading or signing up.

Items to Work on When You First Arrive



We know it's stressful to arrive at a new place. Learning the rules and just getting around in the building is a lot of information. Add orientation to the mix and the overwhelming feelings begin. Still you need to start on your release as soon as you can. You may think ID's and Birth Certificates are the frontrunners. They are important. If you have a valid driver's license



Sandra Bearchum

work on getting a duplicate as they will void it if you try to get an ID. You need a picture ID and at least birth certificate or SS card to work. There is one more item few people think about, and that is your credit score.

No matter where you release to you will most likely be looking for an apartment. Felons are not a protected class, but to be safe in protected class compliance, most landlords will ask for a credit check as well as a background check. A negative credit check will be a strong reason cited not to rent to you. The website creditkarma.com will allow you to make a free account to access your credit score. You can see how good or bad your credit is and where to adjust to improve it. If you have debts in collection can contact them. Explain why you're in debt for example, because you've been incarcerated. Say that you're sorting out your credit situation. Explain how much you can afford to pay each month. Ask them to freeze any interest and charges as long as you continue to pay the amounts you're suggesting. Keep the plan as low as you can as not to impact other payments you will have to make. Once you have a made a payment or two your credit score improves. Slowly your credit will improve as you make steady payments on the date you and the creditor have agreed upon. A good credit score opens many doors. It will play a strong role in your life and just maybe open the door to your new apartment.



agencies you



It is time to budget for cold winter gear. The loaner coat program is low on inventory. Because of the lack of inventory, those who are out of the hole will have to budget for a coat. Priority will be given to the new residents that came in with nothing. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Choose your Hard

Marriage is hard. Divorce is hard.
Choose your hard.
Obesity is hard. Being fit is hard.
Choose your hard.
Being in debt is hard. Being financially disciplined is hard.
Choose your hard.
Communication is hard. Not communicating is hard.
Choose your hard.
Life will never be easy. It will always be hard.
But we can choose our hard.

CEDRIC CAMPBELL – Honors Member



Cedric Campbell, new Honors member, spent a few minutes of his last evening at the Pre-Release struggling with an uncooperative mop bucket. When water slouched on to his newly mopped floor, momentary concern crossed his face. However, just as quickly, Cedric easily regained control, chuckled, shrugged and continued on with his evening.

For issues large and small, Cedric approaches his life with this mindset. “Even when you are not okay, you have to be okay enough to keep your head up and keep moving on”. Cedric wears his happiness easily and his “not okay” times with determined intentionality.

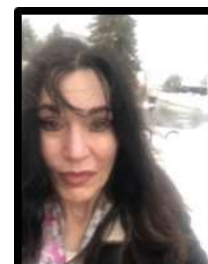
Cedric came to Montana with an ex, who was a traveling CNA. Although they are no longer together, they remain good friends. When the relationship changed from romantic to best friends, Cedric discovered that he was becoming very attached to Montana. Cedric was entranced by the beauty of the landscape, especially the mountains, and by the friendliness of the people, people, as he put it, “with smiles on their faces.” And even though most of his family is in Georgia, he does have a cousin in Livingston. Montana was becoming a second home.

Soon Cedric began another relationship and he now has a two year old son. The relationship, however, became destabilized and now he and his child’s mother are trying to work out a parenting plan. Cedric is now doing everything he can to get himself on track, so he can have custody rights to his son and to be a quality, stable father. While this process will have to go through the courts, Cedric is focusing all of his energies on fatherhood. “I want to be ready to get my son.” Knowing that incarcerated fathers, more often than not, face huge hurdles to be unified with their children, Cedric is determined. He will never stop trying until he can be a part of his beautiful child’s life. “It will work out.”

Knowing that he will soon be an involved and loving dad, a dad that is always there, makes Cedric so very happy. It will also be poignant, as this was not his childhood experience. He did see his dad, but only through prison visits. And while Cedric might have come dangerously close to repeating this pattern, Cedric is adamant that this will not be the story of his own son’s childhood. During his incarceration, Cedric was sometimes haunted by the stigma of his charge, as well as by his father’s incarceration. Cedric was frank about this struggle, “It’s hard to accept something that you are not.” Much of this was painful, but still, Cedric is now looking at the end result and is grateful to God every day. Also, Cedric realized the larger picture.

“God took me away from something that didn’t need to be in my life.”

Sensing there was a story re: his name, I asked Cedric about this. He smiled and told me that his mother and her best friend were pregnant at the same time and decided, possibly in a playful moment, that they would name each other’s baby. (Hence Cedric and not Frederick). From before his birth, his mom had reached out to others regarding the well-being of her son. Several years later, another woman stepped up to care for Cedric. Cedric’s aunt Carrie raised him along with his 3 brothers and one sister and three of her own children. It was a good childhood, Cedric told me, with lots of play time. His grandparents were also involved in the boisterousness of a big family, with cookouts and laughter and being together. Cedric grew up surrounded by care and affection.



Cedric has always had, and continues to have, the love and support of his family. In Great Falls, he also found a spiritual family. Cedric attends New City Church and said he especially connects with the support and guidance of the New City men’s fellowship.

NEWS BY SHEENA JARVEY

CEDRIC CAMPBELL – Honors Member – continued

By Sheena Jarvey

His family always told him: “Make your mom proud.” Cedric is honoring his mom’s memory by making her very proud. Cedric has a big heart and a joyful spirit. Cedric is a friend, a family member, a hard-working employee, a father, a kind man of faith and dignity. Cedric has an inner strength of resolve that has carried him through from childhood. As a young child of five, essentially orphaned, with his mother deceased and his father in prison, Cedric developed a self-reliance, coupled with a reliance on God that has seen him through. He has protected his self-respect and not let the judgment of others damage his well-being.

“Know what you are. It doesn’t matter what other people think you are. Know who you are. I’m a fighter and try my best to come out on top, in a good way. I know I will be with my son.”

Cedric now has his own apartment and he is busy nesting, getting ready to be reunited with his son and move forward in life. Cedric was able to secure a rental quickly, in part thanks to great references from when he lived in Georgia. But honestly, it mostly has to do with Cedric, his unique personality, his innate buoyancy and his positive approach.

As grateful as he is for his own home, Cedric is also very aware of those that don’t have a home. For many, it’s often too easy to turn away from the needs of the homeless and to ignore their cold and hunger. Cedric, however, is not built that way, and he has actively helped many homeless with money and food.

Cedric’s genuine kindness is a part of his nature and so helping others is just what he does. When new residents came into the Center, he helped them with practical things, like filling out a schedule. Cedric gave advice on running a good program, with emphasis on finding and sticking to a routine. Also this, “Respect staff and other residents. Always practice mutual respect.” Cedric is also well respected at work, and this quality work ethic combined with the excellent feedback from his co-workers, keeps him grounded and motivated.

Honor’s profiles celebrate achievements. They let the reader into the complexities, talents, hopes and dreams of the featured person. These profiles also give voice to the person, so they can encourage and inspire others. This is Cedric’s message:

“Have a big heart. People will remember you by that. When I die, I want my kids and grandkids and all who knew me to remember me as a good person. My grandmother told me that God will never leave us. God is always there, but sometimes God lets us learn a lesson. God gives everyone free will and it’s up to you what you do with it.”

Thank you, Cedric and we wish you and your family all the best.

Don’t Settle for Less

A bottle of water at Costco is \$0.25.

The same bottle in the supermarket is worth about \$0.50.

The same bottle in a bar costs \$2.

In a good restaurant or hotel it can be worth up to \$3.

At an airport or on the plane, you may be charged \$5.

The bottle and the brand is the same, the only thing that changes is the place.

Each place gives a different value to the same product.

When you feel like you are worth nothing and everyone around you belittles you, change places, do not stay there.

Have the courage to change places and go to a place where you are given the value you deserve.

Surround yourself with people who really appreciate your worth.

Don't settle for less.

It's a Great Day to Live in the West

Noël Walker

October is the time of year when spooky images are all around us: witches, monstrous faces carved into pumpkins, skeletons, and plastic spiders perched in thick webs. Fortunately for us in Montana, these are all just fun novelties. If you lived on the East Coast, though, your feelings might be colored by more than just your speckled past with events like the Salem Witch Trials. Now, our neighbors to the East have a new reason to do a double take around Halloween decorations: the Joro Spider¹ (*Tryphonophila Clavata*).

Known for their distinctive yellow color, Joro spiders typically have dark blue, grey, or brown stripes with reddish bellies. The males are usually around a quarter of an inch. Cute, right? Hang on. The females measure up to four inches. For scale, a dollar bill is six inches. Fold this paper in half and you'll have roughly four inches.

At the risk of sounding like an infomercial: But wait. There's more. Female Joro spiders are large, yes. But did you know that they are classified as golden orb-weavers? That is to say, they make "**enormous** webs of **multi-layered** gold-colored silk". This was how the University of Georgia described them when they were first documented back in the 2010s. Walking through a regular spider web is bad enough, but these webs have **LAYERS**, and can span up to ten feet across. That's a lot of heebee-jeebees.

"But, why do they need webs that big, Noël?" Oh...let me explain. Because they use them like parachutes, hot air balloons, or hang-gliders to move from place to place, flying on the wind straight into your nightmares.

All jokes (and hyperbolic language) aside, Joro spiders are an excellent example of an up and coming invasive species. Presumably after catching a ride on a ship from their native domain of East Asia, think Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and China, these spiders have spread from Georgia, where they were first spotted, all the way up the coast to the most recent spotting in Pennsylvania, sticking to areas that match their home climate.

Because of how recently they have entered our ecosystem, scientists are unsure of the scope of damage these predators will have on the local balance of power. Birds and bats eat them, while the spiders themselves contribute to Nature's pest control, dining on things like flies and mosquitos.

Now, to the question everyone is wanting to know. Is this spider the size of my palm venomous? Yes and no. They do possess venom, but they are characterized by a calm demeanor, only attacking when they feel cornered. More importantly, their fangs are not equipped to penetrate human skin. So, while they are most likely here to stay, they don't present a physical threat to humans. Only time will tell what sort of impact they have on the environment. Regardless, they take the cake on serious creep-factor this Halloween. In the East. And that's just one more reason to thank God I live in Montana.



¹ <https://www.news-press.com/story/news/nation/2024/09/19/joro-spiders-pennsylvania/75288537007/>

DOMINIK PROPP – Honors Member

By Brenda Demers



Dominik Propp described his adolescent self as a “free range child”. He explained that his mom wasn’t able to take on a parenting role and his dad was out of the picture. Without a good male role model, he fell into what Dominik called a “macho man type ideology”.

Dominik was a wrestler and a power lifter throughout his school years. After high school he joined the Army Reserve. He went to Fort Jackson, South Carolina for basic training and then on to Fort Gregg-Adams, Virginia for Advanced Individual Training as a Logistical Specialist, which in layman’s terms is a warehouse supply guy. Dominik commented, “At that point and time I was still able to function doing drugs and managed for a while. Just under 4 years into it, I was discharged from the military and became homeless. I worked a job for a few weeks and wouldn’t show up because I was working too hard getting high.”

During his time in the military, Dominik formed a relationship resulting in the birth of their son. About 2 years after being discharged, the mother of his son propositioned him. *If you think you can pull it together, we are moving into a big house and we need someone to help pay the rent.* After being homeless for so long, there was no reason to turn down the opportunity. “I was sober just under a year. In retrospect it was not a good idea to move in with an ex with hard feelings where there was a new husband and a sister in the picture who never liked me to begin with. I fell off the wagon and ended up homeless in downtown Helena. I was just running and gunning. Whatever I didn’t put in my arm I sold for food or traded for a place to stay.”

During this stint on the streets of Helena, Dominik met another person struggling with addiction and began a relationship. She became pregnant, pushing the couple to make some hard choices to get out of the cycle they were in. Each attempt ended in failure, and they remained homeless. Dominik’s girlfriend and her ex-husband had 2 older children. The ex offered: *I can see you are trying; come live here and get sober. I’m on the road 6 days a week, then you can be with your older kids.* Dominik reported that they took advantage of the opportunity and that it was a good experience, but, as the cycle of addiction goes, a situation landed Dominik in jail. The ex was not going to make allowances for ill behavior, so another plan was hatched. Dominik was out of jail and his girlfriend was close to giving birth, so her parents allowed the couple to live at the family ranch. Dominik beamed as he talked about his first time living in a real home with a functioning family unit. “I’m taken into this respectable family home and shown what a good male model is supposed to be and what a man is supposed to do. It opened my eyes. The baby girl was born, and for 22 months things were great. I worked on the ranch and held a job. It was really a life changing experience for me -a great experience. Growing up being bad was easy. I didn’t know any better. I knew I was going to prison and that was cool. Looking back, my ideology was dumb.”

Then there was COVid, followed by a booming housing market. Dominik’s girlfriend’s parents were in their retirement years and decided the time was right sell the ranch and travel. Dominik recounted, “We were fresh out of addiction and still not in a mature, adult mindset. We hadn’t saved any money and didn’t make any plans or goals. The reality set in that we had done nothing to prepare.” With a felony record, they were at the bottom of the list for a rental, but a relative that was a realtor was able to get them in an apartment. Dominik was working 60 hours a week with the ironworkers union and caring for the baby when he got home. His girlfriend had begun another relationship and slipped back into drug use. One night she didn’t come home and Dominik was supposed to leave at 4 a.m. for work. Dominik said she finally came home at 6 a.m. *super high*. If he went to work there was no one to take care of the baby. An argument ensued, leading to a PFMA for Dominik.

DOMINIK PROPP – Honors Member - continued

By Brenda Demers

“This was the result of seeing what life is supposed to be like and then watching it circle the drain and not being able to stop it.” As hard as Dominik tried to emulate the family unit he so longed for, he had no control over the other person, resulting in his own downward spiral. His last paycheck funded his high living on the streets. The day before Thanksgiving he went to the apartment where his girlfriend was living with the baby and found it a mess, no food, and the baby uncared for. She asked him to watch the baby while she went to get groceries and was gone for 9 hours. Another argument ensued causing the neighbors to call the police and Dominic being arrested.

Dominic went to Pine Hills followed up by Helena Pre-Release. He said he did well for 10 months. “I had it in my head I was going to do the program, get a place, get the baby, and she would come home and be sober. That was the plan.” However, as with some well thought-out plans, there was a hiccup. He couldn’t find housing, so Child Protective Services moved forward terminating the parents’ custody. “Then I had no reason to be sober. I got high and was sent to START.” Seven months later, he was transported to Butte to get on a bus to go to a sober house in Billings, but he didn’t get on the bus. Instead, a friend insured him that if he got a bag of meth, he would be able to hook up with his girlfriend again. “I still had the ideal that I would have my girlfriend. There was a lot of co-dependency and for the first time in 2 years I was free and high.” He did hook up with his girlfriend. A few days later she was arrested and a few months later it was Dominik’s turn, leading him to GFPRC.

“If you look at my life, it all stems from mental health issues or co-dependency; they feed on each other.” Dominik claims he has broken the ties with his girlfriend, acknowledging the resentment and unhealthy issues would still come up, even if they tried to make it work. “But I will have feelings for her for the rest of my life. Basically it comes down to what I can control and what I can’t. It seems if I keep trying to force something I have no control over it keeps putting me in these places.”

Dominik’s daughter is 5 years old now. “At this point the goal is to build myself. I need to build a life so when she gets curious enough to come find me I’ll have a life that she wants to be a part of. If I just keep doing the same old stuff, she’ll think, *this guy is my dad?*”

Dominik loves weight lifting and gets up early every day so he can his workout in before going to work. At work he enjoys using his welding skills to fabricate parts and pieces.

And now on to what has become Dominik’s rock -- his faith. He was born and baptized into the Catholic faith, but fell away. He sought renewal after paying attention to his girlfriend’s Irish/Catholic dad “doing all this amazing stuff and being what a man should be. It takes strength, intelligence, and willpower to deal with the family problems and be a patriarch. I realized his strength comes from his faith. I’ve been immersing myself in my faith in Catholicism and going to church. I will be confirmed on Easter. I gave up rap music for Catholic talk radio. There is a peace and a love that I feel. It’s a great community. I belong to something. I belonged to the family at the ranch for those 2 years. Now I belong to something. I think that belonging is tied to that really sick co-dependency I had – that I wanted to belong.”

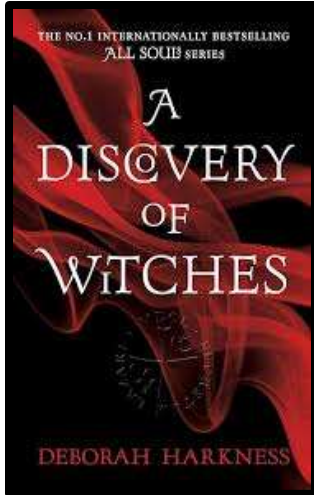
While living on the ranch in Helena, Dominik had the opportunity to ride some rough stock. He loved that way of life and would like to go back to it. “Ironically enough when I was a young boy, before I lost myself, I wanted to be a cowboy. It’s crazy how life works. When I went to the ranch and was put in charge of taking care of the horses and other animals the 6 year old me was like, *this is amazing!* I had it all backwards. My whole teenage years I was a thug thinking I was cool. That’s not really what I wanted at all.”

I would encourage people to get more involved with their faith, whatever their faith is. In addition, ask yourself, would my 6 year old self be proud of the person I am today?

Congratulations, Dominik, we are proud of you!

EDUCATION

Vampire Lovers,



While I don't know that I will ever have enough to justify an entire section, I have heard your requests for supernatural stories and am making it happen. I started watching the new Netflix series, *A Discovery of Witches*, and the first season hooked me. Knowing that the books are always better than any adaptation to film (except for *Last of the Mohicans*, and I will die on that hill), I thought I'd check the series out in book form. That being said, I have ordered the trilogy and can vouch that the books are quite an entertaining read. Think *Twilight* but an epic tale crossing

centuries with smart characters who are still somehow relatable. If I were to write a novel featuring an immortal species, I would write the other main character with an urge know all about different events in history the immortal one experienced. This book has that. So, not only does it have a series you can follow along to, a likeable set of characters, supernatural beings, a smoldering love story, but it is also a fun and engaging way to learn more about history (for those of you looking to beef up some HiSET skills).

I have the original trilogy in the library for check out. I will be ordering the final books in the series soon.



Noël Walker
Education Coordinator

NERD ALERT:

It's that time again, kids, when leaves and temperatures are falling, Halloween is approaching, and the air is sharp enough to cut an apple. Some might be feeling excitement about the upcoming season full of holidays. Others might be dreading it. What a lot of people completely miss is that this is also the time when you get to exercise a privilege many hold sacred: the right to vote. Without a doubt, you have heard people say, "Oh, I don't vote," "It doesn't matter, anyway," or some such about our country's electoral process. No doubt you've also heard arguments about why that is false. Neither of those arguments are the goal of this article. The true goal is much deeper and, one might argue, hopefully longer lasting than the next person's term in office. The *real* goal today is to talk about some of the ways your perspective and understanding are being manipulated without you even knowing it.

Long, long ago, in a kingdom far, far away (1,625 years and 5,909 miles, to be exact) a Greek philosopher, Socrates (SAW-cruh-teez), was born. He would watch politicians manipulate the crowds for selfish without the crowd knowing. This was very frustrating for him. So, to teach others how to be more informed with their decisions, Socrates ironed out the principle of rhetoric (RET-or-ric), or *the science of persuasion*. He narrowed all of persuasion down to three areas: emotions (pathos), logic (logos), and credibility/authority (ethos). His understanding of people was so strong that his teachings of rhetoric are still upheld today. Why is that? Well, because there are always people looking to get something out of you who will manipulate you to join them.

NERD ALERT: continued, By Noël Walker

“But, Noël, no one could do that. I know when I am being manipulated.” While some manipulators are clumsy at best, others are *really* good at it. And, let’s face it: you are surrounded by messages CONSTANTLY trying to get you to do/buy/believe something. No one is 100% immune to the marketing war that is ever raging. But, in the immortal words of GI Joe, “knowledge is half the battle.” So, armor up. If you know *how* people try to twist and warp logic, you can make more informed decisions. These warps and twists are called rhetorical fallacies (re-TOR-ic-ul FAL-uh-seez).

Let’s start with one of the more common fallacies: bandwagon. The bandwagon fallacy is when everyone is jumping off the bridge so you jump, too. You don’t even consider if it is a good idea or bad; you just trust the judgment of those around you and blindly do what they do. Not a good idea. If you are interested in where this term came from, come by and I will tell you. But I won’t bore everyone else with the history lesson.

Another extremely common fallacy is the “appeal from false authority.” This is every celebrity spokesperson used to advertise a product. News flash: buying Jordan’s isn’t going to help your dunk game. Thinking a pair of shoes will make you jump higher, run faster, live longer, be more attractive just means you fell for the fallacy. Thinking that it makes you part of the cool kids group means you fell for this one AND the bandwagon fallacy at the same time. And, if you are thinking, “only an idiot would fall for that hype,” congratulations, you just identified the *ad hominem* (Latin for “to the man”) fallacy, which is when a debate stops being fact-based and gets personal.

One you can’t throw a stone without hearing is the slippery slope fallacy. This assumes that any slight action will cause an avalanche of effects. For example: If you feed that stray cat, next thing you know, you’ll have a whole animal shelter following you around.

If you have spent any time around children (whether minors or those who just act like them), you have probably heard what I like to call the “Oh, yeah? Well…” argument. The technical term for this flawed logic is actually “red herring”, where one tries to distract from the debate they are losing or the point they can’t defend by redirecting the attention elsewhere. For example, “Why are your shoes in the middle of the floor?” “Oh, yeah? Well, why are you just now getting home from work?” The shoes being in the middle of the floor has nothing to do with working late.

Lastly, if you spend any time watching political campaigning, you will most likely see one of three fallacies: the false dilemma fallacy, straw man fallacy, or *post hoc ergo propter hoc* (Latin for “after this, therefore because of this”). The false dilemma fallacy (aka “either/or fallacy”) is a political favorite as it closely models our 2-party system. You are either for this thing or you are against it. This fallacy does not allow for any gray space, which, realistically, composes much of our world and our understanding. Candidate A didn’t support this bill, so they clearly don’t like children to get an education. If *you* don’t vote this way (the way that benefits me, the candidate), *you* are killing democracy. There is a whole galaxy of gray space between these different options. Next, you will hear the straw man fallacy. This is closely connected to the previous fallacy and is when an opposing position is exaggerated to the point of being absurd. A straw man is a silly opponent to try to fight and is useless at fighting back. An example could be something like, “Oh, you want to limit student’s access to technology in schools? What, do you want us to go back to the dark ages?!” or “You want immigration reform so our country can be completely overrun by immigrants?” Finally, *post hoc ergo propter hoc* is an argument where an earlier event is assumed to have caused another event. For example, “I ate fish then got sick, so the fish made me sick.” Or, an actual theory believed to be a fact for CENTURIES: “If I leave out meat to rot, maggots suddenly appear, thus maggots spontaneously generate from rotting meat.” (This theory, while challenged previously, was not totally disproved until Louis Pasteur, as in *pasteurized* milk, and John Tyndale in the 1800s). You can find countless other examples in superstitions, like “Step on a crack; break your mother’s back,” or “Break a mirror and you’ll have seven years’ bad luck,” or “If you get chilled, you’ll get sick” (this is also false, by the way). Politically, you might hear,

NERD ALERT: continued, By Noël Walker

“When [insert politician] got elected this good thing happened, so vote for that party’s candidate and more good things will happen.”

In conclusion, we can all probably think of examples where you’ve been convinced of something only to find out later you were duped. It took an embarrassing amount of time before I realized that bread crusts were not composed of magical ingredients that would somehow make my hair curly. Someone you thought for sure was going to pay you back never planned to return your favor (“false authority”), that doing this thing didn’t make you the envy of the town (“bandwagon”), or that you can, in fact, listen to country music without seeking out a single cow patty to kick around (“slippery slope”). I would love if you took that same discernment into other areas of your life, especially as we approach this time when decisions *must* be made. It doesn’t matter how you decide to vote. The only thing that matters is that YOU decide how YOU want to vote, consciously and deliberately, and not because a flapping head on the screen played you like a fiddle.



HAPPY VOTING!!

MARTY SHANE – Honors Member



Grace came into new Honors member Marty Shane’s life when he least expected it. But that’s the nature of grace. It has its own logic and exists as a spiritual gift without human qualifiers. Marty’s story is how the gift of grace came to him and the impact of his dad’s legacy on his life.

Marty has currently found housing. Not just for himself, but also for all four of his kids, ages 9, 11, 12 and 15. He is bubbling over with the plans for how his family is going to navigate all their schedules. But Marty wanted to be clear that while he is making plans, he is not making promises. He explained, **“I made too many promises to my kids and never kept them. Now, no promises; just do it. This starts with me. I need to keep promises to myself.”**

There will be lots of challenges and Marty is honest about this. He is excited, nervous and is trying hard not to be overwhelmed. Since his daughter is 15 she can get her learner’s permit and eventually help with getting everyone to the different schools. Life as a single dad is going to be chaotic and wonderful and he doesn’t want to miss the wonderful. Marty has such admiration for all of his kids including his teenage daughter. He knows the importance of helping her transition into adulthood. “She’s a tough kid. She spent seven years in foster care and has abandonment issues. **I won’t make excuses; I will just apologize and support her all that I can.”** Marty told his daughter, **“You being who you are is enough.”**

Marty had to go through a bewildering gamut of channels, people, agencies, paperwork, phone calls, and roadblocks to reunify his family. “It was a tough journey to get my kids back, but I’m glad I didn’t give up.” Although he wasn’t always in their lives, Marty said his kids were never hungry and that they were happy. Marty remembered what his dad told him, “You see those smiles on your kids’ faces? You see the good times and the laughter? That’s what you are fighting for.”



NEWS BY SHEENA JARVEY

MARTY SHANE – Honors Member - continued

By Sheena Jarvey

The effort and the fight for his kids is also fueled by his own growing up years. Marty's childhood was not easy. There was abuse, alcoholism intertwined with other addictions, hunger and being poor. Marty was always angry and he liked trouble. Trouble eased the internal chaos always churning inside of him. "I unleashed all the abuse and chaos on everyone else. I didn't know what to do with myself." Grieving further complicated his emotions. "So many people passed away - so many deaths. I can't believe that they are gone. But, also, a part of me feels like they are still around, like they are watching me so that I can do good." In the midst of all the chaos, all that Marty ever wanted was the love of his family.

While Marty was an Inmate Worker, his dad became very ill. Marty's dad had been in a wheelchair for a number of years and he and Marty had been distant from each other - a lot had happened that separated them. Then Marty got the call that his dad's illness was worse, much worse and he was on life support. As next of kin, Marty had to make that decision that no one wants to make. That Marty never wanted to make. But his dad was deteriorating. He had always told Marty, "You pull that plug. Let me go home." So Marty honored his dad's request.

Then the sorrow descended. "After my dad's death I was in my room and I was so sad that I couldn't move off of my bed. I could barely breathe. I kept praying to God - help me. Jesus - you know what I'm feeling. Help me."

The sadness was quickly joined by fear and the sense of lost opportunities. "My greatest fear was my dad's death and knowing I had to face it sober. And here it was." He reflected on his relationship with his dad. "Thinking of my dad, I didn't really cherish the moments. I thought he would be around forever. And now I remember the simplest moments that are so precious - watching TV- watching the hunting shows." But now that was gone and Marty was at the breaking point "I wanted to give up, to sign out. I truly felt I could not do it anymore. When I told my CTS (Nikki) she reminded me to not give up before the good stuff happens. When she said that, I remembered my dad always told me that God talks in mysterious ways. But it took a lot of fighting to convince myself not to give up."

Marty also remembered that his dad told him that he wouldn't know if he didn't try. "Dad told me that is the true cost of failure - you not trying, you doing nothing. And if you fail, that means you did try. I kept hearing my dad say to try. So I tried a little bit and that turned into a little bit more. I can't wait until I get out and see where this takes me. How far will I go with being successful?" Marty continued, "I want to know what real success looks like. I want to realize my goals and dreams, just like my dad said that I would."

"Losing my dad motivated me and made me what I am today. I had to not give up, to break the pattern I had been in for so long." Marty said it took a long time, but he found himself. "I feel balanced and have found my center. I haven't felt like this since I was 19". Marty's kids are his external motivation. His internal motivation? "Being the person I was afraid to become. I had a real fear of success." But now he is more confident, calm and collected.

Marty's regret, if regret is even a strong enough word, was that he didn't ask for forgiveness from his dad. But he knows he has been given spiritual forgiveness. Marty explained, "I am much more connected to my spirituality. I believe in God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Without my dad, I turn to my spirituality. I talk to God and I feel in my soul that He hears me. I have faith and belief. My dad was right about God. He told me, "When you are by yourself you will run to God."

Letting go of his dad, so his dad could go home, was the hardest thing Marty ever had to do. Marty said, "I had to ask myself, How far and how strong is my love for my dad? He deserved it - he was a really good dad. He has inspired me to be a better dad. That's why I have done so well here. That's why I want to live my life more fully. I have to be good in life and good with God so I can see my dad again. And I know that Dad got to go home. Letting go is one of the truest forms of love, if a person can love enough to let go". Spiritual grace surrounded Marty when he needed it the most, and the strength of his dad and the love of his kids have kept him moving forward.

We are so proud of Marty and wish him and his family happiness.

Try Me

By Destinee Hardesty

I've lost days, weeks, years
Of the outside free world.
Now it's part of my own fears:
The Free world and all that's in it.

The options are far too endless,
But the worst part for me is
Doing everything and friendless,
My support so limited: it's one.

I know I'll find my own way.
Support I'll find and have more of.
My choices will grow each day,
And I'll build myself an Empire.

Not your usual Empire, you'll see
Support, friends, clients and family.
It'll be one built on humanity.
Love, kindness, giving, and sharing.

I'll go to school, a new way to be.
Study hard, work harder still
Start my career, and they'll come see me
To better their lives and find peace.

Well hell, I guess I don't need fear.
My determination, strength is
All very much inside here.
Okay, I bet it won't be quite so bad...

Try me.

Rose-Colored Glasses

By Destinee Hardesty

I've been told countless times,
"You look at life through
Rose-colored glasses", and
I don't ever correct them.
The truth is, I see it all:
The corruption, the cruelty,
The wickedness, the greed.
As a matter of fact, I even
Go as far as to have the dreams.
The difference, though, between
The way I am and the way I see,
compared to the rose-colored view,
Is I choose to embrace the good,
To help the great things grow,
To boost morale or appreciate;
Be grateful for the small things,
Take pride in who I am and in others.
Be joyful for each day
And help others smile along the way
Because we all have good.
And, we all have wickedness,
But if you inspire the greatness
Then that is what will blossom!

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.



PRE-RELEASE PRESS

Editor: Brenda Demers



Chris Marez — Honors Member

By Noël Walker



Chris Marez is no stranger to the newsletter. He was here less than a month when he first appeared as a resident standout...before he was even a resident. He jokes that he caught some flak for getting noticed so early on, but he doesn't take the ribbing too seriously. In fact, that is one thing that stands out about Chris. He is able to see things and treat them with the respect they are due, and then he moves on.

There is one exception to his ability to put things to the side, and that is his relationship with God. When asked what brought him to this place, whether that be the Pre-Release, his place in life, or this moment in his journey, his answer is the same: God's Purpose. He recalls the moment that changed everything for him. He said he was on a mountain top chopping wood to sell, high, dehydrated, and exhausted from working through the night. He took a moment to drink some water and couldn't make his body keep going. He said he called out to God, "I need your help. I need your help to pull me out of this rut I've gotten myself in.

I can't keep doing this." Within 24 hours, Chris was arrested. He said it took him a bit to see that his arrest was the solution he'd prayed for. "I asked, and He delivered," Chris quipped. "This time has been a constant lesson in predestination. I am where I need to be to learn what I have needed to learn and do what I have needed to do."

What came next, sentencing and treatment, changed him. All his adult life, there had only been time consequences. Chris had lived alone without anyone really counting on him. If he got locked up, fine. Less than ideal, but fine. This time, though, there were kids involved. "I fully believe God put them in my life." Chris says he has one biological son whom he lost access to in the height of his addiction, and that has grieved him. He says he had given up on having the family he always wanted, which included a son and a daughter. Now, he says, God has seen fit to grant him a son and not one but two daughters. "When I am talking to my children on video chat, and when my daughter says, 'Dad, when are you going to be ungrounded?' that gets me. I learned every decision needs to be carefully considered. I used to just serve my sentence, but now I have put a sentence on my children, and *that* makes me unwilling to hurt others anymore." Chris has watched his fiancée struggle during his incarceration, watched her try to hold things down without him there to help, and he is thankful she has stayed by his side. "I know God has given me my life partner in Rachel. I love her so, so much."

Looking into the past, Chris remembers how chaos was his default, that stability was the exception to the rule. When things would settle, he wouldn't know what to do, and he would take that stability as a cue to try something else, to do something new to push himself out of his delicate balance. Without the "security blanket" of his chaos and upheaval, he would flounder, but now that he has three children and a fiancée awaiting his release, "I don't want to put that on anyone else." With Chris's signature pragmatism and faith, he continued, "It took me a while to realize THIS was the plan, but it was what I needed to be the father I needed to be for my children and the man I needed to be for the right woman in my life."

When Chris was approved to come to the Pre-Release, he said he made three goals: no write-ups, make the Honors Program, and walk out with \$20,000 in savings. He said that with his next paycheck he will have reached all of his goals. When I asked him how he met his goals, he said he owed a huge "thank you" to his former CTS, Christy. He admits that they didn't get off to the smoothest start, but he said it was just one more lesson in trusting God and getting out of his own way. "I would not be where I am today without God in my life, but as for who I learned the most from, I have to give credit to Christy."

One of the biggest takeaways Chris has found is seeing the value in simply being. During his time as an inmate worker, Chris set his sights on a few options, including ministry and welding. However, he said he has found purpose and fulfillment in the food service industry. He said, "I like

Chris Marez — Honors Member - continued

By Noël Walker

being the center of attention, which is rewarded in my line of work.” He feels like he has found a calling as well as a means to support those he loves. He’s got a management job at a nice restaurant and sober living housing waiting for him as well as sufficient money to get his family in a house. He is thankful for the opportunity to provide security for others. I asked him what his plans are for the future. He responded, “My retirement goal is to work with youth as a pastor. I have always wanted to work with kids. I am the person now that I needed in my life when I was younger.”

It might sound like life is rosy for Chris, but it hasn’t always been easy. Through it all, he acknowledges God’s timing is perfect. “If I had gotten this chance a year ago, it wouldn’t have been the same. I’d still be living on the mountaintop, getting high, chopping wood to get by, finding shady ways to make money, always hustling. Always alone.” Now, Chris says he has the luxury of being open. “I have always been an open book. But, now I don’t have to hide. I don’t hide anything anymore because I can’t.”

When I was interviewing Chris, I asked him several questions, one of which was for permission to share my biggest takeaway from working alongside him. He agreed. I told him that when he leaves and I look back on the time he was here, I will remember him absolutely killing it in the kitchen, and I will remember his constant testimony. I can’t count how many times I got to see him live his faith. He would come into my office stressed or worried about this thing or that, and within 24 hours he would be back telling me about how the situation that had cost him a few hairs from his head had resolved itself. It was a uniquely powerful experience to finally be able to point out to him when he would walk in, “Chris, do you remember last time you were stressing out? Did God abandon you then? Will he abandon you now?” He would sigh, slouch, and agree. The God of his mountaintop is the same God of his valley.

And that is the power of Chris. When I started the interview for this article, I asked him, what is the one thing you want to get across in this article? He said,

“My testimony, in all my life, to God be the Glory.”



Congratulations to **Shellie Babinecz** on her 10 year anniversary at Great Falls Pre-Release!

Shellie served a successful 22 years as a trooper with the Montana Highway Patrol.

In her second career at GFPRC she started out as a Correctional Treatment Specialist working with both state and federal residents. Later she was promoted to Program Manager, and then selected to her current position as the Treatment Services Director.

Ray McClelland lost a bet that had to do with college football. He told **Jim Kist** that the Houston Texans would beat the Minnesota Vikings. Ray was wrong; the Texans lost; he had to wear the Vikings jersey. He was a bit of a sore loser because he wouldn't wear it the entire day.



The 70 mph winds of October 4th were no match for the roots of this beautiful Blue Spruce. **Michael Cheney** rescued and relocated these young doves. **Tyler Lombard** cut the trunk into manageable pieces.

****Discerning Truth Series – Winter is Coming****

Raymond Berry with Noël Walker, ed.

Imagine a teacher standing in front of her class on a chilly winter morning, advising her students to wear a hat because "most of your body heat escapes through your head." It's advice many of us have heard, even from trusted figures like teachers or parents. The teacher believes she's helping her students stay warm and healthy. But what if this common bit of wisdom isn't as accurate as we've been led to believe?

The notion that we lose more heat through our heads than any other part of our body is a myth. In reality, heat loss is generally proportional to the area of skin exposed to the cold. If you go outside without a hat but the rest of your body is covered, you'll lose heat through your head simply because it's uncovered—just as you would if your hands, feet, or any other body part were left exposed.

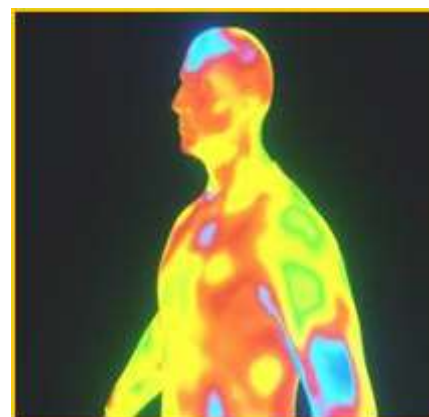
The origins of this myth likely come from old military studies, which tested soldiers in cold conditions while they wore full-body suits with their heads uncovered. Unsurprisingly, the researchers found that the soldiers lost a significant amount of heat through their heads—but that's because it was the only exposed part of their bodies. The results were misinterpreted by others to mean that the head is responsible for most heat loss in all situations, when really, it's about what's left unprotected. Who knows why people focused on this one result. Maybe people passing on this fraction of the results felt smarter pointing out that heat rises instead of talking about the powers of insulation. Maybe it wasn't as fun to also remember that heat spreads out, or diffuses, which is how every heat source doesn't have scorch marks directly above it.

Either way, this story highlights how easy it is for misinformation to spread, even from well-meaning sources. The teacher in our earliest example isn't trying to mislead her students; she's passing along something she herself learned and never questioned. She wholeheartedly believes she is helping. This shows how even the most trusted sources can often pass on inaccuracies without realizing it.

The key lesson here is not to blindly accept "common knowledge" but to engage in critical thinking and question the information we're given. Wearing a hat is still a good idea when it's cold, but it's not because more heat escapes through your head—it's simply because any exposed skin will let heat out. When we challenge long-held myths, we get closer to understanding the truth behind them, and that truth often offers a more nuanced perspective.

In the same way that we reconsider the way our bodies lose heat, we should reevaluate other "facts" that we take for granted. We may find that many of them, like the heat loss myth, are based on outdated or misunderstood information.

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



<https://blendermarket.com>
Human Thermal Image Heatmap

What is the best Halloween costume you have worn or seen someone else wear?

DeeAnna Briggs: Cousin Eddy from Christmas Vacation. Complete with the hose and cigar.



Ray McClelland: The Joker from Batman



Noel Walker: When my son was younger, he wanted to dress up as the scariest thing he could think of. I thought it was a really clever "costume" for a 12 year old to think of and execute.

Keith Ricketts: My best costume was in 1997 we got to wear our costume to work when I was with the Air Force and I went to work as Mr. Spock! It was pretty awesome.



Robin Castle: One year my daughter had a litter of puppies and she dressed her boys in white onesies with black polka dots and dresses the puppies in the same and she dressed up as Cruella and pulled the puppies and boys around in a wagon trick or treating. It was so cute.

Dawn Cooper: The best costume I have ever had was the Lady Bug my mom made for me as a kid.



Gary Quigg: Billings Halloween Costume Show. Husband was dressed as a sheep; wife as a sheepherder. Tags read, "My favorite sheep/sheepherder."

Chris Eckermann: I was the grapes from the Fruit of the Loom commercial!



Jessica Hirst: I was 11 and I was a woman pirate in knee highs and heels and I had a coffee beard.



Amos Goutremont: A pizza box.

Chanler WhiteGrass: Night Before Christmas – Jack the Ripper.



Things to Know about the Drug Known as 'Gas Station Heroin'

JULY 14, 2024

By [Bill Chappell](#)

An image released by the FDA shows bottles containing tianeptine and other compounds. Authorities have urged gas station store owners and others not to sell the products, with names like Neptune's Fix, Za Za and Tianaa, citing serious health risks.

Decades before it became known as "gas station heroin,"

tianeptine was prescribed to treat depression in dozens of countries. Now, U.S. poison control centers are reporting a dramatic spike in cases involving tianeptine — a drug that isn't FDA approved, and one that authorities warn poses overdose and dependency risks.

Imagine if you're at a truck stop, you take two bottles of that and you're driving down the road — now you're high on opioids. It's not a safe situation to be in. And it could be accidental. Just because you see it in a gas station doesn't mean it's safe.



A packet of tianeptine is seen in federal court documents, in a case that resulted in an online retailer being hit with a two-year prison term and an order to repay more than \$1.8 million in proceeds from illegal drug sales. As the packet notes, the drug is not approved by the FDA.

Justice Department/Screenshot by NPR

Even before the opioid link was confirmed, people were beginning to abuse tianeptine.

The flood of stories about its habit-forming properties are another sign of tianeptine's spread. In the Reddit forum about quitting the drug, people who describe themselves as former heavy users of opioids say tianeptine is as addictive, if not more, than other drugs they've used.

Several deaths have been linked to tianeptine: The first known tianeptine fatalities in the U.S. occurred when two men died after ordering tianeptine powder online. The family of an Ohio man who died after taking Neptune's Fix recently filed a wrongful death lawsuit. In Texas, the parents of a man who died after taking tianeptine in 2015 sued online_retailer Powder City; the company said it was halting its business soon afterward.

The Drug Enforcement Administration said this year that law enforcement agents have found tianeptine powder in bulk. Drug dealers have used it to make counterfeit hydrocodone and oxycodone pills, the agency said, or to fill baggies made to resemble heroin packages.

HALLOWEEN CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Down

1. Prank played on Halloween night
2. Most common Halloween color
3. What witches fly on
4. A word used to scare people
6. They fly in the sky at night
8. Vampires use these to bite



Across

5. Covers your face on Halloween
7. Always Trick-or-Treat with a _____
9. He's all wrapped up in rags
10. A bony monster

