

## Resident Standouts

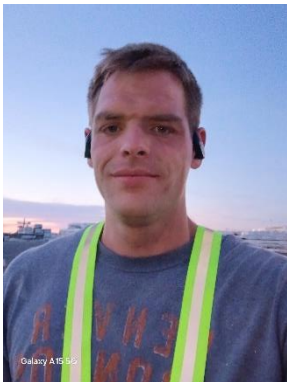


Thank you John! **John Sigala** (left) has been recognized for a shout-out for providing invaluable assistance with a medical emergency we had on East Campus recently. John was calm under pressure while assisting the individual in keeping calm and stayed with him until the ambulance and EMS began to care for the gentleman. John let us know he was previously a firefighter and his experience was very helpful during the incident. Again, thank you, John, for being present and offering your compassion and experience in this time of need!



**Bryson Monroe** (right) has been nominated as a resident standout because he

has been diligently working hard on all aspects of his program since day one of his arrival. Bryson stays positive even when put in situations where negativity would be completely understandable. He also puts effort into helping his fellow residents stay on track. He genuinely deserves kudos for all of his efforts. Keep up the good work Mr. Monroe. We are super excited for your future!



**Sean Kostad** never fails to impress. This time he has been nominated for having completed a year here at the Center without receiving a single write-up. Way to go Sean! We are so proud of you and wish you well as you move on to the rewarding future that awaits you. Meanwhile, please see inside for a glimpse at Sean's ingenuity!



Congratulations are in order for **Lyle Bullshows** as he has been accepted into the Honors Program. We would expect nothing less as Mr. Bullshows has consistently demonstrated his commitment to making a positive difference for himself and those with whom he comes into contact. We appreciate you Lyle!



# Matthew Day Chief – Honors Member

*By Sheena Jarvey*

Matthew Day Chief, new Honors member, is living his best life and is excited knowing it will only get better. Matthew said he keeps focused by using this affirmation: “Remember what is important.”

Matthew’s family is of utmost importance to him. His family is his rock and he dedicates every day to making his supportive family proud. Matthew’s son is now one year old and all Matthew’s energies are focused on being there for him. In fact, Matthew’s parents are bringing his son to see him on October 5th, on Matthew’s birthday. Really, a birthday present doesn’t get any better than that!



Spiritual strength and faith now guide Matthew’s life. “My faith makes me want to be a better person and get away from my selfish ways. I need to be there for other people.” Matthew explained further, “I put my trust in God and at the end of the day, I know that if I stay true to God, I will be okay.” Matthew is constantly checking in with his higher power to stay on the right track. When asked how he knows what God wants him to do, Matthew didn’t hesitate when he stated, “I know I am right with God when I feel content and at peace. I listen, so I can stay on my spiritual path.”

Matthew’s relationship with himself has blossomed with this newfound inner peace. He explained that he wants to be a better person in every aspect of his life. Matthew has not just come back from his past, nor just overcome his past, but rather he has grown from his past. He has incorporated everything he has ever done into the man he is today. Matthew told me, “I did what I did and it all happened for a reason. I needed this journey, I needed my rough past. My troubles and my past forced me to become the man I am right now. I am strong. But without everything I’ve been through, I would not be where I am right now. “

When Matthew said that all aspects of his life are going good, this includes his job, where he is now a foreman, a position that came with a pay raise. His boss wants Matthew to stay

on after his release and Matthew expressed his appreciation, “My boss has been so good to me.”

When asked what encouragement he would give others, Matthew paused a beat, took a breath and flashed his “lights up the room” smile and began:

“Okay, so I don’t mean this to sound corny, but the motto at the Pre-Release is “A Chance for Change.” Well, this program really can be just that. If you utilize the program correctly, it really is a chance for change. You have a chance to gain good employment, save money, budget and schedule your time. This is an opportunity to develop good real-world habits.” Matthew continued, “You won’t always get your way, but nobody always gets their way. But that is life, real life, and learning to accept that brings peace of mind.”



Matthew also talked about the importance of learning to move on and not getting caught up in the stress of the immediate situation. He has learned that things will work their way out eventually - just don't lose it and explode - practice patience.

Healthy habits are also important. A good workout is now an essential part of Matthew's day, something that he relies on for strength and mental balance. Matthew is utilizing his Honors passes to attend Sober Life events. The ease of taking an Honors pass makes it much more accessible for him to participate in the variety of fun activities sponsored by Sober Life, including volleyball and kickball. He is also taking time to socialize with other Honors members, such as going out to lunch with Sean - a further Honors perk.

Matthew Day Chief is finding a state of joy and he found it by going through it, to genuinely get to it. There is no mistaking the joy in his smile. Matthew's smile and his easy laugh truly do light up a room, showcasing his generous and happy spirit, built on a strong spiritual foundation.

Matthew's closing message was from Philippians 4: 6-7 (NIV)

**6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

We are so proud of Matthew and we wish him and his family continued happiness, togetherness and joy.



## Onward and Upward

*By Brenda Demers*

We are excited to celebrate Blair Fisher for completing the Inmate Worker program! Blair worked in the East Campus kitchen where he quickly became known for his friendly nature, great sense of humor, and strong work ethic. He is the type of person everyone enjoys being around.

Of course, being an Inmate Worker comes with its challenges. For Blair, one of those challenges was getting up at 2:45 AM to prepare breakfast. However, this requirement taught him the importance of reliability and consistency. Blair appreciated the camaraderie of his work environment, commenting, "I liked working together as a team."

After completing his program at GPRC, Blair plans to make a home with his wife and son in Oregon where his dad currently resides. Blair is very close to his 8-year-old son, who enjoys playing baseball and video games.

Blair admitted that the Inmate Worker program was instrumental in helping him become a better person. He believes in doing the next right thing and feels that things will work out. Although he is nervous about what lies ahead, Blair is more prepared than ever to take on the challenge!

---



## Richard Lawrence – Honors Member

*By Sonja Roberts*

We would like to congratulate Richard Lawrence on becoming one of our newest members of the Honors Program. Way to go Richard! We know it has been a long and difficult road for you, but we are so happy to see you here.

Richard is in his second round here at the Center. One of his greatest challenges is that he lost his Mom in 2023. He had gotten out of the Center in May 2024, but a month later, in June 2024, he was incarcerated again. He feels like this time around he is working on the things that he actually needed to work on. A big part of his current success is that he took initiative and asked for appropriate programming for his individual needs. He now attends AA and NA meetings regularly and likes to attend Sober Living events.

Richard is grateful for the support of his family as he has sisters and brothers and a lot of nieces and nephews who have his back. With his honors membership, he was able to use a 24 hour pass to visit his family and friends. He is excited about being back with his family on a regular basis. He feels he has worked on everything he needs to in order to get a head start in the life that awaits him. He has been working as a cook at a local restaurant and recently was awarded a promotion and raise.

Richard recommends that we all be supportive of our friends and family as they will show you things that you can't see for yourself. Having people who support him is a key component of Richard's on-going success as he continues to hold onto and cherish his recovery and sobriety. Richard's final thoughts are that this place works if you want it to work! He insisted that we take his picture in front of the Great Falls Pre-Release sign because he is proud of the accomplishments he has achieved while being here. We'll absolutely take that and, hopefully, this message will help to pass that spirit along to others. Thank you, Richard, for being an inspiring example of what a little bit of hard work coupled with a solid support system can help you to achieve.

---



*Hunter, RN*

## Embracing Non-Violent Communication: Lessons from Charlie Kirk

As a nurse working in a pre-release program, I have witnessed firsthand the challenges that individuals face when transitioning from incarceration back into the community. This period of transition can be filled with uncertainty and anxiety, making effective communication essential for fostering understanding and preventing conflict. Recent events involving individuals like Charlie Kirk have highlighted the importance of adopting non-violent communication (NVC) strategies in our daily interactions.

### Understanding Non-Violent Communication

Non-violent communication is a process developed by Marshall Rosenberg that emphasizes empathy, respect, and understanding. It encourages individuals to express their feelings and needs without blame or judgment, fostering a collaborative and supportive environment. As we navigate the complexities of reintegration, practicing NVC can help us build stronger relationships and resolve conflicts peacefully.

### Key Principles of Non-Violent Communication

- 1. Observation Without Evaluation:** When discussing sensitive topics, it is crucial to separate observations from evaluations. For example, instead of saying, "You always ignore my requests," try stating, "I noticed that my last three requests went unanswered." This approach reduces defensiveness and opens the door for constructive dialogue.
- 2. Expressing Feelings:** It's important to communicate our feelings honestly. Using "I feel" statements can help convey emotions effectively. For instance, "I feel anxious when I don't receive updates about my progress" invites empathy rather than defensiveness.
- 3. Identifying Needs:** Underneath our feelings are underlying needs. By articulating these needs clearly, we can create a shared understanding. For instance, "I need reassurance that I am on the right path" can facilitate a conversation about support and guidance.
- 4. Making Requests:** Instead of issuing demands, framing requests in a way that invites collaboration is essential. For example, "Would you be willing to check in with me weekly to discuss my progress?" encourages cooperation and mutual respect.

### Lessons from Charlie Kirk

Charlie Kirk's approach to engaging with youth exemplifies the power of open dialogue and the principles of non-violent communication. He actively invited participants from both sides of a topic to share their perspectives, fostering an environment where differing viewpoints could be discussed respectfully. By encouraging this exchange, he aimed not only to challenge preconceived notions, but also to cultivate understanding. Through active listening and expressing viewpoints, Charlie Kirk demonstrated that meaningful conversations can lead to personal growth and a deeper appreciation of diverse opinions. His example serves as a reminder that communication rooted in respect and openness can bridge divides and promote constructive learning experiences.

1. Empathy in Action: Charlie Kirk had moments where he felt unheard and misunderstood and so did his debate opponents. By prioritizing empathy in our conversations, we can foster an environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

2. Conflict Resolution: Learning from the mistakes of others, we can approach conflicts with a mindset geared toward resolution rather than escalation. Utilizing NVC tools allows us to navigate disagreements in a constructive manner.

3. Building Community: Transitioning into the community is not just about individual success; it's about building a supportive network. By practicing NVC, we can strengthen our community bonds and create a culture of understanding and cooperation.

## **Moving Forward**

As our residents transition into the community, I encourage everyone to embrace the principles of non-violent communication. By committing to open, respectful dialogue, we can navigate the complexities of reintegration with compassion and understanding. Let's learn from the courage and examples of Charlie Kirk, using their stories as catalysts for change in our own lives and communities.

In conclusion, the journey toward successful reintegration may be challenging, but with effective communication, we can create a brighter future for ourselves and those around us. Together, let us strive to build a community that values empathy, respect, and non-violence in every interaction.



**WE MUST FOREVER CONDUCT  
OUR STRUGGLE ON THE HIGH  
PLANE OF DIGNITY AND DISCIPLINE.  
WE MUST NOT ALLOW OUR  
CREATIVE PROTEST TO DEGENERATE  
INTO PHYSICAL VIOLENCE.**

**– MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**



# Representing Transition at its Best

---



## **Mack McMurray, from Compliance Officer to Correctional Treatment Specialist**

Thank you, Mack, for sharing your story. May we all be inspired by your integrity, compassion, and leadership.

*So, Mack, what is your background and in what ways has it led you to the Pre-Release?*

I retired from Active Duty in the Air Force in 2021 as a Pavements and Equipment guy. My career was blue collar, and I believe the work ethic required to succeed in a blue collar job translates well to any other field. Being in the military for my whole adult life led me to studying the social sciences in college, because I always enjoyed mentoring and guiding new troops. Because of that, I ultimately decided I wanted to help people after my military career.

*You started out here as a Compliance Officer; what did that mean for you in terms of your overall goals?*

I wanted to start at the base level and build from there. I wanted to know first-hand how it was to juggle all of the CO tasks and manage the campus.

*What were major challenges, if any?*

In my year as a CO, every day was a different challenge, but also an exciting opportunity to learn.

*What was rewarding about that position, if anything?*

I got a lot of internal motivation from my efforts to try and make a good team with my fellow CO's. It is a demanding job and knowing that your fellow CO's are willing to help and have your back is important. Building and maintaining a good team-based environment can make it easier to come to work every day.

*Do you think it helped prepare you for your current position as a CTS?*

If I had a chance to do it over, I would not have done anything different. It is great for me as a CTS to have the perspective of what the CO's go through.

*How would you describe the transition to a CTS? Challenges? Rewards?*

The transition to CTS is going well because we have a good group of fellow CTS's that are open to help me as I learn. There are challenges, but I try to think of those as opportunities to learn and grow. Helping the residents to get their life on track is by far the biggest reward of this work, and why I have never regretted my choice to pursue this career field.

*What experience(s) from your past have helped you the most in your current position?*

My time as a First Sergeant. It was a delicate mix of holding people accountable and helping them out, which is also a good description for many of the jobs here at the Pre-Release.

*What do you like most about being a CTS?*

The lunch breaks...kidding, don't tell the boss I said that. For real though, I look at the CTS role as a critical component of the recovery process for the residents, and I enjoy fulfilling that role for them and especially for their families as well.

*Is there anything else you would like to share?!*

We have a good group of employees here and I am honored to be a part of the team with all of you.

Again, thank you, Mack, for your candor and your kind and positive spirit. We are honored to be a part of the team with you as well!

---

## Speaking of CO's, a few of our latest and greatest would like to share a few things about themselves!



**Cassey Fassler,  
Compliance Officer**

What is your favorite holiday? *Christmas*

What is your favorite color? *purple*

What is the best meal you have ever eaten?  
*Chicken Alfredo*

What were your favorite classes in school?  
*English & History*

What is your favorite game/board game? *Risk*

Coffee, cocoa, or tea? *tea* ☕

What is your favorite movie? *The Blues Brothers*

If you were an animal, what would you be? *A Bulldog, so I can be lazy*

What is the most interesting place you have ever visited? *Las Vegas*

What excites you most about the future? *Retirement*

What is something simple that brings you peace? *Snow days* ❄️

If you could go anywhere, where would you go and why? *Japan, for its hot springs*





## Christina Neshem, Compliance Officer

What is your favorite holiday? *4<sup>th</sup> of July* 🎆

What is your favorite color? *purple*

Coffee, cocoa, or tea? *coffee* ☕

What is your favorite movie? *The Notebook*

What excites you most about the future? *Seeing my son grow into a wonderful young adult*

What is something simple that brings you peace?  
*The water, rivers, lakes, ocean*

If you could go anywhere, where would you go and why? *Norway, to see the Aura Borealis*



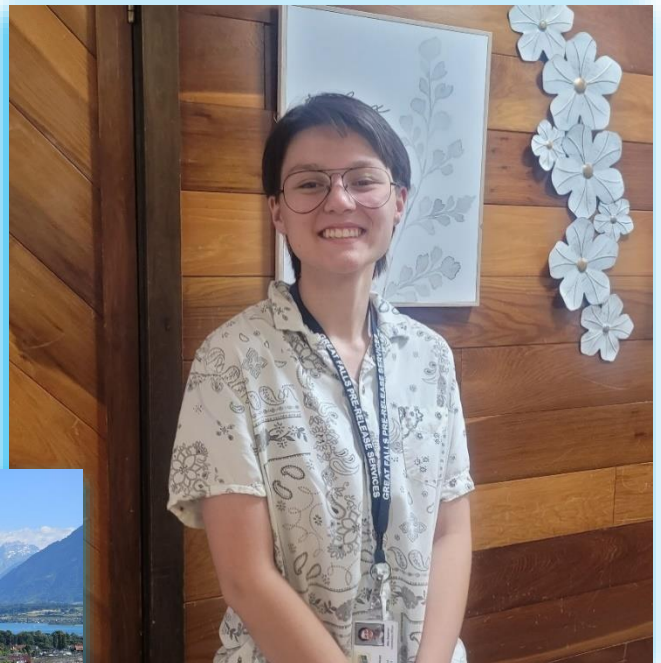
## Mia Shawver, Compliance Officer

What is your favorite game/board game? *Trivia!*

What are your favorite movies? *Reservoir Dogs & Fight Club*

What is the most interesting place you have ever visited? *Switzerland*

What is something simple that brings you peace?  
*My kitten and music*



# Charlene's Heavy Hand

By Sean Kostad

Charlene's got her apron tied too tight,  
She's barking orders from dawn to night.  
"More grease on the griddle, keep them biscuits hot,"  
She don't care if you're sweating, you're giving all you got.

[Chorus]

Oh, Charlene's heavy hand, it rules the pan,  
She don't take excuses, no "Ma'am, I can't."  
With a spatula scepter, she'll make her stand,  
The queen of the kitchen, Charlene's heavy hand.

[Verse 2]

The line cooks whisper when she ain't around,  
But the moment she's back, not a soul makes a sound.  
"Faster, boys, the clock don't stop,  
We're feeding the town till the last plate drops."

[Prechorus]

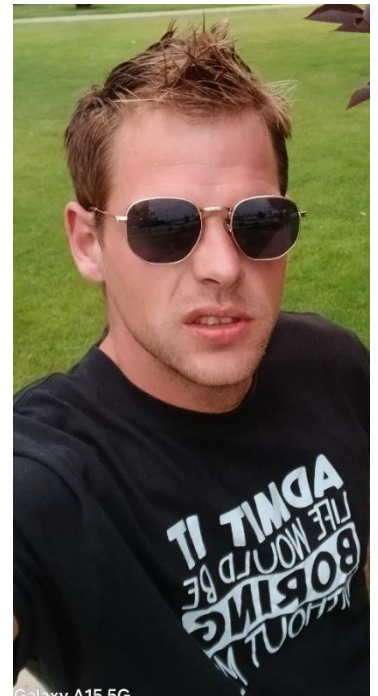
"Butter that cornbread, fry that ham,  
Or you'll wish you'd never crossed Charlene's land."

[Chorus]

Oh, Charlene's heavy hand, it rules the pan,  
She don't take excuses, no "Ma'am, I can't."  
With a spatula scepter, she'll make her stand,  
The queen of the kitchen, Charlene's heavy hand.

[Bridge]

Some say she's a tyrant, some call her tough,  
But her biscuits are gold, and her gravy's enough.  
She's built an empire on sweat and steam,  
A kitchen dictator with a diner dream.



Check out Sean's song here: Listen and make your own song with  
Suno.com <https://suno.com/s/3MBqtwzJ1jxDBDpn>



# Robin's Meditation Station

## SMART Goals

Setting goals guides your vision of the future that you want to create for yourself. Learning how to set goals the right way will give you the best chance of achieving your goals and making progress on the things that are most important in your life.

Here is a proven process on how to set goals to ensure you achieve them. You'll learn the importance of measurements and deadlines when setting goals and why you need exciting goals to make progress.

**SMART** goals are well-defined and unambiguous.

1. **Specific:** Clearly understand your desired outcome
  - It's essential to make your goals specific, not generic. Decide on the exact destination you want to reach and understand the difference achieving your goals will make.
  - Write your goals down. Writing down your goals forces you to clarify exactly what it is you want to accomplish.
2. **Measurable:** Your goal should have specific measurements attached to it
  - Without specific measurements, you have no destination and you can't track your progress
  - Make sure your goals are a number or an event, which gives you clarity on whether or not you have achieved them!
3. **Achievable:** Realistic and attainable
  - Break your goals down and think about the action steps you will take. Breaking down your goals into actionable steps ensures you think clearly about your goals and whether or not they are realistic.
  - Create your action plan so that you know exactly the steps you need to take to achieve them and then start taking action!
4. **Relevant:** Aligned with your purpose
  - Goal setting should be purposeful and intentional as goals are often the first step towards creating real change and transformation.
  - You give yourself a clear destination you want to reach.
  - Setting goals provides the framework to help you achieve your overarching future vision.
5. **Timely:** With a clearly defined timeline
  - Set goals with a deadline so that so that you know exactly the time frame in which you want to achieve them.

In conclusion, always decide on goals that you're motivated and excited to achieve. This is the best way to make sure you start taking actions towards achieving them!

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





## Shout-out to our Kitchen Staff and Leadership!

Our Kitchen Manager, Charlene Bonde, and Women's Staff Cook, Dawn Pierce, teamed up with our in-house Inmate Workers to help out with the local Optimist Club's annual Children's Cancer Drive. The Great Falls Pre-Release helps to sponsor this event by providing a prime rib dinner for local donors. During the event, several items are auctioned off, including leftover Prime Rib. We would like to offer a huge thank you for those who took time on the Saturday event to help make it possible!



**Jeff Barnhart**  
Facility Services Director

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

**Time to Shine!**

**September 2025**

## **The Artwork Showcase is Underway!**

Who is ready to bring a different kind of life to the Center grounds? We are officially kicking off an art drawing contest to produce a big glorious panorama for placement on the fence between the Center and our neighbors at the former Crash Repair. Please take a look at the instructions and grid below. Anyone is eligible to participate, including residents and staff. We will be accepting submissions through the month of October with a tentative selection reveal to be presented in our November 2025 newsletter. If you are interested and feel you need more time, by all means, let us know. We are eager to see what the creative minds of our entire community here can produce!

## LET'S SEE YOUR ART IN COLOR AND FOR EVERYONE TO ADMIRE

OK all you frustrated artists here's your chance to immortalize your art work for posterity (or at least until its painted over or blown away).

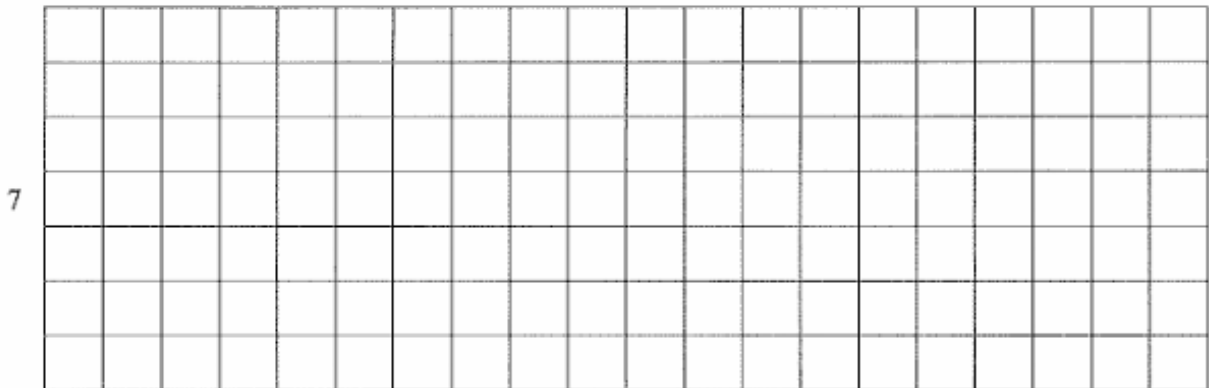
The West 7 ft high 40 ft long corrugated metal fence that separates us from the old Crash Repair building is a perfect pallet for some frustrated artist(s) to show their stuff.

You can call it a contest folks, because your suggested art will be judged by selected staff and residents. ANY MEDIUM – We will supply the paint

Before we entertain any perspective proposal it will need to meet certain criteria.

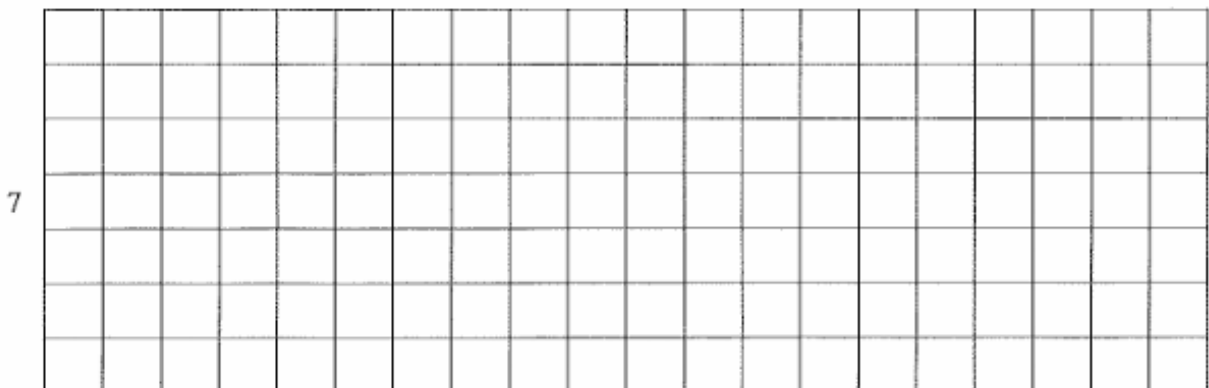
1. Must be tasteful (No graphic exhibition of the human form)
2. Must be esthetically pleasing to the eye. (No Jackson Pollock please)
3. May be culturally relevant to Montana (nature, nurture, fauna or flora or history?)
4. May evoke a sentiment or emotion by its overall presentation
5. Can be submitted by any staff or resident – can be a combined TEAM if necessary
6. Let's make it **original** art and **not** AI generated please.

20'



Since we have over 40' of fence, we can select two entries.

20'



Feel free to use this or your own paper to submit your suggestions.

# Fun and Games

## Teasers with a Twist crossword puzzle

### ACROSS

1. Narnia creator Lewis  
3. **Some time off?**  
9. Prepare to fire  
11. **How someone is feeling?**  
12. Root vegetable  
15. Imbibed  
17. **Vineyard vengeance?**  
22. Nestle close  
23. Carmex or Chapstick?

26. **Crime evidence? (corpus delicti)**

29. Stooge with bangs

30. **Exam schedule?**

31. Money or music abbr.

### DOWN

1. Moneymaker

2. Make a lap

4. Sports center

5. Not working

6. Pureeing need

7. "Kookie" Byrnes

8. Palindromic paddle boat

10. Atlas contents

13. Matched collection

14. "The worst!"

16. Increase with "up"

18. Time past

19. Harrison Ford role

20. Police alert

21. Russian pooch

22. Banana\_\_\_\_\_

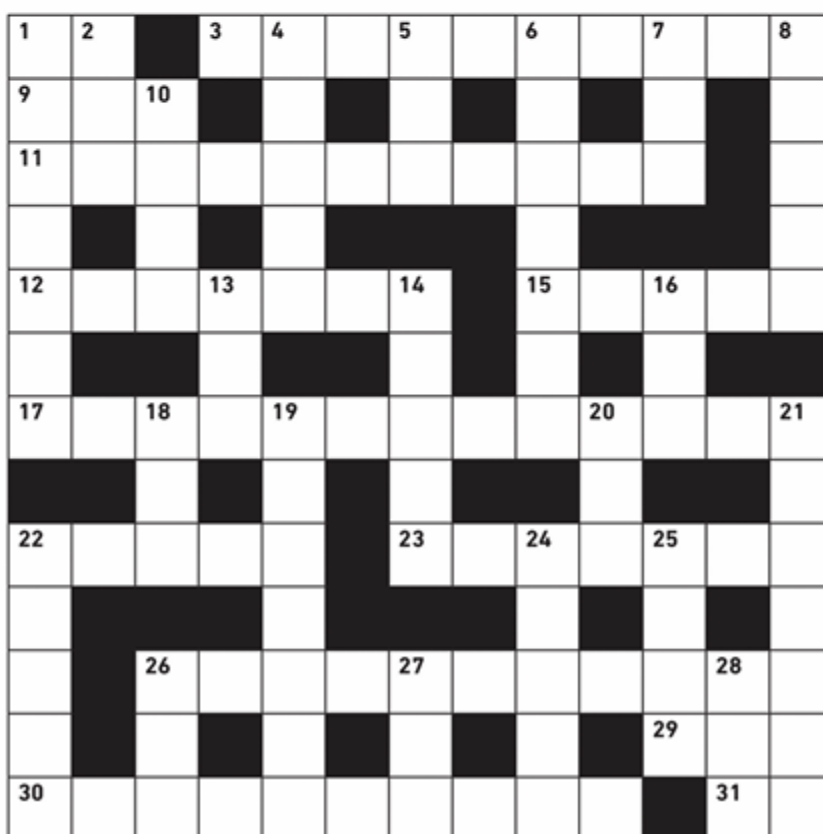
24. Clouds of smoke

25. Minuscule amount

26. Dawber or Grier

27. In good shape

28. Bespectacled dwarf





## Answer: Teasers with a twist crossword puzzle



<https://www.rd.com/list/printable-crossword-puzzles/> (Reader's Digest)



You are encouraged to submit original or meaningful texts, drawings, art, poetry, etc.

[sonja@gfprc.org](mailto:sonja@gfprc.org) or ext. 324

### PRE-RELEASE PRESS

Editor: Sonja Roberts



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