

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY INSIDER

DECEMBER 2024

ISSUE 432

MONTANA



Bitterroot
Montana State Flower

Board of County Commissioners

John Ostlund
Chair

Mark Morse
Member

Donald W. Jones
Member

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Commissioner Corner



I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and enjoyed the first snow of the season.

Employee Spotlight:

This month I would like to congratulate our newly elected and re-elected officials. Elected officials will be sworn in on December 31st at 9:30am in the Commissioners Board Room.

Newly Elected Officials:

Mike Waters

County Commissioner Dist. 3

Hank Peters

County Treasurer/Assessor/Supt. Of Schools

Re-Elected Officials:

Terry Halpin

Clerk of District Court

Judge Jessica Fehr

District Court Judge, Dist. 13, Dept. 1

Judge Donald Harris

District Court Judge, Dist. 13, Dept. 2

Judge Thomas Pardy

District Court Judge, Dist. 13, Dept. 3

Judge Colette Davies

District Court Judge, Dist. 13, Dept. 7

Judge Ashley Harada

District Court Judge, Dist. 13, Dept. 8

MetraPark has some great holiday events coming up this month.

Toys for Tots

December 8th-14th

MT Country Creations Craft Show

December 14th

Yule-Aissance

December 14th

Chase Hawks Memorial Rough Stock Rodeo

December 21st



Thank you all for your hard work this year and the great services you provide to the citizens of Yellowstone County. Have a Merry Christmas and I will see you all in the new year.

Sincerely,
John Ostlund, Chair



New Employees

Cody Coulter
Morgan Mills
Coltan Salminen
Cassandra Dunahee
Rowdy Egger
Courtney McFarland
 Detention Facility

Sean Tucker
 Information Tech

Eugene Gaertner
 Public Works

Jeremiah
Haubenreiser
Eric Giesick
 MetraPark

Allen McGee
Makayla Lucius
 Sheriff Office

Recognition of Service

**25 Years of Service**

Tina Taylor
 Youth Service Center
 12/01/1999

10Years of Service

Jordan Clark
 Detention Facility
 12/15/2014

Anja Silvesan
 Detention Facility
 12/22/2014

David Sanderlin
 Sheriff Office
 12/30/2014

*December Recipe***EASY** recipe**Leftover Turkey Caesar Wraps**

2 cups cooked turkey, chopped
 4 cups Romaine lettuce, torn to bite-sized pieces
 1 large tomato, diced
 ¼ cup croutons, coarsely chopped
 3 tbsp Parmesan cheese
 3 tbsp creamy Caesar dressing
 4 large whole-wheat tortillas



In a mixing bowl, add turkey, lettuce, tomato, croutons and Parmesan cheese. Coat with Caesar dressing and mix well. Add a quarter of the salad mixture to each of the four tortillas. Roll tightly and enjoy.

Makes 4 servings. Per serving: 382 calories | 41g protein | 10g total fat | 2g saturated fat
 4g mono fat | 3g poly fat | 31g carb | 4g sugar (0 added sugar) | 5g fiber | 543mg sodium

Sunshine News

December is a busy month with the Sunshine Committee.



We will be having a raffle with three different baskets.

It's time to deck the doors with Christmas Spirit for our best dressed door contest.

On December 20 we will be having treats and announcing the raffle winner and door contest winners.



The Yellowstone County Courthouse will be closed on December 25, 2024 in observance of Christmas, and



January 1, 2025
 in observance of
 New Year's Day

*Recognition of Service*

Clay Moore
 Road & Bridge
 06/01/1987 - 12/12/2024

Cheryl Steiner
 Detention Facility
 01/05/2004 - 12/16/2024

Tim Miller
 Public Works
 10/30/1989 - 12/20/2024

Paul Christopher
 Information Technology
 06/08/1992 - 12/31/2024

Donald Jones
 County Commissioner
 01/01/2019 - 12/31/2024

Marcien Paulson-Shafer
 Treasurer/Assessor/Supt. of Schools
 08/01/2023-12/31/2024

W-2's and 1095's

W-2's will be mailed to your home address on file with payroll by January 31, 2025.

Proof of insurance coverage (1095's) will be available by January 31, 2025. Trusiatic, the company contracted by Yellowstone County for ACA reporting requirements, will have information on how to electronically access your 1095. There will be more info in the January newsletter.

The Leadership Secrets of Santa Claus

Build a Wonderful Workshop

- Remember we serve the citizens of Yellowstone County
- Focus on people, as well as your purpose
- Let values be your guide

Make a List and Check it Twice

- Plan your work, prioritize
- Work your plan
- Make the most of what you have

Listen

- Open your ears to the issues at hand
- Pay attention to the customer
- Walk a while in their shoes

Get Beyond the Red Wagons

- Step out of your comfort zone and learn new things
- Take advantage of training opportunities
- Remember to always do your best

Share the Milk and Cookies

- Do right by those who do right
- Treat people like you want to be treated
- Smile 😊

Be Good for Goodness Sake

- Set the example
- Be prompt, courteous and helpful
- Remember that everything counts

Follow these “secrets” for great success.

Success follows when people come first.

We wish you all success and a good new year!

Happy Holidays,

Yellowstone County Human Resources

Dwight, LynnDee, Charri, Amy, Kasey & Mariea



Excerpt from: The Leadership Secrets of Santa Claus
Eric Harvey, David Cottrell, and Al Lucia at the Walk the Talk Company

Work Comp Claim FREE - Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following departments for **November**:

Clerk & Recorder/Auditor, Commissioners, County Attorney, District Court, Disaster & Emergency Services, Elections, Extension, Facilities, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology/GIS, Junk Vehicle, Justice Court, MetraPark, Motor Vehicle, Public Works, Road & Bridge, Treasurer, Weed, and Youth Service Center.

In November there were 5 claims filed: 3-Sheriff's Office; 2-Detention Facility



Keep Your Holiday Health on Track

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD



BEST bits

|| **Clear out the clutter.** This time of year, many people end up receiving more gifts than they can use. Do you have kids' toys, clothes you no longer wear, or gadgets and tools you have barely touched? Give them to a local charity. You'll declutter your home and have less stuff to deal with. You'll also make those goods available to someone in need. Or, if you could use some extra money, cash in on your clutter by selling new or gently used items at a garage sale, swap meet or online.

|| **Does cold weather make your joints hurt?** You aren't alone. Although arthritis can increase susceptibility to aches when temperatures drop, cold weather can make anyone's bones hurt. To ease the impact of cold weather on your body, dress in layers to stay warm. Do light exercise before you go out; this will lubricate and loosen stiff joints. Apply heating pads to painful areas when needed.

|| **Your T-zone — eyes, nose and mouth — is your primary port of entry for contagious infections,** including influenza, COVID-19, colds and pneumonia, as well as bacterial infections. Because we tend to touch our faces, eyes and noses multiple times every waking hour, we risk contracting infection from any germs on our hands. **Solution:** Wash your hands regularly and keep them off your T-zone.

The holiday season brings happy times with parties and family gatherings. But it can also bring gift shopping stress and changes to your regular eating habits. Take proactive steps to stay as healthy as possible while enjoying the holidays.

Holidays are the time of excess.

It's common to spend too much, drink too much and miss out on sleep. The good news is that you stay on track by being aware of your habits.

Listen to your appetite. It's fine to have a small serving of all your favorite holiday foods — that's a great part of social events. Just eat until you feel mildly full instead of way too full. Enjoy leftovers instead of overeating at any single meal.

Enjoy your usual meals and snacks.

Don't skip daily meals to save up the calories for the big party later. Eating well all day reduces overeating at the party.

Be active. Step away from the holiday hustle and bustle and go for a walk or do your preferred exercise.

Drink moderately. Moderate alcohol use is two drinks a day for men and one drink for women. Consistently drinking above this amount increases the risk of several chronic diseases, including heart disease and cancer.

Set a budget and stick to it. The health of your finances is important, too. Holiday stress — including credit card debt and finding the perfect gift — can be exhausting, lower immunity to viruses and trigger headaches. Stressed trying to find the perfect present? Send gift cards.

Get enough sleep. Give yourself permission to say no to extra activities when you are tired. Take a nap and aim for seven to nine hours of sleep per night.



"There are three ways to ultimate success: The first way is to be kind. The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind."

—Mister Rogers

Holiday Gifts and Disaster Preparedness

All disasters have one thing in common: they remind us of the importance of pre-disaster preparedness. There is no time like the holidays to start, by *resolving to be ready* before disaster strikes.



Gifts that can save lives are a wonderful way of saying “I want you to be safe!” Some emergency and preparedness items that might make great gifts this holiday season include:

- Portable, battery powered radio with NOAA Weather Radio channels, and extra batteries
- Fire blankets
- Flashlights
- Battery powered lantern
- Enrollment in a CPR or first-aid class
- GPS units for vehicles
- Emergency generators
- Emergency cell phones
- Carbon Monoxide and Smoke detectors
- Appropriate fire extinguishers (kitchen, garage, car)
- Disaster kits or disaster kit items for homes, offices and autos (first aid kits, food, water and prescription medications for 72 hours, eyeglasses, extra clothing, blankets, fire blanket, flashlights, spare batteries, heavy-duty work gloves, and sturdy pair of shoes)
- Emergency escape ladders for second-story exit in a fire
- Car kits (emergency flares, shovels, ice scrapers, flashlights and fluorescent distress flags)
- Pet Disaster kits (food, water, leashes, dishes and carrying case or crate)
- A camp stove with extra fuel
- The gift of a gardener to cut back combustible vegetation from wildfire-vulnerable homes
- National Flood Insurance

Retirement Alert

Cheryl Steiner with the Yellowstone County Detention Facility will be retiring on December 16th after 20 years of service.

Clay Moore with Road & Bridge will be retiring on December 12th after 37 years of service.

Tim Miller with Public Works will be retiring on December 20th after 35 years of service.

We wish Cheryl, Clay and Tim all the best in their retirement. In appreciation for all that you have done, we all want to thank you for your dedication to the County. With decades of work behind you, now is the time to enjoy the next adventure in life.

Congratulations!



L-R: Sheriff Linder, Cheryl Steiner, Captain Smart



L-R: Tim Miller, Clay Moore

Sit All Day? How to Prevent These Common Problems



Low Back Pain

Get some support. The length of your back should reach the back of your chair to help you sit upright. If there's a gap, use a lumbar pillow for cushioning to help prevent yourself from collapsing forward or backward into poor posture. Also, make sure your feet are resting flat on the floor, with your thighs parallel to the ground. You want to avoid having your feet dangling off your chair. Otherwise, the weight of your leg isn't supported, which puts more strain on your back. Using a foot stool can help nix the discomfort.

Abdominal exercises, such as crunches, two to three times a week can strengthen your core. That takes pressure off your back and makes it easier to maintain good posture.

Wrist Strain

When you're using the keyboard or mouse, hold your wrists naturally so they're floating horizontally in the air—not perched higher than your hands or resting on your desk. Also, get a wrist rest for your keyboard and mouse and use it to take occasional breaks over the course of the day. The key word there is rest.

Neck and Shoulder Pain

Station the computer monitor directly in front of you—not angled to the side, which forces your neck into an awkward position. If you're on the phone frequently, use a headset rather than cradling the phone between your ear and shoulder, which can cause muscle strain. Use a chair with adjustable arm rests that allow your elbows to form a 90-degree angle. The arm rest

and the arm angle help take tension off the shoulders.

Good posture is also a longer term solution. Try using an app that helps you work on improving your posture, like [PostureZone](#), which is free.

Eye Strain

The [Occupational Safety & Health Administration](#) recommends ensuring that your computer monitor is 20 to 40 inches away from you so it's not too close or too far from where you're sitting. The top of the computer monitor should be roughly at eye level. You can also place a filter over your monitor to reduce glare, which contributes to eye strain.

If you wear glasses at work, do a ballpark measurement of the space between your eyes and the computer monitor. Then check with your optometrist to make sure you have the right prescription for that distance.

Tight Hips

Stand up from your desk at regular intervals to give your muscles a break and increase circulation. In a perfect world, get up from your desk every 20 to 30 minutes. Your body has to move. Try using a free app, such as [Stand Up!](#) or [Break Reminder](#), that lets you set a recurring timer to remind you to get up at certain intervals over the course of the day.

You've ergonomically modified your workspace, taken the breaks, and done the stretches, but you still have pain? Make an appointment to visit with your primary care provider;;

Thank You for Your Service

Commissioner Donald Jones is finishing up his term with Yellowstone County. When we asked Don about his time with the County, he said, “it has been his pleasure and honor to serve the citizens and employees of Yellowstone County.”

We want wish Don all the best in retirement. Now Don can look back on decades of public service with satisfaction on a job well done and look ahead with anticipation to this next stage of life. Congratulations!



Gift Card Shopping Savvy

Gift cards are an easy choice if you need ideas for that special someone. Use these tips for giving gift cards as presents:

- ❶ **Read the fine print.** Does the card have an expiration date? Does the card have a monthly fee if not used over time?
- ❷ **Buy from reputable sources.** Stick to large, well-known retail chains or companies when buying gift cards. Doing so will steer you away from buying fake or expired cards. Avoid auction sites or discounted sites, where verifying authenticity is a challenge.
- ❸ **Keep your receipts.** Ask for a gift receipt to give with the card and keep your receipt as well. This will give you and the recipient proof of purchase if issues arise with the card.
- ❹ **Inspect the card before you buy it.** Has the code covering been scratched off, or is the card packaging damaged? Barcodes are targeted, too. Scammers take empty cards from a store, cover the barcode with a sticker and then repackage the card. That sticker has a barcode linked to a card the scammer owns. When you add money at checkout, that money goes to the scammer's card instead.
- ❺ **Make sure the person who's getting the card uses it.** Surprisingly, some people don't. Millions of dollars go unspent each year on unused gift cards. Give them a card you know they'll use, such as their favorite grocery store or restaurant.
- ❻ **Know what to do if the card is lost or stolen.** Treat gift cards as cash. However, some companies may offer replacement cards if they can trace card numbers and verify remaining balances.

— Jamie Lynn Byram, PhD, CFP, AFC, MBA

TIP of the MONTH

Raw Dough Warning

Most people know that they should not eat raw cookie dough due to the risk of food poisoning. Raw eggs in cookie batter may contain Salmonella, a harmful bacterium that can cause vomiting and diarrhea. But did you know that raw wheat flour can be as harmful as raw eggs? Flour needs to be baked before being consumed, since heat kills germs like E. coli and Salmonella. **Bottom line:** Bake your cookie batter, and only eat raw cookie dough if it is made with pasteurized raw eggs and heat-treated flour.



STUDY: Friendship and Healthy Aging

Socializing with friends regularly can boost health through the years. In fact, in-person, quality friendships can promote health benefits, including longevity, comparable to those associated with the Mediterranean diet, according to several recent studies.

The research comes at a time when many people are trading in-person friend visits for socializing online. But it could be healthier to see friends in real life, especially as we age. University of British Columbia researchers collected information from 13,000 volunteers, all older than 50 years old, to see how many friends the study participants had and how they interacted with their buddies. The results revealed that during four years, face-to-face get-togethers at least once a week were strongly linked to better physical and mental health.



EXPERT advice

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD

Q: What is RSV?

A: Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common cause of respiratory tract infections. It can infect the upper respiratory tract and lungs of both children and adults. The symptoms are typically mild and self-limiting in most adults and older children.

Some people are susceptible to more severe disease, such as breathing problems that can lead to hospitalization. Infants younger than 12 months, especially premature babies, are more vulnerable. So are older adults and people with chronic heart or lung conditions. In addition, people of any age with a weak immune system may get sicker from RSV.

An RSV vaccine can help prevent more serious disease. The CDC recommends the vaccine for the following:

- Everyone 75 years of age or older.
- People ages 60 to 74 with certain chronic health conditions, such as chronic heart or lung disease.
- Adults who live in nursing homes.
- Pregnant women at 32 to 36 weeks to prevent RSV in their infants during the first six months after birth.

Thank You!

Marci Shafer will be leaving Yellowstone County on December 31, 2024.

Marci was appointed as the County Treasurer/Supt. of Schools/Assessor to fill the remaining term of the previous treasurer who retired mid-term.

We want to thank Marci for her service to Yellowstone County and its citizens. Enjoy your retirement!



Too Stressed to Think?

By Eric Endlich, PhD

You may have heard that chronic stress can be bad for your blood pressure and other health measures. But did you know it can impact your ability to think clearly, too?

Brain fog is a common complaint among those who experience a great deal of anxiety. A recent study found that when stress levels are higher, ability to recall items tends to be lower. The body's built-in emergency response, triggered by stress, primes us to make simple split-second decisions (e.g., fight or flight) but is not well-suited to more complex mental tasks.

Brain fog symptoms include:

- Forgetting what you were planning to do next.
- Completing tasks more slowly.
- Frequent distraction.
- Tiredness while working.
- Difficulty recalling words.
- Disorganization.
- Confusion.

Naturally, if your symptoms don't improve or if you are concerned, it's a good idea to consult your health care provider to rule out any nutrient deficiencies or other medical conditions that could be affecting your mental functioning.

Strategies to manage stress and brain fog include:

- Getting good-quality nourishment, sufficient hydration, adequate sleep and regular exercise.



Designate a worry time when you can jot down your concerns in a journal, and put it away until the next scheduled time.

- Taking breaks from challenging activities.
- Reaching out to friends, loved ones or mental health professionals for support.
- Learning a relaxation technique, such as deep breathing, meditation or guided imagery.
- Practicing mindfulness by focusing on what your senses can perceive right now.
- Using organizational tools to improve time and task management.

Watch for Black Ice. Black ice can look like a wet road, but if you see vehicles in front of you skidding or notice tire skid marks or shiny spots, slow down. Here are some tips if you encounter black ice:

- ➔ **Brake** with care. If you start skidding, apply firm pressure on your brakes to activate the anti-lock brake system (ABS). If your vehicle doesn't have ABS, gently pump the brakes.
- ➔ **Remove** your foot from the accelerator and coast across the ice until you regain traction.
- ➔ **Shift** to a lower gear if feasible.
- ➔ **Try** to keep the steering wheel straight. If you start to skid, steer in the direction of the skid if your back end is sliding. If it's your front end, steer in the opposite direction.
- ➔ **Remove** all distractions, including mobile phones — you need to fully focus on driving.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Deputy or Senior Deputy County Attorney-\$84,000.00-\$108,161.00 per year

Detention Officer-\$24.07 per hour

IT Support Specialist—\$21.74 per hour

Juvenile Care Worker—\$23.87 per hour

Legal Assistant-\$21.74 per hour

Purchasing Agent-\$73,814.00-\$86,840.00 per year

Senior Secretary - 19.72 per hour

Deputy Public Works Director - \$96,780 - \$113,859 per year

To apply for any of the open positions listed above, you can scan the QR code or visit the career page at www.governmentjobs.com/careers/yellowstonecountymt

