

# YELLOWSTONE COUNTY INSIDER

JANUARY 2025

ISSUE 433

MONTANA



Bitterroot  
Montana State Flower

## Board of County Commissioners

Mark Morse  
Chair

John Ostlund  
Member

Michael Waters  
Member

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## Commissioner Corner



Happy New Year everyone. I hope everyone had a great Christmas and spent some time with family and friends. The Commissioners have changed the times of our meetings for the new year. We will follow the schedule below.

### Monday's

8:15 a.m. Calendar  
9:00 a.m. Commissioner Discussion

### Tuesday's

8:45 a.m. Agenda Setting  
9:00 a.m. Regular Commissioner Board Meeting

Yellowstone County's mid-year budget review will take place on Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners Board Room.

Yellowstone County is enacting changes to our account password requirements. These changes went into effect on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>. Passwords will be required to change every ninety days and the following requirement will need to be followed:

- Must be a minimum of 12 characters (Think of using phrases here that you can remember)
- Must be a combination of alpha and numeric and special characters
- Must have a reuse history of 24 passwords
- Must have at least 4 characters changed from the last password

MetraPark has some great events coming up to start off the new year.

The Great Rockies Sport Show	January 17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup>
Fusion Fight League	January 18 <sup>th</sup>
Billings Wedding Fair	January 19 <sup>th</sup>
Camping World RV Show	January 24 <sup>th</sup> -26 <sup>th</sup>
Building & Remodeling Expo	January 24 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>
Chamber Ag Appreciation Celebration	January 31 <sup>st</sup>

Thank you all for the work you do for Yellowstone County. I look forward to another great year in 2025.

Sincerely,  
Mark Morse, Chair

## The Great Rockies Sportshow



*New Employees*



**Michael Waters**  
County Commissioner

**Tyler Fuss**  
Detention Facility

**Marina Tucker**  
County Attorney

**Caleb Staudinger**  
Road & Bridge

**Matthew Kessler**  
Finance

**Kirstie Bromenshenk**  
Election Dept.

**Sasha Jasper**  
Sheriff Office

**Chaelene Massey**  
Youth Services

\*\*\*\*\*



*Recognition of Service*  
**20 Years of Service**

**James Ellis**  
Sheriff Office  
1/31/2005

&

Happy Retirement to  
Officer James Ellis  
1/31/2005 - 1/31/2025



**TIP of the MONTH**

**Make a Change**

Kick off the New Year with some **healthful nutrition swaps**. Pick one change to start with; then add another once you become adjusted to the first. Here are some changes you can try:

- Swap sweet beverages for water.
- Replace refined grains with whole grains.
- Have beans instead of meat once a week.
- Add an extra serving of vegetables to your day.
- Try a fruit you've never had before.

**Vegetable Bean Chili**

- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp chili powder, or more to taste
- 3 bell peppers, any color, seeded and diced
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 can (19 oz.) mixed beans or kidney beans
- ¼ cup tomato paste + 1 cup water
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup freshly chopped cilantro or parsley
- 1 lime, quartered

**Add** olive oil to a stockpot placed over medium heat. **Add** onion, garlic and chili powder, and cook 3 minutes.

**Add** bell peppers, jalapeño, beans, tomato paste, water, corn and salt. **Cook** about 10-15 minutes to soften peppers. **Serve** topped with cilantro and a squeeze of fresh lime.



**Makes 4 servings. Per serving:** 246 calories | 11g protein | 5g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 3g mono fat | 1g poly fat | 42g carbohydrate | 8g sugar | 12g fiber | 466mg sodium

**Sunshine News**



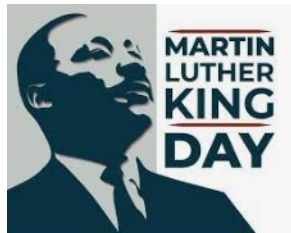
The Sunshine Committee wants to thank everyone for all your support with our events.

Be sure to look for lots of fun events in the months to come.



The Yellowstone County Courthouse will be closed on

January 20, 2025 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



**Be Kindness**

**As the world fights to figure everything out, I'll be holding doors for strangers, letting people cut in front of me in traffic, saying good morning, keeping babies entertained in grocery lines, stopping to talk to someone who is lonely, tipping generously, waving at police, sharing food, giving children a thumbs-up, being patient with sales clerks, smiling at passersby, and buying a stranger a cup of coffee.**

**WHY? Because I will not stand to live in a world where love is invisible. Join me in showing kindness, understanding, and judging less. Be kind to a stranger, give grace to friends who are having a bad day, be forgiving with yourself. If you can't find kindness, BE kindness.**

**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. Trusiac, the company contracted by Yellowstone County for ACA reporting requirements, will have information on how to electronically access your 1095. There is more info on how to sign up for electronic 1095's on page 7 of this newsletter.





## Sheriff Office Promotions

On January 7th, 2025 Yellowstone County Sheriff Mike Linder recognized (4) promotions, within the Sheriff's Office, at the Board of County Commissioners meeting.

Please join us in congratulating:

- Deputy Smith on her promotion to Detective
- Deputy Firebaugh on his promotion to Corporal
- Corporal Osborne on his promotion to Sergeant
- YCDF Booking Clerk Goodyear on her promotion to YCDF Senior Booking Clerk

Congratulations everyone and best of luck in your new roles!



Pictured with Sheriff Linder are on the left, Deputy Smith; top right, Corporal Firebaugh; bottom right, Senior Booking Clerk Goodyear.

### Congratulations!

Congratulations to Deputy Council on receiving the 2024 DUI Task Force Award of Merit. Deputy Council was recognized and presented the award during the DUI Angel Tree ceremony on December 19, 2024.




## Work Comp Claim FREE - Congratulations!



Congratulations to the following departments for **December**: Clerk & Recorder/Auditor, Commissioners, County Attorney, District Court, Disaster & Emergency Services, Extension, Facilities, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology/GIS, Junk Vehicle, Justice Court, MetraPark, Motor Vehicle, Public Works, Road & Bridge, Treasurer, and Weed.

**In December there were 7 claims filed: 1-Elections; 2-Sheriff's Office; 3-Detention Facility; 1-Youth Service Center**

# January 23 is Mental Health Awareness Day Did you know your employer provides an EAP Program?



**Help, when you need it most**

With your Employee Assistance Program and Work/Life Balance services, confidential assistance is as close as your phone or computer.



### EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Your EAP is designed to help you lead a happier and more productive life at home and at work. Call for confidential access to a Licensed Professional Counselor\* who can help you.

#### A Licensed Professional Counselor can help you with:

- Stress, depression, anxiety
- Relationship issues, divorce
- Anger, grief and loss
- Job stress, work conflicts
- Family and parenting problems
- And more



### WORK/LIFE BALANCE

You can also reach out to a specialist for help with balancing work and life issues. Just call and one of our Work/Life Specialists can answer your questions and help you find resources in your community.

#### Ask our Work/Life Specialists about:

- Child care
- Elder care
- Financial services, debt management, credit report issues
- Identity theft
- Legal questions
- Even reducing your medical/dental bills!
- And more

#### Who is covered?

Unum's EAP services are available to all eligible partners and employees, their spouses or domestic partners, dependent children, parents and parents-in-law.

#### Always by your side

- Expert support 24/7
- Convenient website
- Short-term help
- Referrals for additional care
- Monthly webinars
- Medical Bill Saver™ — helps you save on medical bills

#### Help is easy to access:

**Phone support:** 1-800-854-1446

**Online support:** [unum.com/lifebalance](http://unum.com/lifebalance)

**In-person:** You can get up to three visits, available at no additional cost to you with a Licensed Professional Counselor. Your counselor may refer you to resources in your community for ongoing support.



# The BCBSMT App!



Stay connected with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana (BCBSMT) and access important health benefit information wherever you are.

- Find an in-network doctor, hospital or urgent care facility
- Access your claims, coverage and deductible information
- View and email your member ID card
- Log in securely with your fingerprint
- Access Health Care Accounts and Health Savings Accounts
- Download and share your Explanation of Benefits\*
- Get Push Notifications and access to Message Center\*

Text\*\* **BCBSMTAPP** to **33633** to get the app.

\* Currently only available on iPhone®. iPhone is a registered trademark of Apple Inc.  
\*\* Message and data rates may apply. Terms and conditions and privacy policy at [bcbsmt.com/mobile/text-messaging](http://bcbsmt.com/mobile/text-messaging)



[bcbsmt.com/mobile](http://bcbsmt.com/mobile)

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association 351455.1117

## Thank You for Working Safely!

The Board of County Commissioners would like to thank all the employees for their dedication to their jobs and working safely.

Safety does pay in many ways and to show their appreciation, the Commissioners have decided to give every regular full-time and regular part-time employee a personal First Aid Kit.



Again, thank you for taking safety seriously and helping to keep the number of work comp claims to a minimum.

Kits will be distributed to departments starting next week. HR will notify the department heads when the First Aid Kits are ready for pickup. Please be patient as HR gets the kits ready for everyone.

**YELLOWSTONE COUNTY INSIDER**







## Get Moving!

Exercise is potent medicine. It can enhance the way you look and feel and help you manage your weight. Most notably, being active helps you stay healthy and live a longer life. Science has proven that active people are less likely to develop major illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes and colon cancer. Being inactive raises your risk of heart attack or stroke by two times, which is the same amount as smoking.

However, **recent studies show that people in the United States are sitting a lot more since the COVID-19 pandemic.** Exercise may not feel like a priority right now, but it is important to stay active. Exercise relieves stress, helps reduce anxiety and depression and boosts your immune system.

Many people think only vigorous exercise counts. But there is strong proof that moderate activity also provides health benefits and prevents illnesses; for example:

- Break up sitting time by getting up and walking for at least 2–3 minutes every hour.
- Walk outside if you can maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from others.
- Do vigorous housework like vacuuming and sweeping or cleaning out the garage.
- Follow an online exercise class.

Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity every week (or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity) with two sessions of strength building activities per week. That's about 30 minutes of movement, five times per week. It's also okay to break it up. Two 15-minute workouts or three 10-minute workouts can benefit you just as much.

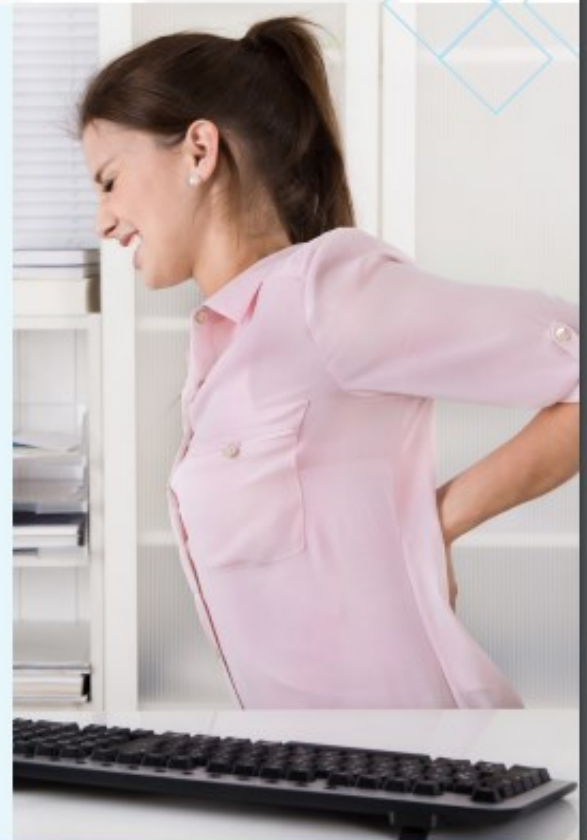
## Being Sedentary Can Increase Back Pain

Need another reason to get moving? Sedentary behavior (sitting for hours each day) can lead to chronic back pain as the back becomes stiff, weak, and deconditioned. As the pain increases, many people reduce their activity and exercise levels, creating a vicious circle of back pain and deterioration of the spine.

Here are some steps you can take for a healthy back:

- **Move.** If you are in pain, this may be the last thing you feel like doing, but it's one of the best things you can do to strengthen your back.
- **Keep good posture.** Pay attention to the way you hold your back when you sit, stand, walk, sleep, or do day-to-day activities. Good posture is when all the bones in your spine are correctly aligned. Poor posture can leave your back stiff and tense. This often leads to back pain.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight can increase strain on your lower back, especially as you age. Follow your doctor's recommendations for diet and exercise and aim to keep your weight within a healthy range for your height.
- **Relax.** Back pain can be linked to stress, tension, and other non-physical problems. Yoga, meditation, massages and acupuncture are a few ways to help lift your mood, stretch your muscles, and help you relax.

If you have chronic pain for four weeks or more, see your doctor!





# Electronic 1095-C Forms

Dear Employees of Yellowstone County,

Trusaic is excited to announce that they are offering electronic 1095-C distribution for the 2024 Reporting year!

### Why use electronic distribution?

Employees can access their forms faster and store their forms online. Employees are able to manage their own paperless preferences, and no additional work is required to maintain 'opt-in' preferences. These forms will also meet accessibility standards for persons with disabilities as well. Finally, online forms reduce paper waste and benefit the environment.

### How can employees access their forms?

Navigate to: <https://1095c.trusaic.com/>  
Select "New to the site? Get Started!"  
Register with your SSN and address.

**The company code is IC6199**

Note: The form becomes available after January 31, 2025. Employees that don't "opt-in" will receive the 1095-C in the mail.



# Welcome to Our Newly Elected Officials

We want to welcome and congratulate our newly elected officials! Congratulations go out to Michael Waters the new County Commissioner and Hank Peters the new Treasurer/Supt. of Schools/Assessor. Terry Halpin was elected to serve another term as Clerk of District Court. Mark Morse took over as the commission chairperson on January 1st.



Hank Peters being sworn in as the new Treasurer.



Michael Waters being sworn in as the new commissioner by Judge Brett Linneweber



Commissioners John Ostlund & Mark Morse, new commission chair.



Terry Halpin being sworn in for another term as Clerk of District Court.



## Protect Your Eyesight

It's important to have an annual eye exam to allow your doctor to identify medical conditions, such as glaucoma or age-related macular degeneration, before they become serious.

According to the World Health Organization, glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness around the world. Glaucoma is a disease that damages your eye's optic nerve. It usually happens when fluid builds up in the front part of your eye. That extra fluid increases the pressure in your eye, damaging the optic nerve. But blindness from glaucoma can often be prevented with early treatment.

Many forms of glaucoma have no warning signs. The effect is so gradual that you may not notice a change in vision until the condition is at an advanced stage. The signs and symptoms of glaucoma vary depending on the type and stage of your condition.

### January Is National Glaucoma Awareness Month

Find out more about this sight-stealing disease by going to [glaucoma.org](http://glaucoma.org).

Open-angle glaucoma	Acute angle-closure glaucoma*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patchy blind spots in your side (peripheral) or central vision, frequently in both eyes</li> <li>Tunnel vision in the advanced stages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Severe headache</li> <li>Eye pain</li> <li>Nausea and vomiting</li> <li>Blurred vision</li> <li>Halos around lights</li> <li>Eye redness</li> </ul>

\* If you have any of the symptoms of acute angle-closure glaucoma listed above, go to an emergency room or an eye doctor's (ophthalmologist's) office right away.

## Want Better Health and Well-being? Practice Gratitude

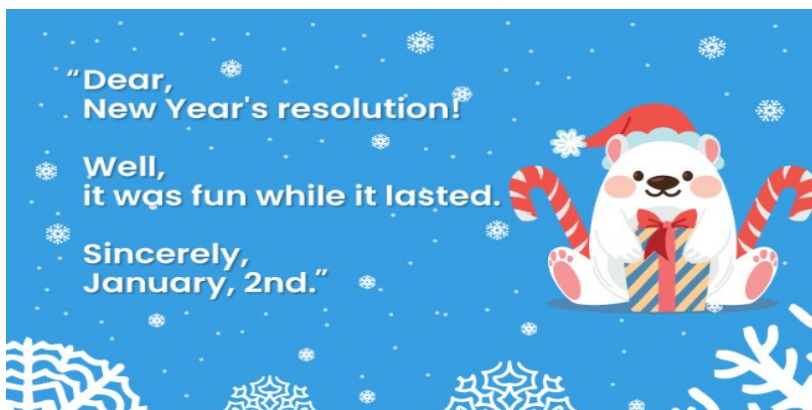
Did you know that science shows that people who cultivate a habit of gratitude are happier, have increased mental strength, build a stronger immune system—and are more likely to be successful?

One effective way to incorporate this practice into your life is to **start a gratitude journal. Each morning or evening**, take 5–10 minutes (or at least 3 times a week) to jot down at least 3 things you are grateful for that day.

Here are some ideas to get you started.

- What is something that made you smile today?
- What is a favorite memory of a loved one?
- List something silly your kids did today.
- Describe a family tradition that you are most grateful for.
- Look out the window, what's something you're grateful for outside?
- What is something you're looking forward to?

There are no rules, so write whatever makes you happy. Enjoy and be well!







# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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

Deputy Sheriff - \$31.33 per hour

Detention Officer-\$24.07 per hour

District Court Clerk - \$17.93 per hour

Juvenile Care Worker - \$23.87 per hour

Legal Assistant-\$21.74 per hour

Pretrial Risk Assessment Assistant - \$21.74 per hour

Seasonal Weed Control Technician - \$17.00 per hour



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](http://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/yellowstonecountymt)

