

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY INSIDER

MARCH 2024

ISSUE 423

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

Spring is right around the corner with the first day being Tuesday, March 19th. Don't forget to set your clocks forward on March 10th.

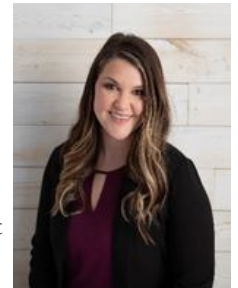


Employee Spotlight:

Darcie Tempel has worked at MetraPark for 8 years and over the years has become an instrumental part of Metra's operations. Below is Darcie's bio so you can hear about all of the wonderful things she is doing at MetraPark. Thank you Darcie and the rest of Metra for all of your hard work.

I was born and raised in Billings, MT. I graduated from University of Montana in 2014 with a double bachelor's in management and marketing with a Certificate in Entertainment Management. I am back at the University of Montana completing the MBA program and will graduate in Spring 2024!

I then began as an intern at the MontanaFair in 2014, and now I'm the Marketing & Sales Coordinator here at MetraPark/MontanaFair and have been here 8 years full time. I love working in the events industry. I love how an event can bring a community together to share an experience. I also enjoy how different it is every day there's always something new!



I was recently awarded Billings' 40 Under 40 for 2024. I am currently sitting on the Board of Trustees for the Yellowstone Art Museum; I am the secretary for the Young Professionals Group with Rocky Mountain Association of Fairs (RMAF). I am a part of the Marketing and Sponsorship Committees for International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE), I'm also a part of the Billings Chamber's NextGen program.

Some of my favorite things are being with my family, watching my son, Kasen, grow too quickly, and managing the chaos of having 3 dogs (2 German shepherds and springer spaniel). I enjoy camping, being on the boat or out on the golf course in the sunshine in the summer.

MetraPark has a busy month of shows and events happening;

Journey w/ Very Special Guest ToTo	March 13 th
Montana RV and Boat Show	March 14 th – March 17 th
Montana State AAU Wrestling Tournament	March 15 th – March 17 th
Spotlight Dance	March 15 th – March 17 th
Jobs Jamboree	March 20 th
Montana Open Wrestling	March 22 nd – March 24 th
RMEF Beartooth Chapter Banquet	March 23 rd
YVEC Annual Meeting	March 26 th
Rescued and Reclaimed	March 29 th – March 30 th
Big Air Bash	March 30 th
Big Sky Reptile Expo	March 30 th – March 31 st



Thank you all for the hard work you do for Yellowstone County. Have a happy St. Patrick's Day Sincerely, John Ostlund, Chairman; Board of County Commissioners

New Employees



- Colton Nelson
David Phillips
Crystal Underwood
Dylan Shoop
Detention Facility
- Alexander Wilson
County Attorney
- Adam Johnson
Rochele Wilson
Youth Services

- Kimberly Peterson
Susan Mattison
Justice Court
- Alexander Wilson
County Attorney
- Pamela Schlosser
Motor Vehicle
- Joseph Lind
Warren Sherner
MetraPark

Nicole Todd
District Court

Recognition of Service



25 Years of Service

Jeff Seward
MetraPark
3/15/1999

20 Years of Service

Theresa Reitz
County Commissioners
3/8/2004



March Recipe

Egg and Vegetable Fried Rice

EASY recipe

- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 6 eggs, whisked
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 cup frozen shelled edamame
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 cups cooked and cooled brown rice
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- 3 tbsp sodium-reduced soy sauce
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil



Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in large pan over medium heat. Add egg, scramble until cooked and remove to a plate. Add remaining olive oil, then add carrots, onion, edamame, peas and garlic. Sauté 6-7 minutes until onion and carrots soften. Add cooked rice, green onions and soy sauce. Stir to combine and cook about 3 minutes to heat rice through. Add eggs and sesame oil. Stir to combine and serve warm.

Makes 4 servings. Per serving: 410 calories | 19g protein | 17g total fat | 4g saturated fat | 8g mono fat | 4g poly fat | 48g carbohydrate | 5g sugar (0g added sugar) | 6g fiber | 523mg sodium

SUNSHINE NEWS



It's time for our annual, Pot of Gold, 50/50 Raffle!

Tickets will go on sale starting Monday, March 11th.

We will be selling tickets all week. Details to follow in an email on Monday, March 11th.

Also, look for a special email later in the month about Easter fun!



The Empower 457 Plan Representative, Corrine Moncada, will be here on March 12, 2024

From: 9:30 am to 4:30 pm - Room 212

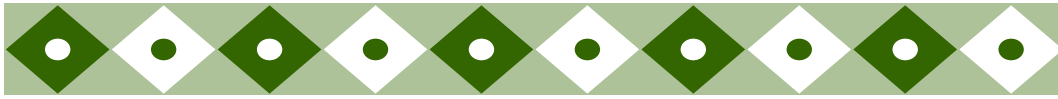
Want to talk about your financial future? Schedule a consultation today.

[Book Appointment \(empowermytime.com\)](http://empowermytime.com)

GRADUATION ALERT!!!

Please join us in congratulating Officers Mulder, Mills, Kinder, and Robbins on their graduation from CDOB at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy!





Take the Type 2 Test This Month

The fourth Tuesday in March is Diabetes Alert Day, when the American Diabetes Association encourages everyone to take a quick Type 2 Diabetes Risk Test.

Among the 37.3 million Americans who have diabetes, 1 in 5 are unaware that they have it. And about 96 million adults have prediabetes, with more than 8 in 10 of those people being unaware of it.

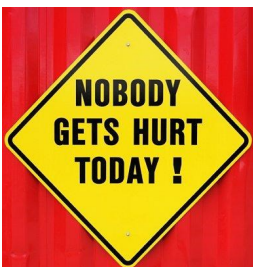
Prediabetes is a serious condition that not only increases your risk of developing type 2 diabetes, but also puts you at higher risk of heart disease and stroke. The early signs of type 2 diabetes can be so mild you may not notice them. Some people don't find out they have diabetes until the disease has already caused long-term damage.

The good news is, there are lots of ways to reduce your risk of developing prediabetes or type 2 diabetes.

- ◇ **Lose weight (and keep it off):** Especially if you're overweight or obese, losing 5–7% of your body weight may prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. If you're struggling to lose weight despite eating a healthy diet and exercising, ask your doctor to test you for insulin resistance.
- ◇ **Get more movement:** Ideally, you'll get 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days a week. If you're not very active, you'll want to start slowly and build up to that goal. Talk to your doctor about what activities could work best for you.
- ◇ **Eat a healthy diet:** Make sure you're eating plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and low-fat dairy. Choose water over juice or soda. Don't expect to make these changes overnight. A lot of complex factors influence why we eat what we eat, so start by making just one healthier choice.
- ◇ **It's all about self-care:** It's extra hard to eat right, exercise, and maintain a healthy weight if you aren't also getting adequate sleep and managing your stress (and vice versa). As The Energy Project CEO Tony Schwartz says, "If you do not put your needs first, then ultimately you will not be able to perform well and show up for others consistently and happily."

Symptoms of Diabetes

- Increased thirst.** Illustration: A woman drinking water from a bottle.
- Slow-healing cuts and sores.** Illustration: A hand with a bleeding cut.
- Fatigue.** Illustration: A person sitting at a desk looking tired.
- Blurred vision.** Illustration: A house with a blurry foreground.
- Frequent urination.** Illustration: A person standing by a urinal.
- Unexplained weight loss.** Illustration: Feet on a scale.



Work Comp Claim FREE - Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following departments for **February**: 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.

In February there were 5 claims filed: 1-Youth Services, 1-YCDF, 2-Sheriff's Office and 1-Road & Bridge

Friendships Foster Good Health

Adult friendships create meaningful social connections.

More than ever since COVID-19, we've seen firsthand the impacts of loneliness and social isolation on people. Staying connected through adult friendships can help us overcome any negative impact of aging.

In fact, research has shown that having close friends may help add years to your life. One study suggested that those with a larger social network had lower mortality at a ten-year follow-up than those with a smaller social network.

Specifically, adults with strong social connections were shown to have a reduced risk of significant health problems, including depression, high blood pressure and an unhealthy body mass index. And of course, companionship can also improve your self-confidence and reduce stress.

However, the 2021 American Perspectives Survey found that Americans report having fewer close friendships than they once did. The good news is that it's more about **quality** than *quantity*.

Maintaining friendships as a busy adult can be challenging at times. To connect well with other people, it helps to be yourself and be available to friends by making your relationships a priority. To nurture friendship, make time for those you care about. Be present by connecting regularly. Show up for your friends, especially when it could matter the most to them.

Be the friend you want to have, and lead with kindness and compassion. You can show your trust as a friend by sharing and asking for help when the time comes.



A true friend is someone who thinks you're a good egg, even if you're cracked.



...Bernard Meltzer

BEST bits



Save Your Vision Month in March is a reminder to take care of your vision. As life becomes more digital, staring at a screen for prolonged periods can cause eye strain. Schedule regular eye exams and take precautions to protect your eyes. A recent survey found that the average American spends at least seven hours a day using electronic devices; constant, unrelieved use can cause eye strain and dry eyes, as well as disturb our sleep patterns. **Practice the 20-20-20 rule:** After 20 minutes of staring at a screen, look away toward an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

Severe weather doesn't end with winter. As we transition from snow and cold to sunshine and warmth, try to be prepared in advance for wild weather that may frequent your area, including tornadoes, heavy rain, lightning and damaging winds. When outdoors, wear layers of warm, wet-proof clothing. Learn more at [weather.gov/ind/preparedness](https://www.weather.gov/ind/preparedness). To find weather and safety events in your state, check the NWS Weather and Water Preparedness Events Calendar at [weather.gov/safety/events_calendar](https://www.weather.gov/safety/events_calendar).

Do you need 10,000 steps a day? People younger than 60 should try to walk 8,000 to 10,000 steps a day to achieve maximum fitness benefits that support life expectancy and cardiovascular health. Fitness tracking devices often advise taking 10,000 steps a day, but taking far fewer can still be beneficial, according to the Harvard School of Public Health. If you're older than 60, you may achieve a healthy benefit between 6,000 and 8,000 steps.



More than 5.3 million Americans are living with brain injuries. Young people between the ages of 15 and 24, children under age five, and adults older than age 75 sustain the most brain injuries in the U.S. The Brain Injury Association of America is putting a spotlight during **Brain Injury Awareness Month** on the importance of preventing brain injuries where possible. It's also an opportunity to learn about brain injury survivors' individual experiences and to help find ways to improve their care. To learn more, go to [biausa.org/brain-injury](https://www.biausa.org/brain-injury).



How's Your Sleep?



The quality of your sleep affects your mood, health and work. Sleep Awareness Week, from March 10 to 16, was started 26 years ago by the National Sleep Foundation (NSF) to encourage people to think about the importance of their snooze time and to take action if they aren't getting adequate, restful sleep.

Studies have mounted over the decades showing sleeping enough — and sleeping soundly — is linked to better physical and mental health, including a stronger immune system and less depression, according to the NSF. And not getting enough shut-eye raises the risk of accidents and lowers productivity, too.

Not getting enough sleep creates sleep debt. Eventually, your body will demand that the debt be repaid. If you are burning the candle at both ends, there's a good chance you're deep in debt.

If you wake up not feeling rested, the NSF offers these strategies to help improve your sleep:

- ➔ **Don't** skimp on shut-eye. Adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night. It's important to keep to a regular sleep schedule, including the weekends.
- ➔ **Exercise** regularly. You don't want to do a vigorous activity right before bedtime, but regular low-impact fitness activities, such as walking or swimming, are helpful for improving sleep quality.
- ➔ **Say no** to large, heavy meals late at night. A light dinner about two to three hours before bedtime is best for digestion and sleep.

- ➔ **Unwind** before sleep by taking a relaxing bath, reading, or listening to soothing music.
- ➔ **Make** sure your bedroom is sleep-friendly. Turn off your phone and any other devices an hour before bed. Keep your bedroom dark (invest in light blocking curtains or shades, if needed).
- ➔ **If** you wake up still tired, it's important to find out why, and take action. You may have an undiagnosed but treatable health problem, such as sleep apnea. Schedule a checkup with your health care provider.

Are you getting enough sleep?

Check the statements below that apply:

- I have trouble falling asleep.
- I have too much on my mind to fall asleep or go back to sleep.
- I need more than 30 minutes to fall asleep.
- I can't go back to sleep when I wake up during normal bedtime.
- I wake up too early.
- I feel tired upon waking, despite apparent normal sleep.
- I awaken frequently during sleep time.
- I have uncontrolled episodes of falling asleep during the day.

How much sleep do you need?

It depends on your age and circumstances. The NSF recommends the following:

Adults age 18 and older	7 to 9 hours
Teens	8 to 10 hours
Children 6 to 12 years old	9 to 12 hours
Preschoolers	10 to 13 hours,
3 to 5 years old	including naps
Toddlers 1 to 3 years	11 to 14 hours,
	including naps
Infants 1 to 12 months	12 to 16 hours,
	including naps

You may need more or less sleep, depending on your health and lifestyle. For example, if you have the flu or COVID, getting extra sleep is essential for your recovery.

How did you do?

If you experience two or more of these situations regularly, you may have developed a problematic sleep pattern — one that may be interfering with your health and safety. Read on for some sleep-friendly tips that can help you get more shut-eye.

Spring Forward, Review Safety

Daylight Savings Time begins every year on the second Sunday in March. Clocks are set forward one hour, except in Hawaii and most of Arizona. It's also a good time to check your home for properly working alarms such as smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors - Anything that burns fuel can potentially become a source of carbon monoxide, an invisible, odorless gas that can kill. CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each bedroom and on every level of the home. The safety tips for CO detectors mirror those of smoke alarms: change the batteries, test them and interconnect them, if possible. Also, make sure vents for your gas appliances (fireplace, dryer, stove and furnace) are free and clear of snow or debris.





Randy Pardis to Retire after 47+ Years!

Congratulations go out to Randy Pardis on his well deserved retirement! Randy holds the record for the longest, continuous employment with Yellowstone County with 47 years and 3 months! Randy has worked his entire career at MetraPark. As the Event Foreperson, his job was to make sure that everything is in place for each and every event. Those events ranged from hockey to basketball, concerts to 4-H, rodeos to monster trucks, home improvement shows to graduations, the national bowling tournament, and the list of events could go on and on.



Randy started working at MetraPark in December 1976, just one year after MetraPark opened in December 1975. The first event held at MetraPark was Holiday on Ice and in the early years of MetraPark there were many hockey games, so Randy helped with the preparation and maintenance of the ice rink floor. Randy has been involved in over 20,000 events!

Randy has been an evolutionary part of the growth of MetraPark. When he first started it was the arena only. In 1986 the grounds became one entity called MetraPark and Randy became a main leader of the journey.

When asked about what stood out as a memorable event, Randy stated that all the events were memorable, especially the presidential visits. He worked each of those events and it was an eye opening experience as to what had to be done to be ready for the President. Randy was fascinated to see what all goes into one of these visits, especially before and after 911.

Over the years Randy has seen many changes, especially in the attitude of the public towards MetraPark. He remembered that initially MetraPark was referred to as “the White Elephant” and then over the years that attitude has changed. People now realize, that MetraPark is a vital part of the Billings and Yellowstone County community.

Randy reminisced that sometimes people don’t realize what they have until it’s gone. That was the situation when the tornado struck MetraPark. Some events had to find new venues, be postponed and sadly cancelled. The only time MetraPark had to cancel a show was when the tornado hit.

Former MetraPark GM, Bill Dutcher said that, “Randy is the epitome of a great attitude. There is not a better measure of a person than attitude, and all-around good guy. Randy always has a smile on his face and is always happy to see you.”



Bill Dutcher reminisced that one memorable moment was during an overnight fair shift getting ready for the rodeo. As Randy came off shift at 8 am, he saw that the rodeo was not going to be ready in time, so he stayed another 8 hours to get the job done without a complaint, and had a smile on his face. Randy is famous for this quote “I HATE WHEN PEOPLE COME IN AND COMPLAIN, I JUST WANT SOLUTIONS.”

That is how Randy rolls, and it shows in everything he does. Randy can tell you so many crazy stories, such as actually having to remove all the green M&M’s from the huge bowl of M&M’s that a certain band had requested.



Randy Pardis Retirement Continued

So, if you get a chance to visit with Randy, please do, as he is a wealth of knowledge on everything MetraPark.

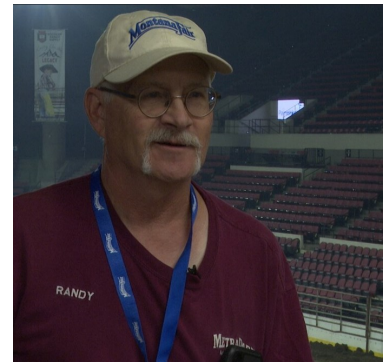
Randy has also seen “the generations” carry on in some of the vendors that frequently use the Metra. Some of the people he worked with early in his career, now have their children and grandchildren coordinating and setting up the events such as 4-H or the Home Improvement Show.

What’s in the future for MetraPark? Randy foresees good improvements over the next few years. Since the beginning, MetraPark keeps evolving and he doesn’t see that changing.

When Randy retires at the end of March, MetraPark will be losing some of it’s institutional knowledge that just can’t be replaced. Randy you will be missed but your legacy will live on, and you will always be family.

Congratulations Randy on your retirement, you have helped to make a difference at Yellowstone County.

Everyone is invited on March 28, 2024 from 1-4 pm in the Metra Cafe to help us celebrate Randy on his well-deserved Retirement!



FLEX Reminder...

Be sure to submit any 2023 FLEX claims by March 31, 2024 for reimbursement of 2023 qualified FLEX and Limited Scope expenses.



Remember...Up to \$550 can rollover this year from 2023. Any roll-over funds would not be deposited or eligible to use until April 1, 2024.

2023 FLEX claims should be sent to Health Equity. Set up your account at www.healthequity.com to submit claims online. Forms are also available on the HR Intranet site.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

First Aid/CPR/AED
Contact HR to Register
Before March 25th

March 28, 2024
9:00 - 10:30 am
Room 212



QPR Suicide Prevention
Contact HR to Register
Two Sessions

May 15, 2024
9:30 -11:00 am
OR
2:00 - 3:30 pm
BOCC Boardroom



Public Employee Retirement



May 29, 2024
12:00 pm - Rm 212
Getting Ready to Retire?
Available for walk-ins 9am-4pm
AND

May 30, 2024 - Rm 212
12:00 pm - Rm 212
New Employee PERS Election
Available for walk-ins 9am-1pm



**Sign up today for the
Yellowstone County Women's Run Team!**
The Yellowstone County Stepinators



Run it! Walk it! Live it! Do it on Your Own!
The Montana Women's Run - May 11, 2024
Join the "Yellowstone County Stepinators" Team today!

It simple to join...just register on line at www.womensrun.org and follow these simple steps:

- 1) Click on "Team Up" tab
- 2) Type in the team name "Yellowstone County Stepinators"
- 3) Select "Join"
- 4) Code to join is "YC-106"
- 5) Fill in your personal information and select 2 mile or 5 mile

Be sure to print up a copy of your registration and bring to HR.

It's that easy to join!

Female employees, employee's wives, mothers, daughters, sisters, friends, and grandmothers are welcome to participate.

It doesn't matter if you want to do the 2 mile or 5 mile course, you can run or walk - Do it at your own pace... Join Today!

The Yellowstone County Commissioners will provide a specially designed Yellowstone County Women's Run Team shirt!

Deadline for registering with the Yellowstone County Team to receive a team T-shirt is April 12, 2024



May 11, 2024

2 mile & 5 mile Courses
Downtown Billings

Run It, Walk It, Live it, Bring a friend!

www.womensrun.org • *register today!*



Pint Night

Thirsty Street
at the Garage
4/4/2024
5 to 9 pm

Getting Started Clinics

Pioneer Park
Monday Nights
4/15/24 - 5/6/24
5:30 pm



Scan to register!

There's mixed news about colorectal cancer.



The good news is regular screenings and removal of precancerous polyps have lowered rates of colorectal cancer in older Americans. But unfortunately, more people age 45 and younger are being diagnosed with the disease. **Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month** in March is a reminder to contact your health care provider about screening options if you are age 45 or older. No matter your age, share your personal and family health history with your provider. You may need colorectal cancer screenings before age 45 or more frequently than normal if you have a family history of the disease.



MONTANA PUBLIC
EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT
ADMINISTRATION

Want to learn more about planning for your future?

Leaving, but not Retiring?	Monday, March 11	12 p.m.	MPERA
PERS Ready to Retire for Defined Benefit Members	Tuesday, March 12	2:30 p.m.	MPERA
Create a Spending Plan	Thursday, March 14	2 p.m.	Empower
PERS New Member Plan Choice	Friday, March 15	12 p.m.	MPERA
Market Volatility	Monday, March 18	2 p.m.	Empower
HPORS Ready to Retire	Monday, March 18	3 p.m.	MPERA
Financial Wellness	Thursday, March 21	3 p.m.	Empower
PERS Defined Contribution Plan Ready to Retire	Friday, March 22	12 p.m.	MPERA
PERS New Member Plan Choice	Wednesday, March 27	3 p.m.	MPERA

Register at: <https://mpera.mt.gov>