

# WOODY'S WORLD




## KATIE WHITMOYER EARNS PROFESSIONAL IN HUMAN RESOURCES CERTIFICATION


SUBMITTED BY DON HAYES, HR MANAGER

The HR Certification Institute is the recognized body for providing certification testing for Human Resource Professionals. To even be able to take the test a person has to meet several criteria and often times has to go through an "auditing" process to prove those requirements are met using more than just the person's word for it.

Studying for the exam often takes weeks because of the number of categories and subjects covered in the test. Those categories include the following: Business Management and Strategy; Workforce Planning and Employment; Human Resource Development; Compensation and Benefits; Employee Relations; and, Risk Management. The test can range from about 175 questions to over 200 questions and those



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taking it are given three hours to complete the test. To take the test the person has to go to a testing center, like Sylvan Learning Center, so that a test proctor ensures the test is taken within the rules and within the required time frame. Neither the process nor the test is easy. From May 2016 to July 2016, 3,212 people took the test for the Professional in Human Resources (PHR) Certification. Only 50% passed.

On November 3, 2016, Katie Whitmoyer took the test and passed it on her first try. In four of the six categories her performance was at the highest level. In other words, she did not just slide by. She excelled.

Congratulations Katie on earning your official PHR designation!



**QUALITY &  
CONSISTENCY  
ARE A TEAM  
EFFORT**



## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Allison McDonald	1
Scott Sandler	3
Aaron Cherry	5
Ron Wilson	5
Betty Ronan	9
Justin Smith	10
Holly Anderson	25
Julie Patterson	26
John Schriver	27
Keith Wood	28
Josh Eickhoff	30

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Samantha Kisch	6
Jeremy Brockel	11
Yvonne Penne	13
Bob Adams	14
Georgia Brester	15
Gordon Ryder	15
Mauri Bradley	16
Judy Hinkle	20
Mikayla Nielsen	24
Dave Spina	26
Carol Hicks	28
Lacey Thompson	28



# MARKETING UPDATES

SUBMITTED BY BARRY WOOD, VP MARKETING & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

In the past I have always been tasked with writing an article for the accounting office, and although there doesn't seem to be a lot to say, I have occasionally managed to make the articles longer than anyone wanted to read. Of course, truth be told, pretty much any article about accounting is going to extend past the point of being interesting. I've probably lost half of you already.

This time, I am writing about the marketing department, and that is basically the point of the article. The unexpected passing of Joe Landsverk, our head of marketing, left us with a hole that had to be filled. Bryan and I sat down with each member of the marketing team and discussed the situation. The general consensus was that of a sense of hesitancy about who might replace him. They felt that it needed to be someone who was already

familiar with the department and how it works, but not one of them. If you have ever been in the office where marketing is, you can see

**We went through lengthy discussions and finally decided that the best course of action would be for me to move over to marketing.**



that it is a small office for as many people as are in it. As a result, they have become pretty close knit and – while it was agreed that some change was warranted – they didn't want someone new coming in and disrupting what was working well.

We went through lengthy discussions and finally decided that the best course of action would be for me to move over to marketing. We are fortunate to have Kelcie as a new addition to the office, and she has been able to absorb a lot of what I was doing, and Bryan has taken over signing leave slips for accounting personnel. Also, Brenda took over part of the supervisory duties.

One of the big issues we have been facing in marketing is that we have five people crammed into a space that was initially intended to hold two people. We also were in the process of moving hand cup assembly into its new location; which gave us the available space to build new offices for marketing personnel. As I write this, the offices have been framed off and are coming along nicely. I expect that we will be moving into them early in 2017.

# WPG UPDATES

SUBMITTED BY BRYAN WOOD, PRESIDENT & CEO

After red hot sales all summer long we are seeing things back off a little. However sales are still good and really more in line right now with what we were expecting. The elevated sales we experienced over the summer were a bit of a surprise to all of us. Right now I am expecting us to finish up the year with November and December's sales being below our average monthly sales for the year, but well above what our sales were for the same months in 2015.

In 2015 WPG finally bit the bullet and took on the production expansion project. This was a big step for us because the lessons we learned during the past recession

are still vivid in our minds. Now in hindsight it was definitely the right decision. We do have debt that we have to service as a result, but it positioned us to deal with

**Now in 2016 we are again taking measure to position us for future growth.**



the growth we have experience in 2016. Without the extra production capacity we gained by adding space in 2015 I am not sure if we would have been able to handle the elevated sales we have been experiencing.

Now in 2016 we are again taking measure to position us for future growth. This phase of our plan includes adding office space and expanding our break room. We developed a long list of goals we wanted to accomplish with this expansion project and I am pleased to say that we should be able to meet just about all of them. We apologize for the disruptions and inconveniences that this project has created, but it is renovation and expansion that is really past do. We are confident that when it is completed we will be in a better position to handle the additional work load that will come with the next several years of growth.



# UPDATE ON PASSPORTS

SUBMITTED BY LEE ANN WOOD, MARKETING ASSISTANT

With international travel there are two different forms that may be required. One that is required for all countries is a passport. You will need a passport to get into almost all countries. But you will need a passport to get back into the US from any country including Canada and Mexico. The other document that is needed in some countries is a visa. A visa is not needed for most countries but there are a few. These are country specific and must be applied for to that particular country in order to visit that country. Some of the countries that do need a visa are Australia, Brazil, and China. Most visitors to our country are required to get a visa as well as have a passport.

There are some changes coming up on updating passports. One of the most important refers to those who have glasses. We are no longer allowed to wear our glasses in pictures in new passports. If you turn in a picture where you are wearing glasses, it will not be accepted. Current passports with glasses are good until they expire.

Considering travel, even if it is a few years off, you might want to get your passport now. There is going to be a back log and longer wait times next year. The reasons for this are 2 fold.

1. Passports were first required to reenter the US from Canada, Mexico and Caribbean in 2007. This meant that a great number of passports were issued at that time. Many of them were a 10 year expiration date. This means that next year there is going to be a large number of people renewing their passport next year.

Samoa, New Hampshire, and New York at this time do not qualify.

In order to obtain a new passport you can download the paperwork from <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports.html> or you can get it from the Ronald Reagan post office in Billings which is located just off of South 27<sup>th</sup> St near the Women's Prison. This is also the office to turn the paperwork into when you are ready.

Something you also need to consider when traveling with a passport is that each passport contains a chip, much like most new credit cards do at this time. The credit card companies are putting this out to be a security feature, but it really isn't. For about \$100 off the internet you can pick up a chip reader, which can read the chips from your passport and/or credit cards from a foot or two outside of your purse or pocket. With that reader they can obtain your credit card numbers and all of your personal identification. In order to protect against this invasion happening to you, next time you purchase a new wallet or purse, consider getting one that blocks such readers. They might be ugly, but better ugly than broke.

Happy traveling.

**Considering travel, even if it is a few years off, you might want to get your passport now.**

2. The Real ID Act will take effect next year. Because of this many drivers licenses will not be accepted as valid identification for flying purposes. Several states will not be qualified so they will need a passport in order to fly from those states. (Montana has qualified and you will be able to continue to use your drivers licenses from this state to be able to fly.) But those from Louisiana, Minnesota, American

## NEW EMPLOYEES



**AARON CHERRY**  
Molder



**ALEJANDRO DIAZ**  
Machinery Assembly

**Welcome Back!**



**ED SHIPP**  
Cleaning / Powder Coating

## WPG Christmas Party

- Friday, December 9, 2016
- KC's Palace Bar and Lanes (upstairs banquet room)
- Happy Hour 6:00 PM
- Dinner 6:30 PM



**Materials Control Clerk**  
(1 Full-Time Position)

**Night Production Technician**  
(1 Full-Time Position)

**Night Molder**  
(1 Full-Time Position)

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

(see [Billings365.com](http://Billings365.com) for more information)

### 02 DECEMBER

- Christmas Caffeine Crawl- Downtown Billings
- National Dart Assoc. Reg. Tourn. - Raddison Hotel
- Night Before Christmas-The Grand Escape Room
- Festival of Trees - MetraPark
- Winterfair -YAM
- ArtWalk- Downtown Billings
- Kids Campfire Fridays - Montana Audubon Center
- The Polar Express - Depot
- Photos with Merry Auld Father Christmas - Barjon's Books
- Christmas Stroll - Downtown Billings
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Teka Brock at Trailhead Spirits
- Music Night with Nothin' Yet Trio - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Billings Bulls Hockey - Centennial Ice Arena
- Warren Miller's 67<sup>th</sup> Film - ABT
- Funky Bunch - NOVA
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- In Rapture, Stranded By Choice, Shores of Leine- The Pub Station

### 03 DECEMBER

- National Dart Assoc. Reg. Tourn. - Raddison Hotel
- Pictures with Santa - Moss Mansion
- Festival of Trees - MetraPark
- Joliet Community Center Arts & Craft Fair
- Yellowstone River Walking Tour - Montana Audubon Cnt
- Winterfair - YAM
- Law Enforcement Torch Run Polar Plunge - Lake Elmo
- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Star Wars: A Roguish Release Party - Billings Public Library
- Class: Christmas Wreaths - Better To Gather
- Bird-Friendly Holiday Nature Crafts - Montana Audubon Cnt
- The Polar Express - Depot
- Not Your Boyfriends Band - The Garage
- ZooLights-ZooMT
- Christmas with C.S. Lewis -ABT
- Billings Bulls Hockey - Centennial Ice Arena
- Venture Improv - NOVA
- "The Holiday Spirit is Upon Us" - MSU Billings
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre

## TRADESHOWS

SUBMITTED BY BARRY WOOD, VP MARKETING & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

At the end of October, we faced a sort of unusual situation in that we had two tradeshow back to back. This has happened to us in the past, but normally there is at least a week's separation in between them. That didn't happen this time.

October 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> we had the annual Glass Build America show. This show has been alternating between Las Vegas and Atlanta for several years now. This year it was in Las Vegas. Representing Wood's Powr-Grip were Daniel from engineering, Holly from sales, Katie from training/HR, Kelcie from accounting, and

Barry from marketing. We had both displays of the Intelgrip technology shipped directly from Dusseldorf in Germany as well as one of the prototype machines and several machines that represent our current version of the lifters.

It was a well-attended show for the most part. The degree of excitement regarding the new technology had a pretty significant variability depending on how familiar the audience was with vacuum lifters in general. It seemed the more familiarity a person had, the more excited he/she was.

The second show was MetalCon in Baltimore MD October 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>. Being from Montana, it is a little surprising how popular Baltimore was as a destination, especially considering that the Ravens/Cowboys game was in Dallas this year (BAL 17 DAL 27).

MetalCon is not as big as Glass Build, and our product is not used by as large a percent of the attendees as in glass. It is also one of the rare industries where we have significant competition domestically. Nevertheless, it is a good show in an industry that we anticipate will grow as time goes on.

## KIDS THRILLED BY FIREWORKS DISPLAY

SUBMITTED BY DAVID PETERS, WEB CONTENT & WRITER

Nate Temple, owner of Big Boomer Fireworks, sponsored a girls softball team the past season. He told his team that if they had an undefeated season, he would put on a fireworks show in their honor.

The girls won all their games, and Nate fulfilled his promise Friday night, November 11th, launching hundreds of fireworks from behind the three softball diamonds next to Wood's Powr-Grip's manufacturing plant. He intentionally did it on Nov. 11th to make it a promise fulfilled/Veteran's Day display.



Fireworks started at 6 pm, and went for about 25 minutes. He was shooting off 2 to 4 inch mortars two and three at a time for the duration, with ground displays mixed in, and a superb grand finale that blew dozens of boomers off in less than 30 seconds.

Scores of people from around town showed up to enjoy the show, and the girls were thrilled with their victory fireworks display.

Wood's Powr-Grip graciously provides 10 acres of space next to its manufacturing facility for local area softball teams to use each year.



**Happy Flakesgiving!**

A special *thank you* from the Flakes!



*Thanks for All your Help*  
*for*

The total given by the employees was \$392.00 so with the matching funds **\$784.00** was raised for Flakesgiving. That is **almost 40 families fed** because of your generosity!! Thank you!

Thank you!

Your thoughtfulness means the world to us!



# NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

SUBMITTED BY BRYAN STROBEL, NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Well the time has come... frost on the window, the cold gentle breeze making the snow gracefully dance across the windowsill. Curled up in a blanket, the fireplace lit, hot chocolate in hand and a favorite movie in mind, what a way to spend a late fall day. Hopefully we all get to spend a few days this Christmas season doing the things that we really enjoy while getting refreshed and energized for the upcoming year. Until then it always seems like there are plenty of things to get done and often a shortage of time to accomplish them. So before we start daydreaming of our days off let's keep focus and finish strong so we can also have a feeling of success as the year comes to an end.

Across many departments there are a lot of folks devoting much of their time to getting the Intelli-Grip control system incorporated

**We are optimistic that our customers will see the value in all the effort we've put in and it will help us continue to be the leader of the pack.**

into several of our primary lifters. We have been working toward making this available on the MRT, MRTA8, and MRTALP8 at the start of 2017. Even though together

we've made several prototypes, the process of ensuring we have parts on hand, breaking down fabrication into desirable sub-parts, fixturing for efficient production, making labels and operator documentation for relevant sales regions, additional product tracking, providing means for upgrades and updates, and a host of other requirements takes a lot of effort from a lot of people. We are optimistic that our customers will see the value in all the effort we've put in and it will help us continue to be the leader of the pack. The time has come... not only for frost on the window, but to guide the launch of the new Intelli-Grip control systems – thanks for your part in it!



with Mike Fyfe  
Cleaning/ Powder Coating Supervisor

1. How long have you worked at WPG? **39 years**
2. How long have you been supervisor of Machining and Welding?  
**About 6 months in the cleaning, powder coating and tear-down. I have been a supervisor of a few departments over the past 30 plus years—Handcup Assembly, Handcup fabrication, Molding and the Night Shift. It is good to see younger and more energetic personnel supervising and running departments since the company has grown and evolved into a more modern manufacturing plant with a lot of updated equipment to improve the production output and making the processes easier and faster.**
3. What is the biggest challenge your department faces?  
**Powder coating is a new process for us so we are problem solving as we learn and improve the process.**
4. What is something other departments can do to help?  
**Other departments are very good at helping and working with our cleaning and powder coating personnel to solve production and process problems.**
5. Is there something you would like to brag up about your employees/department?  
**The personnel in the cleaning and powder coating department work well as a team to solve and improve the processes.**

## 04 DECEMBER

- National Dart Assoc. Regional Tourn. - Radisson Hotel
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings
- The Polar Express - Depot
- "The Holiday Spirit is Upon Us" - MSU Billings
- Messiah Festival - ABT
- Acoustic Sunday Sessions - The Garage
- Congo Sanchez of Thievery Corp. - The Pub Station

## 05 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Tin Soldiers - Art House Cinema
- Class: Wood Burning - Better To Gather
- Jozef Luptak w/Boris Lenk & Dr. Jen Bratz - RMC
- Blacklite Distric, Message from Sylvia - The Pub Station

## 06 DECEMBER

- Nature Nuts - Montana Audubon Center
- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Class: Feather Earrings - Better To Gather
- Trivia Night with McLovin from Hot 101.9 - The Vig Alehouse

## 07 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Hump Night Open Mic - The Garage
- Yellowstone Rim Runners Club Run
- Class: Icicle Ornaments - Better To Gather
- Open Mic Night - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Broadway Christmas Wonderland - ABT
- Beer Bingo - The Vig Alehouse
- Aaron Kamm and the One Drops - The Pub Station

## 08 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- All American Indian Shootout - MetraPark
- Victorian Christmas Celebration - Moss Mansion
- Treo Jazz Jam - The Garage
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Projectile Comedy - Bones Brewery & Arcade
- Ugly Sweater/ Tap - Takeover! - Peppers Bar & Grill

## 09 DECEMBER

- All American India Shootout - MetraPark
- Last Chance Weedender Show - Shrine



## 09 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Holiday Stroll at the Shops at Shiloh Crossing
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Music Night with Jim Newton - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Christmas Cabaret - NOVA
- Billings Bulls Hockey - Centennial Ice Arena
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Helmet - The Pub Station

## 10 DECEMBER

- Cookies with Santa - Rimrock Mall
- All American Indian Shootout - MetraPark
- Trunks & Treasures Tour - Moss Mansion
- Docent 2nd Saturday: Art for Kids - YAM
- Holiday Tour of Homes
- Last Chance Weekender Show - Shrine
- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Photos with Merry Auld Father Christmas - Barjon's Books
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Bitter Road - The Garage
- Black Sheep HDfC MM "Christmas and Chrome" - Shrine
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Music Night w/Cedar Ridge - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- The High Country Cowboys - ABT
- Christmas Cabaret - NOVA
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Strangeways - The Pub Station

## 11 DECEMBER

- Last Chance Weekender Show - Shrine
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Free Christmas Choir Concert - First Christmas Church

## 12 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Salsa Dance Lessons - The Garage
- Class: Monogram Clay
- Ornaments - Better to Gather
- Aesop Rock with Rob Sonic and DJ Zone - The Pub Station

## 13 DECEMBER

- Nature Nuts - Montana Audubon Center
- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- PintAid - Friends of Pompey's Pillar - The Garage

# WHAT IS THE LEAN MANUFACTURING 5S TECHNIQUE?

SUBMITTED BY TREVER PANKRATZ, PROCESS ENGINEERING DIRECTOR

5S is a technique that results in a well-organized workplace complete with visual controls and order. It's an environment that has "a place for everything and everything in its place, when you need it".

The 5S's stand for 5 Japanese words that constitute good housekeeping. Roughly translated they are:

- **Sort (Seiri)**
- **Set in order (Seiton)**
- **Shine (Seiso)**
- **Standardize (Seiketsu)**
- **Sustain (Shitsuke)**

"Visual order is the foundation of excellence in manufacturing. When it is in its place on the production floor, work gets done efficiently and effectively. When it is not in place, work still gets done - but at a level of cost that is hard to justify".

Visual Systems,  
Gwendolyn D. Galsworth

5S is not just a clean-up campaign, it's a system that allows individuals to work more efficiently. It requires;

- Perseverance and determination
- The ability to see what's important
- Attention to detail

5S is the key first step in workplace improvement.

### "Sort"

Remove from the workplace all items that are not needed for current production (or office) operation.

- Sorting means leaving only the bare necessities
- When in doubt, throw it away

### "Set in Order"

Arranging needed items so that they are readily accessible and labelled so that anyone can find them or put them away.

### "Shine"

Sweep and clean the work area. The key purpose is to keep everything in top condition so that when someone needs to use something, it is ready to be used. Cleaning a work area produces and opportunity to visually inspect equipment, tooling, materials and work conditions.

### "Standardize"

Define what the "normal" condition of the work area. Define how to correct "abnormal" conditions. The standard should be easily understood and easy to communicate (i.e. visual controls).

### "Sustain"

Implementing solutions to address the root causes of work area organization issues. All employees must be properly trained and use visual management techniques.

## INTERNAL AUDITS

SUBMITTED BY TOM DEBREE, QUALITY ASSURANCE DIRECTOR

One requirement of our ISO 9001 certification is that we audit our own processes at least once each year. We have a great team of individuals who have been assigned to do this for us - Amanda Wilkey and Conway Hendrickson from the Engineering area, Jake Knaub from the Marketing area, Kelsie Dolman from the main office, and Val Seymour and Allison McDonald from the QA Area. These individuals are tasked with working on two audits each year where half of our quality management system is evaluated each audit. The audits are performed around March/April

and one in September/October. Each of these audits require about 4 to 6 weeks of effort to complete and the auditors are

**I greatly appreciate the efforts of these auditors and would like to thank them for their many hours spent auditing our operations.**

required to complete these audits while still attending to many of their normal duties. It may not

be the most pleasant of tasks and difficult to juggle, but it is absolutely necessary. Procedures tend to vary with time and the higher level the procedure the more this tends to be true. The audits these individuals perform helps keep our procedures properly aligned and up to date to the needs of the related areas. It also is very important for ensuring our compliance to the ISO 9001 standard and being able to maintain our certification. I greatly appreciate the efforts of these auditors and would like to thank them for their many hours spent auditing our operations.



# PASSION PENS: BAKE ME A CAKE AS FAST AS YOU CAN

SUBMITTED BY BRENDA LAWVER, PAYROLL & OFFICE SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Growing up, my Grandma would always make sure everyone in her family had a birthday dessert. When she was older, and couldn't keep up with her growing family, she made sure we had a box of cake mix for our birthdays. I remember thinking how cute my Grandma was for giving us cake mix on our birthdays. Looking back, it's a precious memory I cherish. She wanted to make sure we all knew she loved us, and was thinking of us on our special day. That is something my Mom and I are trying to carry on for our family. I also try to share that feeling with my office coworkers by bringing a dessert to work for them on their special day.

There are so many websites to find recipes. The ones I use most are tasteofhome.com, pinterest.com, and pillsbury.com. Start with ingredients you are comfortable with and get more creative as you go.

There are also classes available. About ten years ago, I was working nights and weekends at a local craft store. As employees, they encouraged us to take the classes they offered, to be better informed and help the customers. I took the three cake decorating classes and I'm glad I did. I would encourage anyone to take at least the first class. It's even more fun if you take it with family or friends!



## Some tips I have learned:

**1. Use a box mix.** I know! I was surprised too, but they really do taste great and make the process a lot easier.

**2. Once you have baked your cake or cupcakes, let them sit on a wire rack for about 1 hour. Cover and put in the freezer overnight.** Let thaw one hour before frosting. If you don't have the time to freeze them overnight, freeze them for at least one hour. This will keep the cake or cupcakes moist. The cupcake paper will also come off smoothly—without leaving half the cupcake.

**3. Start simple and try new things as you become more comfortable.** Purchase a beginner decorating set or just a few piping tips. I would recommend the cake-icer tip, the triple-star tip, a writing tip and some type of Drop Flower or Open Star tip.

**4. To make the frosting swirled on a cupcake, use the Drop Flower or Open Star Tip.** Start in the center of the cupcake and just swirl around in a circle until you reach the outer edge.

**5. I learned with Wilton,** and I also use Wilton products, but you can **use whatever you are comfortable with.**

**6. If you love coffee,** add coffee instead of water to the cake mix. Add some instant coffee to the frosting and toffee bits to the top – toffee coffee cupcakes. **Always a crowd favorite!**

You can also make those world events a little sweeter! Every January my nephew requests my



"Superbowl Cupcakes". All they are is French vanilla cupcakes with green frosting for the turf (use the three-star tip) and a football field or goal posts drawn on the top (writing tip). Something simple, but now my niece and nephews have that special memory for Superbowl Sundays.

The end result isn't just the dessert, but the smile on the kid's faces or the celebration with your coworker or family.



## Wilton Classic Buttercream Icing

**1 cup solid white vegetable shortening**

**1 tsp Wilton Flavor (vanilla, almond or butter)\***

**2-6 tablespoons milk or water (however you like the consistency – I use 4)**

**1 lb. pure cane confectioners' sugar (approx. 4 cups)**

**\*Wilton Flavors may be used in any combination to fit your taste (almond is pretty strong so I'd use just a drop or two of that flavoring).**

I typically double this recipe. You'll usually have a little bit left; use it as a spread between graham crackers. Always a hit with the kids!

## 13 DECEMBER

- Country Swing Lessons - Beat Ballroom Company
- Trivia Night with McLovin from Hot 101.9 - the Vig Alehouse

## 14 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Hump Night Open Mic - The Garage
- Yellowstone Rim Runners Club Run
- Open Mic Night
- (Hed)p.e. - The Pub Station
- Beer Bingo - The Vig Alehouse

## 15 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- High Noon Speakers Series - Western Heritage Center
- Class: Alcohol Inks - Better To Gather
- Treo Jazz Jam - The Garage
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Projectile Comedy - Bones Brewery & Arcade
- Puff Puff Pass Tour with Snoop Dog - Shrine

## 16 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Winter Wonderland (ZooLights) - ZooMT
- Music Night with R.A.D. - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Christmas Cabaret - NOVA
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- The Veer Union Acoustic Tour - The Pub Station

## 17 DECEMBER

- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Parker Brown Band - The Garage
- Mandie Castro at Trailhead Spirits
- Winter Wonderland (ZooLights) - ZooMT
- Celestial Solstice - Depot
- Lat45 Adventure Ministries Presents the Bryan Drake Show - Emmanuel Baptist Church
- Chase Hawks Rodeo - MetraPark
- Music Night with Krystal Hudak - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Christmas Cabaret - NOVA
- Billings Symphony presents Holiday Pops - ABT
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Shakewell, Yellowstoned - The Pub Station

## 18 DECEMBER

- Christmas Cabaret - NOVA
- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre



## 18 DECEMBER

- Forever Plaid: Plaid Tidings - Billings Studio Theatre
- Acoustic Sunday Sessions
- ZooLights - ZooMT

## 19 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Salsa Dance Lessons - The Garage
- Class: Gift Tags - Better To Gather
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Tabletop Gaming Night - The Pub Station

## 20 DECEMBER

- Nature Nuts - Montana Audubon Center
- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Holiday Open Mic Series - The Pub Station
- Country Swing Lessons - Beat Ballroom Company
- The Ten Tenors - ABT
- Trivia Night with McLovin from Hot 101.9 - The Vig

## 21 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- Hump Night Open Mic - The Garage
- Yellowstone Rim Runners Club Run
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Candlelight Tours at the Moss Mansion
- Open Mic Night - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Beer Bingo - The Vig Alehouse
- Wade Montgomery - The Pub

## 22 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Treo Jazz Jam - The Garage
- Candlelight Tours at the Moss Mansion
- Projectile Comedy - Bones Brewery & Arcade

## 23 DECEMBER

- Night Before Christmas - The Grand Escape Room
- The Savages - The Garage
- ZooLights - ZooMT
- Candlelight Tours at the Moss Mansion
- Mustic Night with Hillbillings - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Engage the Unseen, Dead Presley - The Pub Station

## 24 DECEMBER

- Music Night with Sal & Kathy Garibay - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Christmas Eve Open Mic Special - The Garage
- ZooLights - ZooMT

## 27 DECEMBER

- Holiday Open Mic - The Pub

# BILLINGS CAREER CENTER TOURS

SUBMITTED BY KATIE WHITMOYER, HR PROFESSIONAL

On Friday, October 28, WPG hosted over 100 students and teachers from the Billings Career Center, as well as a handful various



manufacturing supporters from around the state, in two tours of our facility. As you all have probably noticed, our "Now Hiring" sign out front has been up fairly consistently over the past year, and we are definitely not alone in our hiring struggles. Almost everywhere you drive around Yellowstone County everyone is looking for good help. Also, as you all probably read in your new handbook inserts that recently came out, with the rearranging that has gone on in our Production departments and with Federal and State regulations, it is now nearly impossible for us to hire anybody under 18 (can't wait for America to be Great Again \*insert smart-aleck smile\*). Nonetheless, the Human Resource Department is actively trying to explore some



less traditional applicant recruiting strategies, while still maintaining our best attempts to hire people who will be good additions to our team.

As a result of this, Don and I have both attended several seminars and meetings focused on combatting this labor shortage in Montana, and on how to retain employees. One common theme we have been hearing is the need to start educating the younger generations on employment opportunities- both from schools and from businesses perspectives. A huge focus of our education system over the

last, at least, 10 years or so, has been on preparing all kids to go to college after high school, rather than preparing them for whatever they actually intend to do after graduation- whether it is college, or technical school, or joining the workforce. I am optimistic that the education system is hearing our pleas for more preparation for students wanting to join the workforce or attend technical schooling straight out of high school- teaching them more technical skills as well as interpersonal skills that employers look for (work ethic, etc.). Also, there seems to be a stigma in society that jobs in manufacturing have little to no career potential and are not desirable jobs. Thus, some of the reasons we wanted to host all of these students from the Career Center.

**Thank you all again  
for being great sports  
during this tour and  
for all of your hard  
work and dedication to  
WPG- it really shows  
when we pull together  
for these type of  
functions!**

Now, if you aren't familiar with the Billings Career Center, this is straight from their website "The Billings Career Center offers multiple opportunities in vocational and technical education which can be paired with academic preparation at a student's home school." Don and I toured their facility recently and it is very impressive. A lot of us took some type of what we called "shop" or "vo-ag" classes in high school, but at the Career Center they actually host specialized high school programs in these subjects- plus more. Some examples are that they have a huge auto body shop for their Automotive program, they have a room with at least 10 welding bays, CNC machines, and various other machines for their Metals Machining program (where their current project is designing and machining a specific part for

NASA), an Engineering Preparation program where students learn all about drafting and engineering



basics, and a Construction program where the students actually help design and build a real house in Billings (this year their house is estimated to be valued at over \$300,000).

The tours were organized slightly different than tours we have done in the past, as we organized for it to jump from "stop" to "stop", with there being 6 different "stops". The intent and hope was that each one would be highlighting something that applies to what these kids learn in these programs, or what they may be interested in. The six stops were: Hand Cup Assembly's new pods, CNC machines, Waterjet (that we made a sign for them to hang up in their shop on), an employee's perspective of working in manufacturing, a demo of our product- particularly a new DC3 cladding lifter, and a CADD demonstration. I want to give a HUGE thank you to those who helped with organizing, guiding tours, and running the "stops"; everyone did an excellent job and I got a lot of great feedback from our guests!

We hope to get the Laurel schools involved with at least a tour sometime in the near future as well. Thank you all again for being great sports during this tour and for all of your hard work and dedication to WPG- it really shows when we pull together for these type of functions!





# MEDICAL EXPENSES - TIPS ON GETTING YOUR MONEY'S WORTH

SUBMITTED BY DON HAYES, HR MANAGER

Your health is important – and so is your bank account. The average deductible for workers with employer-provided health insurance grew from \$826 in 2009 to \$1,217 in 2014, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, with the percentage of insured workers who face a deductible of \$1,000 or more growing from 6 percent in 2006 to 32 percent in 2014. Plans offered in the ACA exchange have an average deductible of \$5,081 for an individual and \$10,386 for a family for the bronze plans, the most popular of the four “metal” tiers, according to an analysis by HealthPockets.com.

It important for consumers to approach medical care as they do other purchases – shopping for not only quality, but also price. Unfortunately, the system doesn't make that easy.

**1. Ask Questions.** The first rule, say experts and advocates, is to ask a lot of questions: Is that test really necessary? Is there a generic version of that medication? Are there less expensive alternatives to this treatment? And, finally, how much is this procedure going to cost?

**2. Get the best price on prescriptions.** If you take a brand-name medication, ask your doctor to prescribe the generic equivalent. On average, the cost of a generic drug is 80 to 85 percent lower than the brand-name equivalent, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and generics have been shown to work just as well as brand-name drugs.

**3. Use a flexible spending account or health savings account.** Depending on the type of insurance plan you have,

you may be able to sign up for a flexible spending account or health savings account. Both allow you to put tax-deductible dollars into an account that can be used for out-of-pocket medical expenses such as copayments, deductibles and prescription medications.

**4. Check your bills.** Even those with the best insurance policies often get bills for procedures that should be completely covered. A mistake in coding can mean the difference between a mammogram with no copay and one that costs \$600. Be vigilant in checking both bills and explanations of benefits, a statement that summarizes which



procedures and services are covered and those that remain for you to pay. Keep records of whom you talked to and when, because the calls are often recorded.

**5. Negotiate your hospital bill.** If you go into a hospital or undergo an expensive procedure, get an itemized bill, preferably before you leave the hospital. Once you've made sure it's free of errors, ask the hospital billing department for financial aid, a discount for paying in cash or a payment plan. If you have lots of big bills, consider hiring someone to negotiate for you.

**6. Practice preventive care.** That means taking

prescribed medications, keeping up a healthy lifestyle and visiting your primary care doctor for treatment of chronic conditions. “Chronic conditions can be better treated if they’ve not progressed to a more serious phase,” Reyes says. “To treat disease is much more expensive than to prevent disease.”

**7. Get copies of all your medical test results and records.** Bringing those with you to consultations can cut the number of tests and office visits you need. Often, if you’ve had a test recently, there is no need to repeat it. Plus, if you visit a doctor with test results in hand, she can advise you immediately rather than needing to set up another appointment after test results arrive.

**8. Ask whether tests, prescriptions or procedures are really necessary.** The latest drugs aren't always better than older, cheaper drugs. If you tell the doctor you're paying cash for what he or she orders, he or she may suggest you wait to see if the condition resolves before ordering an expensive test. Instead of paying for 20 sessions of physical therapy, pay for one and learn exercises to do at home.

**9. Pick the right facility.** If your condition isn't life-threatening, don't go to the emergency room. A persistent cough (WellVial!) or a broken finger may be better treated in an urgent care center or walk-in clinic at a much lower cost. But not all clinics or urgent care centers are the same. Investigate the facilities near you before you need them so you can make the right choice when you're ill.

## 27 DECEMBER

- Country Swing Lessons - Beat Ballroom Company
- Trivia Night with McLovin from Hot 101.9 - The Vig Alehouse

## 28 DECEMBER

- Hump Night Open Mic - The Garage
- Yellowstone Rim Runners Club Run
- Tabletop Gaming Night - The Pub Station
- Open Mic Night - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Beer Bingo - The Vig Alehouse

## 29 DECEMBER

- Treo Jazz Jam - The Garage
- Candlelight Tours at the Moss Mansion
- Projectile Comeday - Bones Brewery & Arcade

## 30 DECEMBER

- Candlelight Tours at the Moss Mansion
- Music Night with Naomi Superstition - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Zoso -The Ultimate Led Zeppelin Experince -The Pub

## 31 DECEMBER

- Zoo Year - ZooMT
- John Roberts Y Pan Blanco - The Garage
- Music Night with Spur of the Moment - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Billings Bulls Hockey - Centennial Ice Areana
- Rockin' New Year's Eve -ABT

## 03 JANUARY

- Nature Nuts - Montana Audubon Center
- Holiday Open Mic Series

## 04 JANUARY

- Tabletop Gaming Night - The Pub Station
- Open Mic Night - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery

## 06 JANUARY

- Music Night with Chuck Bishop & Gum On Your Shoe - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- The Norwegians - NOVA
- Funky Bunch - NOVA

## 07 JANUARY

- Music Night with Quenby - Yellowstone Cellars & Winery
- Billings Bulls Hockey - Centennial Ice Arena
- The Norwegians - NOVA
- Venture Improv - NOVA

## 08 JANUARY

- Billings Wedding Fair - Radisson Hotel
- The Norwegians - NOVA
- New Shanghai Circus Acrobats - ABT

## 09 JANUARY

· New Shanghai Circus Acrobats  
· ABT

## 10 JANUARY

· Nature Nuts - Montana  
Audubon Center  
· David Bromberg - The Pub

## 11 JANUARY

· Open Mic Night - Yellowstone  
Cellars & Winery

## 12 JANUARY

· Honk Jr.-Billings Studio Theatre

## 13 JANUARY

· Honk Jr.-Billings Studio Theatre  
· Music Night with Lunatic Fringe  
· Yellowstone Cellars & Winery  
· Billings Bulls Hockey -  
Centennial Ice Arena  
· The Norwegians - NOVA  
· The Ennis Sisters - ABT

## 14 JANUARY

· Yellowstone River Walking  
Tour - Montana Audubon Cntr  
· Honk Jr.-Billings Studio Theatre  
· Jeff Dunham - MetraPark  
· Honk Jr.-Billings Studio Theatre  
· The Norwegians - NOVA  
· Pinky and the Floyd - The Pub

## 15 JANUARY

· Honk Jr.-Billings Studio Theatre  
· The Norwegians - NOVA

## 17 JANUARY

· Nature Nuts - Montana  
Audubon Center

## 20 JANUARY

· Billings Bulls Hockey -  
Centennial Ice Arena

## 21 JANUARY

· Building & Remodeling Expo -  
MetraPark  
· Fractured Fairy Tales - ABT  
· Billings Bulls Hockey -  
Centennial Ice Arena  
· Cold Hard Cash - The Pub

## 22 JANUARY

· Building & Remodeling Expo -  
MetraPark

## 24 JANUARY

· Soul Street Dance - ABT  
· Nature Nuts - Montana  
Audubon Center  
· Soul Street Dance - ABT

## 26 JANUARY

· Fifty Shades of Men Show - The  
Loft Night Club

## 27 JANUARY

· Billings Bulls Hockey -  
Centennial Ice Arena

## 28 JANUARY

· Meet Your Match Speed Dating  
Event - Billings Petroleum  
· Billings Bulls Hockey  
· Saturday Night Fever - ABT  
· Hairball- The Pub Station

# PASSION PENS: PICTURE IT IN THREAD

SUBMITTED BY LEE ANN WOOD, MARKETING ASSISTANT

Cross stitching (X-stitch) is a time of solitude. In an electronic age, sometimes solitude is hard to come by. Time to let the brain rest from the myriad of stimuli all around us. There are weekend days when it becomes PJ's and X-stitch... even food is iffy when I really get going. I just need to



do one more length of thread so I don't lose my place... as if I could not find it later. As confusing as some patterns get, it is amazing how a person is able to find their spot in the middle of it.

X-stitch is different from embroidering: Embroidering is done on a cloth that typically has the outline of a picture on it. X-stitch is done on Aida cloth that has a grid to it. Normal size for Aida cloth is 14 stitches per inch. Some made with linen get to be as small as 32 stitches per inch. I cannot see anything that small anymore.

Only once have I created my own pattern for a picture. This was a poem I had been asked to do, about Christmas from Heaven. So throughout the poem I wove Christmas lights. I also took the time to blend 3 different threads, slowly changing the color from one to the other.

One of the newer ways of getting patterns is online. They come in an Adobe format and you can mark off what you have already done by highlighting the completed

squares. In a complicated area, it will save your eyes by making it easy to keep track. With paper patterns, it is not uncommon for some people to make copies so they can mark out what they have already done.

## Tips:

**1. You are not going to do a project in one sitting.** So do what you can when you can. Tenacity is your friend here.

**2. When a pattern is completed, the back should look fairly close to a reversal, or mirror image, of the original on the front.** A good x-stitch should be enjoyed from both sides of the cloth!



**3. A good needle threader is worth its weight in gold.** I like the S-shaped ones. My needle holder also has a magnet on the back to keep it where I can find it between uses.

**4. Threads come in batches of six, and most patterns call for using two or three threads at the same time. Always separate out your threads from each other before threading them onto the needle.** This may seem strange, but it helps to keep the threads from tangling or not lying down flat.

**5. When using metallic threads, use a product like Thread Heaven.** This will help keep the threads from splitting and making a mess.

## 6. Keep your knots small.

On wall hangings, you do not need to tie off ends, as it will not be going through a washing machine after being framed.

## 7. Don't have long strings going across the back of a project.

Those threads can often show through where you don't want them to. This is especially annoying when it comes up through the pattern to the front of the picture, picked up with a new stitch you just made. A thread should be no more than an inch long on the back between areas a color is used.

## 8. Get lots of needles and leave them threaded between uses.

I have done projects using just one needle and the time it takes between colors is greatly reduced if you don't have to rethread constantly.

**9. Tearing out is part of the job. You are going to make mistakes, and correcting them is all part of it.**

## Happy stitching!

The picture below is a couple of Christmas socks done for children in my family. Those are the 13th & 14th socks for me. They took me about 3 months each to finish.





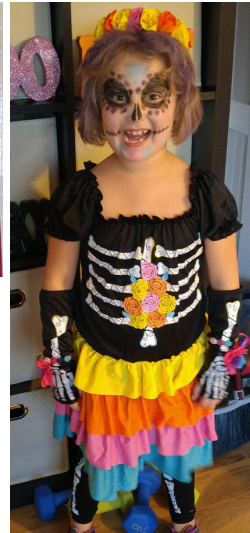
# COSTUME CORNER



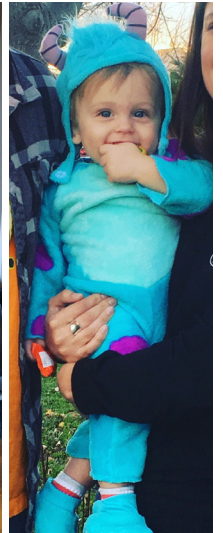
submitted by Amanda Wilkey



submitted by Patti Fyfe



submitted by Don Hayes



submitted by Katie Whitmoyer



submitted by Holly Anderson



submitted by Julie Patterson



submitted by Justin Smith



submitted by Carol Brooks



submitted by Don Hayes



submitted by Patti Fyfe



submitted by Lacey Thompson



submitted by Brad Wood



submitted by Gary Bond



submitted by Curtis Hartman



submitted by Julie Patterson



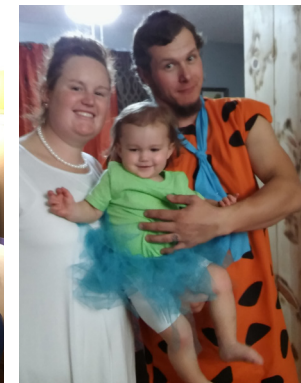
submitted by Sherry Engen



submitted by Katie Whitmoyer



submitted by Curtis Hartman



submitted by Patti Fyfe



submitted by Brad Wood



# 2017

## HOLIDAY CLOSURE & SHUTDOWN SCHEDULE

<b>APRIL 14</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>
<b>MAY 29</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>MEMORIAL DAY</b>
<b>JULY 3-4</b>	<b>MONDAY - TUESDAY</b>	<b>INDEPENDENCE DAY</b>
<b>SEPT 4</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>LABOR DAY</b>
<b>NOV 23-24</b>	<b>THURSDAY-FRIDAY</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING</b>

### **Winter Shutdown Dember 25, 2017 - January 1, 2018 (total of 6 work days off):**

[Note: Work the week before Christmas, Monday-Friday (Dec. 18-22, 2017).

Off 10 days-Saturday, December 23, 2017 through Monday, January 1, 2018.

Return to work on Tuesday, January 2, 2018.]

### **HOLIDAY CLOSURES**

If an employee is scheduled to work on a posted holiday, they will receive the day off and the paid holiday benefit for that day. If an employee is not scheduled to work on a posted holiday, they will not receive the paid holiday benefit.

All full-time employees who are employed as of January 1, 2016 and work the entire calendar year will receive 80-hours of paid holiday. Regular part time employees, and employees who have not worked the entire year, will receive a proportional number of holiday hours based on their scheduled work hours in 2016.

### **WINTER SHUTDOWN**

The number of paid holiday hours an employee will receive during the winter shutdown will be determined by the number of paid holiday hours they received prior to the shutdown. Each employee will be paid the balance of any eligible hours of paid holiday remaining for the year, during the shutdown, taking into account their full-time or proportional part-time status.

Vacation or Personal Leave may be used to cover any non-paid days/hours during the winter shutdown. Employees who do not have sufficient paid leave must take the remaining days/hours as approved time without pay.