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"Charlie Free" Soon to be Free Again

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A Florida prison escapee who was captured more than thirty years later will soon be a free man again.

Jack Hazen, aka Charlie Free, was granted parole Wednesday and will be released by month's end.

Folks in Las Vegas knew him as Charlie Free a hardworking husband and father of two. What they didn't know is his real name was Jack Hazen and he had escaped from a Florida prison 32 years earlier.

Now after a year back behind bars, Hazen has been granted parole by a unanimous decision of the Florida Parole Commission.

"He learned his lesson and you know I think he should get credit for that time he did turn his life around. He made a family, he paid his taxes, he raised us to be law abiding citizens," said Hazen's daughter Christina Greer. "Who wants to pay for somebody ... taxpayer money is paying for somebody that has already proven to everybody that he can live a decent life and not revert back to that kind of life," she said.

Hazen was caught in January of 2008 and extradited to Florida to serve out the rest of his seven year sentence for aggravated assault despite alzheimers, a brain tumor and a heart condition that require thousands of dollars in medication and treatment each month.

Parole Commissioner Monica David says Hazens' health was a factor in his release, but not the main one.

"If they don't present a risk, then there's really no need for further incarceration," David said. "For me, the fact that even though he was on escape status, that he had led pretty much a crime free life for over 32 years, and so, to me, I didn't feel like because of his age and his health status

that he was going to be a risk to society."

Hazen will be released from prison on March 31st and will spend the next two years on parole. His lawyer, Tallahassee attorney Don Pumphrey, says he's found Hazen a job and a place to live in Panama City.

"After 30 years of looking over his back and having to lead a double life, he can finally confront that and give back to the State of Florida enough so they feel free to release him," Pumphrey said.

Pumphrey says he will now work on getting Hazen's parole transferred to his home state of Nevada so he can be with his family.