



Montana Department of Corrections Correctional Signpost

2013
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Unusual funding decisions at the end of the 2013 Legislature created some uncertainty about the state of the Department of Corrections budget for the next two years.

In the final negotiations between the Legislature and Gov. Steve Bullock, no additional money was put into House Bill 2, the major budget bill for state government. Instead, lawmakers worked with Senate Bill 410.

Amendments to that bill in the closing days of the session created an “operations account” in each of three agencies: Corrections, Public Health and Human Services, and Labor and Industry. Into each account, the bill places \$2 million.

The money for corrections is to be used “for the purpose of funding various operations costs of the department.” This vague language gives the department discretion on how to use the money.

SB410 also gave the governor’s office \$7.5 million to use for operations in eight agencies – including corrections – and the governor’s office. Again, the wording in the bill gives the governor broad discretion in deciding how to allocate the money among the agencies and how it’s used.

The net result is that the Legislature left it to the executive branch and its agencies how to spend \$13.5 million over the next two fiscal years, beginning July 1.

Corrections officials have not yet decided how the money provided in the bill will

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Getting Around

New DOC Director Mike Batista talks to staff at Montana Women’s Prison during a visit to the Billings facility. He has made learning in-person about Montana correctional programs a priority since taking the director’s job in early January. More photos of recent visits by him and Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik are on pages 30-31.

How key bills fared in Legislature

By Adrienne Slaughter

The following is a summary of legislation actions on key bills in which the Department of Corrections was interested during the 2013 Legislature.

PASSED

- House Bill 61 allows individuals including offenders to access treatment for gambling addictions. The bill, sponsored by Representative Ryan Lynch, D-Butte, was revived after being tabled in the Business and Labor Committee. The bill takes effect Oct. 1.
- HB68, developed by the Law and Justice Interim Committee and sponsored by Rep. Margie MacDonald, D-Billings, establishes a statewide reentry task force for offenders within 12 months of release from prison. The bill dictates the members of the task force include, but not be limited to, representatives from the Department of Corrections, Office of Public Instruction, university system, Department of Labor and Industry, Department of Public Health and Human Services, Department of Commerce and Department of Justice. The bill takes effect July 1.

- HB71, another one sponsored by MacDonald, requires the Montana Board of Crime Control to apply for grants and provide funds to establish restorative justice programs throughout the state and to annually report to the Law and Justice Committee regarding the status and performance of the

BILLS, Page 3

Montana Department of Corrections Mission

The Montana Department of Corrections enhances public safety, promotes positive behavior in offender behavior, reintegrates offenders into the community and supports victims of crime.

Budget

FROM Page 1

be spent, but the process will include discussions with the governor's budget director before the new fiscal year starts.

"The flexibility we have in using this money will allow us to address our greatest needs with the goal of spending the dollars in the most efficient manner possible," DOC Director Mike Batista says. "We'll demonstrate that the Legislature's decision to trust this agency to make prudent spending decisions was deserved."

The two-year corrections budget approved by the Legislature contains \$363.5 million, compared with the department's request for \$369 million.

Among the items not funded in the budget were salary increases to move correctional officer wages to the 2010 market rate, projected costs for inmates requiring medical care outside prison, 10 new prerelease beds for women offenders with mental health issues, full funding for the infirmary at Lewistown, and funding for 12 existing prerelease beds for men.

Adding to the budget uncertainty is the legislative handling of the state employee pay plan. Lawmakers provided about 25 percent less money than the governor requested and left it to the executive branch to distribute the money. The only requirement is that the executive "pay particular attention to the lower pay bands and those who did not receive base pay increases in the biennium beginning July 1, 2011."

How the pay plan money is used will affect how agencies like corrections use the discretionary money provided in SB410.



Linda Moodry (left), victim and public information officer at Montana State Prison, and Sally Hilander, DOC victim programs manager, were among those commemorating National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April at the state Capitol.



Governor visits NEXUS

Eugene Wagner, an offender at NEXUS Treatment Center, talks with DOC Director Mike Batista while Gov. Steve Bullock (background in blue blazer) looks on during a visit to the Lewistown facility. RIGHT: Gov. Bullock, accompanied by Citizens Advocate John Malia (center), review some learning error reports with offenders at NEXUS. (Photos by Timothy Gibson)



Bills

FROM Page 2

- grants program. The bill, which takes effect July 1, also revises the definition of restorative justice and eliminates the Office of Restorative Justice in the Department of Justice.
- HB72, sponsored by MacDonald and proposed by the Law and Justice Committee, allows judges to require participation in a restorative justice program as a condition of an offender's suspended or deferred sentence, if the program accepts the offender. It also requires offenders to pay a participation fee. The bill took effect when signed into law April 12.
- HB137, which took effect April 19, clarifies application of parole eligibility for juvenile offenders. The bill was sponsored by Rep. Kimberly Dudik, D-Missoula, and passed both houses unanimously.

- HB140 outlaws "bath salts," the street name for a family of designer drugs containing substances that have effects similar to amphetamine and cocaine. The bill says that substances structurally similar or producing physiological effects similar to dangerous drugs are illegal. Rep. Tom Berry, R-Roundup, sponsored the bill, which passed the House with only seven dissenting votes and passed the Senate unanimously.
- HB433, by Rep. Jesse O'Hara, R-Great Falls, revises laws related to registration of sexual or violent offenders by requiring them to register when located for more than 10 days in a county where they do not normally reside and requiring offenders to register in any subsequent county after 24 hours until the offender registers again at the county of residence. The bill took effect when signed by Gov. Steve Bullock on April 24.
- Senate Bill 51, sponsored by Sen. Shannon Augare, D-Browning, eliminates the requirement that the Montana Board of Pardons and Parole and Department of Corrections report biannually to the Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee and the Law and Justice Interim Committee regarding the outcome of medical parole releases including health care costs. It takes effect Oct. 1.
- House Joint Resolution 16, sponsored by Rep. Jenny Eck, D-Helena, requests an interim study of public institutions operated by the state that serve individuals with mental illness, intellectual disabilities and chemical dependency. (This replaced an identical HB289, which was killed in committee.) A poll of lawmakers after the session ranked the study fifth among 17 possible studies. The study will be conducted by the Children,



The platoon of trainees stands at attention for a graduation ceremony.

Boot camp brings change to trainees

By Heather King
Administrative Assistant
Treasure State Correctional
Training Center

Ninety to 120 days! That's what offenders are told when they enter our boot camp program here at Treasure State Correctional Training Center. They hope for 90, but most get 120.

It may not sound like much, but to the trainees – as they are called – it seems like FOREVER. They start on day one scared and nervous. They go through the program scared and nervous, but for most, the fear and anxiousness have a new cause as they progress through the program. At first, it's because of the unknown within the program. As they work toward graduation, the trepidation is due to their impending freedom.

Freedom can be scary. Offenders know that with it comes the need to step up and make good choices and the right choices through life. They have to show integrity, which means always doing the right thing even when no one is looking. Freedom presents to offenders the time to change the detrimental lifestyle that got them here in the first place. It is a time to prove to themselves that they are better than where they were.

Here at Treasure State, the men are given the tools to succeed and grow as individuals. It is their choice whether to use those tools. They attend classes on victim impact, anger management, substance abuse, parenting and cognitive principles and restructuring.

They also attend education classes to obtain their high school diploma or GED. A church service on Sundays offers an opportunity to expand their faith. They have a structured schedule everyday with work details, physical fitness and self-study.

They earn phone calls and visits every 30 days. They earn work opportunities in the community. They have to be at a certain level before they can go into the community of Deer Lodge and assist with the annual firewood delivery, sweeping sidewalks for parades, and cleaning up before and after the county fair.

A typical day at boot camp starts at 5 a.m. and ends at 10 p.m.

Offenders begin the day with a restroom visit and then dress for physical training before eating breakfast. Twice a day they have a flag ceremony, once in the morning and once in the evening. They receive three nutritionally balanced meals as well as a snack before lights out.

During the morning and part of the afternoon the trainees attend groups. While some are in groups, the others are tending to the daily chores of cleaning the facility, doing laundry, shoveling snow, mowing grass, and other basic maintenance tasks. They also participate in quiet study time and can meet with their mentors, if they are assigned one, to work on their assignments.

In the evening, offenders get time to arrange their gear for the next day, mail call, a chance to write and read letters, and to meet with others in their platoon to show support for one another and those who are struggling.



Trainees get time to study.



A boot camp graduate reads his graduation speech to the other trainees.

Senate unanimously confirms new DOC chief

The Montana Senate unanimously confirmed the appointment of Mike Batista as director for the Department of Corrections.

A 30-year veteran of state and federal law enforcement agencies, Batista was appointed to the job by Gov. Steve Bullock in December and took over the state's third-largest government agency in early January when Bullock was sworn in as governor.

During the confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Batista's nomination was supported by various law enforcement organizations.

Jim Smith of the Montana Sheriffs' and Peace Officers' Association said he worked with new director during Batista's 20 years as head of the state Criminal Investigation Division and called him an "outstanding public servant and law enforcement officer" who demonstrates "understanding and compassion for anyone he works with."

Jerry Williams of the Montana Police Protective Association said Batista has three attributes prized in law enforcement: leadership, character and integrity.

Rep. Jesse O'Hara, R-Great Falls, was a middle-school counselor when Batista was a student and remembered him as someone who wanted a career in law enforcement even as a ninth grader.

"He's going to be as outstanding at that (being corrections director) as he has been at other things in his life," O'Hara told the committee. "I can't think of a time when I haven't been extremely proud of him."

During his first months on the job, Batista told the committee, he has developed a strong appreciation for the work done by those in the corrections profession. While legislators may not get slaps on the back for funding corrections programs, lawmakers do understand the department performs a very important public safety function, he added.

Batista, 53, is a Great Falls native and earned a bachelor's degree in criminology from Eastern Washington University in 1982.



DOC Director Mike Batista meets with Missoula County Sheriff Carl Ibsen during a visit to correctional facilities in Missoula.

Boot camp

FROM Page 4

When a trainee finds out the date he will graduate, he has the option of inviting up to four pre-approved family members to attend the ceremony. This is a big day, a much-awaited date marked by pride and a sense of accomplishment.

The graduates are allowed time before the ceremony to visit with their guests. Then they are excused to get ready for the ceremony and then line up to wait. The rest of the platoon marches in singing a cadence that was written for

the graduates by one of their fellow trainees and personalized for the specific graduates. The platoon lines up.

The graduates march in and line up between the U.S. and Montana flags. The platoon salutes them for their accomplishment. This is where they read their graduation speeches.

For most, this is a very emotional and happy moment in their lives. They are congratulated by staff, given their final hat – a gray one with the Treasure State motto "Courage to Change" on the front – and are dismissed back to the barracks. Most continue on to the aftercare program at the Great Falls Transition Center; some go home that day. Whatever their destination, they will not likely forget their boot camp experience.

Drug testing: Myth vs. fact

By Kurt Aughney
DOC Drug Testing Coordinator

Breaking the cycle of addiction is critical for most offenders to successfully return to or continue living in their communities. In order to break the revolving door of addiction, treatment, relapse and addiction, the department must identify those offenders who struggle with abuse and discover the substances on which they are dependent.

One of the most important tools the department has to detect abuse is the urinalysis drug screen (UA).

During fiscal year 2013, the department has so far administered more than 13,000 UA's. The department's goal in next fiscal year and beyond is to decrease the number of false positive results. False positives are tests that were positive but later found to be negative at the state crime lab using confirmatory testing.

Numerous myths surround the drug-testing program. Public understanding of the truths behind some of these myths will benefit the drug-testing program in the long run. Toward that end, here is a look at some misunderstandings about offender drug testing.

Myth: New marijuana use can be detected by comparing THC (tetrahydrocannabinol, the active ingredient in marijuana) levels in consecutive samples.

Fact: False. New usage cannot be accurately measured by using THC levels alone. The amount of THC is relative to the amount of water in the donor's urine and will not be equivalent in consecutive samples making a true and accurate measurement impossible.

Myth: Comparing the level of a drug in nanograms (one billionth of a gram) to the amount of donor urine in milliliters – or nanograms per milliliter (ng/ml) – is an accurate method of measuring the amount of a drug consumed by the donor.

Fact: False. The ng/ml above specified cutoff levels does indicate drug use, but does not accurately correspond to the amount of a drug used by the donor. Numerous factors such as a drug half-life, the donor's drug use history, age, sex, weight, health, or even variations of a specific drug itself can affect the reading. Different people may have equal levels even though they have consumed much different amounts of the same drug.



Aughney

Myth: It is possible to distinguish THC from marijuana and the prescription drug Marinol through laboratory testing.

Fact: False. Marinol and THC are identical chemical compounds derived from the marijuana plant and cannot be distinguished.

Myth: If an offender is exposed to secondhand marijuana smoke, it can result in a positive UA.

Fact: This may be technically true. However, the minimum level of THC for a positive result is set at 50 ng/ml in order to avoid this possibility. Numerous studies have exposed subjects to massive amounts of secondhand smoke and have yet to yield a positive result above or near the cutoff level.

Myth: Food and products that contain hemp will not test positive for THC in a UA.

Fact: False. This is another reason cutoff level for THC is set where it is. However, a donor may still test positive for THC by ingesting large amounts of hemp products. THC is an illegal substance for offenders. If a positive sample is confirmed positive for THC at the crime lab. The source of the THC does not matter.

Myth: Urine and saliva tests will produce the same results during a drug screen.

Fact: While both tests are scientifically accurate, the window to detect specific substances in saliva is shorter than for urine. However, saliva tests can detect drug use by the donor before it becomes detectable in UA's. All things being equal, one test may be positive while the other test is negative, and vice versa.

Myth: If a donor bleaches or has cosmetic alterations to their hair it may affect the result of a drug test on the hair.

Fact: True. Alteration of the donor's hair will not beat the test, but will make drugs in the donor's hair sample much easier to detect.

Myth: Hair testing is acceptable to detect recent drug use.

Fact: False. Any drug use occurring during the previous week will not be detected through hair testing even when the hair is cut as close to the scalp as possible.

Myth: If the UA and lab results do not match, then one test is not functioning properly.

Fact: This is both true and false since they both test for different results. UA's test for specific metabolites found in urine, while lab tests determine exact substances and



Corrections years were learning experience

By Bob Anez
DOC Communication Director

Almost eight years ago, I came to the Montana Department of Corrections as someone who had watched and wrote about state government for nearly a quarter of a century.

I thought I knew how government worked. I thought I knew state employees, why they do the work they do and what motivates them. I thought I knew about corrections.

But the past seven years and nine months have been about learning – learning what I really didn't know.

I have learned that state government is a challenging place to work. Despite the best efforts of employees, government gets a bad rap as a wasting of taxpayer money, laced with agencies that stockpile money in slush funds without regard for need or purpose.

Some citizens, and particularly legislators, see government as only a consumer of tax dollars and not a provider of benefits and necessary services. Some seem to believe that departments are in some sort of competition to grow their budgets more than the other agencies and that success is measured in the number of dollars in a budget rather than the effectiveness of programs.

It isn't so.

What people fail to see is the irony of a dilemma created when elected representatives impose demands and expectations upon government and then refuse to provide the money needed to comply with those demands and meet those expectations.

I have seen government that struggles daily with finding ways to do its job better; to spend money wisely; to be innovative, effective and imaginative; and to do more and more with less and less.

I have learned that state employees try mightily to make government work for the Montanans who pay for it. They recognize their obligation to spend carefully the money that citizens work hard to earn and are forced to pay in taxes. They serve well the public that pays them and they take that obligation seriously.

Most state employees work in largely invisible jobs. They are under-appreciated, under-rewarded and under-recognized for their contributions to a better society.

And then there's corrections. I learned the most about this profession.

I learned corrections is a part of government that is perceived as an inconvenient necessity. It operates in the shadows, invisible to typical Montanans. The majority of citizens don't know much about it, and those that do – usually those with a family member or friend in the system – have nothing but criticism for the work it does under very challenging conditions and with difficult "customers."

Legislators wish it didn't have to be funded. They don't get applauded by constituents for spending money on prisons, medical care for inmates, training and equipment for probation and parole officers, or treatment for repeat drunken drivers. They get praise for providing tax relief, giving schools more money and taking care of the poorest Montanans.

At end of the criminal justice system, corrections is at the mercy of court decisions and the laws that drive them. Corrections gets what, to many, are the dregs of society – the sex offenders, the murderers, the drug addicts, mentally ill and the drunken motorists – that society would just as soon see disappear from the collective consciousness. But they don't disappear. They come to corrections, and adequate funding is needed for their care and supervision.

Finally, I have learned about corrections employees. They are dedicated and passionate about their work, and not just from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. I have seen a constant effort to do more to salvage the lives of those given to corrections for care, and to develop new and more effective means of stopping offenders from getting caught up in that revolving door of recidivism.

Correctional officers, probation and parole officers, support staff, treatment specialists and management really do work hard every day in a field that is mostly unseen in the daily lives of Montanans.

To you corrections professionals with whom I have had the privilege of working, remember you are some of the most important of state employees. No matter how anonymous you are and no matter what you do, the ripples from your role in ensuring the public safety of Montanans reach all corners of this state every single day. Don't forget the work you do saves lives.

Thank you for the honor of getting to know you. You are heroes.

Goodbye corrections.

STEPS graduates start newsletter

By Gail Boese
MCE Administrative Officer

Lou Tice, past chairman and co-founder of The Pacific Institute, spent nearly his entire life spreading his educational curriculum around the world in a commitment toward making “a better world.” Lou’s education programs have touched an estimate 33 million people around the world, and the ripple effect could be much greater.

Some of the people his efforts have touched are the staff of the Montana Department of Corrections through Investment in Excellence and inmates at Montana State Prison through the STEPS (Steps to Economic and Personal Success) program. This program continues to grow, and the ripples are being felt once again.

STEPS graduates Wayne Waldron and Mark Drury sat down with Sara Mosier, STEPS facilitator and a teacher for Montana Correctional Enterprises (MCE), to brainstorm ways to better engage the inmate population as a whole, reach inmates who have not had an opportunity to take the STEPS program, and impassion the culture of the prison with the philosophies of the STEPS program.

This led to a proposal to publish a newsletter entitled “*Through the Wire: A Stairway to Success.*” This pro-

posal was reviewed and approved by Gayle Lambert, MCE administrator, and Montana State Prison Warden Leroy Kirkegard. The first issue of the newsletter was published Feb. 1.

“*Through the Wire*” is written by inmates, for inmates and filled with positive material that reinforces the principles these inmates have learned, class project articles, letters from inmates on the positive effects it has made in their life, motivational and positive quotes, and fun items like brain teasers.

The newsletter is published quarterly and is reviewed by staff editors Mosier and Lorna Kuchinsky, along with Lambert and Kirkegard, before publication. Copies of the newsletter are distributed to each housing unit at MSP, the regional prisons, Crossroads Correctional Center, prerelease centers and The Pacific Institute.

The first publication of the newsletter was sent to The Pacific Institute. Mark Schlosser, one of the executive directors, was so impressed with the newsletter and how the inmates were paying the program forward that he asked if he could include an article about this on the institute’s Facebook page and in its newsletter.

It is exciting to think about the far-reaching effects of this newsletter and how one positive statement or uplifting story can make a difference in someone’s life. This is the ripple effect, and this is what we are talking about.

Staff members or inmates interested in STEPS — even those who are a little skeptical — are encouraged to attend a couple of classes to see what the program is all about.

Testing

FROM Page 6

amounts of certain substances found in a specific sample. Most UA’s cannot determine if substances are adulterants or substitutions, and they cannot detect if a substance cross-reacts with other substances to generate false positives. The advantage is that UA’s provide statistically accurate results in a rapid and simple test.

Myth: Numerous substances are able to cleanse the donor’s sample of drugs.

Fact: False. Many products are sold as “cleansers” in the form of pills, powders and teas, but none of these products are proven to clean dirty urine. Most products sold as cleansers direct the donor to abstain from drug use for at least three days before the test. After three days, a UA’s ability to detect most substances is passed. In addition, most cleansers direct the donor to drink copious amounts of water, which in turn dilutes the urine. This invalidates a sample and should be questioned by the tester.

Beck succeeds Anez

Judy Beck, with nearly 30 years of experience in state government, will be the Department of Corrections new communication director, starting June 10.

She replaces Bob Anez, who is retiring June 1.

Beck began her career as program planner in the Department of Labor and Industry in early 1984. She worked three years as speech writer for then-Gov. Ted Schwinden. Four years later she became administrative assistant to the Department of Family Services director.

In 1993, she began a 20-year tenure as communication officer for the Department of Justice. She became deputy director of communications for Gov. Steve Bullock when he took office in January.



Beck

Montana sees 2% decrease from 2006-2011

Incarceration rates fall in most states

Montana was one of 29 states that saw a decrease in incarceration rates during the five years between 2006 and 2011, according to a recent report from The Pew Charitable Trusts.

Montana joined Georgia, Utah and Virginia with the smallest reductions in their imprisonment rates (2 percent) during the period. California (17 percent), Hawaii (16 percent) and Massachusetts (15 percent) had the largest declines.

West Virginia (17 percent) Arizona (16 percent) and Pennsylvania (14 percent) experienced the largest increases in rates. In all, 18 states had increased incarceration rates. Three states – Iowa, Missouri and South Dakota – saw no change in their incarceration rates.

The Pew report said the rate decreases were not surprising since the U.S. prison population dropped in 2010 and 2011 after “nearly four decades of explosive growth.”

“Many of the states showing recent drops have taken substantial steps to rein in the size and cost of their corrections systems,” the Pew authors reported. “Often with overwhelming bipartisan votes, leaders in these states have shortened terms behind bars for lower-level offenders or diverted them from prison altogether.”

The report said several states, including Georgia and Pennsylvania, have invested significant funding into probation and parole “in an effort to break the cycle of recidivism and improve public safety.”

While the desire to save money is a factor in states’ efforts to reduce the prison population, increased investment in treatment and diversion programs, strong public support for trimming dependence on prisons and the growth of research to identify effective alternatives to prison also play a role in the trend, the report said.

Montana has undertaken similar efforts before and during the span covered in the report. In 2005, the Department of Corrections added a second felony DUI treatment program. In 2007, the department opened two drug treatment programs aimed at those offenders with the most severe and treatment-resistant addictions.

The state also expanded prerelease centers and opened an assessment and sanction center to divert from prison offenders who violate conditions of their community placements.

Montana’s incarceration rate was 367 per 100,000 residents at the start of 2012, compared with a national average of 492.

Passages plans alumni gathering for Aug. 11

Passages Women’s Center will host its fifth annual alumni celebration on Sunday, Aug. 11. The two-hour event begins at 1 p.m. outside the center in Billings.

This event, including an ice cream social, will be held in the New Visions Garden and is open to all former Passages residents and their immediate families as an opportunity to share their successes with other alumni and staff and to enjoy treats, games for kids and prize giveaways.

Department of Corrections staff members working with offenders formerly at Passages are encouraged to

attend. It’s a great way to support the accomplishments the women have made in their lives.

Passages is operated by Alternatives Inc. and utilizes the therapeutic community model of treatment. The center houses three distinct programs, a prerelease center; an assessment, sanction and revocation center; and an inpatient alcohol and drug treatment program. It has a capacity of 164 female offenders.

For more information on this event, contact Jan Begger, Passages director, at 294-9609 ext. 211.



A MWP success story...

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following letter was sent by a former inmate to Jo Acton, former warden at the Montana Women's Prison, in March.

Dear Jo,

I hope all is well with you. Since we last communicated, I was accepted into a graduate program at the University of Illinois at Springfield in the Master's of Human Development Counseling and hired as a graduate assistant with the Office of Disability Services to help pay for my education.

My focus in the counseling program is in marriage, couples, and family counseling. I am also working on a certification in alcohol and substance abuse. I hope to get a dual licensure as a mental health counselor (LPC) and a marriage and family counselor (LMFT).

My purpose in life is unfolding and I can't express how gratifying it is to feel like I've found my niche. On the side, I am working on a certificate to be a yoga instructor and I hope to use yoga as a therapeutic tool in my counseling practice. As we speak, I am working on my counseling internship on the residential unit of a substance abuse agency, and I am integrating my knowledge of yoga and meditation to work with clients at the agency. Clients are very responsive to the meditation group, and I believe it is because they can see instant results in how they feel from participating in the yoga/meditation activities.

It has been such an honor to be given the opportunity to share my gifts with the residents at the agency. I am still on probation, so I am unable to work in the prisons at this point. However, as soon as I can I will expand my practice to those institutions, as well.

I am very curious as to how the Prison Paws for Humanity program is holding up. Although I am not actively working as a dog trainer (not enough time in the day), it is still on my list of "things to do with my life." My finger is on the pulse of dog training in institutions and I consistently research the animal/human healing potential. I have written many papers for my classes and attended workshops and webinars on the subject of dog-training programs.

There are many programs like yours in the Midwest and they are very successful. I have met people in the field of which I work who are involved with such programs. My gratitude extends to you and I want you to know that I always think of my time at MWP as healing, and as a catalyst to my purpose in life. I will never forget your kindness and I will always remember how you and your staff treated me.

My memory for names has always been a problem, and I can't remember how to spell his last name, nor am I quite sure of his first name, but I remember the way he treated me like a human being, so if you could, please let Mr. Harmann [Lt. Mark Hartman] know I appreciated that he believed in me, that would be great. I will keep in touch and hopefully one day I can come visit the prison and share some hope with the prisoners there. Thank you, again, for all you do!!

Sheerine Bazargani

From the Director



Our people make our department. The employees – from the accounting clerk and correctional officer to the computer application developer and probation officer – are this agency's greatest asset.

I know of two that prove that point.

Everyone says that we have the best newsletter in state government. I agree. During Bob Anez's tenure here he has vividly captured in words and pictures the people and outstanding work done by this department. My interest in working here peaked after reading our newsletter and biennial report for the first time.

This Friday we say goodbye to two very talented professionals who have contributed so much to our organization: Myrna Omholt-Mason and Bob Anez. They are special people who I'm glad to have had a chance to work with and get to know on a personal level. They are reminders for all of us that it's the people that make organizations great! We wish them all the best in the future.

Now that the Legislature is behind us, we will focus on the people of DOC. We will invest time, money and support to ensure that they have the tools to do their work effectively. We will make a top priority the recruitment and retention of talented people able to help move this organization forward.

That's the reasoning behind my decision to place at the top of my to-do list the development of an agency-wide pay plan that will provide a reasoned and defensible approach to paying our employees fair wages for performing their duties daily to protect public safety.

I want a pay plan that recognizes the unique challenges that many corrections employees confront every day they come to work. I want a pay plan that helps attract people to a corrections career and not one that discourages them from coming and staying.

This will be one of the items on the agenda when the DOC management team meets in June.

But we also will be talking about other issues as well.

The meeting will kick off a review of the department's organizational structure to determine whether some modifications can be made here and there to improve agency's effectiveness and efficiency. We'll be looking at ways to simplify department processes and procedures. We'll explore how to improve our relationships with other pieces of the criminal justice puzzle and with our private partners that operate the wide array of community corrections services.

I'll also ask the management team to talk about ways to enhance the department's image so that more Montanans understand what this agency does and the important role it plays in providing them with safer lives.

We have a lot we want to accomplish and, together, corrections employees, offenders, our partners and all of Montana will benefit.



By Holly Callarman
HR Specialist
Montana State Prison



No one can ignore sexual harassment

Sexual harassment can be a difficult and awkward topic. The subject can make some people feel uncomfortable and unsure about their own interactions with those around them. It can sometimes be the elephant in the room, where everyone knows something is going on but no one wants to be the first to speak up.

The problem is, sexual harassment will always be an issue in the workplace as long as it is treated as a subject that few feel comfortable talking about and fewer know what to do about it.

That is why Montana State Prison set aside one week in April – National Sexual Assault Awareness Month – to host Sexual Harassment Awareness Week. The human resources team sent out helpful information each day in an attempt to shine light on the giant elephant of sexual harassment and to get people talking about it. The emails were designed to give practical and relevant information to today's workplace.

Department of Corrections policy 1.3.20 outlines the agency's official position when it comes to sexual harassment. The policy alone, however, doesn't answer all of the questions we in human resources receive. So here's some questions and answers about the subject.

Q: I see the policy, but what does that look like on a day-to-day basis?

A: Sexual harassment comes in many forms and does not have to be overtly sexual. For example, innuendo, whether in a joke or passing comment could be sexual harassment even though the joke or comment was not explicitly sexual but only implied a sexual context. Physical contact – especially of the buttocks, chest, and groin – could be considered sexual harassment. The best advice is to play it safe. Ask yourself, "Would I want innocent ears to hear this?" If the answer is no, don't say it. Ask yourself, "Would innocent ears be offended?" If the answer is yes, don't say it.

Q: How are individuals liable?

A: Supervisors must make every effort to stop sexual harassment and take appropriate disciplinary action. Non-supervisors have a responsibility to report incidents regardless of the target of the harassment.

Q: What can I do to prevent sexual harassment?

A: The best way to prevent sexual harassment is to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect within the workplace. One way to do that is to SAVE each other.

Serve as an example to those around you with a good attitude and work ethic.

Appreciate the efforts of others and recognize their accomplishments.

Value co-workers as people who can help each other.

Encourage others in their work.

Q: What's another great way to prevent sexual harassment?

A: Talk about it. Don't be afraid to confront the topic in constructive and proactive ways with co-workers and supervisors. Be willing to voice concerns and discuss problems when they arise. By having open communication, we as a department can clear the sexual harassment elephant from the room and have a more enjoyable workplace.



Governor visits DOC's Central Office

Gov. Steve Bullock visited the Department of Corrections' headquarters in mid-April, marking the first time in eight years that a governor has been to Central Office. He and Tim Burton, chief of staff to the newly elected governor, talked with Director Mike Batista and Deputy Director Lorraine Wodnik before touring some of the building and meeting employees. Pictured, left to right, are Burton, Batista and Bullock.

Students learn about probation world

By Dan Taylor

EDITOR'S NOTE: Taylor is a probation and parole supervisor in Billings and is a licensed addictions counselor.

This past spring semester, I was privileged to teach an elective undergraduate course entitled "Introduction to Probation" for the criminal justice track of the sociology program at Montana State University Billings. In reality, the course covered all aspects of community supervision and programming, not just probation.

The text I selected for the students was "Corrections in the Community" by Latessa and Smith. In addition to the broad view of community corrections and supervision, I wanted to make sure the course was practice-based so I brought in several guest speakers to address the class on their areas of supervision.

Billings Probation and Parole Officers Jennie Hansen and Katie Weston made a presentation on reentry programs; Billings P&P Officers Melanie Melia and Michelle Downey talked about sex offenders and the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal Tim Hornung talked about how the federal agency's Montana Violent Offender Task Force opera-

tions assist in apprehending violent offenders and absconders. Juvenile Parole Supervisor Paul Hawkins from Billings wrapped up the guest presentations by discussing juvenile supervision and programming.

Students were required to attend and observe a Drug Court, operation, complete two case presentations to their classmates and tour the men's prerelease center in Billings. Students were tested on their knowledge with a mid-term and final exam, as well as being familiar with conducting a presentence investigation and writing a report of violation. Finally, students were presented with various "best practices" in community supervision, as well as the latest research on what works in community supervision, including chemical dependency treatment.

Although many of the students were criminal justice majors, some with law enforcement aspirations, it was a wonderful opportunity to give them a solid understanding of the role and mission of the Probation and Parole Bureau.

Region four has steadily increased its number of student interns, which provides potential P&P officers with real-time, hands-on experience, and helped the regular officers tremendously. It has been said that the road to understanding is founded in education, and for probation and parole, the investment is definitely paying off.



Spotlight

Wodnik: job is about support

By Bob Anez
DOC Communication Director

The new deputy director for the Department of Corrections has a clear vision of her role in a position the agency has not had for 18 years.

“I am here to help people get to where they want to go,” says Loraine Wodnik. “I want people to feel comfortable coming in and talking with me. I don’t want anybody to be intimidated by this position.”

Wodnik, who started her new job April 8, brings 20 years of experience in state government to corrections. She held operations and budget positions in the departments of Natural Resources and Conservation, Justice and Revenue, and she believes that background will benefit her here.

“I have learned a lot about state government operations – what works well and what doesn’t work well – and I have learned from both,” she says. “I have worked with a lot of people and have a good working relationship with those in other state agencies, the legislative branch and the governor’s office.”

Director Mike Batista, who took over the department less than five months ago, continues to work on the details of Wodnik’s duties and responsibilities. But he has indicated he intends to her focus on program development, design of an agency-wide pay plan, and organization efficiencies.

He says additional specifics will be decided following a management team meeting planned for June.

In the meantime, Wodnik, 44, plans to focus on learning all she can, as fast as she can, about corrections.

“I need to learn from the folks around here, what works well in this agency and what’s not working,” she says. “I’m up for that. I encourage people to teach me. I want and need all of them to teach me.”



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Wodnik

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She is anxious to visit correctional facilities and talk to the people who work in them – “letting them teach me” is how she explains it. “I want to learn what they see my role as, to determine where I can add value.”

She has traveled to Deer Lodge to learn about Montana State Prison, Montana Correctional Enterprises and Treasure State Correctional Center.

Wodnik and Batista also visited correctional programs in Billings, Bozeman, Glendive, Helena, Laurel and Miles City

Her first hours on the job included a tour of Central Office to meet the staff, giving employees their first chance to put a face to the name they had heard.

Some of those she met were previous employees of agencies where she had worked and they recognized her name or knew her from those times. Wodnik had an easy air about here as she talked with staffers and learned their job responsibilities, although the sheer number had to be overwhelming.

But even before her first day, Wodnik had already spent some time around the department and her initial impressions were distinctly favorable.

While still finishing her work at the Revenue Department, she recalls, a handful of people stopped by her office and told her corrections was an agency “full of good people.”

To Wodnik, overstating the critical function of the department would be difficult because of its vital responsibility for protecting public safety.

“I’m amazed at all of the things corrections is involved in,” she says. “I’m not sure that people understand how important it is for the Department of Corrections to be successful in its work. The average citizens may not understand how important it is in their daily lives.”

Corrections, Wodnik recognizes, has two faces. Incarceration is a necessary means of making Montanans feel safer, but the corrections programs aimed at returning offenders to society as productive community members is of equal importance.

Wodnik sees corrections as the right place and right job at the right time in her life.

After six years as fiscal administrator at the Department of Revenue, she was ready for a change and a new challenge.

“This is an opportunity for me to assist in bringing some ideas that worked well and that I’ve been involved

in implementing to a new agency,” she says, noting that her development of an agency-wide pay plan for the Revenue Department will be useful in doing the same in corrections.

And Wodnik is comfortable being the new staffer; she’s been there before. While some may question the need for a deputy director, she says it struck her as surprising that Montana’s third-largest government agency lacked such a position.

What’s unusual about this job is that she succeeds no one – there is no “playbook” and there’s no one with which her work can be compared. That unscripted role is exciting and invigorating because she and the director will define the job.

Away from the office, Wodnik likes to spend her time on running, walking, reading, home improvement, travel-

‘I need to learn from the folks around here, what works well in this agency and what’s not working, I’m up for that. I encourage people to teach me.’

ing and spending time with her husband and their four children.

She talks easily about her management style, an indication that describing her approach in dealing with colleagues is something to which she has given considerable thought.

She describes herself as an open communicator and good listener who expects accountability from herself and others, and as a person who is goal-oriented and supportive.

Wodnik also believes she has become a good decision maker, which she explains is someone who knows when she has enough information to make a timely decision.

Decisions must be made, but they are not always perfection, she says. “You can’t be so concerned about never making a mistake that you prevent yourself from making the decisions that need to be made.”

Wodnik’s self-assessment skills appear when asked to describe her personality. She uses words like practical, hard-working and family-oriented. But perhaps what best sums her up comes after a short pause to think.

“Comfortable with myself,” she says.

Prison ministry: A message of hope



The Rev. Rob Nedbalek with Freedom in Christ Prison Ministries, above, leads a worship service in the religious activities center at Montana State Prison. (Photos by Larry Beckner, Great Falls Tribune)

By David Murray
Great Falls Tribune

The journey to attend a worship service at Freedom in Christ's chapel is an intimidating one.

First there is a background check, followed by security clearance that may require a strip search. The chapel's courtyard is surrounded by a 12-foot-high chain-link fence topped with razor wire, and your every move is monitored by surveillance cameras and uniformed guards.

But for the men who attend services here, the Freedom in Christ Prison Ministry represents a link to the outside world and may provide them with a pathway to a better life once their prison sentence is completed.

"If we truly follow the tenets Jesus preached and taught — of forgiveness, of loving our neighbor as ourselves, then as a faith community we need to accept that God through Christ Jesus can work through and in anybody," said

the Rev. Rob Nedbalek, pastor of the Montana State Prison parish of Freedom in Christ Ministry. "Our position is not to judge the inmate — they've already been judged and had a sentence executed against them."

The existence of prison ministries is nothing new. A variety of religious organizations have provided religious services for Montana inmates since the completion of the first territorial prison in 1871. Today, several volunteer ministries are active at the Montana State Prison. But Freedom in Christ, administrated and funded through the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is unique in that it is the only permanent congregation established within the prison's walls.

"I'm not the pastor of a congregation somewhere else and come in and visit," Nedbalek said. "We are our own worshipping community. When I go inside, I'm not just there as a visiting volunteer. I am the inmates' pastor, and it is their congregation."

Grace behind bars

For the 100 or so inmates who participate in the spiritual services provided by Freedom in Christ, the distinction of having their own parish reverend is an important one. Nedbalek recalled how on his very first visit to the prison, a Max Level III inmate, a man with a violent history as a California gang member, asked Nedbalek about his commitment to the prison ministry.

"This is a man who's out of his cell one hour out of every 24," Nedbalek said. "When he's out of his cell, he wears

'When I go inside, I'm not just there as a visiting volunteer. I am the inmates' pastor, and it is their congregation.'

-Rev. Rob Nedbalek



Pastor Rob Nedbalek, with Freedom and Christ Prison Ministries, during a worship service at Montana State Prison.

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chains, ankle bracelets and handcuffs. We visited through glass and he said, ‘Are you going to be here?’ I said, ‘Say more, what do you mean?’ He said, ‘We get these people — they come in, they do their shtick, they get us all fired up and then they leave. Some of them come back six weeks later, some 12 weeks later and some never come back. We need somebody who’s here for us.’”

Nedbalek made it clear that the contributions of all volunteers at the prison are valued and appreciated. But trust is a rare commodity behind prison walls, and the formation of lasting long-term relationships is invaluable in fostering faith-building and a genuine religious experience.

“I’ve grown to know Pastor Rob real well,” inmate David Boucher Jr. said. “He was there when my mom passed on — he helped me through that. I care quite a bit about him.”

Boucher has a criminal history stretching back 30 years.

He’s been in and out of prison since the early 1980s and is currently serving a two-year sentence for burglary. But despite his record of recidivism, Boucher appeared genuinely moved during Holy Week services at the prison’s religious activities center and asserted that his search for spiritual guidance is authentic.

“People have a misconception of what programs like Freedom in Christ do for people in here,” Boucher said. “Some of them say that religion is just a crutch in here and what are they (the inmates) going to do when they get out. They don’t believe that faith can be built in here. But it is, and they need to know that.”

Nedbalek readily admits that not every member of the prison congregation may be genuine. Tedium is the inmate’s constant companion, and some men may attend religious services simply as a means to relieve the boredom.

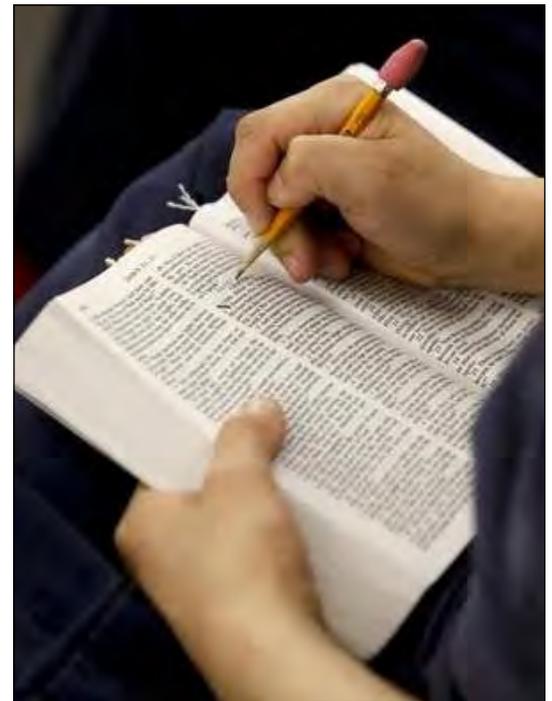
“Anybody who doesn’t think that’s part of what’s going on is wearing blinders,” he said. “But there are those who are genuinely seeking, and we

provide for them.”

Nedbalek speaks as a man with personal knowledge about life in prison and the potential for religious growth there. In 1980 Nedbalek was convicted on a single count of vehicular homicide. While serving time in a Colorado prison, he was confronted by a prison guard who had been a friend of the man Nedbalek had killed.

“He told me that he had made up his mind before I ever got there that it wasn’t an accident, and I was guilty of

murdering his friend,” Nedbalek said. “Furthermore, he told me that he had decided I wasn’t leaving. He chose the creepiest place in the prison to do that, and I was pretty well convinced that I was going to die.”



Wesley Rich writes a note in his Bible during a Christ Prison Ministry service at Montana State Prison.

‘Some of them say that religion is just a crutch in here They don’t believe that faith can be built in here. But it is, and they need to know that.’

-Inmate David Boucher Jr.

Health & Wellness

By
April Grady



Quarterly Quote:

The occasional voices of children at play in some garden, the latching of a gate far down the street, the dying fall of a drowsy chanticleer, are but the punctuation of the poem of summer silence that has been flowing on all the afternoon. (from A Summer Evening's Dream, Edward Bellamy)

Eco Tip: Having a Green Picnic (howstuffworks.com)

A picnic celebrates the natural world, so it's sort of pointless to have a picnic that destroys that world. Some ways to keep your picnic green:

- Use reusable plates, cups and utensils. Plastic utensils allow you to avoid washing up, but their utility ends there. It's cheaper (and greener) to bring metal utensils from home. Toss the dirty ones into a used dish, so you can take them home for easy washing.
- Choose cloth napkins, not paper. Ditto for the dishtowels.
- Buy local produce from farmers' markets. In general, the less your food has traveled, the less pollution it has created.
- Try for an all-vegetarian spread. Modern mass production of meat has high energy costs and creates a lot of pollution -- more global-warming emissions than all oil-based forms of transportation put together [source: Freston].
- Instead of driving, bike or walk to the park. Or, if your city offers it, take mass transit or use a car-share program.
- It should go without saying, but pick up all your trash. Abide by the camper's tradition of leaving the picnic site cleaner than it was when you found



it. Better yet, try not to create any trash at all.

Don't use disposable containers. Recycle whatever you can, and collect food scraps for composting.

Summer Health Tip: (nutritionvista.com)

On sultry, humid days, muscles compete with the skin for blood circulation. When it's hot outside, more blood flows near the skin to help dissipate body heat and cool the body down thereby keeping your body's temperature from rising to dangerous levels. But that can mean less blood reaches muscles, hence the lethargy.

To handle the summer heat onslaught and ensure your body is as cool as it can possibly be, here are a few measures that are easy to follow:

1. Eat light, small, frequent meals. Start the morning with a sweet, juicy fruit at breakfast. Ripe summer fruits - peaches, plums, melons and pears, are exactly what your skin craves for in the hot season. Citrus fruits are also very cooling. Eat whole or extract their juice, store in the refrigerator and sip often throughout the day.



2. Include salads in your diet. Consuming leafy lettuce and summer greens, corn on cob and cucumbers in salads are delicious ways to stay cool. These foods contain a significant amount of water and can actually thin the blood, which has a cooling effect. Onions too are great in the summer, because of their ability to beat the heat and provide relief from summer ailments. So, throw in some washed onion slices onto a sandwich, or in your salad.

3. If you get burnt (sun stroke or heat stroke), seek relief by sipping on green tea or take a spoon of onion juice. They are potent antioxidants that can neutralize cellular

damage caused by the sun's rays.

4. To cool the body through sweating, add small amounts of hot spices to food while cooking. Hot peppers, fresh ginger, and black pepper are all great spices to make it really hot for you and then to cool you down.

5. Hydrate your body.

Drink at least 8-10 glasses of water a day. Water is the best drink as it doesn't contain any sugars that can add up to unnecessary calories. For a change, a lemon and honey drink can also instantly replenish your body's lost fluids and work as an energizer. Drink fluids even if you are not yet thirsty. Once you have the feeling of being thirsty means you are already dehydrated.



6. Wear loose, full-sleeved cotton clothes to protect the body from the sun and to aid evaporation of sweat. Use a hat to protect your head from the sun when you go out

7. Stay indoors. Restrict outdoor activities to the cooler parts of the day - early mornings before 10:30 or late evenings after 5:30.

8. Limit red meat and instead go for fish and oysters.

9. Avoid extreme cold foods and drinks. Most of us normally pick these and they are actually known to interfere with digestion and sweating, thereby interfering with the body's natural cooling mechanisms. So, however tempting it may be to sit on your porch licking an ice cream cone or sipping a cool glass of tea, try a wedge of watermelon instead.

Eat Smart:

Lime Avocado Quinoa Salad (anitaavalos.com)

- 1 cup quinoa cooked in two cups water (you can do this on the stove or in a rice cooker)
- Olive Oil (as needed)
- The juice of 2-3 limes (fresh limes, no bottled stuff!)
- 1 large avocado, pitted and diced

- Small handful of chopped cilantro
- 1/2 of a small red onion, diced
- 1/4 cup diced green onions
- Sea salt
- One diced white or yellow peach
- 1 large head of romaine or red leaf lettuce, rinsed, dried, and chopped

Directions: Cook quinoa according to directions and set aside in a large bowl.

In the large bowl, drizzle the quinoa with a bit of olive oil and toss well. Then, squeeze the lime juice and sea salt (to taste) and toss again.

Next, add in your cilantro, red onion, green onion, and toss again. Add in the avocado and toss. Lastly, add in the diced peach, toss, and add in more lime juice if desired.

In a salad bowl, line the bowl with the lettuce, scoop out some of the salad onto the lettuce, and garnish with a couple of lime wedges or extra avocado.

Summer Fitness:

20-Minute Backyard Cardio Circuit

This series of 1-minute PE classics packs almost the calorie burn of Spinning -- ideal for at home exercisers.

- March in place for 3 minutes (360 steps)
- 60 Jumping Jacks
- March 1 minute (120 steps)
- 60 Jumping Jacks
- March 1 minute
- 30 Squat-Thrusts*
- March 1 minute
- 30 Squat-Thrusts
- March 1 minute
- 30 Squat-Thrusts
- March 1 minute
- 30 Squat-Thrusts
- March 1 minute
- 60 Jumping Jacks
- March 1 minute
- 60 Jumping Jacks
- March in place 2 minutes to cool down

Calories burned: 145

*From standing, crouch down, place palms on floor, jump legs back into full push-up position, then jump legs back to crouch pose and stand up. Repeat.

Regional Roundup



Items in the roundup are contributed by the regional probation and parole staffs.

Region 4

Congratulations to Steve Stanford on being selected as regional employee of the quarter. He is the institutional probation and parole officer at Passages and was selected by his peers and management for his dedication, strong work ethic and positive influence.

Jeremiah Adams transferred from the Hardin office to Billings where he has assumed the duties of supervising offenders in the Carbon County area as well as some offenders in Laurel.

Megan Schaack transferred from the intensive supervision program and Amanda Roos took her place on the team. Schaack is supervising a standard caseload as well as being involved with the Billings Drug Court. Three other officers are involved with treatment courts: Mary Aggers and Sarah Reil are working with the Impaired Driving Court and Steve Peek is helping in the Family Drug Court. Mary also is involved with the Veterans Treatment Court, which recently had its first graduates.

Congratulations to Peek and Katie Weston, who recently completed the probation and parole officer basic training.

Region 5

The region welcomes back Officers Cameron Moe and Jim Brenden after successfully completing the P&P basic training. On April 29, the region met for its semiannual firearms and OC (pepper spray) training conducted by Supervisor Scott Brotnov and Officers Dave Edwards and Darrell Vanderhoef. Officers simulated shooting around barriers and practiced OC scenarios in the office. Additionally, Officers Brian Fulford and Rae Baker were recognized for their five years of service with the DOC.

The day reporting program supervised by Officer Amy Rehbein is up and running at the Polson office.

Patty Morrison, licensed addiction counselor for the past seven years in the Kalispell office, is retiring after 18 years as a counselor. She is a true professional and we all feel fortunate to have worked with her. Patty has been a

valuable asset to the office and will be deeply missed. She plans to spend a lot of time writing in the coming years.

Region 6

The region recently hosted Director Mike Batista, Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik, and Community Correctional Division Administrator Pam Bunke as they traveled through the region visiting correctional programs and meeting with local P&P staffs in Miles City and Glendive.

A new officer has joined the team in Glasgow on May 20. Casey Johnston fills the vacant Native American specialist position there. She previously interned at the Montana Women's Prison and the Billings P&P office.

Many of the regional staff members have been busy training lately, including Officer Michelle Helgeson who completed the P&P basic course at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy on May 17. Supervisor Sue Drivdahl recently attended a motivational interviewing training in Helena and Regional Administrator Emery Brelje, Officer Lloyd Dopp and Officer Roxy Silver attended the course at Billings in late May to meet the requirements for assessing offenders as part of the reentry process.

Lastly, the region will lose a member of the staff June 10. Dopp will transfer from Sidney to the Helena office. He started his career with Region VI after retiring from the Sidney Police Department in 2007. He served the City of Sidney for 30 years as a police officer and continued his service as a probation and parole officer. Dopp has worked tirelessly for the state and his community, and has become one of the most respected veteran officers in this region. He always brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table and brings everyone up that is around him. He has had to work very hard to stay on top of the increasing challenges in Sidney due to the increasing number of offenders moving to the area to find jobs in booming oil fields. He often had to work many long nights and weekends. Dopp also serves as the region's firearms instructor and first-aid instructor. The region is losing a great officer, colleague and friend and we wish him well as he heads to Helena.

Bills

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Families, Health and Human Services Committee.

- SJ3 by Murphy requests a study of the state Board of Pardons and Parole, including the parole philosophy of the board, the statutes and rules administered by the board, the degree to which the board has prevented or contributed to the need for additional prison beds and the effect of the possible elimination of the board. This study was ranked tenth in the legislators' poll and is assigned to the Law and Justice Committee.

KILLED

- HB70 required community-based prerelease centers and treatment facilities to implement a victim impact panel as a part of basic cognitive-behavioral treatment program for offenders. The bill, sponsored by

MacDonald, would have cost \$97,049 annually for the first two years. It was tabled by the House Appropriations Committee in April.

- HB211, which would have mandated the Department of Corrections be required to adopt rules establishing Taser training requirements and procedures, was tabled in committee at the request of its sponsor, Rep. Steve Lavin, R- Kalispell.
- HB289, sponsored by Eck, was tabled by the House Human Services Committee. The measure would have required the Law and Justice Committee to study public institutions serving people with mental illness and other conditions.
- SB9, sponsored by Sen. Terry Murphy, R-Cardwell, would have re-established the Corrections Advisory Council eliminated in 2010 due to a tight budget. It was tabled in the House Judiciary Committee after passing the Senate. The bill called for a 10-member council with the same duties as the last version.



Spring Outing

It was a warm, sun-drenched spring afternoon when the roar of the cadence echoed up the road leading to the Treasure State Correctional Training Center. Moments later, the string of orange shirts and black shorts came into view. Marching in formation, the large contingent of trainees was finishing its physical training for the day.

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In the end, however, the Colorado prison guard came with a message of forgiveness and did not seek vengeance. He told Nedbalek that his faith in God had convinced him to forgive the man who had killed his friend. Not only that, but the guard had decided to go one step further and explain to Nedbalek why he had forgiven him.

“He could have just blown it off and forgotten all about me,” Nedbalek said. “But he felt it was important that I knew he forgave me and that the reason he had was because God had told him to. This was the first real understanding I had of grace.”

Nedbalek describes his experience with the guard as transformative. After his release from prison, he became active in a variety of church congregations. Nedbalek ultimately entered Wartburg Theological Seminary and was ordained as a Lutheran pastor in 2002.

Isolation, acceptance

While Nedbalek does not claim his time in prison makes him a better pastor, he does believe that the common experience he shares with inmates makes him more empathetic with the desperation and loneliness they commonly experience.

“There are a lot of really good people who come in and work with the guys that have never been in prison or have never been arrested,” Nedbalek said. “They’re good people, and they’re doing fine stuff. But there is something about having gone through those doors and knowing I didn’t have the ability to turn around and walk out — it sends chills down your spine that you can never forget.”

Many of inmates who attend Nedbalek’s services agree, and they see

their pastor as an example of an inmate who’s made good on the pledge to change his life and succeed in the broader community outside prison walls.

“Pastor Rob doing what he does shows that a person who has been in prison can go a long way,” Eli Saylor said. “It’s a goal to be like him, really.”

At 28, Saylor has already been in prison for almost 10 years. In July 2003, he was involved in a drug deal that

went bad. Two of his accomplices were convicted of kidnapping and murder of 17-year-old Steven “Bubba” Ash’s body was found shot twice in the head near Corona Lake, northwest of Plains.

Saylor denied knowing about the plan to kill Ash but admitted to being in the vicinity when the shooting took place. He later pleaded guilty to charges of aggravated burglary and tampering with evidence, for which he received a 40-year prison sentence.

“After I committed my crime, a lot of things hit me when I was in max custody,” he said. “A lot of people think inmates find God for a parole hearing. In my situation, I was sentenced to 40 years without parole when I first



The Rev. Rob Nedbalek with Freedom in Christ Prison Ministries, left, gives communion to John Berry, center, and Eli Saylor in the Religious Activities Center at the Montana State Prison.

came to prison. In the beginning of my walk with God there was no window there for me until I was an older person.”

Like many inmates with prison sentences both long and short, Saylor has virtually no contact with anyone outside the Montana State Prison. His family cut their ties with him shortly after he was sent to prison.

“They say absence makes the heart grow fonder,” Nedbalek said. “It’s a crock. Absence just makes absence. The people on the outside who are a part of these men’s family units go on with their lives. I would venture that 60 to 70 percent of the guys who are in prison have nobody on their visiting list. There’s not contact from anybody on the outside.”

Prison ministries can provide guidance to inmates during their incarceration, but the fact is without some form of community support after release, a large percentage of

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parolees return to patterns of behavior that land them back in prison.

A 2007 study on prison recidivism conducted by the Pew Charitable Trusts found that more than 43 percent of parolees reoffend within three years of their release. In Montana, three-year recidivism rates have consistently hovered around 42 percent for the past 14 years.

The Pew study found that states with the most success in lowering recidivism provided detailed transition planning in the months prior to an inmate's release, followed by close supervision outside the prison walls. Success was further enhanced through collaboration with community programs designed to address issues of parolee employment, housing, transportation and any necessary treatment for mental illness or addictions.

Montana currently lacks these types of parolee transition programs, which are now common in states like Oregon, Michigan and Missouri. However, the concept of continued involvement in parolees' lives is a central tenet of the Freedom in Christ ministry.

According to Nedbalek, one of the goals in establishing an independent congregation within Montana State Prison is to include those parishioners within the broader community of ELCA churches throughout Montana. The ultimate hope is that these men will find greater support and contin-

ued encouragement from community congregations once they are paroled.

"The hope is to help them return into that network of society — into the collage of life with the knowledge that people care about them," Nedbalek said of the inmates' transition out of prison.

Yet he acknowledges that not every prisoner will continue on a re-

'The hope is to help them return into that network of society - into the collage of life with the knowledge that people care about them.'

-Rev. Nedbalek

demptive path once they leave incarceration, and that many good people may have legitimate concerns about embracing a man with a recent prison record. Nedbalek argues that the transition of a man who was once an "inmate" into a contributing member of society can come from small beginnings.

"It starts with the simplest of things — just giving a man the benefit of the doubt," he said. "Maybe you are unwilling to rent them the apartment upstairs from you or give them a job. But even if you can't do anything positive to help them, don't do anything negative that will perpetuate the stigma of man unwanted by society."

Us and them

At Wednesday's worship service, inmate John Berry assisted Pastor Nedbalek with the sacrament of communion. Diluted grape Kool-Aid dispensed from a plastic soda bottle was substituted for traditional communion wine, but the men of Freedom in Christ ministry accepted it with reverence and grace.

"The way I look at it is, I've spent this life here pretty much as a screw-up," Berry said. "I've been in and out of jails, mostly for petty stuff, for most of my life. All those times I always had the feeling that I still had time. That I was always going to have enough time to get my life on track. Now I'm here and I'm knocking on the door of 52 years. I don't feel like I have time to turn my life around anymore — I feel like the opportunities are slipping away. I don't want to spend my next life being in an even worse situation than what I've been in here."

Easter is a season of redemption — a time to reflect on sacrifice and forgiveness. This Easter Sunday, Nedbalek will hold two services at the small chapel of Montana State Prison. Both will emphasize the hope and the promise of Christ's sacrifice for the salvation of mankind.

"I preach a lot on forgiveness," he said of his remarkable ministry. "On the fact that Jesus hung out with broken people. That the church, historically, has been a gathering of God's broken people and not so much great preachers and marvelous ministers — God's people who ministered to one another when they are broken."

"We are all broken."

Curbing DUIs: Corrections plays role

By Michael Beall
Great Falls Tribune

On the evening of April 15, 2009, Great Falls police were notified that a green-and-white Chevy pickup collided with landscaping boulders and was high-centered off 3rd Street N.W.

The driver was Larry Olson, and the witness told police Olson was weaving in and out of traffic and tailgating. It was 6:43 in the evening, and after performing and failing the field sobriety test and blowing a .097 blood-alcohol content, Olson was charged with his fourth driving under the influence citation, a felony.

Olson's wreck in April 2009 was minor. He escaped unscathed, and so did the drivers who crossed his zigzagging path just as they had thousands of other times throughout his 69-year-old life. Olson's mishap was one of 192 alcohol-related crashes in Cascade County that year, and his arrest was one of 596 DUI arrests in Cascade County and his conviction was one of 6,954 across the state.

Montana continues to wrestle with a drinking-and-driving culture that makes the state infamous for DUIs. Maybe it's the state's 70,000 miles of open roads, its sparsely populated landscape or the mindset of its people.

Whatever the reason is, Montana is constantly in the top 10 percentile nationally in alcohol-related fatal crashes. And since 2008, felony DUIs, or a fourth or subsequent charge, tops the Montana Department of Corrections as the highest conviction offense for males, and it trails only possession of dangerous drugs in total convictions.

The tides are turning in the fight to curb DUIs, but members of the law enforcement and criminal justice communities — and even the DUI offenders themselves — agree that the laws must be tougher and tougher early on in a person's drinking career in order to supplement the many tools and treatment options the justice system and the Department of Corrections has in changing the behavior of multiple DUI offenders.

Pam Bunke, administrator for Adult Correction, believes the reason is because of the cavalier and entitled attitude toward DUIs. "It's because we're Montanans, and we have the right and long roads and long spaces between communities," she said. "But it's sad to see our state so high in DUIs and number of people killed, and I think it comes from that attitude."

The vehicle with an intoxicated driver behind the wheel is a weapon, she said, and the DOC, law enforcement and DUI task forces across the state continue to fight to keep them off the road.



Larry Olson receives a breath sobriety test at the Cascade County Sheriff's office in 2012 as part of the department's 24/7 Sobriety Program to curb DUIs in the county. Olson was the first DUI offender added to the program. (Tribune photo by Rion Sanders)

'It's because we're Montanans, and we have the right and long roads and long spaces between communities. But it's sad to see our state so high in DUIs and number of people killed, and I think it comes from that attitude.'

*-Pam Bunke
Adult Community Corrections*

DUIs

FROM Page 24

Life of second chances

Larry Olson has battled addiction since he was 16. He first smoked marijuana at 15 and shot heroin at 17. But to Olson, alcohol is the real killer.

He began the cycle of jail cells and treatment programs in eastern Los Angeles as a teen, but nothing kept him clean.

Olson was sentenced to the DOC for 13 months to be placed in an appropriate correctional facility or program on Aug. 5, 2009, which brought him into the hands of the Warm Springs Addiction Treatment and Change (WATCh) program, a six-month inpatient program designed as a peer-to-peer therapeutic community to give inmates the tools to turn their lives around.

Despite WATCh's proven track record of keeping graduates sober, by April 2012 Olson violated his probation by drinking, bringing him before Cascade County District Judge Thomas McKittrick, who sentenced him to the sheriff's office — not to a new jail cell but to the 24/7 Sobriety Program. He was the first client in the program that opened in September 2012.

One morning in mid-February, Olson wore a crooked grin, and his eyes warmed up the stale and cold conference room in the Cascade County Detention Center as he spoke about his life changes. He had just submitted a breath sample in the same manner he has twice a day for more than six months.

"I can't imagine me going back to alcohol. I don't think about alcohol anymore. I'm no longer feeding on alcohol," Olson said. "It's too dangerous. I have things to live for. Life is amazing."

Until the snow fell and the nights grew longer, Olson's rode his bicycle atop Gore Hill twice a day for the tests.

"It was inconvenient in the beginning," he said.

It took Olson three months to change his attitude about the program. He used to look at law enforcement as the enemy and he used to care only about himself, but he said that people in the sheriff's office and in the community are rooting for him.

"I'm trying to be kind to myself and kind to others. I can now walk this Earth without gossiping about people," he said. "I'm concentrating on the ripple effect."

Despite the fact he drank days after leaving inpatient treatment options like NEXUS and WATCh, Olson believes the 24/7 program is the real deal.

Olson continues to attend Alcoholics Anonymous and arrives at the sheriff's office on time, and he hopes he can prove his addictions are finally defeated. But how many second chances has it taken?

'Not the Department of Punishment'

Flash back 25 years ago, Cascade County Sheriff Bob Edwards said. Someone pulled over for a DUI had a 50-50 chance of not being arrested and taken to jail.

Drinking and driving has always been there, Edwards said. "The reason you're seeing an increase is that we're enforcing more. We've made the public aware and we've made it known that we're not going

to put up with it, so the numbers are going to be higher." The statistics may not be improving, but it is a sign that the culture is changing.

Edwards sees the change in the younger generation.

But the same younger generations still lives in a time with DUI laws that are too weak, according to Great Falls police Officer John Green, the GFPD's drug recognition expert.

"Our younger generation has grown up with the idea,



Twenty-two-year-old Kayla Pedersen pleads guilty of driving under the influence in front of Municipal Court, during a change of plea hearing. Pedersen was court ordered to wear a SCRAM bracelet for six months awaiting trial. (Tribune Photo by Larry Beckner)

DUIs

FROM Page 25

“That if I get a DUI, I’m going to get six months jail time all suspended but one day, some fines and maybe an alcohol class. Oh I can deal with that,” Green said.

But Green agrees that even in his 10 years as a police officer, it’s getting better.

“I think our detection has gotten better and our enforcement has gotten a lot better,” he said. And the reason comes down to training.

The issue at hand is the law, and he partially blames himself. Not because he’s law enforcement, but because he’s a voter.

“As a whole, we all are at fault,” he said. “We’ve allowed this problem to come. It’s not the legislators, not the criminal justice system.”

Both Green and Edwards see the DUI problem as a juggling act.

It’s a process of juggling the economics of jail, prison time and treatment, as well as the rehabilitation of the offender.

“I’m all for treatment,” Green said. “But I do believe our DUI laws need to be tougher on that first offense.”

But what Edwards asks is, is tougher?

Take the first offense DUI, the guy who goes out with some friends after work. He has a clean record and messes up. “Does that guy need to be in jail for six months? Probably not,” Edwards said.

On the other hand, the second, third, fourth and fifth DUI offenses need to be seriously looked at, he said, and to Edwards something has to give to change behavior.

It’s all about correcting one’s behavior. That’s why they call it the Department of Corrections. It’s not the Department of Punishment. We have to correct behavior,” Edwards said.

Changing behavior

Cascade County DUI Task Force director Al Recke sees three segments of society.

One segment will never drink and drive, and on the other end, there’s a segment that will do what they want, regardless of the law. They’re going to drink and drive, and if the law yanks their license, they will drive again.

But in the middle is a group Recke is optimistic about.

“You have a chunk of the population that are getting better, getting smarter and getting educated that there is a big liability associated with drinking and driving,” he said.

“They are the people who are able to internalize the potential hazards versus the inconvenience of getting a taxi.”

The task force is one attempt at educating the public through public service announcements, billboards, advertisements in high school newspapers and commercials. The group lobbies for tougher laws through the Legislature and assists law enforcement.

“Trying to educate the public is a tough sale sometimes, because you’re trying to change behavior,” Recke said.

Changing behavior is the crux of the debate regarding drinking and driving and the Department of Corrections as a whole. Should the tax dollars go toward treatment or jails and prisons?

According to the Department of Corrections, the average stay in the DOC costs \$61,200 for a male inmate, \$54,476 for female inmates, \$13,833 for males in the WATCH treatment center and \$26,318 for females in the WATCH East Center. But in many circumstances, felony DUI offenders spend time in prison before they are transferred to WATCH or other alcohol treatment facilities.

For Recke, the decision to treat or incarcerate a multiple DUI offender depends on the person. “You’re going to have the segment of society who don’t care. They’ll do their

time. They’ll dry out, and they’ll get out and do the same thing again,” Recke said.

It’s the philosophy of the Department of Corrections that treatment works and is the better option.

“When they’re sitting there doing time, it’s not the best use of our resources,” Pam Bunke said. “I would tell you that personally and professionally they should be getting treatment, but it’s not our call.”

The Department of Corrections doesn’t get the call until the felony DUI.

A process of a miracle

The halls of the WATCH Treatment Center are like a cross between an elementary school, a prison and an army barracks.

The “brothers” march in unison from dining hall to class in a single file line. They chant songs and they answer to commands.

The 113 brothers are broken into three families, and within each family are three grades or phases. Those just arriving wear navy blue scrubs until they move to second phase and wear blue polo shirts and then they finally graduate to maroon.

‘It’s all about correcting one’s behavior. That’s why they call it the Department of Corrections. It’s not the Department of Punishment. We have to correct behavior.’

-Cascade County Sheriff Bob Edwards

DUIs

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The Tribune was granted access to the WATCH treatment center, but as a condition, was asked to keep names of those incarcerated confidential.

John Doe stood before his light blue family and shouted at one of his brothers.

“When are you going to get honest?” John asked with a stern look across his face, almost angry. “It’s why we are all here. We lie. Take responsibility for yourself.”

What the brother forgot to do was make his bed correctly, and he tried to prove to his brothers it wasn’t his fault.

Peer-to-peer confrontation is a major part in WATCH’s treatment program. The older brothers teach and criticize each other’s behavior because they cannot fool each other. They all have similar histories of lying.

‘We see miracles here every day. We have guys here who have drank their entire life, and they start over and win back their families and take back their health.’

*-Alex Vukovich
WATCH administrator*

BAC at the time of arrest is .202, two and a half times the legal limit.

But the most staggering statistic that Alex Vukovich, the WATCH West administrator, has is that each offender drives drunk an estimated 1,000 times per DUI.

“Their disease is biochemical reaction to alcohol,” Vukovich said. “They don’t drink because their wife left them or their dog died or truck broke down. They drink because they’re addicted. That’s it.”

The six-month intensive inpatient program is designed as a peer-to-peer therapeutic community to give inmates the tools to turn their lives 180 around from how they think to who they will associate with.

“We see miracles here every day,” Vukovich said. “We have guys here who have drank their entire life, and they start over and win back their families and take back their health.”

The inmates at WATCH know all too well how powerful alcohol addictions can be. WATCH is a Department of Corrections sentence, which means each patient needs to have a felony DUI, or four or more DUIs. The average DUIs count at WATCH in 2013 is 5.5 — down from 8 DUIs when the program opened in 2002 — and the average

It is no easy feat to reconfigure the mindset of the brothers, and the first task the program tackles is proving that each offender broke the law.

“One of the things that happens at WATCH is that many of the offenders don’t see themselves as criminals. They don’t think they are risking public safety,” said Ron Alsbury, chief of Probation and Parole. “So initial work is to develop different thinking.”

When John entered WATCH, he never thought he’d be able to restructure his brain to be able to confront his own brother, let alone keep himself accountable.

He arrived hard as concrete. He started drinking in the sixth grade and first tried meth as a freshman in high school.

WATCH wasn’t easy. He wanted instant gratification like he’s wanted his entire life. He tried to get his brothers, his counselors and the process to flex to him.

“They kept telling me to trust the process, but I would say, ‘What process? You’re out of your mind.’ I’ve never had a process in my life. I do what I want. My schedule,” he said

It wasn’t until he had been there 60 days that he started internalizing all the lessons.

“You don’t have time to revert back to your old ways,” he said. “You’re all in. You don’t have time to get off kilter. Someone will confront you, and they’ll hold you accountable.”

There’s no question in Vukovich’s mind when he says that treatment is better than prison time. He believes no one is a lost cause, even those who go to prison before arriving at WATCH.

He is also well aware that despite the programs successes and best efforts some people can’t be helped, some won’t be helped and some die. A WATCH graduate dies every 60 days.

Vukovich’s philosophy for DUI offenders is EET: educate, enforce and treat.

“Educate the people on alcohol and drinking and driving. Enforce the laws so offenders don’t get nine or 10 before I see them, and finally treat,” he said.

‘You don’t have time to revert back to your old ways,’ he said. ‘You’re all in. You don’t have time to get off kilter. Someone will confront you, and they’ll hold you accountable.’

*-John Doe
WATCH resident*

DUIs

FROM Page 27

Early intervention

Kayla Pedersen successfully navigated the 20 miles back to Great Falls after a night of drinking in Stockett in September of 2012.

If only she remembered to turn on her headlights after dropping off her friend and drove toward home, she would've kept her 22-year-old record clean, but she wouldn't be sober.

Pedersen hasn't had a drink since that night, and six months of her sobriety was spent wearing a cold-gray plastic box strapped snug against her leg. The machine she wore was a SCRAM bracelet, a Secure Continuous Remote Alcohol Monitor, a device the size of a deck of cards that vibrates every half hour to measure vapor excreted from her skin.

It was her first DUI, but after her experience she never wants to get in trouble again or turn to alcohol. It might have been the \$10 a day that SCRAM cost her, or the cost and time in alcohol classes or the 24 hours in the pre-release center, but Pedersen said the real cure was staying sober long enough to clear her head.

'The drinking culture in Montana is changing. You can see a shift with the way people are teaching their kids. It's not as accepted or ignored or allowed.'

*-Danielle Waltner
Former compliance officer, SCRAM*

"If it would've been a slap on the wrist, I wouldn't have gotten any better," she said. "It's all in your head. You want to drink, you want to go out and have fun, but when you're sober long enough, you realize there are other things out there."

SCRAM is part of Cascade County's 24/7 Sobriety Program. It began in September 2012, and municipal and district courts are using the program as a condition of bond to ensure defendants are following court orders.

Dirk Sandefur, one of four Cascade County district judges, said the court's use of 24/7 and SCRAM is increasing, but since it's relatively new, it's an evolving process.

"I think the defendants definitely think it is an extraordinary and unreasonable burden on their liberty, and they think it's an extraordinary and unreasonable burden financially," Sandefur said.

Sandefur said the court will consider that, but the bottom line of the court has to be that it is a problem that the offender created, and the court has to ensure it is putting enough restrictions on the offenders to protect the public.

"Honestly, I think it is the best thing that's ever happened to me," Pedersen said.

Pedersen said he had her first drink of alcohol as a 15-year-old, but she learned how to cope through alcohol after her grandparents died. She started to party in high school, and as the years added up, she slowly found alcohol as a refuge.

"It took me until I was sober long enough to realize I was going down the wrong road, and I need to be straightened out," she said.

SCRAM and 24/7 at the Sheriff's Office is a proactive tool, Sandefur said. And time will tell, if the tools continue to work.

"Seemingly, the new tools give us the opportunity to protect the public by knowing in real time that they're violating probation by drinking," he said. "When push comes to shove, we're doing what we can to make sure they're not reoffending."

A culture change

"The drinking culture in Montana is changing," said Danielle Waltner, a former compliance officer for SCRAM. "You can see a shift with the way people are teaching their kids. It's not as accepted or ignored or allowed."

Waltner sees it in the way people call in drunken drivers to the police, and how they're not afraid anymore and that they want to stand up for their community.

As for SCRAM or other alcohol treatment options, Waltner said they don't work for absolutely everybody. But if people want it to work and they want to turn their life around, there are options to prove their sobriety.

Sandefur said he's seen the slow transition over the past 11 years on the bench, but there's a long way to go.

"In this society that everyone has a car, and there's alcohol available as a legal substance, there's only so much society can do to police those people," Sandefur said.

But he believes with the combination of the new tools for the court and law enforcement as well as public awareness and well-publicized tragedies there is hope.

"The alcohol culture in Montana is so engrained, and it's more than just a cultural issue because the cultural issues breed the behavior that results in the alcoholism," Sandefur said. And when you're dealing with alcoholics, then it's beyond a cultural thing, it's a psychological and physiological problem that you can't just fix with an attitude change, and that's why it's such a thorny problem."

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article appeared in the April 14 edition of the Great Falls Tribune. Reprinted with permission.

MSP Communications Fair



Admissions Officer Cliff Curnowe works on a team-building exercise.



Legal Services Bureau Chief Colleen Ambrose plays Plinko at an information booth.



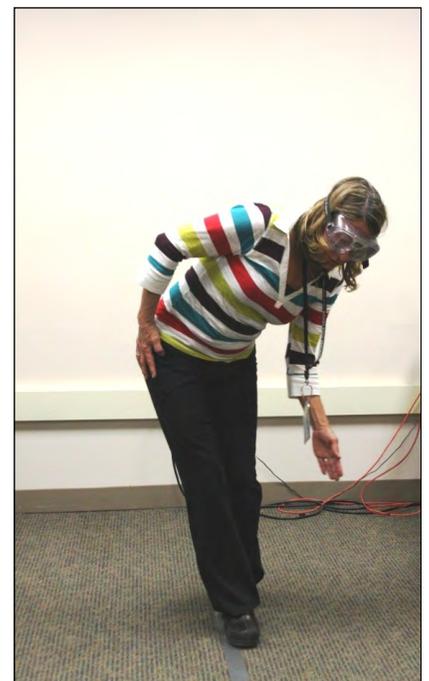
Associate Wardens Myron Beeson (back) and Leonard Mihelich cook brats and burgers for the fair.



Joe Acebedo mans the hamburger barbecue.

The annual communications fair at Montana State Prison is designed to encourage exchange of information among diverse operations at the prison and to honor staff during National Correctional Officer Week. The event features informative displays, free drawings, games and contests, and good food for all three shifts at the Deer Lodge facility.

BELOW: A crowd gathers for lunch in the large classroom.
RIGHT: Cheryl Bolton struggles to walk wearing DUI goggles that simulate intoxication levels.

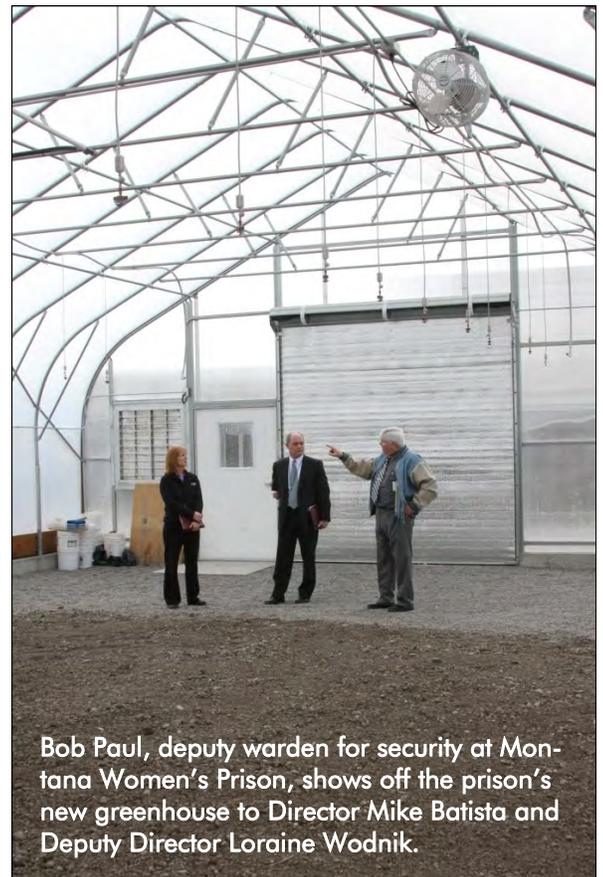


GETTING TO KNOW... CORRECTIONS



Director Mike Batista listens to members of the management team during a meeting at Montana Women's Prison.

Director Mike Batista and Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik have made a commitment to familiarize themselves with corrections programs throughout the state. They believe a firsthand understanding of the variety of services the department offers and the opportunities to meet the dedicated corrections professionals are critical to effective management of the agency. The photos on this and the next page chronicle their initial visits to Montana Women's Prison and Montana State Prison.



Bob Paul, deputy warden for security at Montana Women's Prison, shows off the prison's new greenhouse to Director Mike Batista and Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik.

BELOW: Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik takes notes on issues raised during a management meeting at Montana Women's Prison.



Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik, right, and MCE Administrator Gayle Lambert listen to Sgt. Buddy Myotte talk about operation of High Side Unit 1 at Montana State Prison.





Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik and Director Mike Batista listen as Lt. Mike Moorman provides a briefing to the night shift at Montana Women's Prison.



Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik, right, talks with Cathy Redfern (center), Health Services Bureau chief, and Cindy Hiner, director of nursing, at Montana State Prison.



Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik, center, listens to MCE Administrator Gayle Lambert and Jerry Arneson, furniture supervisor, explain the furniture-manufacturing program operated by Montana Correctional Enterprises.

Sara Schantz, who contracts with Montana Women's Prison to provide parenting classes to inmates, talks with DOC Deputy Director Loraine Wodnik (foreground) about the program that allows inmates to spend time with their children at the prison.



17-year-old tells her story

Riverside ‘saved my life’

EDITOR’S NOTE: The following unedited essay was written by a 17-year-old girl while on juvenile parole as part of a college writing course she is taking. It tells the story of her life and the role Riverside Youth Correctional Facility has played in it..

As a young girl, home was the place where I received great big bear hugs from my Dad when I walked through the front door; kisses and tucks-in to bed. I was fed there, cried there and had many fevers there.

I remember walking home from elementary school, two blocks away. Eager to get home, I tried not to get tripped by the uneven bricks that had aged with the ground, protruding from every angle. I would finally get home after skipping over the bricks. With that after school hunger pang, I would run to the fridge in hope of something to tame my never ending sweet tooth. What I found was kale and spinach, thanks to my Mother. These are the things that made my home, home.

My body felt numb and I loved it. I remember thinking, “This is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I am going to die doing this and be OK with it.”

After my parents’ nasty split, life became dreadful. My once loving home was now a hostile environment. My home now radiated anger, guilt and frustration; it was just about constant. Words like infidelity, divorce, and custody were lingering and possessed the energy in the room. Because of this aura of pessimism, I wasn’t running to get home. I didn’t receive those big bear hugs that I used to get after a long day of school. I didn’t tell my parents when I was feeling sick or when I needed a shoulder to cry on; it seemed as if they didn’t care.

Because I wasn’t eager to get home, I stopped going home. I wouldn’t call or text where I was. My parents would call my phone numerous times to see where I was. If I answered the phone, it would have meant for me to go home. That was the last place I wanted to be.

When I did finally show up at my house, I was immediately interrogated with questions like when, where, why, and who. They were worried sick many times, but I didn’t care. I didn’t care because I was high. I needed to escape the negativity. So I got drunk.

I would go anywhere I could; friends houses, the park, or the local Target store. As I started using more, I started getting into more trouble with my family as well as with the law. Being grounded didn’t stop me from leaving the house. Getting tickets didn’t stop me from using. What I told myself was “I don’t care” and I showed it.

While I was out gallivanting around the city, day or night, in a car or on foot, I was creating criminal mischief. My friends and I would be driving drunk, and skipping school to get high. We would do dumb stuff like knock down blue garbage cans around town. As we drove, we listened to songs like “Hits from the Bong” and “Shots.”

The road seemed elongated and fuzzy while the trees seemed beautiful and real. I had a sense of invincibility and euphoria. My body felt numb and I loved it. I remember thinking, “This is what I want to do for the rest of my life. I am going to die doing this and be OK with it.”

I wanted to use and nobody was going to stop me. The stimulating ups and depressing downs of using was obviously showing on me. I had dropped close to 20 pounds very rapidly and I slept sporadically.

My folks wanted me to attend family counseling but I refused. I didn’t think I needed help. What I was thinking was “I can do everything on my own.”

I was sentenced on my sister’s tenth birthday. She had looked up to me and I went to juvenile prison on her birthday. I felt ashamed of how much of a disappointment I was.

Saved

FROM Page 32

I was already seeing both a mental health and chemical dependency counselor along with a probation officer. All the professional involvement did not have any impact on my previously diagnosed oppositional defiance disorder (ODD).

Because of me running away from home, being angry and defiant with others, losing my temper easily, and having trouble in school I was diagnosed with ODD. For me, all of these were linked with my substance abuse.

This all led up to the day that, in the end, saved my life.

I was arrested in May. Because of my recent escapes, this was inevitable. In the dark place that I was in, I did need help, and knew it. After my arrest, I was sentenced to a youth correctional facility [Riverside] that forced help on me. I was sentenced on my sister's tenth birthday. She had looked up to me and I went to juvenile prison on her birthday. I felt ashamed of how much of a disappointment I was.

Before, I didn't care if I was arrested. I held my head up high when the cop slapped the cuffs on my small, bony wrists. This time, that is not what happened. I hung my head and cried. This is when everything felt like it was crashing down on me.

During my intake, I was given an initial evaluation. I remember sitting on the table that looked like a picnic bench, except this one was twenty feet long and made of hard wood like cedar. I was scared. This was one of the only times where I felt anything at all. It was because I was sober. I had buried my emotions while using and drinking.

To this day, it is still hard for me to show emotion. I have been numbing myself for so long, it is almost impossible for me to simply show each emotion for what it is. I feel vulnerable and I do not like that. The evaluation revealed that my problem area was mostly chemical dependency.

I have not had a normal teen-age life. I did not go to movies with friends; I didn't have a job. I hadn't had the chance to get my driver's license. My seventeenth birthday was spent in youth corrections. My sixteenth birthday was spent in a group home, along with my fifteenth, the

previous year. I put my drugs before my family and my whole self.

While in corrections we went to school, chemical dependency groups, life skills groups, and recreation. We had uniforms, set bed times and early wake up. No touch-

I learned patience, better self respect and to value me as a person; all while being forced to be sober. This is why I say it saved my life. It made me want to be sober.

ing was an obvious rule. We had to walk in lines right behind one another, silently. I will always remember walking to and from buildings in these straight lines. As we left the first person in line has to shout "one," then the next person in line shouts "two" and so on.

While I was there, the highest number I shouted was 18. I was part of a group of 18 girls that all had to get along with each other, 18 girls who were labeled criminals. That was not a warm feeling. Then, as we entered the next building the counting started all over again. The punishment for breaking any of the rules in a major way was being tackled, restrained and most likely thrown into secure confinement.

For the first time it was easier to address my own issues than to break the rules, like I was used to doing. So that's just what I did. I found new ideas and ways of experiencing life different, a healthier difference.

While there, I earned my high school diploma and left with a better outlook on life. I learned patience, better self respect and to value me as a person; all while being forced to be sober. This is why I say it saved my life. It made me want to be sober. The hardest part for me was not staying sober, it was getting sober. To consider this place my "home" would be too extreme; but I can honestly say that it was a step in the right direction for helping me find my "home" again.

Today, I am still on the journey to find my old bear hugs while eating spinach along the way.

Improved security and control at women's prison



Montana Women's Prison recently completed installation of a new automated control system that operates cell doors, intercoms and security cameras. The project included the addition of 26 cameras (for a total of 80) and a new system for monitoring them. The project, costing more than \$250,000, was authorized by the 2011 Legislature and updates aging equipment plagued by problems and failures since 2002 when the Billings prison added a 148-bed expansion. The Spokane-based firm, Engineered Controls Systems, won the competitive bidding process and installation began in December. The result is a more dependable system, increased security and a safer prison. The photo at left shows the makeshift computer setup for the control system before the project. The photo at right shows the organized operation afterward.



Little things mean a lot

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article appeared in the May edition of Corrections Directions, the newsletter of the Association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA). The author is director of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections. Reprinted with permission.

By A.T. Wall
ASCA President

I didn't want to go. The annual dinner of a grassroots prisoner reentry program operated by a small faith-based coalition was being held in the southern part of the state but it was a beautiful spring Saturday afternoon and I'd already had a busy week. Besides, I attended this event several times before. I had said, however, that I would be there this evening and I didn't have a point of contact to use in cancelling. So off I went, grudgingly and without enthusiasm.

I arrived late. Dinner was being served and the speaking program was underway. As I took my seat, I heard the organization's founder and president state that this year's award winner was being honored posthumously. Next to her was an easel displaying the photograph of a vibrant

young woman with a beautiful smile. The speaker explained that the honoree had died of diabetes just a few months before. Apparently she was a very committed volunteer for the organization, meeting woman offenders from this area before their release from custody and helping to ease their transition home.

Then I heard the speaker say, "And Veronica told me that the greatest moment of her life was when Director Wall said that he would allow her access to the prison even though she was a former inmate." The crowd erupted in shouts, cheers and applause. I was stunned and also more than a little embarrassed by the attitude I had brought to the event. To make matters worse, her teenage son came up and pumped my hand repeatedly, as he thanked me for all I had done for his mom. The fact is that I had no recollection of this episode at all. It became clear that an encounter of virtually no significance to me was treasured and talked about by this young woman for the rest of her short life.

Because we're so often preoccupied by the large and complicated decisions, we may not always remember that the small ones matter, too. What we say and do may make a tremendous difference, for better or for worse, to people for whom we loom very large. There is no doubt that there will be many other occasions when I will not remember what I've said or done. I hope I don't forget the impact my position might have on someone else.

The Training Times



Distance learning course menu grows

Department of Corrections employees can check out the new opportunities recently added to the agency's Distance Education Program.

The program offers new outside website opportunities such as CE-Quick (<http://appa.cequick.com/>) that has various courses for low to no cost. These American Probation and Parole Association-approved e-courses concentrate in the areas of community and juvenile corrections.

There also are 12 new courses available on the Online Learning Center, including new orientation courses about employee safety and workers' compensation.

Another four in-house courses, called "Tools for the Trade," are prerequisites for the "Nuts and Bolts of Supervision" training, but are available for all employee to take.

The final six courses are e-courses for purchase that have a various number of modules attached to them. Their subjects cover everything from ethics to project management. All of these new courses are an excellent resource of information.

The Professional Development Bureau staff urges employees to take time to get to know the department's Distance Education Program by taking a course or two. See all of the courses available on the training pages: <http://cor.mine.mt.gov/training/default.mcpX> and <http://www.cor.mt.gov/cdep.mcpX>

Staff learns interview skills

Rae Forseth, specialist in the Professional Development Bureau, spent the past three months traveling the state conducting training in motivational interviewing for the probation and parole staff.

Forseth offered training in Missoula, Great Falls, Helena and Billings. About 75 probation and parole staffers attended the initial classes in the first three communities.

This training is a prerequisite for use of the Montana Offender Risk and Reentry Assessment, and all employees who will be conducting offender interviews using the new assessment tool had an

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Butte-Silver Bow helps MSP train on new fire truck



The Butte-Silver Bow Fire Department sent two of their battalion chiefs to Montana State Prison to assist in training the prison's fire brigade in the operation of its newly acquired ladder truck. Battalion Chiefs Rick Ryan and Jim Merrifield spent time going through all of the basics from starting the truck to running water through the hoses and finally raising the 50-foot ladder and running water through the ladder's nozzle. MSP Fire Brigade Chief Dan Calcaterra says: "That was some truly great training, the knowledge they shared and time they spent going over the operation of the truck was invaluable. We'd be very lucky to have them come back and work with us again." (Photos by Tom Bolton)

Four complete drill instructor training

Four new drill instructors completed 10 days of intensive training earlier this year and took their posts at Treasure State Correctional Training Center. The four new DI's, pictured outside the boot camp near Deer Lodge are (left to right): Cpls. Scott Harding, Jeremy Moon, Jeremy Tafelmeyer and Daniel Williamson. (Photo by Heather King)



Training Schedule — June-August

June	Time	Course	Location	Agency/Instructor(s)	Hours	Cost
4	10-12	Generations at Work	Helena	PDC	2	\$75
5-6, 11-12, 19-20	8:30-4:30	Basics of Management	Billings	PDC	42	\$440
5	8:30-4:30	Powerpoint 2010	Helena	PDC	7	\$123
5	8:30-4:30	Remote Management	Helena	PDC	7	\$123
6	8:30-12	Managing Multiple Priorities	Helena	PDC	3.5	\$95
7	8:30-12	Documenting Disciplinary Action	Billings	PDC	3.5	\$95
12-13	8:30-4:30; 8:30-12	Writing Administrative Rules of Montana	Helena	PDC	10.5	\$160
10-13	8-5	Defensive Tactics Instructor Course	Kalispell	Howard Webb	32	\$199
17	9-4	Managing Emotion Under Pressure	Billings	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$149
17-18	8-5	Group Crisis Intervention	Missoula	Carol Staben-Burroughs	16	\$100
18	9-3	Advanced Excel	Helena	PDC	5	\$110
18	8:30-12	All Kidding Aside: Preventing Harassment	Helena	PDC	3.5	\$95
18	8:30-12	Records & Information Management	Helena	PDC	3.5	\$75
19	8:30-4:30	From Me to We: Effective Collaboration	Helena	PDC	7	\$123
20	8:30-4:30	Investigating Personnel Issues	Helena	PDC	7	\$123
21	8:30-12	Meeting-ful Minutes	Billings	PDC	3.5	\$95
25-26, 27-28	Various	Effective Presentations	Helena	PDC	21	\$245
26-27	9-4	How to Communicate with Tact & Professionalism	Billings	Fred Pryor Seminars	12	\$299
July						
16	9-4	Microsoft Excel Basics	Missoula	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$79
17	9-4	Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics	Missoula	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
19	9-4	Managing Multiple Priorities	Billings	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
23	9-4	Microsoft Excel Basics	Kalispell	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$79
23	9-4	Dealing With Difficult People	Great Falls	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
24	9-4	Dealing With Difficult People	Bozeman	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
24	9-4	Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics	Kalispell	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
25	9-4	Microsoft Excel Basics	Helena	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$79
25	9-4	Dealing with Difficult People	Missoula	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
26	9-4	Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics	Helena	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
30	9-4	Microsoft Excel Basics	Great Falls	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$79
31	9-4	Microsoft Excel Basics	Billings	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$79
31	9-4	Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics	Great Falls	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
August						
1	9-4	Microsoft Excel Basics	Bozeman	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$79
1	9-4	Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics	Billings	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
2	9-4	Microsoft Excel: Beyond the Basics	Bozeman	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
14	9-4	Developing Emotional Intelligence	Missoula	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$199
15	9-4	Developing Emotional Intelligence	Helena	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$199
16	9-4	Developing Emotional Intelligence	Bozeman	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$199
19	9-4	Communication Skills for Women	Bozeman	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
20	9-4	Communication Skills for Women	Helena	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99
21	9-4	Communication Skills for Women	Missoula	Fred Pryor Seminars	6	\$99

Comings

These lists of new and departing employees cover the period from Feb 23 through May 29. If you notice errors or omissions, please contact the *Signpost* editor.

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Kara Thompson

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Cynthia Boles

Tiffany Cheetham
Monti Coburn
Tonya DeHaven
Artist Frantz
Eric Hempstead
Christopher Hoyt
Dale Ingraham
Trisha Loomis
Shannon McDowell
Brandon Newell
Christopher Nordstrom
Raymond Reed
Peter Thomas
Trevor Thompson

Rebekah Titeca
Will Walsh
Benjamin Willis
Leland Zuber

Montana Women's Prison

Wallace Allen
Jennifer Stubb

Pine Hills
Brandan Clayton
Kathryn Dolatta
Priscilla Killingsworth
Corinna Lyon

Austin Phillips

Probation and Parole
Elizabeth Fisher, Bozeman
Levi Knott, Bozeman
Cameron Moe, Kalispell
Shaun Olmstead, Bozeman

Riverside
Kara Benson

Treasure State
Daniel Williamson

Goings

Donald Ackerman
Tonia Akines
Justin Andrews
Michael Birnbaum
Grady Brown
Natasha Cameraon
Floyd Clevidence
Robert Cremer-R
Thomas Davies
Gabrielle DeNio
Jon Dragoon

Matthew Eads
Dione Ferris
Andrew Fisher
Sean Flotkoetter
Joshua Folven
BreAnna Garner
David Gazzara
Zane Harmon
Drew Hines
Britnie Horvath
Myrna Kuka

Andrew Marsh
Linda Martin
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Carlos Monroy
Tom Nielson
Sharon Parks-Banda
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Mike Radakovich
Jean Stewart
Stephanie Tekavee

Jelly Thares
Cindy Trimp
William Walsh
Patricia Ward
Kami Williams
Paul Williams
Amy Youngblood-Myers

R=retirement

Skills

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opportunity to learn techniques and skills to help in that process.

Motivational interviewing is a client-centered, directive form of interviewing that allows resistant interviewees (offenders) to identify internal motivation and resolve ambivalence. The goal is for officers to be able to talk with offenders, figure out what motivates them and then help them decide to change.

The value of these techniques for staff is the ability to discover offenders who are at the highest risk to reoffend, what truly motivates them to stay out of the corrections system and how an officer can use the information to get offenders the programs and services they need.

The result is officers able to work more effectively and efficiently toward reducing recidivism, by placing offenders in programs they recognize will help them while ensuring the department has the most cost-effective programming possible.

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