

TRANSITION TIMES



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CAROL BRONSON CHOSEN AS LAW DAY AWARD RECIPIENT



Law Day awards have been presented to a variety of worthy individuals over the past 14 years. Notable recipients include those working in law enforcement, supervision of offenders, sentencing, prosecuting, legislating, and even serving on boards that impact the community at ground level such as the Great Falls Pre-Release Center. As we recognize this year's recipient, what better person to be honored than someone who is all things community – Carol Bronson. Carol's job title is Community Engagement Specialist, but her biography is a modest representation of all the value she brings to the community table. Her title could be:

- ✓Community Revitalizer
- ✓Community Enhancer
- ✓Community Advocate
- ✓Community Code Enforcer
- ✓Community Investment Specialist
- ✓Community Activist
- ✓Community Law and Justice Expert
- ✓Community Policing Monitor
- ✓Community Drug Takeback Czar
- ✓Community Neighborhood Watch Captain
- ✓Community Resource Coordinator

The list could go on and on, but lest we forget ----- also a Downtown Chick!



Jon Boutilier, GFPRC Board of Directors President, presents Carol Bronson with this year's Law Day Award

With all the hats that Carol wears, the one we appreciate the most is her support of the Great Falls Pre-Release Center. For many years now, first as the Weed and Seed Program Coordinator and now as chief of the Neighborhood Advisory Committee for NeighborWorks, Carol has actively included us in community discussions and opportunities to educate the public.

By Paul Cory, Executive Director

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Carol's husband, Bill Bronson, provided the following biography:

Carol is the Community Engagement Specialist for NeighborWorks Great Falls. Prior to assuming this position, she was the Site Director for Great Falls Weed & Seed, and before that, the Executive Director of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. Before working for the foundation, she was a litigation paralegal for 21 years at law firms in Billings and in Great Falls.

Carol was born and raised in Billings. She has a bachelor's degree in Humanities from the Honors College at the University of Oregon and a paralegal certificate from the Institute for Paralegal Training in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

She was appointed by Governor Bullock to the State Historical Preservation Review Board in 2015, and was reappointed to another term in 2018. She also served on the local City-County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission for several years.

Carol is married to local attorney and City Commissioner Bill Bronson. They have two sons, Benjamin and Matthew.

EDUCATION

Resident Receives HiSET

Congratulations to **Stephen Matkovich** from the entire staff at the Transition Center and much continued success in your future.

Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. --John Dewey



Resident Receives CNA Certification

The Great Falls Transition Center, Great Falls Public Schools' Adult Education Program, and Benefis Spectrum have created a partnership to enable our residents to enroll in Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) classes.

This is an intense two week class which includes clinicals, practical tests, and a state written test. With successful completion of these test areas, our residents are Certified Nursing Assistants and eligible to apply for and fill CNA positions in the community.



Our goal is to improve the lives of our residents by offering them a lifelong job opportunity and a chance at a better paying job so they can become self-supporting, productive citizens of the Great Falls community. There is a significant need for CNA's in Great Falls, and the community will benefit greatly by our residents being able to fill various positions.

One of our residents participated in and passed this intense two week program which finished May 24. This is the seventh graduating class from the Center to complete this program and our 14th resident to have completed the program.

Our new graduate is **Shelby Pelsler**. Congratulations Shelby on a job well done and much continued success in the future.

By Dave Nelson, Education Coordinator

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CASCADE COUNTY DUI TASK FORCE LAW ENFORCEMENT RECOGNITION CEREMONY

City Attorney Cassidy Blomgren has prosecuted almost 140 DUI cases with a 96% success rate. She played a leading role in procuring new public safety software and also assisted in the evaluation of a new prosecution model. Cassidy has shown a willingness to assist in every aspect of operations both inside and outside of the court room.

Deputy Cascade County Attorney Ashley Wilkinson has proven to be an asset to Cascade County by handling daily DUI prosecutions and conducting jury trials. She has worked hard to enforce DUI laws and protect citizens.

Cascade County Sheriff's Deputy Angel Creech has apprehended multiple DUI offenders over the past year by maintaining a very active patrolling standard. She has shown the dedication and fortitude required to keep our community safe.

Great Falls Police Officer Kevin Supalla has made 37 DUI arrest between 2017 and 2018, which is twice the amount of his closest peer. He has shown an extreme passion for DUI enforcement and for ensuring the safety of the citizens of Great Falls. Kevin shares his expertise and knowledge with his fellow officers and instills the importance of investigating DUIs to new officers.

Montana Highway Patrol Trooper Dan Arnold has processed 54 DUI offenses, 7 MIP citations, and 12 citations for open containers. In addition to his regular patrol he contributes overtime to the STEP (Selective Traffic Enforcement Program) specifically looking for impaired drivers. He also instructs DUI traffic stop scenarios at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy.



Thank you to the following donors for contributing gifts and awards for each recipient: **Chili's, CAT Rental, Fuddruckers, Great Harvest, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Legend Stone, Perkins, Starbucks, Tacticality Workwear, and Trophies Express.**

**Cassidy Blomgren, Dan Arnold,
Kevin Supalla, Angel Creech**



NEWS FROM SHEENA JARVEY, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

On April 18th the Great Falls Pre-Release celebrated National Volunteer Month with a delightful luncheon. Our thanks to the Women's kitchen for the great meal.

Volunteer Diane Kliewer started off the festivities with a lovely invocation prayer. This was followed by opening remarks by Alan Scanlon, Treatment Services Director. Mr. Scanlon thanked the volunteers for their gift of service and their generosity of time. He pointed out that, when working with people, we may not see the direct result of our efforts. On the other hand, however, we never know when the seeds of our caring and insight may make a difference in someone's life. The smallest act or word can suddenly materialize in someone's mind and can change the course of their life. So, our job in community corrections is to keep our professional conduct always in line with the positive well-being and success of the clients we service and to remain optimistic.

Sheena then thanked all of the gathered volunteers for their incredible gifts of time, talents, caring and patience. She thanked each individual for their unique skills, energy and personalities that they bring to their volunteer jobs. She noted that each volunteer knows that the residents all have friends and family who want the best for them and the volunteers always honor this by bringing their best when they volunteer. Speaking of bringing their best, our beloved and honored volunteer, Juanita Rosales, came accompanied by members of her family, who had been on a medical missionary trip to Juanita's homeland of the Philippines. The pride they took in Juanita's accomplishments was clearly evident.



Left to Right:
Lisa Lord
Cecilia
Meredith
Sheena Jarvey
Juanita Rosales
Lina Lacanilao
Ben Lacanilao

Our keynote speaker was Volunteer Karyl Viste. Karyl was accompanied by her husband, Dave. Karyl began her talk with a personal story of how addictions had impacted her family and their struggles and lessons. It was an inspiring talk on the transition from, "this won't happen in my family" to "yes, it did, and this is how we will cope, learn and grow." We were inspired by Karyl's honesty and care for her family. Karyl then did a demonstration of some of the ways she connects with the female residents in her Monday "Cooking and Conversation with Karyl". In wrapping up her speech, the gem that Karyl left us with was this: it is not about the ultimate outcome. We may never know what the ultimate outcome will be for our clients or for any of us. That goal is too elusive. What her volunteer service is about is sharing the journey and making positive connections in the here and now. We share, support, and encourage folks right where we are.

Echoing the words of Mr. Scanlon, attention to our interactions in the present moment allows us to do our best work. This perspective gives us confidence and peace of mind that we are doing the job that needs to be done and that the rewards are intrinsic in the work itself and the real time journey that we all share.

Our Great Falls Pre-Release volunteer staff is absolutely the very best. Here is a list of our dedicated and talented folks, with all of our thanks: **Teddy Atkinson, Charlotte Cornelius, Sandra Gurnsey, Patti Horst, Diane Kliewer, Darlene Long, Lisa Lord, Roseanne Mares, Pauline Merenz, Debbie Olson, Maxine O'Neil, Juanita Rosales, Joan Rosteck, Julie Saenz, George & Nita Tyner, Karyl Viste, Terri Williams, and Michelle Zuidema.**



Alan Scanlon

Finally, a special thank you to all of the residents who, through the years, have participated in the volunteer program. While our hope is that the volunteer program has benefitted you, we also know that the volunteers and staff have benefitted from your enthusiasm, feedback and participation. Service is a two way street and without meaningful connections to others, there is no job satisfaction. So, to all of the residents, thank you for your active interest, support and involvement in the volunteer program.



In closing, I give a special shout out to all of my co-workers, the Administration and the Board of Directors for making the volunteer program so strong. Your backing of the program means so much and, without the staff, this program would not exist. In the midst of all of your other duties, you always take time to affirm and fortify the volunteers and the work they do. Thank you.

Volunteer Spotlight: Update on our keynote speaker: **Karyl Viste**. Karyl placed first in her age category in the one mile Ice Breaker Road Race, posting a time of 13:18. Way to go, Karyl, we are so proud of you! Furthermore, we will make no attempt to out run you!

Residents Give Monetary Donations to the Volunteer Program

How awesome is this? Mr. Randy Wittman and Mr. Gary Ervin both contributed a surprise donation to the Great Falls Pre-Release Volunteer Program to help purchase materials for craft days.

The Great Falls Pre-Release has long been providing re-entry programs, or community correctional programs. Our mission is community safety through personal growth and responsibility of individual offenders, helping them to live pro-social and productive lives. The volunteer program is one component of the many programming options available to the residents.

However, a re-entry program is never a one way street. The community part of our mission will always involve local citizen participation. This involvement happens in numerous ways and we are continually grateful for the support. (Special thanks to all our volunteers!) The other half of our community programs are the residents themselves. As Mr. Wittman and Mr. Ervin so eloquently demonstrated, a community correctional program only thrives when the residents give back to the community they are a part of. Great Falls will always remember the Booter community service programs (most frequently heard comment, "oh we just love the Booters"). But this public involvement spirit lives on. As awesome as the monetary gift from Mr. Ervin and Mr. Wittman was, that is not even the best part. The most awesome part is this: the spirit behind the donations. It is the dignity of people rebuilding their lives who recognized that they can play a key role in building a stronger community. When we are all at our best, the community strengthens the Pre-Release and the people in the Pre-Release strengthen the community. As Mr. Ervin and Mr. Wittman demonstrated, the residents can take the initiative to inspire, to contribute and to change the people around them in a positive way. At our best, community re-entry is a two way street, with all participants contributing. Like I said, how awesome is that?

By Sheena Jarvey, Volunteer Coordinator

Randy Wittman becomes emotional as he expresses his reasons for contributing to the volunteer program.



Resident Randy Wittman, Volunteer Diane Kliever, Volunteer Coordinator Sheena Jarvey, and Volunteer Debbie Olson



Correctional Treatment Specialist Chris Hickman, Volunteer Coordinator Sheena Jarvey, and Resident Garv Ervin

STAFF NEWS

New Staff: Welcome to our newly hired Compliance Officers **Corey Hoskins, Maesyne Lamey, and Joncianne Speth.**

Milestones



10 Years – Annette Trout: Compliance Officer

Annette was no stranger to Great Falls Pre-Release when she was hired 10 years ago. She had already been volunteering her time to help the residents with crafts. She remembers that their favorites were glass etching and making key chains. Annette and her 4 sisters and 3 brothers grew up in Panama, New York. Coincidentally, she served in the Air Force in the Republic of Panama before being sent to Great Falls. Her job was a helicopter mechanic. After leaving the Air Force, Annette ran a day care, was a foster parent, bred AKC Chihuahuas, volunteered at the jail, pre-release, and at her church. She has 4 children, 2 of which are adopted, and 4 granddaughters. Knowing she can encourage the residents to do well makes working here meaningful for Annette.



10 Years – Joe Marten: Support Services Specialist

Throughout the years Joe has been a valuable asset to the center. He started out as a Compliance Officer and then moved into the Aftercare wing where he built a rapport with businesses and organizations in the community by coordinating Booter spot jobs and community service. In March of 2017 he was selected to be our Support Services Specialist. His responsibilities include coordinating community service for individuals sentenced to do so by justice court; facilitating daily testing and one on one weekly check-ins of people required to participate in Probation and Parole's Enhanced Supervision Program; collaborating with the Salvation Army which provides clothing to incoming residents; setting up haircuts for new residents prior to their job search; and even helping residents learn to parallel park for their driving test.

Joe is a Great Falls native but has lived numerous places around the world throughout his 6 ½ years as a Navy Seabee working as a construction electrician. After completing boot camp at the Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois and technical school at Sheppard Air Force base in Wichita Falls, Texas, he worked in Gulfport, Mississippi, Guam, the Philippines, Camp David, Maryland, and at the White House and Pentagon in Washington D.C.

What does Joe like about working at Great Falls Pre-Release? *Every day there seems to be a new challenge. Some good and some bad, but at the end of the day, we are all here to give that chance for change. It really is a great feeling when you get to see even one resident make it or get the help they need. The team effort that is put into helping and giving the chance surpasses any job out there. Ten years has gone by in a blink of an eye, but I guess that is what happens when you really enjoy what you are doing!*

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Veterans Treatment Court Recognition

Joseph Williams, GFPRC Community Services Coordinator, was recognized at the June 19th Veterans Treatment Court graduation ceremony for his assistance in providing Treatment Court participants the opportunity to give back to the community. Joseph pairs veterans with local organizations to provide community service. In addition, Joseph oversees the Veterans Treatment Court jail alternative sanction bed program.

By Brenda Demers, Editor





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TRANSITION TIMES

Brenda Demers, Editor
Great Falls Pre-Release Services, Inc.
1019 15th Street North
Great Falls, MT 59401
brenda@gfprc.org
406-455-9323

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MISSION STATEMENT

Great Falls Pre-Release Services, Inc. provides a cost-effective alternative to incarceration for offenders through a variety of community-based correctional treatment programs. Great Falls Pre-Release Services, Inc. is dedicated to public safety and trust through professional, quality services which facilitate personal growth through positive change and individual responsibility of assigned offenders.



gfprc.org

Vision Statement

Dedicated to providing resources and opportunities that safely and successfully restore offenders into society.

Statement of Values

- *Motivation:* A desire to help others reach their full potential.
- *Professionalism:* Maintain proper interactions with staff, residents, and the community.
- *Accountability:* Take ownership for successes and shortcomings, to ourselves and others
- *Equality:* Ensure equality by expressing, in attitudes and actions, respect for all.
- *Dignity:* Model behavior in a respectful manner to instill a sense of self-respect and to bolster a positive self-image.
- *Community:* Develop a positive environment that facilitates healthy change as the residents integrate into the broader community.