

TRANSITION TIMES



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A Familiar Face

By Brenda Demers



We are pleased that John Strandell accepted the offer to re-join the Great Falls Pre-Release Services, Inc. Board of Directors. John previously served on the board in the early years of the Center's existence.

Our board members bring a wide array of professional experience to the table as they volunteer their time and expertise at monthly committee and board meetings, in addition to helping with screening.

John is no stranger to the field of law enforcement and corrections. He gained his law enforcement degree at Dawson Community College in Glendive. His career inaugurated at the Dawson County Sheriff's Office where he served as a Deputy Sheriff.

John went on to spend 26 years with the Cascade County Sheriff's Office where he was Undersheriff for 7 of those years and Sheriff for 6. One of his major accomplishments as Sheriff was the planning and implementation of the Cascade County Detention Center, the first of three in the state. John advanced to the Montana Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigations in 2003 where he served as the Investigations Bureau Chief until his retirement in 2020.

John has served on numerous advisory and legislative committees and boards of directors throughout his career. He is active in his community, having served as a councilman for the Town of Cascade as well as a trustee for the Cascade Public Schools.

John has, and continues to be, physically active refereeing football and basketball. He enjoys outdoor activities such as camping, fishing, and hunting. He and his wife Shary have been married for 44 years and have 2 children and 4 grandchildren.



Lighthouse Dedication

A ceremony was held July 22nd to dedicate the cement lighthouse the Board of Directors commissioned Chris Legg of Legend Stone to create. The lighthouse stands in the front park area and is a representation of Paul Cory's dedication to the Center. Lighthouses were a standing theme throughout his career working with adults and youth in the community. Paul's 30 years at Great Falls Pre-Release bear witness of his insatiable drive to make a difference to those seeking help. He wanted the Center, like the lighthouse, to provide troubled people with solace, shelter, and hope, even if for a brief time.

Sheena Jarvey spoke at the ceremony and acknowledged the proficiency and skill sets of each Great Falls Pre-Release staff member. She commented, "We are social workers, mental health workers, and we maintain custody and security by enforcing rules and keeping order, and everything in between. For all of us, our pre-release does form a unique culture where we support each other to create a greater good. Paul's vision for the Center was rooted in his social work background. Ultimately, Paul wanted the best for each resident and staff member. And I know he would want us to continue on the path of doing good in this world, of taking care of our small corner of the world the very best we can."



Sheena talked about Paul's unique personality, his enjoyment of the history of Great Falls, and his notorious sigh. Sheena continued, "Although Paul is not with us, my sincere hope is that his spirit is circling around Glacier Park and that he is able to enjoy being at the top of Going to the Sun, without the frustration of finding a parking space!"

Sheena shared an email that Paul wrote to staff in the summer of 2019 with the subject line: *Good Stuff*. Paul noted, "...the good work of the staff is never in doubt," and he went on to write:

"Thanks to those who:

Do their jobs without complaint.

Stay Positive.

Remember why we are here.

Proactively problem-solve.

Help where it's needed and when it's requested.

Keep with our mission.

Help the residents to help themselves.

Take the good with the bad.

Remember –WE ALL WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE A COMMON GOAL!

Thanks all!!!

Paul"



Paul's wife, Lorri

Executive Director, Alan Scanlon closed with, "We try every day to carry on the legacy that Mr. Cory established for us. This lighthouse will be a wonderful reminder for everybody to be strong and to not give up. We can all strive for change. We can all just try to get a little bit better every day because that impacts our friends, our family, and our loved ones."

Employee Milestones

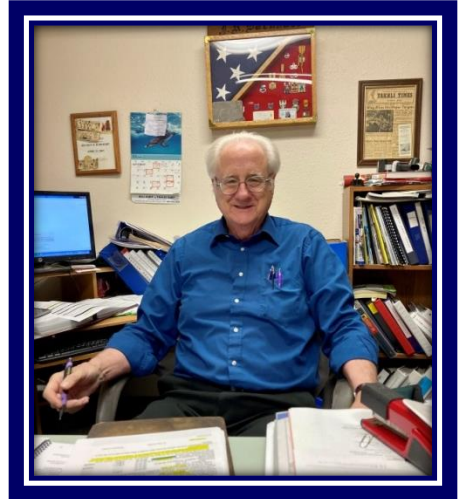
By Brenda Demers

Jeff Barnhart, Facility Services Director - 30 years: If you want to know anything about the workings of the Center or its history, ask Jeff. He knows every nook and cranny of every building too! In fact, if Jeff ever does retire, we're not quite sure how we would fill his shoes.

Jeff grew up in Pennsylvania and joined the Air Force right out of high school. Jeff's 26 years in the service took him to Texas, Arizona, Colorado, Honduras, Greece, and Thailand where he was a bomb loader during the Vietnam War. While at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Jeff procured his broadcasting license and fulfilled his dream of becoming a radio announcer.

Jeff began his career at Great Falls Pre-Release as a resident advisor, moving up to the counselor for direct court commitments and Community Service/DUI Task Force Coordinator. Later he was moved into the newly created Facility Services Director position which, at that time, included being the maintenance person. Jeff is now in charge of everything related to buildings and grounds, ensuring we are in compliance with the state and federal contract mandates. He also supervises the maintenance, food services, inmate worker, and compliance officer departments. With the many hats Jeff wears, he somehow manages to always remain calm!

Jeff enjoyed acting in off-Broadway and local theatre in his earlier days. Now his spare time is consumed with the Uptown Optimist Club, where he stripes parking lots, helps with fundraisers, and collects and distributes donated items. And, anyone that reads this newsletter has found that he is a science and history buff.



Keith Ricketts, Correctional Treatment Specialist - 5 years: Prior to coming to Great Falls Pre-Release, Keith served in the United States Air Force for 23 years, after which he worked for a number of years as a civilian. The deployments made him appreciate life and his family a lot more. Keith and his wife have been married for 21 years and raised two children.

Keith was hired as a Compliance Officer where he worked nights for almost 4 years. Eventually a Correctional Treatment Specialist position opened up. When asked about the differences in a CO and a CTS he said, "As a CO you can reach out and touch just about all of the residents and make an impact in their life, while as a CTS it's generally only the people on your caseload, but you can specialize in how you help them. The whole reason I am here is to help people." Why does Keith feel drawn to helping others? "I have a brother that's been missing since the '80's and another brother that could be one of these residents. I can empathize with the residents a lot even though I never walked a mile in their shoes."

Memorial Day weekend marked the one year anniversary of a car accident that took the life of Keith and his wife's daughter. Keith will never forget what Roger Lesofski told him ... *Take this horrific tragedy and use it to be a better counselor.* That's what Keith tries to do in seeing each resident as a person. "They have another chance; she didn't." Keith tries to change his focus and energy from losing his daughter to assisting the residents. He wants the residents to feel safe in talking to him, and he feels they do better knowing that they can.

Meet our new Education Coordinator



Editor's Note: I asked Allen Heisler to share a little something about himself, and he wrote the following:

I have worked as an educator in many different capacities throughout my career. I have worked previously at GFPRC (2004-2006) as the Activities Coordinator and taught life skills classes as part of that program. I have worked in a variety of public school settings ranging from large AA schools to small rural K-12 schools in Montana. At those schools, I worked mainly in the capacity of a Health/Physical Education Instructor and coach for many different sports. However, I have also taught a variety of courses in the Social Sciences.

I stepped away from classroom teaching for a time, and was a college and career advisor serving high schools in north central Montana, and advising students on college accessibility and affordability, as well as on career pathways. I also hold a Certified Career Service Provider credential recognized by the National Association for Career Development.

I am a native Montanan, and love everything our great state has to offer for recreational activities. I am an avid hunter and fisherman, and take advantage of those times as often as I can. I am also a competitive weight lifter, and have qualified to compete at the world championships the past seven years, winning world titles four times.

I believe in the mission of GFPRC and I take great pride being part of a team to see people be successful in their endeavors.

Meet our New Community Service Coordinator

By Brenda Demers

Corey Hoskins was selected to replace Joseph Williams as the Community Service Coordinator. She has worked as a Compliance Officer for three years. Corey shared that she has “been there done that” – jail, drugs, alcohol, homeless and without food. She lamented, “I felt hopeless.”

Corey commented that sometimes you have to hit a low, low until you can figure things out. She was driving under the influence and ran into a police car. “It was a big wake up call. I thought I killed the police officer. I wasn't the same person when I was under the influence.”

Corey made a change in her life and got “very spiritual” and did AA 3 times a day for about 10 years. She said she still lives the AA lifestyle.

Corey's advice is: “Never give up. Always know there is hope and change and you are capable of it once you get your mind set. Giving back in service work is the way to go.”

The residents will definitely miss Corey as a CO. One commented that she pays attention to the small things and makes everyone feel special. Another resident said that she is a great “go-to” person for questions or anything they need. She is approachable, respectable, super nice, and doesn't judge. Congratulations, Corey, on your new position!





Sandra Bearchum, Karen Conley, Jim Kist, Tim Schultz, Patrick Christensen and Cheryl Haynes. Mike Scott and Heath Reed are in the background.



The cooks: Joe Marten, Bob Dompier, Pete Gammill, Brett Blasdell

Staff BBQ
The Center Visionary Committee hosted an awesome lunchtime BBQ for staff.



Pat Christensen, Jim Kist



Mike Sadowski, Corey Hoskins, Jay Warehime



Christy Atakenu, Sheyenne Grenier
Kayla Williams is in the background

Annual Board of Directors' Meeting and Dinner at the Meadow Lark Country Club

Jon Boutilier was re-elected as President, John Gregory as Vice-President, Max Van Heel as Treasurer, and Gary McFerrin as Secretary. Kevin Heffernan, Gary McFerrin, Trudi Schmidt, and Kathy Van Tighem were re-elected to serve additional three year terms.



Management Team and years of service with the GFPRC
Mike Scott, Treatment Services Director – 27 Years
Alan Scanlon, Executive Director – 19 Years
Jeff Barnhart, Facility Services Director – 30 Years



GFPRC Board of Directors
Back Row: John Strandell, Trudi Schmidt,
Gary McFerrin, Curtis Thompson
Front Row: Kevin Heffernan, Jon Boutilier,
Max Van Heel, John Gregory
Not Pictured: Karen Grove, Bill Quast, Kathy Van Tighem



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jon Boutilier, President: VP-Branch Manager/Commercial Loan Officer, Stockman Bank
John Gregory, Vice-President: Retired Branch Claims Manager
Gary McFerrin, Secretary: Retired Commercial Producer, HUB International
Max Van Heel, Treasurer: VP Sales & Marketing, Pacific Media Technologies
Karen Grove: Retired Trust Officer, Davidson Trust Company
Kevin Heffernan: Supervising United States Probation Officer
Bill Quast: Retired Vice President, Energy West
Trudi Schmidt: Former State Legislator, Educator, and Social Worker
John Strandell: Former Cascade County Sheriff; Retired Bureau Chief, Division of Criminal Investigations
Curtis Thompson: Attorney, Thompson Law, P.C.
Kathy Van Tighem: Counselor, Great Falls High School

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.