



Correctional Signpost

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Montana sees fewer inmates

Montana was one of 27 states experiencing a decrease in prison population last year, according to a report by the Pew Center on the States. Nationally, the number of state inmates dropped for the first time in 38 years.

Montana's prison population declined 0.1 percent, to 3,605. That decrease of just two inmates was the smallest in the country. The U.S. total inmate population dipped by 0.4 percent. The largest decrease was 9.2 percent in Rhode Island and the largest increase was 5.3 percent in Indiana.

California, which faces a dramatic budget crisis and has released large numbers of inmates to help address the problem, had the largest numeric decrease of 4,257. The largest numeric increase in inmates last year was 2,122 in Pennsylvania.

The report, issued in mid-March, cautioned that the overall decline of 0.4 percent may be a "temporary

Budget cuts totaling \$6.9 million in place

The Department of Corrections is one of 23 state agencies to have its budget reduced in an effort to deal with steep declines in government revenue due the recession.

The cuts, announced in early April by Gov. Brian Schweitzer, total about \$41 million. The corrections share is \$6.9 million, with the bulk of that decrease coming in the budget year that starts July 1.

The largest single reduction was a \$2.4 million savings by putting on hold plans for development of a prerelease center in the Kalispell area. That project had been delayed by public opposition to the original proposed site.

Other reductions included withdrawing planned increases in the daily per-offender rate paid to operators of treatment programs, prerelease centers, regional prisons, Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center, and the privately run prison in Shelby. Those increases, mostly 1 percent, were scheduled to take effect starting in July.

In addition, the department will reduce its use of treatment programs for women offenders in the coming budget year to save \$365,000. The Elkhorn meth treatment center in Boulder will have funding for four fewer beds, the Passages Alcohol and Drug Treatment (ADT) program in Billings will be reduced by four beds, and the felony DUI treatment program in Glendive (WATCH east) will be cut by two beds.

The department still will have 36 women at Elkhorn, 38 at Passages ADT and 48 offenders at WATCH east.

Mike Ferriter, department director, said the focus remained on the women's correctional system because it – unlike the men's system – has available space. The Montana Women's Prison is operating at about 80 percent capacity and will be able to provide chemical dependency treatment for women who might otherwise be in the community-based programs targeted for the reductions.

"These are difficult decisions, but necessary ones in light of the budget and revenue picture confronting the state," Ferriter said. "Treatment will still be offered to women needing it. They will not be denied the treatment they need."

Other corrections reductions include \$200,000 from the budget for inmate medical expenses that occur outside of secure facilities, \$200,000 in spending for information technology equipment replacement, \$300,000 in the Juvenile Delinquency Incentive Program, and a \$330,000 cut in Montana State Prison's operating budget. Using supervision fees and parental contributions to offset some personnel costs will save \$1.6 million.

Although the department accounts for about 9 percent of the total general fund budget, corrections represents 17 percent of the spending cuts because school funding is mostly exempt in this budget-cutting process.

Drop

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blip” that can be part of the seasonal fluctuations in corrections, rather than the start of a “sustained downward trend.”

But it said some indicators hint that the drop may be the start of a continued reduction. Advances in supervision technology (such as GPS monitoring), progress in behavior change research, development of more accurate tools for assessing an offender’s risk, public support for prison alternatives and tight budgets may sustain the decline, the report said.

While the Pew Center acknowledged that budget pressure may be part of the explanation for the falling population in 2009, it also noted that states are trying

innovative approaches that are having results.

Expanded use of intermediate sanctions as an alternative to sending parolees back to prison for violating conditions of their supervision is a method being used in California. Michigan, which has reduced its prison population by more than 6,000 since 2007, has cut the number of inmates serving their minimum sentences.

Texas is spending money on a network of residential and community-based treatment and diversion programs, and Mississippi has decided that inmates need serve only 25 percent of a sentence, not 85 percent, before becoming eligible for parole.

Although the report did not mention Montana, this state launched revocation centers to divert offenders from going back to prison in 2005 and 2007. Parole eligibility in Montana already

occurs after an inmate serves a fourth of his or her sentence.

Montana embarked on a build-up in its community corrections programs several years ago. Since 2004, capacity of the state’s system of prerelease centers has increased 40 percent to 835. Likewise, the various treatment and sanction programs grew by 143 percent to a capacity of 578.

“What many other states are just doing now, Montana has been doing for years,” said Department of Corrections Director Mike Ferriter. “With the support of Gov. Schweitzer, we made a commitment long ago to place more emphasis on community corrections programs and to reserve prison for only those who truly need to be there as a matter of public safety and accountability.”

He noted that Montana has achieved and maintained

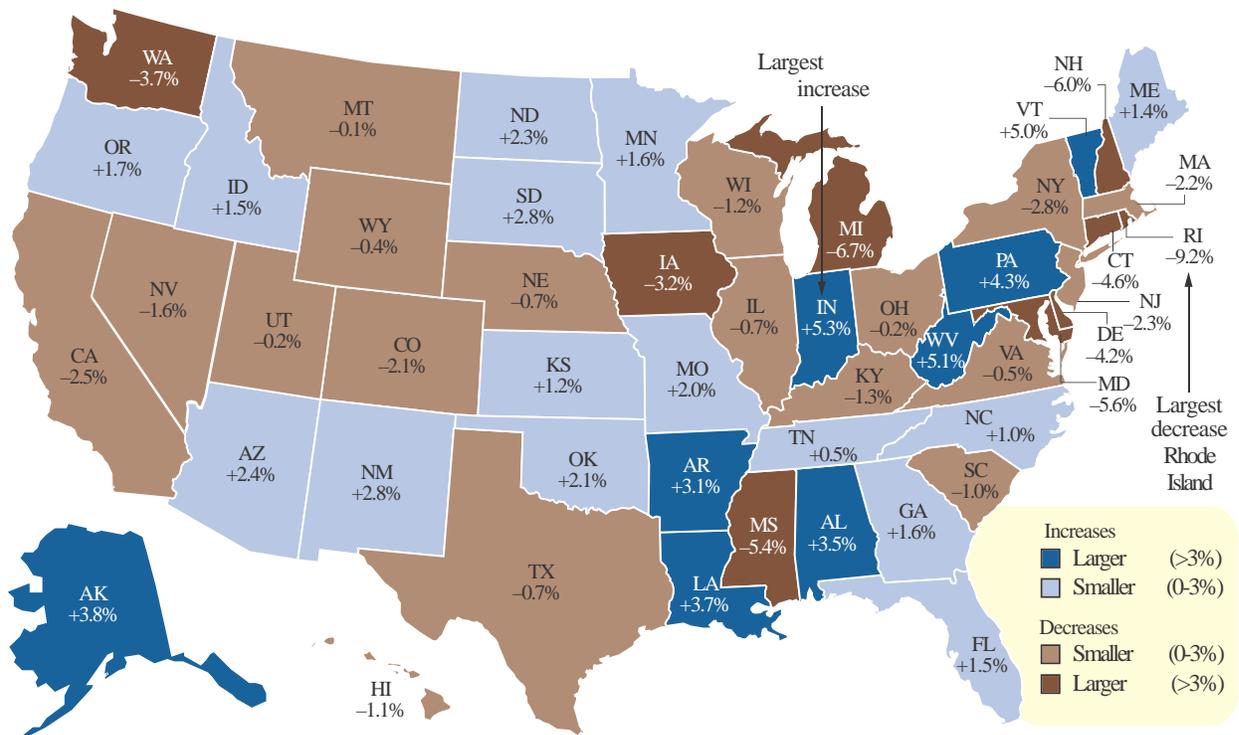
Montana Department of Corrections Mission

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

its goal of supervising 80 percent of its 13,000 offenders outside of prison.

Among Montana’s neighboring states, Idaho had a 1.5 percent increase, North Dakota’s inmate population grew by 2.3 percent, South Dakota saw a 2.8 percent rise and Wyoming reported a 0.4 percent decrease.

Percent change instate prison populations,2008–2009.



Team praises operations, staff

ACA renews accreditation for BOPP

The American Correctional Association has renewed its national accreditation of the state Board of Pardons and Parole for another three years.

The audit team from ACA praised the board’s operations, saying it was “impressed with the professionalism, commitment and dedication of the entire staff.”

“They are very supportive of the leadership of the agency and all are committed to the jobs they perform,” the report concluded. “There is a strong, family-type atmosphere and they work together very much as a team.”

The ACA team also applauded the board’s move from a cramped office near the old territorial prison to more spacious offices that once housed a state forestry program. Since the move, the staff has updated computers and technology in general, and is planning a transition to electronic records, it noted.

“The files were found to be in very good working order and had considerable attention paid to them since the previous audit,” the ACA report said. “The agency has no notices of noncompliance with local, state or federal laws or regulations.”



Thomas

In addition, the auditors said their interviews with board members disclosed that they consider themselves “very well informed” in making decisions and pleased with the increased use of technology, including wireless laptop computers.

The board has had ACA accreditation since 2001.

Craig Thomas, executive director, said the program is “one of only a handful of releasing authorities in the world that are accredited” by ACA.

“I would like to thank the board members and board staff for their commitment to follow national standards in the parole process and special thanks goes out to Parole Analyst Christine Slaughter who coordinated the reaccreditation process.”

More than 1,500 correctional organizations in the country have ACA accreditation, including the DOC’s Youth Services Division and Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility.

ACA accreditation is a professional peer review process based on national standards that have evolved since the founding of the association in 1870. The standards are developed by national leaders in the fields of corrections, law, health care and other groups interested in sound correctional management.

Remembering victim advocate Darla Gillespie

**By Sally Hilander
Victim Programs Manager**

My favorite memory of Darla Gillespie is the moment she bounced into a Crime Victims Advisory Council meeting in Helena, her hair dusted with snow, a few minutes late, apologetic but unruffled.

While some council members didn’t attend the meeting due to icy roads, Darla drove 350 miles from Glendive.

Such commitment from this vibrant and wholehearted victim advocate with the dimpled smile was why the phone call in early February informing me of her death had to be a mistake. But it wasn’t. Darla was only 50.



Gillespie

Darla was chairwoman when the council disbanded in December 2009. A victim herself, she had served with compassion, persistence and understanding.

As staff liaison for the council, I thought I knew Darla pretty well. We met quarterly over several years, discussed matters of importance to crime victims, and shared a passion for restorative justice – a criminal justice approach that focuses on healing for all parties harmed by crime’s ripple effect.

Darla won the Montana Department of Justice Outstanding Crime Victim Advocate Award in 1997 for her work in the Seventh Judicial District. She and I served together on a Board of Crime Control subcommittee that administers federal funds for victims.

Time for socializing at meetings was short, but I knew Darla’s laughter and quick wit. I knew she doted on her kids Janna, Jodie and Jesse, and four grandkids. I knew she moved back to the Flathead Valley in 2008 to be closer to her sister Darcie Harris, and many other family members and friends.

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A lot has changed in 30 years since Alternatives began



EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article was published in the Feb. 14 edition of The Billings Gazette to mark the 30th anniversary of Alternatives Inc. Reprinted with permission.

**By Ed Kemmick
The Billings Gazette**

Thirty years ago in Montana, there was one 350-bed prison for men in Deer Lodge and one very small minimum-security prison for women in Lockwood.

When men were released from prison, David Armstrong said, "you pretty much gave them prison blues or prison khakis and a hundred bucks and turned them loose."

In 2010, the corrections landscape could hardly look more different. The state now has a men's prison in Deer Lodge, a women's prison in Billings, a private prison in Shelby and regional prisons in Missoula, Great Falls and Glendive. In early February, more than 2,600 people were locked up in those facilities.

But Montana, following a national trend, hasn't just been building more prisons. There has been an increasing push to get offenders into treatment for substance abuse, into programs that encourage them to give up lives of crimes and integrate them back into society.

At the moment, about 1,700 people are in prerelease centers in Montana, in state-sanctioned treatment programs or living under intensive supervision. Many thousands more are on probation and parole.

Armstrong has watched the revolution in the corrections industry from a ringside seat.

He has been the only administrator of Alternatives Inc. since it opened it in 1980 as the first nonprofit pre-release center in Montana. Now, as it marks its 30th anniversary, Alternatives Inc. has expanded far beyond what Armstrong could have imagined back in 1980.

Starting with just five beds, Alternatives now has a 180-bed prerelease center for state and federal male prisoners and a 155-bed Passages center for women, consisting of a prerelease center, a prison diversion program and a drug treatment facility.



Alternatives Inc. client adviser Justin Miller makes an hourly head count in the facilities dorm.



David Armstrong (center), who has been the administrator of Alternatives Inc. for all of its 30 years, visits with residents recently in the Alpha House's outdoor recreation area. (Photos by James Woodcock, Billings Gazette)

Thousands affected

At the prerelease centers, offenders generally spend six months under strict supervision, working in the community, paying for room and board and attending educational and counseling programs.

In Yellowstone, Carbon and Stillwater counties, Alternatives Inc. also operates Beta Jail Alternatives, which is in charge of offenders under misdemeanor probation and pre-trial supervision. Thousands of people attend Alternatives classes aimed at shoplifters, domestic-violence perpetrators, minors in possession of alcohol and other offenders.

For the same three counties, it offers alcohol and drug treatment, urinal-

Communications Plan

Human Resources Division

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the fourth in a series of division communication plans to be published in the DOC newsletter, as part of an effort emphasizing the importance of improved communications among DOC employees.

1. Administrator will schedule periodic meetings with the bureau chiefs and direct reports as follows:
 - a. Bi-weekly individual meetings with each bureau chief and direct report
 - b. Monthly bureau chief meetings scheduled on an annual basis
 - c. Quarterly direct report meetings to obtain progress reports on established goals/objectives provide feedback and identify support needs
2. Any staff member is encouraged to "walk-in," schedule an individual meeting or call the administrator and/or bureau chiefs to report issues, ask for support or express concerns. Staff "walk-in's" for reporting positive feedback about fellow employees are encouraged.
3. Administrator will schedule an "all-staff" conference call after each management team meeting to update staff on issues, activities and decisions reached.
4. Administrator will integrate a "manage-by-walking-around" practice within the division, visiting with individual employees in their workplace to better understand needs and solicit ideas and suggestions and build relationships.
5. Division staff meetings will be scheduled twice a year to share information on department and division goals, objectives and activities; provide an opportunity for social interaction; and celebrate employee and department successes.
6. Administrator and bureau chiefs will invite staff from other divisions to scheduled staff meetings to foster teamwork, understanding of interests and needs and relationships.
7. All division staff will use available technology such as conference calls, e-mail, intranet, VisionNet and online meeting capabilities to ensure information is shared throughout the division and department – up, down and laterally.
8. Administrator and bureau chiefs will coordinate to assure at least one article on division activities or topics of interest is contributed to each edition of the department newsletter, "Correctional Signpost."
9. Administrator and bureau chiefs will support the expanding department intranet ensuring accurate and timely information is posted to the division's tab.

Gillespie

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In September, she began working with the Center for Restorative Youth Justice in Kalispell.

I didn't know that Darla loved quilting, rafting, classic cars, Danielle Steele novels and powerful engines. I didn't know her dual reputation as a speeding-ticket collector and "deer

magnet," or that backseat driving was her pet peeve.

I knew about the skydiving incident. I didn't know Darla was born in Iowa, and we never discovered that we once lived 13 miles apart in Colorado.

I thought I knew Darla the professional, but I didn't know she had a second degree in law enforcement. I didn't know she used weekends to help domestic violence victims in Dawson County escape, boxing up their possessions and using her own car to move

them – or that she once loaned clothes to a victim for a court appearance.

These are the wonderful and surprising things we sometimes learn about a friend or colleague from an obituary and tributes posted on a funeral home Web site by those who knew the person best.

Darla certainly was the best.

Her funeral was Feb. 13 in Glendive. Her obituary and tributes are online at <http://www.funeralplan2.com/silvernale/>

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ysis, house arrest, gambling assessments and GPS monitoring. During 2009 it had about 4,000 clients under supervision or attending its behavioral and educational programs. It has a staff of 151.

The economic impact on Billings is sizable. In a report to the 2009 Legislature, the Department of Corrections reported that inmates of Alternatives Inc. prerelease centers in Billings put in more than 450,000 hours of employment in 2008, earning \$3.2 million.

Of that total, nearly \$1 million was paid to Alternatives Inc. for room and board, \$136,000 went to restitution for crimes, almost \$600,000 was paid in income taxes, \$154,000 was used to pay medical expenses and \$80,000 was paid out in child support. Offenders also save as much as they can to prepare for their release.

"We're not your typical nonprofit," Armstrong said.

In 30 years, an estimated 6,500 people have passed through the Alpha House prerelease center and some 82,500 people have been clients of Beta Jail Alternatives. Since Passages opened in 2007, it has had about 1,700 women in its programs and under its supervision.

On the radar

Given the state's appetite for reducing the prison population and making greater use of community corrections, Alternatives doesn't seem to be in danger of shrinking, much less going away.

But whatever good the organization has done for the state of Montana or the thousands of people directly affected by its programs, it has also had some less-than-desirable impacts on the Billings community, and it has periodically

come under criticism from community leaders and elected officials.

Until opening the Passages Women's Center three years ago, Armstrong said, Alternatives generally operated under the radar, with most people not even aware that Alpha House was in the heart of downtown Billings.

With the opening of Passages in what used to be a Howard Johnson Express Inn, a high-profile building on South 27th Street, Alternatives suddenly found itself more closely watched and more often criticized. Some South Side residents balked at the clustering of correctional buildings in their neighborhood. Passages is within blocks of the Montana Women's Prison, the regional probation and parole office and a juvenile jail. The county jail, though not on South 27th, is also on the South Side.

Other observers, including Police Chief Rich St. John, fear that the presence of so many prerelease beds in Billings encourages ex-

cons to take up residence in Billings after doing their prerelease here. Others have wondered about the burden placed on social-service agencies, given the number of people who move to Billings to be close to family members in prerelease or living here after their release.



Richard Farnsworth, a client adviser at Alternatives Inc., gives a Breathalyzer test to a client as he checks back into the prerelease center.

'I think that's pretty significant that Alternatives Inc. stepped up and agreed to put this hybrid program together.'

*-Pam Bunke
Administrator
Community Corrections Division*

Going strong

Of course, Alternatives Inc. also has many supporters.

Given the nature of its business, and of the intense scrutiny under which it operates, "I think Alternatives has really stood up to the test," said Pam Bunke, administrator of Adult Community Corrections for the Department of Corrections.

Bunke, who used to run the regional probation and parole office here, said she works with corrections counterparts around the country who are impressed by the risks Alternatives Inc. has been willing to take, particularly in regard to Passages, which combines prerelease, a prison diversion program and drug treatment under one roof.

DOC answers contract audit

The Department of Corrections has developed a plan to remedy problems found in the agency's contract management process during a recent legislative audit.

The plan addresses each of the nine recommendations contained in the report, which was reviewed by the Legislative Audit Committee in early March. Members raised concerns about the audit findings, and Corrections Director Mike Ferriter assured them the department takes seriously the findings and is committed to addressing them promptly.

"We'll improve," he told the committee. "This is not a good place for me to be standing."

Contracts are an important issue in an agency that has more than 230 contracts costing about \$73 million a year, or about 40 percent of the department's annual budget.

The audit criticized the department for issuing some contracts without competitive bidding. The agency said in its formal response that the law is unclear on whether an expansion of an existing program requires a bid solicitation.

Auditors also noted the department has obtained some services without signed contracts, something Ferriter said he finds unacceptable.

Ferriter emphasized the department has taken steps in the past year to improve contract management, including new training for contract liaisons, increased accountability for regularly scheduled reporting by the liaisons and additional staff in the contracts bureau. He also said contract management updates are part of the standing agenda for all department management team meetings.

In a memo to all management staff and contract liaisons the week after the audit committee meeting, Ferriter emphasized his personal commitment to see improvement in the way contracts

From the Director

Mike Ferriter



Until recent weeks, many people often told me, "Things are quiet at corrections. I haven't seen your name in the newspaper in a long time." That's changed.

In the past week or two, I have heard comments like, "Things must be going wrong at DOC because I've been reading about the department a lot lately." I even heard that someone described the department as being in "disarray."

I respond: "The newspaper doesn't tell the whole story."

Sure, we have dealt with a less-than-satisfactory contract management audit. We've had some staff and offenders make some very poor personal choices, and a couple of our work units need to improve their teamwork. We even had one of our private partners challenge a budget reduction in public forums.

Disarray? I think not. It's too bad people don't remember so easily recent news articles about our efforts holding the line on the prison population, how impressed legislators and media are with the drunken-driving treatment program and that a small reduction in the meth program for women reflects big gains in management of female offenders.

The fact that many people were upset about the meth program cut indicates they recognize just how successful it is. To have residents concerned because fewer meth addicts will be in their community is a sign of that success.

Those who see us only through dark glasses as going through a difficult time don't know about the gallant efforts of Pine Hills staff whose efforts likely saved a young offender's life just last week, or the tireless efforts by staff to ensure the young women at Riverside were safe during recent utility outages. They won't know about the massive development of a new offender management system at no added cost to the state or the surge in restitution collections since we assumed the responsibility.

These same people will never note the efforts made to transport a gravely ill inmate to Missoula for life-saving treatment and give his family an opportunity to visit. They are unlikely to remember the ongoing graduations from the life-changing STEPS program for inmates and the joint efforts of Montana Correctional Enterprises and Montana State Prison in this endeavor.

And most people will overlook the fact that we successfully manage more than 13,000 offenders daily, and many Montanans still feel safe enough to leave their keys in their car or their home doors unlocked.

I suppose that I could be accused of having my head in the sand, but I disagree. I just happen to be in a chair where I have a broad view what goes on in this agency. From the little sandless porch on Eleventh Avenue, I get to see far beyond the headlines. What I see makes me proud to be a part of the Department of Corrections.



A couple of residents of Alternatives Inc.'s Alpha House visit in one of the dorm rooms at the prerelease center.

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"I think that's pretty significant that Alternatives Inc. stepped up and agreed to put this hybrid program together," she said.

The organization also has the support of Billings' new mayor, Tom Hanel, a former police lieutenant who has served on the Alternatives Inc. board of directors for nearly 15 years, off and on.

Through his work on the board, Hanel said, he has come to know of many people, including three men imprisoned for sex offenses who turned their lives around and have become "useful, good citizens."

"So it does work," he said.

Hanel also said that while people will inevitably have some concerns about living anywhere near a prerelease center, "they don't concern me as much as the unknowns."

The "unknowns" are the ex-cons who discharge their sentences without going through prerelease and are no longer under supervision, and to a lesser extent the many people on probation and parole. As of last June 30, just over 8,400 people were on probation and parole in Montana. By contrast, 2,076 people were in alternatives-to-prison programs, prerelease or other forms of supervision.

Armstrong often points to those kinds of figures when people talk about the perceived dangers of a prerelease center. Offenders released from prison are going to return to the community one way or another, he says, and at least in prerelease they remain under close supervision for some

months, subjected to drug testing, required to work and save money and make plans for living independently.

"I don't have too much problem selling our program in theory or selling it to the community," he said. "I have trouble when it comes to selecting a site for a program."

A sore point

The siting of Passages on South 27th Street still rankles Marion Dozier, a former City Council member who now chairs the South Side Task Force. Dozier, who said she speaks only for herself, not the task force, worked as a "life skills counselor" for nine years at what used to be a 12-bed minimum security prison for women in Lockwood, in the 1980s.

She was also an early board member for Alternatives but resigned "because I could see the way the board was going."

In her view, the emphasis on community safety gradually gave way to growth for growth's sake, to a larger and larger organization mostly interested in new sources of revenue.

The opening of Passages solidified what Dozier calls "institution row" on South 27th, and she fears its presence will only encourage state officials and Alternatives Inc. to cluster new corrections programs around it.

"Just because they're here doesn't mean we should just keep taking them," she said. Unlike other parts of town, she said, the South Side seems powerless to protect its neighborhoods.

She pointed to the massive opposition to the siting of a Mormon temple on the far West End in the late 1990s. Although the temple was eventually built, it was scaled down by half and subjected to numerous restrictions.

"We were like — you put the jail out there and we'll take the temple," she said.

Dozier and Jim Ronquillo, the Ward 1 City Council member who lives a couple of blocks from Passages, say they are also worried about the possibility that Alternatives will one day move all of its operations onto the Passages campus.

Armstrong said those fears apparently were related to Alternatives' purchase of an adjoining vacant lot when it bought the Howard Johnson building. But that was at the request of the former landowner, he said, and Alternatives has no plans for the property. He said it would cost as much as \$10 million to build from scratch the structures Alternatives owns in the downtown area.

Consolidation on the South Side, he said, "is not even a thought on the horizon."

'I don't have too much problem selling our program in theory or selling it to the community.'

*-Dave Armstrong,
Administrator*

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Ronquillo said another of his big concerns is that Alternatives, which doesn't pay taxes, makes regular use of the Billings Police Department, while his constituents might not even get a police response when they report a car break-in.

"They receive better services than we do, and I just don't think that's fair," he said.

Frequent fliers

Police Chief Rich St. John said that in the last three months of 2009, police officers went to the Alpha House 65 times and Passages 36 times, with two officers responding each time. Some days there were multiple visits to the two buildings; one day police went to the Alpha House four times.

Without breaking it down precisely, St. John said probably 95 percent of the calls involved transporting inmates from Alternatives to the jail.

That is a concern for Ed Ulledalen, a councilman from Ward 4. He said he raised the issue with St. John late last year.

"Is this a business that's being subsidized by the general fund?" he said. "I just wanted some quantitative measure of what is the impact on our police department."

Ulledalen said he wasn't picking on Alternatives Inc. He said he is also interested in doing something about excessive false burglar alarms, which waste a lot of police time, and the practice of sending a fire truck and an ambulance to every 911 call.

'We've always taken the people who have the most problem paying, and we try to offer the lowest-cost services.'

-Armstrong

Armstrong said the question of police transport for Alternatives inmates came up when Ron Tussing was police chief, and the city's legal staff decided then that if there was a warrant involved in transporting an inmate to the jail — and there almost always is, Armstrong said — the city was obligated to provide the service.

In the long run, Armstrong said, the city benefits from Alternatives' presence in the community. Municipal Court sends hundreds, if not thousands, of misdemeanor violators to Alternatives for supervision or programs every year,

Armstrong said, and Alternatives is not fully compensated for many of them.

"We've always taken the people who have the most problem paying, and we try to offer the lowest-cost services," he said.

'Camp followers'

Harder to gauge is the impact of inmates who come to Billings through prerelease and then settle here after their release, sometimes with husbands, wives, children and other "camp followers," as Dozier called them.

That is a concern of Sheryl Hoffarth, who used to work at the women's prison in Lockwood, later worked as a unit manager for Community Corrections in Billings and served

Nearly six out of every 10 offenders leaving a Billings prerelease center choose to move elsewhere.

on the Board of Pardons and Parole after retiring in 2001.

Since the main goal of prerelease centers is get the offender integrated back into society, with a house and a job, it stands to reason that inmates who find some stability while in pre-release are going to stay here afterward, Hoffarth said.

In her experience, Hoffarth said, women and families are much more likely to follow a man to prison or prerelease than a man is to follow a woman. And since most of the people in prerelease are men, that adds up to a lot of potential impact on schools, public assistance and other tax-funded services.

"I don't know if anyone has ever really carefully examined that question," she said.

Though that question hasn't been looked at, the Department of Corrections did provide a breakdown of the male and female offenders who went through prerelease in Billings between 2005 and 2009.

That five-year number totals 1,662, but it includes only offenders who came to Billings from the prison system. Alternatives' two pre-release centers in Billings typically host about 900 offenders a year, but many of them were sent there directly after conviction, since their crimes weren't considered serious enough to warrant prison placement. Others are there after violating probation or parole.

But of the 1,662 who came here from prison, 1,155 were originally convicted and sentenced outside Yellowstone County. Of that number 361 offenders were sent to another institution or program after prerelease or had their sentences discharged, so no one tracked where they went.

Of the 794 offenders who went on probation or parole and were able to choose where to live, most of them — 454,

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or 57.2 percent — left Yellowstone County. That meant 340 of them chose to stay here during those five years.

And of those who stayed in the county, according to the Department of Corrections, 12 percent committed new crimes.

Weighing the factors

Hanel, who used to serve on the Alternatives screening committee, said there are two ways of looking at the question of where an offender received his prison sentence. In some cases, he said, an offender might have family here, including children, plus connections that will make it easier to find work and to fit back into the community.

But in other cases, the screening committee has rejected applicants specifically because they were from this area and had nothing to return to but the law-breaking, substance-abusing crowd they used to hang with.

Armstrong also pointed out that many criminals are transient, and it might not tell you much to find out what county they were sent to prison from.

“Where are you from could be, at a base level, where did you commit your last crime?” he said.

Steve Peek, the screening and disciplinary coordinator for Alternatives, who also serves on the Alpha House screening committee, said that in recent years the committee has probably rejected applications from a little more

than half the offenders who try to get into prerelease in Billings.

In the case of sexual offenders, he said, being from a different county is almost automatically disqualifying; for others, it’s a factor, “but not an overriding one.”

Peek said the screening committee that reviews applications from inmates seek pre-release placement also denies at least half the applicants, and before that the application has to be approved by the manager of the prison unit where the offender is being held. So, before an inmate even gets into Billings, the screening process has been quite rigorous, he said.

While the offenders are in prerelease centers, the rate of escape is low.

In all of fiscal year 2009, there were 31 escapes from

the six prerelease centers in Montana, and all of the escapees were captured. And though “escape” is what it is called, and it warrants the same punishment as escaping from prison, it usually means the inmate simply failed to report back from a job or other obligation.

From 2005 to 2009, the apprehension rate was 97.4 percent. Of those inmates who are sent back to prison during their time in prerelease, a report to the 2006 Legislature showed that 84.9 percent were returned for technical violations, 8.9 percent for a new crime and the rest for a combination of factors.

Armstrong said people in prerelease are closely monitored and have to remain free of drugs and alcohol, under the threat of an immediate return to prison. When they are sober and working, he said, “you’d have a pretty hard time differentiating between them and anybody else in the community.”

In all of fiscal year 2009, there were 31 escapes from the six prerelease centers in Montana, and all of the escapees were captured.

Billings leader believes in prerelease concept

By Ed Kemmick
The Billings Gazette

James “Ziggy” Ziegler is acutely aware of how difficult it is for society to deal with citizens who break the law.

“You don’t know whether you’re doing it all wrong or doing it all right,” he said. “Is prison supposed to be a place to warehouse people or rehabilitate them? That’s always the question.”

Ziegler, a former Yellowstone County commissioner, made his own decision many years ago, after his father

was murdered by two armed robbers in a Los Angeles parking garage.

That was in 1973. When he moved to Montana a few years later, Ziegler was still very angry, filled with thoughts of revenge. A friend suggested that one way of dealing with his emotions would be to visit the state prison in Deer Lodge.

“Thirty-two years later, I’m still going,” he said.

As part of the Cursillo prison ministry, which is affiliated with the Catholic Church, Ziegler visits the prison

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Leader

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for two long weekends a year, with shorter follow-up trips to the prison every other Sunday.

His work includes talking to prisoners from the perspective of a victim, trying to help them understand the ripple effects of their crimes. Because of his work at the prison, he said, he was ultimately able to forgive the men who killed his father.

And because of his ministry, he was asked to be one of the early members of the board for Alternatives Inc., a non-profit business that runs pre-release centers in Billings and offers dozens of other community corrections programs.

Ziegler served on the board for several years, in addition to being on the screening committee for the Alpha House pre-release center, and he rejoined the board in 2007.

Over the years, Ziegler has employed hundreds of former prisoners and pre-release inmates at Stella's Kitchen and Bakery, which he co-owns with his wife, Stella.

"Our mission here has been to help out where we can," he said.

There is a financial incentive for businesses willing to hire ex-convicts — a tax credit of up to \$2,400 per employee, depending on how long they stay on the job.

Like Alternatives Inc. itself, Ziegler said, Stella's has had a few minor problems over the years but mostly a good relationship with its formerly law-breaking employees. There have been a few thefts from the business, and once a couple of employees broke in after hours and stole some money, but they were caught and jailed and they paid restitution.

What's more common is hearing from former workers who have made something of their lives, who have jobs and

families and wanted Ziegler to know how much his help meant to them.

"If nobody gives them a chance, what's going to happen to all these people?" Ziegler asked.

That's why he continues to support Alternatives Inc. It simply makes more sense to help inmates prepare for life outside of prison than to dump them on the street at the end of their sentence, he said.

He said he's also a believer in Alternatives because he's had a chance to observe its administrator, David Armstrong, over the past 30 years.

"David just does a tremendous job," he said. "He's an administrator that really cares."



James "Ziggy" Ziegler visits the kitchen at Stella's Kitchen and Bakery, which he co-owns with his wife. Over the years, he said, the restaurant has hired "at least a couple hundred" ex-convicts and residents of the Alternatives Inc. prerelease centers. (Photo by James Woodcock, Billings Gazette)



E Unit renovation

Workers are in the process of gutting Montana State Prison's E Unit, which originally was used as reception for new inmates. The building will be renovated to be used for visiting, property storage, the transportation unit and a small expansion of the nearby infirmary. (Photo by Crystal Brown)

Questions & Answers

Communication

The problem with communication ... is the *illusion* that it has been accomplished.

—George Bernard Shaw

What is communication?

It is the process of exchanging information in a way that conveys meaning and attempts to create shared understanding.

Why is communication important?

Communication is a two-way street. It allows the providing of information to others and permits the return of information. Communication – in writing, orally or through images – is the basic tool for people to give one another the means for understanding what is happening and why.

What happens if communication is inadequate?

A vacuum is created. Employees fail to understand why decisions are made and what direction the department is going. The public develops suspicions about what is occurring within the department. Rumors spread, misunderstandings thrive and inaccurate information is perceived as fact.

Where does good communication originate?

From everyone in the department. Administrators and supervisors are obligated to clearly, consistently and frequently communicate their needs and expectations to the employees who work for them. Employees should understand they are expected to freely communicate issues and concerns to their supervisors.

What is the most important part of communication?

Listening. Through listening comes understanding and the ability to recognize whether the message is clear and understandable. Active listening allows communicators to assess what they are saying to ensure they are conveying the right message, and permits recipients to analyze what is being said so they can ask questions.

With whom does the Corrections Department communicate?

Employees, other state agencies, Montana citizens, legislators, district judges, prosecutors, victims, defense attorneys, offenders, federal agencies, other state corrections departments and news media.

Why is internal communications in the Corrections Department so critical?

The department has 1,300 employees scattered throughout Montana in 25 communities. Some of these employees are more than 500 miles apart. Some spend their shifts in offices, others in secure facilities, and some spend workdays in cars. It's important to ensure that this diverse work force has a common understanding of the goals and activities of this wide-ranging department so that staff acts in unison toward reaching the department's mission and objectives.

Why are external communications so important?

Citizens and news media have a keen interest in operations of a state agency responsible for the supervision of offenders and protecting public safety. Ensuring Montanans know what is happening in a department with such a serious obligation is critical to maintaining the credibility of the agency and public trust. Legislators need to understand what goes on in an agency that uses about 9 percent of the state's total general fund budget. Criminal justice system officials care about corrections as a critical element of the system.

What does the department do to communicate with employees and the general public?

The department publishes a biennial report in advance of each legislative session that is made available in printed form to key lawmakers and to the general public on the DOC Web site at <http://www.cor.mt.gov/content/Resources/Reports/2009BiennialReport.pdf>.

A bimonthly newsletter is published online at <http://www.cor.mt.gov/content/news/Signpost.pdf>. In addition, the department issues news releases, fact sheets and reports on various issues and events that arise related to the department. Department officials are available for media interviews and a communications director and public information officers at each of the state prisons ensure that requests for information are promptly answered. A DOC intranet site, recently revamped, provides important internal information to employees at <http://cor.mine.mt.gov/default.mcp.x>. Each division has developed a communication plan specific to their operations and they can be found at

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<http://www.cor.mt.gov/About/CommunicationPlans/default.mcp>

What happens when someone asks for information from the department?

Such inquiries usually come to the communication director who will either collect and provide the information or route the request to someone with knowledge to answer the questions. The communication director works with staff to prepare responses that are accurate, consistent, organized, understandable, comprehensive and timely.

Who responds to requests for information?

In most cases, an administrator or bureau chief will reply. But even then, the response should be coordinated in advance with the communication director to ensure the information provided is consistent, accurate and timely. While the department can speak with more than one voice, it is critical that the voices are in harmony in reflecting the agency's mission, vision and goals.

How good are my communication skills?

Here's a Web site link where you can take a test that assesses your communication skills:

http://www.queendom.com/tests/access_page/index.htm?idRegTest=683

Labor-management committee gets praise

The Labor-Management Committee of the Probation and Parole Bureau, the Youth Community Corrections Bureau and MEA-MFT Local 4464 recently won praise from Ted Handel, a federal mediator who frequently assists the committee with problem solving.

Handel told the 11-member committee it is one of the best such groups he has ever worked with and that he liked the way members pulled together to get things done.

The committee has existed since 2006 and worked tirelessly to improve the working relationship between labor and management. The goal is to create "positive liaisons to better identify and resolve issues that are of concern to Local 4464, the Probation and Parole Bureau, and the Youth Community Corrections Bureau, as well as advocate to obtain necessary changes and resources. Open communication, mutual understanding, interest base and consensus

process will be used in making and implementing decisions and finding equitable solutions."

The committee meets quarterly, with a telephone conference call meeting during the interims to ensure members move forward on issues. Some of the current issues the committee is working on are officer and office safety, officer equipment, specialized caseloads and access to management staff.



Newest contract bureau staff members are, left to right: Tia Snyder, purchasing agent; Kim Dallas, purchasing technician; and Michelle Jenicek, contract specialist. Gary Willems, not pictured, is bureau chief.

Audit

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are managed.

"As you can imagine, I don't want to find myself before a future audit committee trying to explain why the department has not complied with audit recommendations," he wrote. "But just as important, I don't want the department to be the subject of such scrutiny and criticism again."

He acknowledged staff has worked hard to make improvements already, but warned em-

ployees not to allow the issue to become a lower priority.

"Contract management, proper reporting and compliance with laws and policies must remain on the top of our to-do list every day when we come to work," Ferriter said.

He urged contract liaisons and managers to review the audit report periodically as a reminder of the work that needs to be done.

"Working together, as a team, we can do this," Ferriter wrote. "We are capable and competent, and must show that to Montana taxpayers, legislators and other state employees."



1968 plan envisioned specialized prison

By Bob Anez
Communication Director

The idea was a simple one: First-time and younger offenders should be separated in prison from older, repeat offenders. While that plan never became reality, it offers insight into the thinking of Montana correctional officials more than 40 years ago.

A 1968 report, prepared by an architectural firm and recently found among old files at the Department of Corrections, details plans to spend at least \$5 million (\$30.5 million in current dollars) to build a 415-bed facility west of Deer Lodge. Ironically, the location is where the new Montana State Prison was built nearly a decade later.

The project, called the "First Offenders Facility," was devised in 1966 by the Board of Institutions based on the conclusion that "present facilities hinder the rehabilitation programs attempted by the prison and seriously affect the attitude of each prisoner."

At the time, Montana State Prison still was housed in the aging territorial prison in downtown Deer Lodge. A new prison would not open until 1977.

But the proposal advanced in 1968 was not for a generic new prison; it envisioned one specifically for first-time offenders and offenders less than 21 years old. The report said about 47 percent of all inmates were first offenders.

The report explained the reasoning behind the proposal:

"A program to provide a completely segregated facility for tractable first offenders, complete with recreational facilities and educational-training facilities, follows recommended prison practices. This program can be justified on the basis of guard costs, maintenance costs, manpower training, development of productive citizens, or on the simple basis of man's humanity to man."

The 1967 Legislature provided funding to establish specific requirements and determine construction costs for the project.

The plan targeted "tractable" first offenders, described as those "wanting and capable of treatment." Although the report did not address intractable offenders (those not wanting treatment) and "defective" offenders (those with limited or no ability to be treated), the plan apparently contemplated them remaining at the existing prison.

The document envisioned a close-security prison "with provisions for training and treatment, to prepare them (offenders) for parole, or for a type of custody that costs the state less money. Treatment of education and vocational deficiencies must be a basic aim in the rehabilitation of young or first-time convicts."

The proposal called for using some of the prison ranch land located three miles west of town. The only significant buildings there in 1968 were Rothe Hall, which housed 200 inmates working on the ranch, and the "tag plant," where license plates were made. Both buildings remain structures within the current prison compound.

The plan outlined four phases of construction at the site, including three 100-bed cell housing units, a 100-man minimum-security dormitory and a maximum security unit for 15 inmates. It proposed a "hospital" for 16 patients, gymnasium, recreation center, classrooms, athletic field, and an auditorium that included a theater and religious center.

Proposal

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It also described expansion of existing industries programs to include a garment shop, dry-cleaning plant, sign and mattress factories, and a cannery. It proposed expanding or moving existing programs, such as the farm and ranch operations, dairy, medical research lab, vehicle maintenance and repair shop, concrete block plant, license plate and furniture factories, electronics repair shop and laundry.

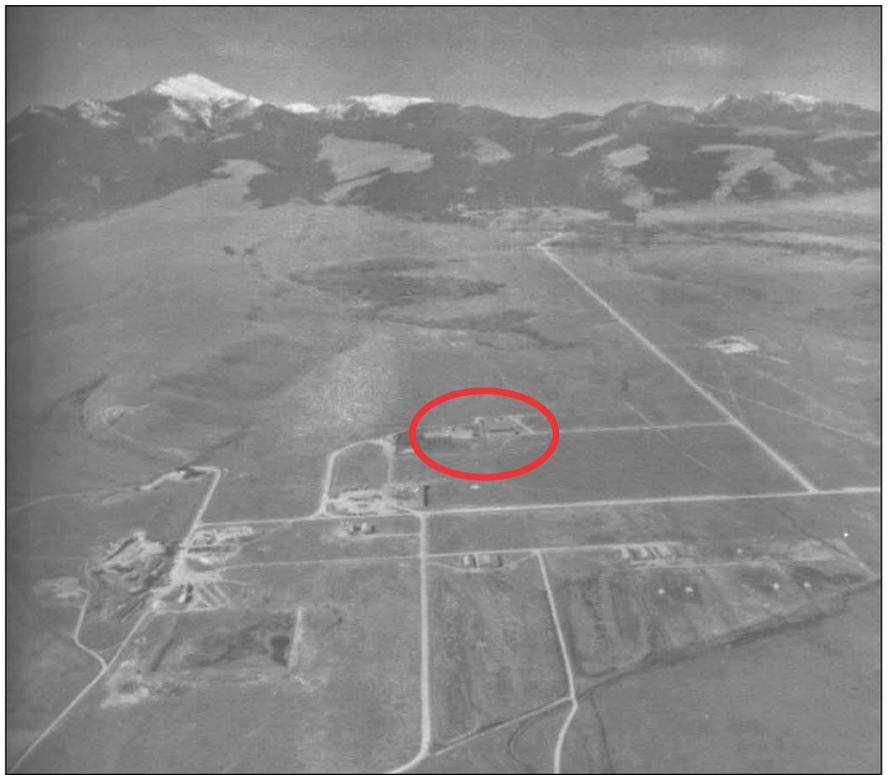
The plan contemplated an administration building, reception unit for new arrivals, visitor center, central heating plant and an expanded food service at the site.

Far ahead of their time, the developers envisioned a "prerelease unit," located somewhere away from the prison. This idea appears to be a forerunner of the prerelease centers that exist today, but did not appear in Montana until 1981.

The maps indicate the plan was to build the specialized prison just west of the current compound. Aerial photos from the time show sparse development in the area beyond Rothe Hall, the tag plant, vehicle maintenance building, hog and chicken structures, and a slaughterhouse.

Phase I of the project, to be completed in 1969, would create buildings totaling 64,500 square feet at a cost of \$2.1 million. Phase II, consisting of 99,000 square feet, was expected to cost \$1.6 million. Phase III's 61,000 square feet would cost \$1.4 million. Phase IV, with 20,000 square feet of buildings, had no cost estimate.

Ultimately, the old prison closed and was replaced with the existing facility located in the same area where the First Offenders Facility had been planned. The existing prison covers an area to the east of Rothe Hall, while the facility planned in 1968 would have been built west of the landmark.



This photo, looking west toward Mount Powell and the Flint Creek Range, shows the site of the current Montana State Prison in 1968 before it was developed. The buildings circled in the center of the photo are Rothe Hall and the former tag plant.

Report paints picture of 1960s inmates

A 1968 plan for development of a second state prison to house first-time and young offenders offers an revealing profile view of the inmate population at that time.

- The average prison term was 43 months, nearly identical to the 44 months today.
- The most common crime for inmates was forgery and bad-checking writing; today it's drug possession.
- Property (nonviolent) crimes brought six out of every 10 inmates to prison in 1968; today only about 31 percent go to prison for nonviolent crimes.
- The prison held 480 inmates then; today the male inmate population is 2,245 (more than 4½ times higher) in four prisons.
- The average age of inmates was 30; today, the average inmate is 37½.
- 16 percent of inmates were American Indian; the rate is 19.5 percent today.
- Only six of the 480 inmates (1.2 percent) were "known narcotics users;" an estimated 93 percent of offenders today have a chemical dependency problem.

Former inmate says thanks

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following letter was written to Montana Women's Prison Warden Jo Acton. The author has applied to two graduate programs at the University of Illinois.

Dear Jo,

I am writing to thank you for treating me (and every woman incarcerated at MSP) with respect and dignity. During my stay at MSP, I was involved in the dog training program (one of Piper's trainers) around the time you introduced the Therapeutic Community, all of which played a part in my success. Since my release from prison in June of 2005, I have successfully completed a Bachelor's program at a private university in Quincy, IL. I graduated with a degree in Psychology (with honors), and now I am applying to graduate school to earn a master's degree. My hope is to eventually work with women either in prison or released from prison; in hopes of "paying forward" the humanity that was demonstrated by your team at MWP. I have thought about my stay at the prison and I realized that I was fortunate for the treatment I received there. I know a lot of people who could have benefited from the programs the prison had to offer. I was given treatment that I couldn't have afforded, and probably would not have pursued, had I not been incarcerated at MWP. I am aware that your programs are innovative, and I admire you for what you do there at MWP. The prison provided structured counseling and many other programs and activities which enriched my life at a time when I needed it the most. My goal is to pass the humanity on to other women who are unfortunate enough to have landed themselves in prison. The same humanity that I believe was afforded to me. You may not have been personally involved with my treatment at MSP, but you played a big part in my success.

Since my release from MWP in 2005 I have used my skills as a dog trainer to give back to the community. I volunteered at the Quincy Kennel Club as a trainer. I was able to train a dog named Lucy, who belonged to a disabled man named Chuck (bound to a wheelchair) in obedience; which enriched both the dog and the owner's life. Each week I would pick Lucy (the dog) up from (owner) Chuck's house, and I would take her to training classes where she blossomed. I am beginning to work with a woman who wants help training her dog (he's a boxer!) to be her helper, so I am excited to begin a new challenge.

Life has not been easy. Since my release from prison, I lost one daughter, Secily, to death caused by complications of cerebral palsy, and prior to my release I lost my other daughter, Aspen, to the state of Montana. Thankfully, as a result of my faith in God, I still have a purpose in life. My spiritual life is strong and I regularly attend church. I am involved with a kind-hearted, supportive, and educated man, plus I have a loving family, both of which bring me strength. Educationally, and professionally I hope to study programs like the Prison Paws for Humanity program, and present the results to the psychological community. More prisons need to explore the option of taking a program like yours and making it a success, as you have, and I hope to play a part in that movement. It is an area of psychology that is fresh and ready to explore!

I know that MWP was not your typical prison. Thank you for being different, and thank you for believing in your Prison Paws for Humanity program. Thank you for sticking to your guns through any struggle you may have had, because I have benefited enormously from your dream.

Sincerely,
Sheerine Bazargani

National magazine spotlights Montana's MASC programs

By Amy Abendroth
Correctional Unit Manager
Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center

Jails across the United States are bursting at the seams and prisons are faring no better. How can we best utilize the limited secure space at our disposal?

Perhaps a more pointed question is: How do we handle those inmates who seem to be "clogging" the system? Specifically, how do we deal with inmates who have been convicted of sexual offenses, those who battle serious alcohol and drug addictions as well as those with mental health issues? Secure facilities throughout the nation are overwhelmed with these special-needs offenders.

A community corrections program in western Montana has been tasked with assessing and providing referrals for such offenders. The Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center (MASC) is a state program operating under the Community Corrections Division of the Montana Department of Corrections.

MASC was created in 2003 at the suggestion of Mike Ferriter, who was administrator of community corrections at the time and is now department director. Since its inception, MASC has been organized and cultivated into a successful program under the leadership of Administrator Dan Maloughney.

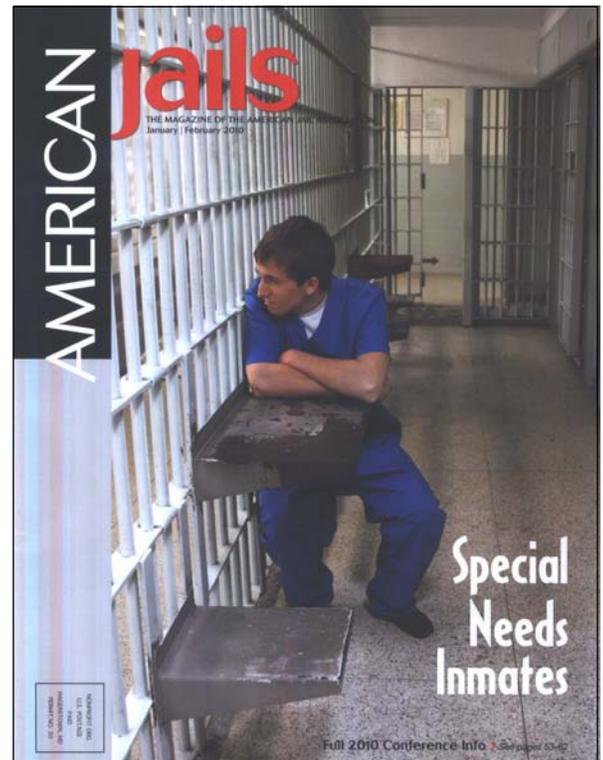
MASC operates under a contract between the state and the Missoula County sheriff's department and is housed inside a unit of the Missoula County Detention Facility. The county provides all security staffing for MASC.

To understand MASC's mission and work, one must first recognize that Montana's criminal justice system is unique. Judges have more flexibility than imposing a prison, deferred or suspended sentence for felony offenders. Depending on the factors in each case, judges have the option to sentence someone to the department, referred to as a "DOC commit." This leaves the placement decisions to corrections professionals.

DOC commits can be placed directly into a community corrections program or undergo further assessment to determine their suitability for community placement.

That assessment process is conducted at MASC. MASC serves only adult male offenders; the equivalent for women is housed in a separate facility in eastern Montana. If a court sentences an offender to the department, the sentence can be for any length of time allowed by law. However, all but five years must be suspended in order for an offender to be eligible for placement at MASC. Offenders who are sentenced directly to prison are not eligible for MASC.

One of MASC's initial goals was to divert approximately half of incoming offenders into community corrections programs, rather



Can corrections professionals successfully deal with special-needs offenders and reduce the current "clogging" in jails and prisons? As evidenced by the Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center, the answer is a resounding yes.

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than sending them to prison. But the program has been far more successful, diverting three out of every four offenders.

MASC is also tasked with upholding the DOC mission:

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

Therefore, MASC staff must be diligent in their assessments in an attempt to facilitate the best possible outcomes, both for the community and for offenders. This is particularly challenging as MASC does not generally receive offenders who are easy to place. Instead, the bulk of MASCs population is comprised of special-needs inmates: sex offenders, the chemically dependent and those with mental health issues.

Attorneys and probation officers can provide offenders with applications to

Montana's correctional institutions have been more heavily populated with these special-needs offenders than those in many other states.

community corrections programs. Therefore, offenders who are easy to place are often approved for community programs prior to sentencing or shortly after. Community corrections programs are less likely to take special-needs offenders immediately after sentencing. Understandably, they pre-

fer to take only those special-needs offenders who have gone through an assessment process and have been deemed appropriate for community placement.

Sex offenders, chemically dependent

rate than many other offenders. Among the treated sex offenders who have been released from Montana State Prison in the past 21 years, only 2 percent returned to prison for a new sexually related offense (Law and Justice



MASC is located in the Missoula County Detention Facility.

offenders and those with mental health issues are a concern for institutions all over the United States. However, Montana's correctional institutions have been more heavily populated with these special-needs offenders than many other states. This underscores the significance and importance of an assessment and referral program like MASC.

Nationwide, estimates are that more than 12 percent of incarcerated individuals are sex offenders (Sabol et al., 2007). In Montana, the rate is more than twice as high at 28.7 percent (Law and Justice Committee, 2009). Although Montana has six prerelease centers (referred to as work release centers or halfway houses in some states), only two of those centers accept sex offenders. Additionally, Montana State Prison has the only in-patient sex offender treatment program in the state, and sex offenders in Montana – treated or not – are rarely granted parole because of the limited community placement options due to public views of sex offenders.

Yet, statistics indicate that treated sex offenders have a lower recidivism

Committee, 2009).

Chemically dependent offenders comprise another large portion of the incarcerated population in Montana. Nationally, almost 80 percent of inmates nationwide are incarcerated due to substance abuse and dependence (Khalsa, 2003). In Montana, about 90 percent of offenders are chemically dependent (Conley and Schantz, 2006).

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 65 percent to 70 percent of inmates released on parole nationwide are sent back to prison within three years, primarily because they return to their use of drugs and alcohol. While treatment does not guarantee that offenders will remain sober, a lack of treatment certainly increases the chance for relapse and/or recidivism.

Mentally ill inmates are a third group of special-needs offenders prevalent in Montana. Nationwide, the rate of reported mental health disorders in the state prison population is 56.2 percent (Fellner, 2006). An estimated 40 percent of inmates in Montana suffer from some form of mental illness

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(Conley and Schantz, 2006).

Unfortunately, most jails and prisons are ill equipped to appropriately treat and monitor mentally ill offenders due to a lack of staffing, limited medication options and other barriers. Additionally, mentally ill offenders are more likely to disobey institutional rules, receive write-ups; and, consequently, are more likely to be denied parole based on their behavior while incarcerated.

The prevailing sentiment among the American population is that the government should be "tough on crime,"

It would serve us well to provide these individuals with as many tools as possible in order to assist them in becoming law-abiding citizens.

particularly in regard to sex offenders. Little progress has been made in illuminating the fact that we cannot simply lock up everyone and throw away the key. Most offenses do not warrant the death penalty or a life sentence. The bulk of all offenders will, at some point or another, be back out in society.

It would serve us well to provide these individuals with as many tools as possible in order to assist them in becoming law-abiding citizens. In the case of special-needs offenders, treatment in conjunction with stability and supervision are some of the most important tools we can offer.

In the past six years, the MASC program has successfully facilitated treatment, stability and supervision for

special needs offenders. MASC staff has conducted over 3,000 chemical dependency, mental health and/or sexual offender assessments. The program prison diversion rate is 77 percent.

Three case studies

Jason, Robert and Kirk (their last names are omitted to maintain confidentiality) were assessed at MASC and ultimately obtained community placements. All three were considered special-needs inmates based on their criminal history, substance abuse and/or mental health history.

Jason was convicted of felony criminal possession of dangerous drugs at age 25. He received a three-year DOC commitment. However, six years earlier when Jason was 18 years old, he was convicted of a sex offense for having a relationship with a 14-year-old girl. He had not completed sex offender treatment prior to his drug conviction.

Robert was 21 when he received a felony conviction for operating a methamphetamine lab. In addition to manufacturing and selling the drug, Robert also was a heavy meth user and struggled with clinical depression. He was ultimately sentenced to a five-year DOC commitment.

Kirk first began exhibiting signs of mental illness when he was about 21. For the next 10 years or so, his parents and family tried to get him help. However, despite their attempts, Kirk experienced auditory hallucinations and suffered from a paranoid delusional system. At the age of 31, he was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Fourteen years later, he was convicted of sexual intercourse without consent and sentenced to the department for 20 years with 15 suspended.

Jason, Robert and Kirk were transported to MASC following their sentencing. Although they arrived at different times and their individual experiences varied, the program itself is somewhat standardized. Each went through the same basic process that all other MASC inmates go through.

Upon arrival, an inmate is placed in the classification pod. Within a few days, the inmate attends an orientation session facilitated by Missoula County staff and MASC staff. This orientation covers facility rules and regulations as well as a basic overview of the program. Following orientation, the inmate is classified by county staff and moved into one of the general population housing units.

The informal assessment process begins as soon as an offender arrives at MASC. Inmate behavior is monitored by both county and department staff.

The informal assessment process begins as soon as an offender arrives at MASC. Inmate behavior is monitored by both county and department staff. For example, if an offender cannot maintain clear conduct while housed at MASC, he is determined to be inappropriate for placement in the community. Such an offender would be transferred to prison rather than going through any further assessments.

The formal assessment process begins after MASC receives the inmate's file, which includes the final judgment or other legal paperwork from the sentencing court, and after the offender has completed orientation. At that point, MASC staff conducts an intake meeting with the offender. During intake, staff reviews the offender's file and conduct a cursory interview with the offender about his background, criminal history, chemical dependency and/or mental health issues, incarcerating crime, and any other pertinent in-

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formation.

Based on the intake interview, the offender may be referred to one of the MASC contract staff members for further assessment. These members include three licensed addiction counselors. One counselor is a licensed clinical social worker and another is a licensed clinical professional counselor as well as a clinical member of the Montana Sex Offender Treatment Association.

Once an offender has been assessed, he is scheduled to appear before the MASC Screening Committee. The committee is comprised of the MASC administrator, the institutional probation and parole officer, the correctional unit manager, administrative support, the three contract staff and a sergeant or other representative of the detention center.

The committee conducts screenings weekly. During screenings, the committee reviews an offender's file and any assessment results are presented to the group. The committee discusses the offender's placement options and the offender appears in person before the committee. Following discussion with the offender, the committee presents its placement recommendation to the offender. At that time, the offender may be given applications for the appropriate programs.

The options are any of the six pre-release centers; a methamphetamine and opiate treatment program; Connections Corrections, a chemical dependency treatment facility; Warm Springs Addictions Treatment and Change, a facility treating felony DUI offenders; Treasure State Correctional Training Center, a boot camp; or a combination of these programs. On occasion, an inmate may be placed on the intensive supervision program directly from MASC. If the committee determines that none of the programs are appropri-

Once an inmate is accepted by a community program, MASC staff notifies the offender, a bed date is arranged and the inmate is placed in that program when space becomes available.

ate, the offender is transferred to prison.

If the offender agrees to the proposed community-based program, he completes the application given to him by the committee. MASC staff then compiles a packet of information that includes the application, copies of legal documents and other pertinent information, and sends it to the appropriate community program. Each program conducts its own independent screening process; MASC cannot compel a community program to accept an offender.

Community corrections programs are able to take a much more comprehensive look at offenders based on the information provided by MASC. Once an inmate is accepted by a community program, MASC staff notifies the offender, a bed date is arranged, and the inmate is placed in that program when space becomes available. If an offender is denied by a community program, he is notified of the denial and may be called before the committee again for additional discussion. If an offender is denied all appropriate community placement options as determined by the MASC screening committee, he is transferred to prison.

The average length of stay at MASC is 76 days. While there, an offender may be placed in groups to aid in the assessment process and/or to provide

some treatment. For example; one of the addiction counselors facilitates a chemical-dependency group, the sex offender therapist runs a treatment group, the social worker facilitates a group focusing on criminal thinking errors and the correctional unit manager facilitates a group for offenders who are recommended for placement at the boot camp. An offender may also have one-on-one sessions with contract staff, and mental health services are provided as needed.

Jason, who arrived at MASC as an untreated sex offender, found his community placement options limited based on that fact alone. During his stay at MASC, he also was assessed as methamphetamine dependent. He was originally considered for the meth treatment program, but was denied

Robert came to MASC as a meth "cook" and addict. He was initially difficult to assess, as he was very guarded and somewhat verbally combative.

placement there because of his sex offender status.

In order to assess him further, Jason was placed in chemical dependency and sex offender treatment groups. It became apparent to the group facilitators that Jason was committed to taking responsibility for his actions and was motivated to change. The screening committee opted to have Jason stay at MASC until he completed phase one of sex offender therapy. This greatly enhanced his chances of obtaining a community placement.

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Jason requested consideration for the boot camp and the committee agreed that this would be an appropriate referral. He joined the appropriate group and was subsequently approved for the placement. Jason graduated from the program, attended their after-care program, was placed on community supervision and eventually discharged his sentence.

Robert came to MASC as a meth “cook” and addict. He was initially difficult to assess, as he was very guarded and somewhat verbally combative. Robert was interviewed several times and one report completed at MASC stated that, although “there were not any extenuating circumstances to preclude him going to prison ... this writer saw glimpses of a young man who is very ashamed about how his behavior has affected his family and who covers up his fear with anger.”

MASC staff opted to place Robert in the chemical dependency and criminal

thinking groups to assess him further. Robert ultimately agreed with the committee’s recommendation for the meth treatment program. He graduated, served a six-month term in a prerelease center, was placed on supervision and has since transferred his supervision back to his home state.

When he arrived at MASC, Kirk had a history of not taking prescribed medications for his mental illness. But he had most recently been taking court-ordered biweekly medication. His schizophrenia was being successfully managed. He continued to receive the medication at MASC. Kirk was interviewed, tested and assessed by MASC’s sex offender therapist and was designated a low-risk offender.

However, due to Kirk’s history of unpredictable behavior, he was placed in the sex offender and criminal thinking groups for additional assessment and monitoring. Ultimately, Kirk received a placement in the intensive supervision program and was closely supervised through electronic monitoring. He completed the program and has been on supervision for two years.

In addition to conducting assessments, MASC also offers an additional

service to the department. Offenders on probation may be sentenced by means of a hearing to serve a period of time at MASC as a consequence for failing to comply with conditions of their community placement. This is referred to as a sanction. Sanctioned offenders may be held a maximum of 30 days and must remain in the classification pod for the duration of their sentence. These offenders are not assessed and receive no special services while they are serving their time. Sanction offenders comprise only a small portion of MASC’s total population.

On average, five to 15 offenders arrive at MASC each week. The same number are being assessed and placed in appropriate facilities weekly. This is accomplished only through the hard work and dedication of a small, but very effective, staff.

Can corrections professionals successfully deal with special-needs offenders and reduce the current “clogging” in jails and prisons? As evidenced by the Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center, the answer is a resounding yes.



Left to right: Vicki Sandford, accounting technician; Colleen O’Leary, director of human resources; Steve McArthur, director of community correctional programs and transportation; Mike Thatcher, chief executive officer; Gov. Brian Schweitzer; Fred Stradinger, treasurer of the board of directors; Ryan Lynch, director of development and administration; and Molina Puccinelli, executive assistant

CCCS honored

Community, Counseling and Correctional Services Inc. has received the Montana Ambassadors Business of Year Award.

The honor recognizes the company’s ability to deliver services more creatively, create jobs, promote economic development and develop long-term partnerships with Montana communities where it operates.

The nonprofit corporation also was recognized for its willingness to invest in its employees, programs and physical plants.

The Butte-based CCCS provides prerelease and drug treatment services under contract with the Department of Corrections.

The Montana Ambassadors is a volunteer organization of leaders in business, education and various professions with a common dedication to living and doing business in the state and to furthering the best interests of the state.

Regional Roundup



EDITOR'S NOTE: Items in the roundup are contributed by probation and parole staff in each region.

Region 1

There has been a lot of discussion about the federal grant positions that the Department of Corrections has been awarded for probation and parole officers. Research was conducted by the University of Montana, in coordination with the Department of Corrections, to identify factors that contribute to recidivism in Montana. As a result of the findings of this research, two populations of offenders – American Indians and offenders with co-occurring disorders – were identified as being at greater risk for recidivism, thereby needing increased attention from probation and parole staff. This was found to be particularly true in rural areas where there might be increased travel and service coordination. The grant that the department was awarded funds eight positions to work with these populations of high-risk offenders. Five positions were for cultural specialists and three were for co-occurring disorder specialists. The goal of the grant is to decrease recidivism in these populations in rural communities. The Hamilton Probation and Parole Office was one of the offices selected to receive a co-occurring disorder specialist.

The criteria for the co-occurring disorder caseload is that the offender must have an already diagnosed mental illness along with a substance abuse problem, or at least have a diagnosed mental illness. At first glance, we could easily say, "That's almost everyone on our caseload." However, we soon discovered that it was not that simple. The biggest challenge has been that many offenders may have co-occurring disorders or be mentally ill, but may not have already obtained a diagnosis of a mental illness.

It does not come as a big surprise that many offenders in the system or just entering the system have not accessed the resources needed to have obtained a diagnosis of a mental illness. And certainly there is no question that many of the offenders within the system suffer from personality disorders that are not a mental illness. So our first challenge in obtaining this new officer was to identify those offenders on the Hamilton caseload that meet the grant position criteria.

The whole process regarding the grant positions has been and continues to be an on-going learning experience. The grant position officer will not be allowed to perform duties that would be considered outside the scope of the grant po-

sition. For example, that officer would not be in the regular rotation of writing presentence investigation reports (PSIs). The only PSIs that would be assigned to that officer would be if we are already aware that the offender meets the co-occurring or already diagnosed mental illness criteria and, therefore, would be on the officer's caseload. The grant position will have a reduced caseload, partly because it will be a more challenging group to deal with and will require greater service coordination, but also because the officer will have different duties than a regular probation and parole officer – duties specific to the grant, such as increased data reporting and information tracking.

Of course, the greatest challenge for these positions will be that, no matter what the department creates in terms of specialized supervision for this population of offenders, what can be done will always be limited by lack of resources in communities. The grant position officers will need to be very creative to assist these offenders in tapping into whatever resources are available.

The Hamilton probation and parole office is fortunate to have someone come on board who seems to be up for the challenge. Allison Wilson was born and raised in the Bitterroot Valley, the only girl in a family of seven children. She attended Corvallis High School and obtained her bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Montana. During college, she completed an internship with juvenile parole in Missoula. After that, she moved to Washington state where she worked with severely emotionally disturbed youth in a residential setting. She moved back to Missoula and entered the masters of social work program at UM. During this time, she worked as program manager at a transitional housing program for pregnant and parenting young moms ages 16 to 24.

Region 3

We have some new faces, including Heather Moore and Rodney Johnson in the Lewistown office. Heather comes to us from the federal system and has filled our full-time probation and parole officer (PO) position. Rod joins us from the juvenile system and is the new PO technician.

Roundup

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Bonnie Boettger has done well as our now our half-time institutional probation and parole officer (IPPO) at Nexus and half-time PO, after many dedicated years as PO tech.

Sherill Powell-Balsley also joined the team, filling our IPPO position at the Crossroads Correctional Center in Shelby. She previously worked at the prison as a case manager. Pati Killebrew-Hall has joined the Havre crew after being the successful applicant to fill the grant position.

At the Montana Law Enforcement Academy, Johnson received the "Spirit of Service award" in honor of Doug Barnes, a former DOC employee. This award is special because it was given by his peers. Congratulations Rodney. We are told that Boettger was the first female in 10 years to shoot a 100 percent during her qualification round at firearms training. Now that everyone has returned from the academy training and the firearms course, we are all eager to get down to business and find our stride.

Region 5

After 24 years working for the state, including the past 19½ as a probation and parole officer in Libby, George Clough decided it was time to benefit from his hard work and retire March 31. George started working for the state in 1986 with the Job Service in Polson. In 1991, he joined the Department of Corrections as a P&P officer in the single-person office at Libby, with a caseload of 130. He was joined by a second officer in 1994 and third in 2008. In 1995, he became a certified firearms instructor. He, along with other members of the instruction team, received the Governor's Excellence in Performance Award in 2007. George also

served as a volunteer fireman in Libby for 24 years. George plans on doing as much fishing, hunting and back-country horseback riding as possible. He will also accompany his wife, Joan, on all of their planned trips around the country.

Region 6

In February, Glendive Probation and Parole Officers Sue Drivdahl and Darrell Vanderhoef braved the always entertaining highways of eastern Montana to join Officer Roxy Silver from Glendive in attending the medical marijuana training presented by the state Justice Department's Division of Criminal Investigation. All involved found the training informative, providing much information concerning the law itself and many statistics on the number and locations of recommended medical providers, caregivers and patients in the state. At the request of Drivdahl, a supervisor, a CD of the PowerPoint presentation was provided for use in future regional training.

In March, Officer John Uden made the journey from Miles City to Billings to transfer supervision of 16 offenders living on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation to the caseload of the new specialist headquartered in the Hardin office. His name is Adam Granger. This transfer will allow more one-on-one supervisory time for these offenders and, hopefully, will lead to higher success rates for them and a reduction in new offenses, as well as less alcohol and drug abuse. Uden has handled that caseload for an extensive period and was able to share valuable information and assist in making connections between Granger and the tribe. The effort Uden put into facilitating this transfer is greatly appreciated.

As part of the Region II/Region VI officer exchange program, Gary Flakker transferred to Bozeman in early April to begin work there. Gary has been a delight to work with and

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Curious?

Want to know what's taking place in IT development? On the Correction's intranet page is the IBTB Development Monthly Report. It shows the activities in the IBTB Application Development Unit for the previous month. See what is going on with OMIS and YMS. See what other items are being developed and what's on the list. See what change requests have been submitted, approved or completed, and so much more. <http://cor.mine.mt.gov/Divisions/HPIS/IBT/Applications/default.mcp>



ADMINISTRATOR'S CORNER

Mike Mahoney Warden Montana State Prison



Every once in a while, a news article appears in Montana newspapers mentioning some inappropriate behavior by someone working at Montana State Prison. Thankfully, those instances occur very seldom. But a recent instance was related to a court case that carries an important message.

The resulting court ruling involved the Department of Corrections and the news media in a difference of opinion regarding the public's right to know vs. staff's right to privacy in disciplinary matters.

In her ruling, District Court Judge Kathy Seeley of Helena summarized the department's position: "DOC argues that the employees in this case are not sworn peace officers, teachers, or other types of official holding positions of public trust."

The court disagreed and stated that correctional officers are public safety officers as defined in section 44-4-401, MCA, which provides: "Public safety officer means (a) a corrections officer who is employed by the Department of Corrections, established in 2-15-2301, and who has full-time or part-time authority or responsibility for maintaining custody of inmates in a state correctional facility..."

The judge noted the officers are responsible for the care and well-being of incarcerated persons. She also pointed out that the DOC's own Web site emphasizes the position that officers and other department employees hold as role models: "As leaders in corrections, department employees affect the quality of life for all Montanans by demonstrating and promoting honesty, integrity and accountability in all our public service."

Clearly, the public and the courts hold us to high standards in our public service. I believe we, as corrections professionals, have always felt this way and believe we should be held to a higher standard because of the kind of work we do. The same philosophy applies to our brothers and sisters in community corrections, juvenile corrections and our central office.

Now the courts have confirmed that mistakes were made. Investigations determined the extent of our errors. Those who acted inappropriately were held accountable.

The court ruling puts us on notice that, because of the unique position of public trust held by correctional officers, information on wrongdoing by such individuals – just as with police and other law enforcement officers on the streets – may be made public if such information is requested.

I can accept this ruling, but I must admit that I am concerned that we need to seize the moment when these things happen to ensure that we keep the public informed about the good things we do on a daily basis. Yes, we need to be held accountable for our actions, but there needs to be a balanced perspective and public understanding about how these matters are managed. There needs to be a recognition that we don't hide our mistakes from the

CORNER

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public and that we do learn from them. The ultimate goal for us is that we grow stronger as a result of how we deal with them.

We need to take every opportunity to educate the public about the challenges we face every day and what a great job our dedicated staff does in response to these challenges. That's difficult because good news seldom makes headlines.

We need to remind those we serve that the mistakes of a few should not condemn all correctional officers. The fact that it is easy to paint an entire group with a broad brush does not mean it's right.

It is unfortunate that we received national attention as a result of the information that was released regarding the investigation in this case. The focus of this story was on female correctional officers and the issues that have arisen nationwide with women working in correctional institutions. The intent of the story was not to bash female cor-

rectional officers, but to indicate that the issues that arose here are not unique to Montana. They can and do happen all over the country. Unfortunately, it taints all women that work in secure facilities, conduct themselves as professionals and make their co-workers proud to share a shift with them.

Approximately 41 percent of department employees are women and they function in various capacities throughout every division.

I have had the pleasure to work side by side with a number of them and I believe they should hold their heads high and be proud of what they do because their work ethic and professionalism knows no gender. They are part of this agency's identity.

To all DOC employees – and especially those at Montana State Prison – I urge them to not allow the actions of a tiny minority define our image in the public's eye. Do not become discouraged, cynical or angry. Continue to do the jobs that Montanans need you to do, and do them well.

I can't think of a more critical time for us to band together and get our message out to the public about the great services the women and men of the Department of Corrections are providing on a daily basis.

Budd named boot camp superintendent

Greg Budd, a 30-year veteran of the Corrections Department, always admired the state's boot camp program and now he is the new superintendent of the Treasure State Correctional Training Center.

He replaces Tony Heaton, who left the position at the Deer Lodge facility in December.

Budd, 50, retired from the agency at the end of 2009, but said he always intended to return to work in corrections because he's too young to stop working and needs to be busy.

"I planned to move to something different," he said after his hiring as superintendent was announced in late March. "My goal was community corrections because I worked so long in secure care. I needed to do something different."

He rejoined the department in February as a correctional officer at Montana State Prison, where he had spent most of his corrections career. Applying for the boot camp job fit his plans

perfectly, the Anaconda native said.

"I've had a relationship with Treasure State since 1996, providing a lot of technical assistance," Budd said.

The boot camp marks a big departure from the prison world where he worked.

"The fact that you have a finished product – you start with someone real raw and at the conclusion you have someone who is respectful and has come to grips with their crime and victims," he said. "They (boot camp graduates) have made significant life improvements.



Budd

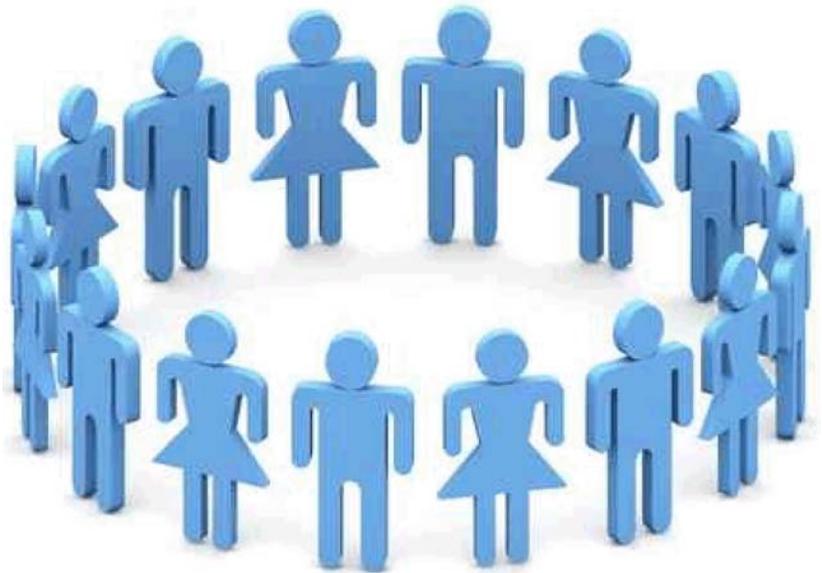
"The satisfaction is contagious; there's actual outcomes rather than the revolving door" of a prison population, Budd explained.

"Greg will bring a wealth of knowledge and skills to the Adult Community Corrections Division with his experiences with offenders, staff, corrections best practices, and new approaches," said Kelly Speer, Facilities Program Bureau chief for the division. "I am confident that he will embrace the goals and objectives of community-based corrections and the uniqueness of TSCTC and will do an excellent job in his new position."

Budd began his corrections career as a correctional official at the prison in 1980 and was later promoted to sergeant. He was a staff development specialist at the prison for four years in the early 1990s and then became a unit manager before taking a job as security manager for the department at central

Employee profile

How MDOC compares to other agencies



The Montana Department of Corrections has one of state government’s youngest work forces, one of the highest turnover rates among state agencies and is one of the most unionized of the departments, according to a new report.

The annual report from the state Human Resources Division shows the average age of the 1,318 corrections employees is 45, the fourth lowest among state agencies and two years younger than the average for all state workers. The four-person commissioner of political practices staff is the youngest with an average age of 32, followed by the Board of Public Education employees at 39, and the Office of Public Defender at 43.

The most-elderly agency is the Public Service Commission, with an average age of 52. The Montana Arts Council and Office of Public Instruction (51 years) and the Department of Labor and Industry and Montana Historical Society (50 years) are closed behind.

Given their relatively young age, it’s not surprising that corrections employees also have worked for the state less than most government personnel. The average corrections employee has slightly more than 10 years of service, the seventh lowest among all agencies. The government-wide average is 12.1 years.

The longest-serving employees are found at the Public Service Commission, where staff have an average tenure with the state of 16.4 years. The political practices office’s young staff has the shortest time with the state – an average of 4½ years.

The turnover rate for corrections employees last year was 12.5 percent. Only five agencies had higher rates: public defender, 17.3 percent; Department of Agriculture, 17 percent; School for the Deaf and the Blind, 15.6 percent; secretary of state’s office, 14.6 percent; and Department of Public Health and Human Services, 13.1 percent.

	DOC	State
Average age	45	47
Years of service	10.1	12.1
Turnover rate	12.5%	9.8%
Unionization	68.5%	60.5%
Hire rate	15%	9.9%

Ten corrections employees transferred to other state agencies in 2009 and six transferred to corrections from other departments. State-wide, 129 employees moved from one agency to another.

Political practices and the three-member Board of Public Education staff had no turnover in 2009. The state average was nearly 10 percent. That’s down from about 14.5 percent in the past two years, due largely to economic conditions. Likewise, the hiring rate dropped by a

similar amount in the same time.

Corrections has government’s sixth-highest rate of unionization, with 68.5 percent (903) represented by organized labor. The state government average is 60.5 percent.

The highest rate of unionized workers is found at the Office of Public Instruction where 89 are covered by collective bargaining. Transportation ranks second at almost 84 percent; public defender, 78.4 percent; Department of Revenue, 77.6 percent; and Public Health and Human Services, 75.4 percent.

The Board of Public Education, Commerce Department, governor’s office, Livestock Department, State Library, Arts Council, political practices Public Services Commission, secretary of state and state auditor have no union representation.

In all, 7,080 state government workers were members of 14 unions in 2009. The Montana Public Employees Association ranks first among unions representing state workers. It counts 3,209 members, or 45.3 percent of all unionized state personnel. MEA-MFT is second with about 29 percent, or 2,051.

DOC employees take icy dip for Special Olympics

Six members of the Administrative and Financial Services Division braved chilly weather and frigid water to raise \$800 for the Special Olympics. Cindy Trimp, Lena Havron, Kara Sperle, Mandy Wels, April Grady and Marti Swarens took the plunge in mid-February.



ABOVE: Lena Havron brandishes her sword as she wades from the water.



ABOVE RIGHT: Marti Swarens found the water less than warm.



RIGHT: Mandy Wels, April Grady and Marti Swarens leap off the dock.



Dressed as unnamed super heroes, the divers spelled out "budget freeze" on their costumes.



Answer is no for most at Alternatives Inc.

'Should I stay or should I go?'

**By Dave Armstrong
Administrator
Alternatives Inc.**

Offenders in Montana's correctional system work hard to obtain placement in community corrections.

For those exiting the prison system, the road to community placement goes through the Parole Board and requires that the inmate complete at least 25 percent of their sentence and maintain clear conduct for 120 days prior to release. For those entering the system through DOC sentences, there is also a lot at stake – good performance leads back to the community, while rule violations may result in placement in a sanction center or prison.

Most offenders enter prerelease and treatment centers with the intent to do well. This is not an easy proposition as offenders face the temptations of drug and alcohol use, the influence of negative peer groups and the pressure of normalizing damaged relationships. Some will find work immediately while others struggle to find employment, and all will have to watch their money carefully.

There may come a time when offenders ask themselves "is it worth it." For some this occurs on the heels of a rule

violation which may result in time out in a sanction center, essentially a step backward. When this test comes the offender faces an important choice – in the words of the popular song by the Clash:

*"Should I stay or should I go now?
If I go there will be trouble
An' if I stay it will be double
So come on let me know!"*

For Montana offenders the choice to walk away from a community corrections center carries the same penalty as escape. Offenders convicted of escape may be sentenced to up to 10 years in prison. Walking away is an impulsive act, done in lieu of facing up to ones shortcomings, and while indicative of the offender's lack of readiness for release, it has a severe consequence for the offender and indirectly the

taxpayer who foots the bill for incarceration.

Montana's community corrections programs have historically had a low escape rate with one escape for every 10,000 days served. Nevertheless escapes draw a great deal of public attention and potentially place both the public and the offender at risk. Law enforcement has an outstanding record regarding the apprehension of offenders who walk away from community corrections centers, but



Armstrong

these resources are better focused on responding to crime.

In short, all parties – correctional employees, offenders, law enforcement and most importantly the public – are best served when walk-aways are at a minimum. This has been the case at Alternatives Inc. in fiscal years 2009 and into 2010. During this time period, two offenders have walked away from the Passages Women's Center and only seven of nearly 500 offenders at the Alpha House Men's Center. Numerous steps have been taken to support this good decision making. These steps include:

- Assuring that offenders are apprised of the severe consequences for escape prior to their transfer, again upon intake, and throughout their stay.
- Keeping community corrections clients aware that escape is not an answer to problems, nor is it the norm for clients.
- Early identification and intervention for clients in need of support.
- Reward and encouragement for offenders who are successful, to provide an attractive alternative to walking away.

Profile

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Throughout state government, professionals account for slightly more than half of all employees; technicians make up 15 percent; protective services, 8 percent; skilled crafts and officials or administrators, 7 percent each; paraprofessionals and administrative support, 4 percent apiece; and service or maintenance workers, 3 percent.

Women have greater representation in state government than in the overall Montana work force. About 50 percent of state workers are women, compared with slightly less than 47 percent in the state as a whole.

Women have made the greatest progress among the ranks of state government officials and managers. In 2005, they accounted for 32.4 percent of such positions; in 2009, they topped 38 percent.

American Indians have made less progress. In 2005, they were 1.9 percent of all state workers and today they account for 2.2 percent.

The report also showed that men tend to earn \$1,000 to \$11,000 more than their female counterparts in the same work category.



From left: Spirit of Service Award winner Rodney Johnson, probation/parole technician, Lewistown; DOC Director Mike Ferriter; Spirit of Service Award winner Jennie Hansen, institutional probation and parole officer, Montana Women’s Prison; and Academic Award winner Ryan Janes, Gallatin County Court Services misdemeanor probation officer, Bozeman



Probation and Parole Bureau Chief Ron Alsbury, far left, recites the DOC Code of Ethics for 23 newly graduated probation and parole officers.

Probation & parole graduation



DOC Director Mike Ferriter, fourth from left, poses with the family of former corrections employee Doug Barnes. The family received an award honoring Barnes for his 15 years with the department. Barnes died in 2005.



Left to right: DOC Director Mike Ferriter talks with Ron Alsbury, Probation and Parole Bureau chief, and Pam Bunke, administrator of the Adult Community Corrections Division, before the graduation ceremony.

Director Mike Ferriter received an award from the graduating class, honoring him for his “life-long commitment to improving corrections in Montana.”



Health and Wellness



by April Grady

Wilma Rudolph was born in 1940 with polio. She wore leg braces until she was nine years old and could not walk normally until she was 12. Wilma went on to win three gold medals during the 1960 Olympics in the 100m, 200m, and 4X100m relay (www.wilmarudolph.net). Wilma is proof anyone can accomplish their goals with hard work and focus. We may not all be elite athletes capable of winning gold medals but with numerous local races supporting local charities occurring in the coming months, why not put your best feet forward and give it your all.



Quarterly

Quote: "I loved the feeling of freedom in running, the fresh air, the feeling that the only person I'm competing against is me." "Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit...the potential for great-

ness lives within each of us." - Wilma Rudolph

Eco Tip: This month's eco tip is simple. While out on your next run, carry a small trash bag and pick up trash you find along your running route until the bag is full. The bending over will be an excellent strength addition to your work out and other runners will thank you for the improved scenery.

Exercise: Go to www.runmt.com to access all upcoming running events across the state of Montana. I will be running the Missoula full marathon this summer-let me know if you are interested! Here are a few of the featured races:

May 8, 2010, Saturday

29th Annual Montana Women's Run • Billings, 2 Miles or 5 Miles...Run or Walk. Last year almost

7,000 women of all ages hit the streets to give over \$60,000 back to the community divided among the Billings YWCA, Billings Clinic Women's Wellness Fund, Billings Family YMCA, and scholarships at both Rocky Mountain College and MSU-Billings. Entry fee is \$17 online at active.com or \$19 by mail.

www.womensrun.org

The Don't Fence Me In • Helena, 30K, 12K & 5K Trail Runs, 7:30, 10:00 & 10:30 AM, respectively. A non-competitive 5K dog walk will start at 10:45. Start/finish area near Anchor Park. This is a fund raiser for the Prickly Pear Land Trust. www.pricklypearlt.org

May 22, 2010, Saturday

CMB's Peet's Hill Hustle • Bozeman, 5K and Kids Run. Proceeds benefit the Children's Museum of Bozeman. 8 a.m. start for the Kids Runs, 8:30 start for the 5K. \$20 Pre-registration, \$25 race-day registration. The race will be staged at the Bozeman Public Library on Main Street in downtown Bozeman.

May 23, 2010, Sunday

Third Annual Buffalo Jump • Ulm, near Great Falls – ½ Marathon, 10K Run & 3 mile Walk at the First People's Buffalo Jump off exit 270 on Interstate 15. 9:00 a.m. race start for the ½ marathon and 9:45 a.m. race start for the 10K run and 3 mile walk on Sunday May 23rd. \$20 pre-registration cost for the 10K and the 3 mile. \$40 pre-registration cost for the ½ marathon. All proceeds benefit the University of Great Falls Cross-Country and Track Teams. www.ugf.edu

June 19, 2009, Saturday

Wulfman's Continental Divide Trail 14K • Butte, A Point to Point, Single-Track Race on the beautiful section of National Scenic Continental Divide Trail between Homestake Pass and Pipestone Pass. Online race registration [only](http://www.buttespissandmoanrunners.com). Website contains lots more information www.buttespissandmoanrunners.com.

July 11, 2010, Sunday

THE MISSOULA MARATHON • Missoula, Marathon & Half Marathon, Kids Marathon & Marathon Relay. Sponsored by Run Wild Missoula. Marathon starts at

Wellness

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6 a.m. in Frenchtown, Half Marathon starts at 6 a.m. near Blue Mountain Rec. Area. Bus Shuttles to the starting lines. The Kids Marathon starts at 9 a.m. on the Kim Williams Trail. More info at www.missoulamarathon.org

Need a training plan for your upcoming race? Go to Runner's World.com and utilize the SmartCoach feature. SmartCoach training plans incorporate the

10% mileage increase philosophy by gradually increasing long runs each week. This tool allows runners to choose their pace, training intensity, and long run days.

RunningPlanet.com also has downloadable ebooks for less than \$10. This site has plans for 10Ks, ½ marathons, and marathons. For my most recent marathon I used the Minimalist Intermediate Competitive 24 week Marathon Plan ebook. I ran a personal record without injuries. If anyone is interested in using this plan for marathon training, contact me and I will print or email you a copy. agradymt@gmail.com

Recipes-Runner's Fuel:

WALNUT AND BLUEBERRY BRAN PANCAKES

A pre-run breakfast to top off your fuel tank

Recipe by Cat Cora

PUBLISHED 09/10/2007 Runner's World

1 1/2 cups 1% milk

1 cup instant oats

3/4 cup sifted all-purpose flour (or a blend of white and whole-wheat flours)

3/4 cup blueberries

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

1/4 cup oat flour or oat bran

1 tablespoon baking powder

2 tablespoons honey

1 teaspoon salt

2 eggs, beaten

Pour milk over oats and sift together flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Lightly stir eggs into oats mixture. Add dry ingredients and honey, stirring until combined. When the batter is thoroughly mixed, stir in the blueberries and walnuts. Ladle batches of the bat-

ter onto a preheated greased or nonstick griddle or frying pan and cook until tops are bubbly and edges look cooked. Turn over and finish cooking the other side. Makes about 10 pancakes. Serves four.

Calories: 365

Fat: 10.5 g

Carbs: 52 g

Protein: 15 g

SPICY SALMON LETTUCE "Gyro"

A protein-packed recovery meal that's light on the stomach

Recipe by Cat Cora

PUBLISHED 09/10/2007 Runner's World

5 4-ounce salmon fillets (can also use halibut)

2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more to brush the fish

Juice of two limes

1 tablespoon chili powder

1 tablespoon cumin

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 1/2 teaspoons sea salt

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 head butter lettuce

1 head radicchio

1 tomato, diced

1 onion, diced

1/2 cup prepared tzatziki (in yogurt section of your supermarket)

1/4 cup chopped scallions

Preheat grill to 400°F. In 13- by 9-inch baking dish, combine olive oil, lime juice, and spices. Add fillets and turn them so every side is coated with marinade. Let marinate for 10 minutes.

Form lettuce cups by gently separating the heads of butter lettuce and radicchio. Line a whole leaf of butter lettuce with radicchio.

Brush fillets with olive oil before placing them on the grill. Cook until they begin to turn opaque on top (cooking time will vary, depending on thickness of fillets). Fish should be firm to the touch, flaking easily.

Flake a generous amount of fish into each lettuce cup, or cut the fish into small chunks and place them in each cup. Top with tomato and onion. Drizzle with tzatziki, then garnish with scallions. To eat, use a knife and fork, or eat it like a taco (a bit messier). Serves four.

Calories: 350

Fat: 22 g (good fat)

Carbs: 9 g

Protein: 31 g

Emergency prep undergoes change

By Garrett P. Fawaz

Emergency Planning & Preparedness Manager

It's 2 a.m. and the director's home phone rings from a call placed by the Montana State Prison Command Post, notifying him that the refinery adjacent to the Montana Women's Prison has just exploded with unknown casualties and structural damage.

It's 3 p.m. and the director's cell phone rings from a call from the command post telling him that a freight train has derailed near Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility and an unknown vapor cloud is headed towards the Miles City facility.

These two scenarios present likely and realistic incidents that could result in the loss of life or property and environmental damage that would directly affect the department for many years to come. Over the past six months, the department has been proactively addressing emergency management and the adoption of the Incident Command System (ICS).

ICS is defined as:

A standardized on-scene emergency management design which incorporates facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications into a common organizational structure designed to aid in the management of resources during an incident(s). It is used for small to complex incidents and by various public and private jurisdictions.

This systematic approach to ICS has included the development of a new department emergency operations plan

(EOP) and an emergency operations center (EOC) standard operating procedures manual. Embedded in the department's new plan is a strategic training plan focused on ensuring all department personnel are adequately trained in emergency management.

Through training provided by the Department of Homeland Security's Center for Domestic Preparedness, the department now has two ICS certified instructors, Garrett Fawaz and Erv Bohlman. Fawaz is the agency's emergency planning and preparedness manager, and Bohlman is security supervisor at Pine Hills.

Both instructors are certified to teach various foundational and advanced ICS courses.

Over the past several months, they have conducted two advanced ICS-300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents courses, to more than 30 leadership personnel at Pine Hills and the women's prison. This 16-hour course focuses on increasing leadership's knowledge and skill in providing overall incident management for an expanding incident.

The transition to ICS represents a paradigm shift for the department from an operational incident management culture that was focused on policy to one that is now built on an all-hazards operational planning approach.

This is not a rapid cultural shift, but one that will take time, commitment and training. The transformation to ICS and the incorporation of the EOP throughout the department also provides the department the opportunity to submit federal grant applications.

Because of this dedicated effort, the department will be significantly better prepared and capable of responding to and recovering from an incident, thus ensuring the continued ability to maintain the safety of the Montana public and the security of our citizens, communities and homes.



Budd

FROM Page 25

office in Helena.

After six years, Budd returned to MSP as unit manager and held that position until he retired.

Dan Burden, a former Treasure State superintendent, has been interim head of the program for the past four months.

Budd and wife, Melanie, have two grown sons, Brad and Derick.

Roundup

FROM Page 23

will be missed.

St. Patrick's Day found the regional staff at the quarterly regional meeting in Glendive. The morning involved lively discussion, policy review and overall teambuilding and bonding time. Staff was trained in pepper spray retention during the afternoon session.

In late March, Mary Doll, administrative assistant, and Officer Karla Grimes attended a rollover car demonstration staged by the state Transportation Department. A vehicle involved in a rollover accident was displayed. The vehicle's "cage," which surrounds the passenger compartment, was not crushed even though the vehicle had rolled both end-to-end and side-to-side. The wreckage clearly demonstrated there is room to live in a vehicle if a seatbelt is worn. A demonstration of a rollover was presented showing results when seatbelts were used and not used.

Crime Victim Rights Week: April 18-24

By Sally Hilander
Victim Programs Manager

Fairness. Dignity. Respect.

This is the theme for National Crime Victim Rights Week, April 18-24, a reminder to everyone that victims deserve recognition from the criminal justice system.

In 1982, the President’s Task Force on Victims of Crime referred to the neglect of crime victims in the United States as a national disgrace. That was about the time parents of a murdered child asked to be informed as the case progressed.

“Why do you want to know?” the prosecutor reportedly asked. “You’re not involved in the case.”

Today, every state has laws to recognize and protect victim rights, and to improve victim access to the criminal justice system. Most victim rights statutes are found under Title 46 of the Montana Codes Annotated at http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/mca_toc/46_24.htm.

So how are we doing with victim rights in the Department of Corrections?

Victims came to us in the 1990s, pointed out gaps in our offender supervision and victim notification strate-

gies, and volunteered to work side-by-side with staff to secure a voice in decisions, policies and new legislation.

We acknowledge victims in our mission statement while most state departments of corrections do not. Montana was the second state in the nation to purchase VINE, an automated notification system that tracks prison inmates and provides the information to victims.

Victims have visited the boot camp and the Great Falls Prerelease Center since 1998, speaking on victim impact panels, explaining the ripple effects of crime, and encouraging offenders to change.

The DOC collects and disburses at least \$2.5 million in victim restitution every year. The department facilitates face-to-face dialogues between victims and offenders to help victims find answers and begin to heal. The list goes on.

But DOC has plenty of room for improvement. When our notification sys-

tem fails, offenders return unannounced to the communities where they committed their crimes, creating fear and more trauma among victims. Employees occasionally give in to stress and tell persistent victims to “move on” or “get over it.” We forget to thank victims who

drive halfway across Montana to volunteer for our programs.

But when Crime Victim Rights Week starts April 18, corrections officials can safely say DOC is committed to supporting victims. Our department goals, policies and mission statement demonstrate

this.

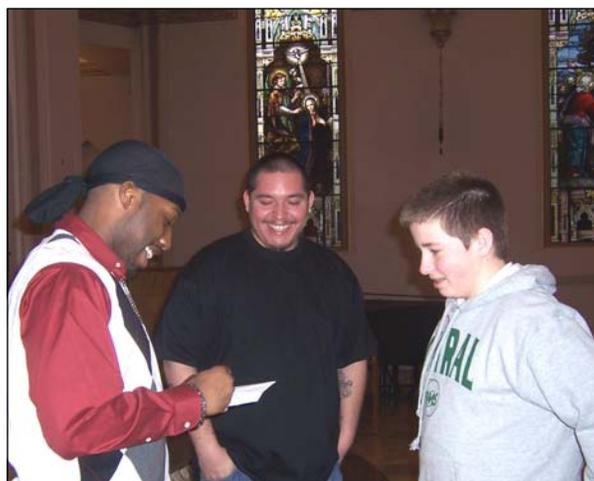
Although the Crime Victims Advisory Council was disbanded due to budget constraints, the agency’s commitment to solicit and hear input from victims has not changed.

DOC has made positive changes and we will make more improvements in the future. We understand and support the belief that crime victims deserve fairness, dignity and respect.



Booters visit school

John Henson (far left) and Jesse Perez, graduates of the Treasure State Correctional Training Center, talk with a student from St. Francis Middle School in Billings. During the visit, the two “booters” talked to students about the choices they made as teens that led them down the wrong path and how the boot camp experience changed them. The program was part of a middle school group called SOAR, or Students Organized Against Risk. Perez and Henson are members of a Billings booter group that includes 15-20 graduates.



Training targets offender trauma

Unresolved trauma among correctional populations must be addressed rather than ignored if recovery from addictions, development of a healthy self-concept, acceptance of personal responsibility and formation of a social conscience are to occur.

By Dawn DeVor
Mental Health Counselor
Montana Women's Prison

Traumatic experiences can be dehumanizing, shocking or terrifying – they can be singular or multiple compounding events over time and often include betrayal by a trusted person or institution and a loss of safety.

Offenders in Montana's correctional system often have long histories of trauma in their lives.

The effects of traumatic stress can be devastating, but with proper treatment and support, healing is possible.

In early March, Mindy Brookshire, lead licensed professional counselor at the Passages Assessment, Sanction and Revocation Center, and Dawn DeVor, a social worker at Montana Women's Prison, discussed issues surrounding providing care to traumatized offenders in correctional settings.

The training session was for 18 staff members from the Butte Prerelease Center.

In addition to her work at Passages, Brookshire is a contract therapist at the women's prison. Between her and DeVor, they have more than 20 years experience providing mental health treatment in corrections.

The training's premise is that a history of traumatic stress is not an excuse for criminal behavior. However, issues of unresolved trauma among correctional populations must be addressed rather than ignored if recovery from addictions, development of a healthy self-concept, acceptance of personal responsibility, and formation of a social conscience are to occur.

Examples of trauma histories that frequently occur in

correctional populations include incidents of child abuse, domestic violence and/or sexual abuse. In addition, traumatic stress related to combat may be present among military veterans who are incarcerated.

Complicating matters further is the stark reality that some incarcerated offenders have both experienced traumatic stress as victims and caused traumatic stress as perpetrators, which underscores the need for effective trauma treatments that are specific to correctional environments.

The one-day seminar had three objectives:

- To learn and describe what trauma is and how it affects the brain and body
- To understand and implement trauma-informed care as it relates to the specific needs of correctional environments
- To receive an overview of a trauma treatment model designed specifically for incarcerated persons called TAMAR (Trauma, Addictions, Mental Health and Recovery).

The training used the RICH model, endorsed by the National Council for Trauma-Informed Care. RICH stands for

Respect, Information, Connection, and Hope, which are supports that all trauma survivors need in order to heal, and which all staff can help provide.

Correctional settings, in which considerations of public safety and security are paramount, offer unique challenges when designing physical environments and treatment programs that are trauma-informed.

The contention of Brookshire and DeVor, based on their experience and emerging clinical research, is that providing trauma-informed care in correctional settings enhances lasting recovery. It also creates a safer, more positive work environment for





Inmate Tony Leyba at work in the lumber processing plant.

Inmates earn lumber grading certification

By Gail Boese
MCE Administrative Officer

With nearly 40 years experience in the lumber industry, Clara Morrison understands what it takes to get a job in the business. As supervisor of the lumber processing plant run by Montana Correctional Enterprises, she also knows what skills inmates need to find lumber-related employment once released from prison.

This is why, for seven years, she worked to get a lumber grading certification program started at the plant. This dream was finally realized when her first inmate worker, Tony Leyba, received his lumber grading certification in February.

“As far as I am aware, Tony Leyba is the first inmate that I know of that has received a certification in lumber grading,” said Tim Olsen, field representative and inspector for Timber Products Inspection Inc. “This is quite an accomplishment.”

TPI is a national independent, third party wood products inspection,

testing, and consulting company.

Morrison worked closely with Olsen to support this program once she built up her stud grade lumber and found a market for it. Then she had to find inmate workers knowledgeable enough in lumber and committed to completing the training.

Obtaining certification isn't easy. The inmate must meet all national grading rules established by the U.S. Department of Commerce and maintained by the American Lumber Standards Committee.

The grading test requires an accuracy rate of 95 percent for each unit of wood that is graded. Six units of wood, or 10,000 board-feet, must be graded consecutively in order to pass the test. If one unit of wood does not meet the accuracy rate, the process starts over.

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Trauma

FROM Page 34

correctional staff, some of whom may themselves have experienced traumatic stress in personal lives, military service or work.

TAMAR was developed by the Office of Special Populations within Maryland's Mental Hygiene Administration. The federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Systems Administration provided funding for the project.

The program was piloted in detention facilities in Maryland with impressive results. Darren McGregor, a

marriage and family therapist, is project director in Maryland and has been a great resource as the program is implemented and expanded in Montana.

TAMAR is a trauma treatment program designed for individuals 18 and older who are incarcerated or on supervision. The treatment covers 30 trauma-related topics in a 12-16 week process designed to help people examine the connections between traumatic stress, mental health issues and substance abuse. It also encourages integrated mind and body healing.

Montana Women's Prison has had a TAMAR program since 2008, and Passages started its program in 2009. Feedback from participants in both fa-

cilities has been extremely positive overall, and the Butte prerelease is planning to add the program.

Brookshire and DeVor plan another training session for correctional staff in Billings in early May. They thanked Jay Grant and the rest of the prerelease staff for requesting the training. They applauded Montana Women's Prison Warden Jo Acton and Sue Orand, deputy warden of programming, and Passages Director Jan Begger for supporting efforts to enhance trauma-informed care and effective trauma treatment in correctional settings.

For more information, contact Brookshire at mbrookshire@altinc.net or DeVor at ddevor@mt.gov.

Gangs lure members in getting foothold

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second in a series of articles about street gangs and motorcycle clubs, issues for both correctional officers and probation and parole officers.

**By Don Kelley
POII, Butte**

The most significant threat that gangsters present to the community is that once a gang takes hold, it is there forever. It is almost impossible to eradicate gangs once they gain a foothold.

Gangs present the community with an unacceptable level of risk. The violence that commonly accompanies gangs makes victims of not only other gang members but also innocent citizens.

Youth are easy prey for the mentality of gangs. The lures of large amounts of ready cash, reputation and respect of other gang members, and fear from citizens are hard to combat. Once into a gang, members will spend the rest of their lives either involved in criminal activity or attempting to extract themselves from the clutches of the gang.

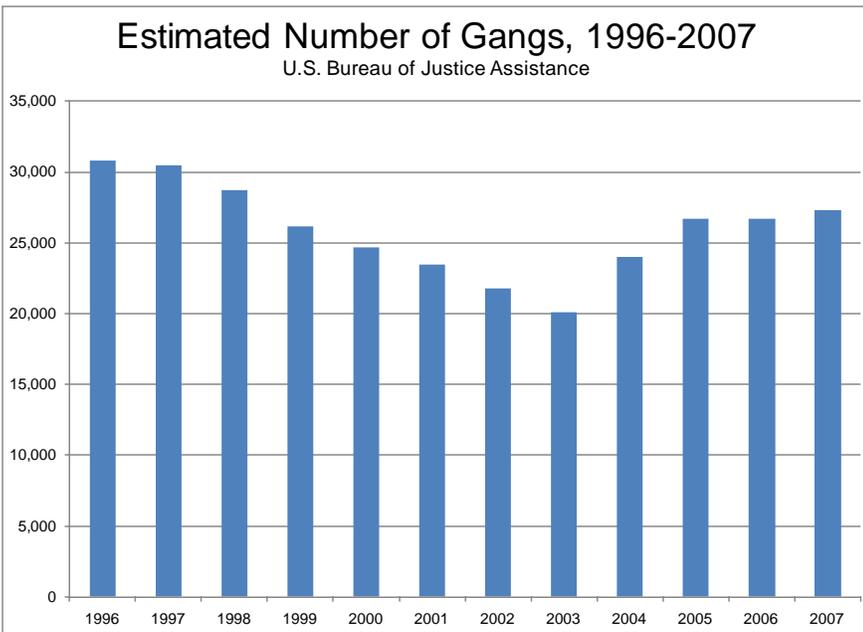
The violence of the gangs is not discriminatory or reserved for other gang members.

A drive-by shooting does not take into account the 3-year-old child playing in the yard two blocks away that gets hit by a stray bullet. A crack-selling dealer does not consider the food that he takes from the mouth of the 8-year-old child of the addicted parent. The addict does not recognize the damage she does to her daughter as she prostitutes herself to get money for more drugs. She does not see the squalor that she helps to create because she does not care anymore.

A common term for crack, heroin or morphine addicts is a "skell," which is short for skeleton and an appropriate description for someone with little left – only bones, no soul or heart.

The only purpose for gangs is drugs, money and guns. They serve no peaceful use. If an organization were peaceful or an asset to the community, it could not be a gang.

Gangs reach into our homes when we allow them to get a foothold into our community. When our high schools start to have problems that we know are indications of gang activity, the administrators are hesitant to take strong anti-gang measures until it is too late. Law enforcement may not be well enough informed to identify gangs or the



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Lumber

FROM Page 35

Each piece of lumber is visually graded according to such factors as: number, size and position of knots and holes; bark on edges; decay; checks and splits; machining defects; twisting, bowing and warp; and species.

Once the lumber is graded, a grade stamp is placed on each piece as it

leaves the mill. The grade stamp usually consists of information that includes moisture content, product grade, species of lumber, mill ID number or name, and the accredited supervisory agency.

Morrison said it takes almost two years before a person feels confident enough to take the lumber grading test. Since February, two more inmate workers, Abel Gonzales and Jeremy Oeleis, have passed the lumber grading

certification test. Morrison hopes three more workers will do the same in the next six months.

She and Olsen believe the certification will almost guarantee a released offender employment in any lumber mill in the country. A grader is very important to a mill because he is responsible for marking and grading every piece of wood and separating lumber products into appropriate strength categories.

Placement project benefits offender

By Mike Norvelle

**Institutional Probation & Parole Officer
Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center**

The efforts made by the Missoula Assessment and Sanction Center (MASC) team to find a community placement for a special-needs offender were rewarded recently when he was honored as corporate employee of the quarter by his employer, Opportunity Resources.

The MASC mission is to find community-based placements for appropriate offenders sentenced by the courts to the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections. Possible community placements include boot camp, prerelease centers, drug and alcohol treatment programs, intensive supervision, conditional release, or, many times, a combination of these programs.

At times, MASC is confronted with an offender who, for various reasons, is very difficult to place. It could be his crime and criminal history, supervision history, his likelihood to reoffend in the community, or mental or medical needs that exceed the scope of the programs he needs. In this case, Paul is a sex offender with a developmental disability.

Dan Maloughney, MASC administrator, put together a team consisting of members of his staff, a Missoula probation and parole officer, a representative from the Developmental Disabilities Program in the Department of Public Health and Human Services, and a member of Opportunity's staff.

Opportunity was a natural participant because it already has a program to employ those with developmental disabilities. The business also has a sex offender-specific treatment and residential program, and can already provide housing, treatment and employment for sex offenders with developmental disabilities. At the same time, Opportunity provides for around-the-clock security so community safety is addressed.

Paul went to work right away in Opportunity's woodshop and, as his treatment provider has indicated, he has done a great job from the start.

"Paul is an enthusiastic guy who loves to come to work!" said Ann Harris. "He tries very hard at everything he does. Paul has worked hard at his goals at the wood products program. He works hard throughout his day and continues to improve in his work performance."

Considering that his was a very difficult placement, his employee award speaks to Paul's efforts and those of all involved to get him placed in the most appropriate program. It also represents a goal for all offenders placed by the MASC program.

Gangs

FROM Page 36

identifiers that accompany them into a community.

One individual I know described his initial involvement and "jumping in" to a gang this way

"Where I come from, it got so bad in school that I was afraid to see a black man just walking down the street. I was a white boy in a black and Mexican neighborhood. You couldn't get away from the stuff; even the teachers were afraid...."

Every day I'd get beat up so I started to hang around with these guys I knew were involved with it all, you know. I hung out with them for awhile and the blacks kind of left me alone, you know. My dad used to be kind of

mean once in awhile when he was drinking and stuff, so after I started to hang with these guys, my dad kind of left me alone, you know.

Well, these guys told me that, you know, since I was always with them anyhow and that I was eventually going to end up as one of them that I should just jump in and get it over.

So one day after school we just kind of went to an empty lot and they jumped me in, you know. When I got up I just felt, like, great and all that. I just went like crazy for a minute. I really never felt like that before, like I really belonged, you know.

Well, the guy that he kind of ran things, you know, told me that since I was white that I had to be jumped in by everybody and that if I didn't that the jumping out would probably kill me, cause it was much worse a beating to get jumped out than it is to get

jumped in.

So they just kind of took me way down into Spanish town in San Bernardino and I got jumped in again. After awhile I thought that I could just get out of it all by leaving and coming here to Montana so far away from it, you know. Well I couldn't, and so now I'm here in prison."

When you see how easily these people become involved in the gang mentality and how deeply into it they are, it leaves you with a sense of hopelessness that we can be effective in stopping gangs from taking over.

Nothing could be further from the truth. We can be effective. We can make a difference in our communities simply by being involved. We do not have to allow gangs to gain so much power that they hold hostage an entire community. We do have a choice.

OMIS adding management plans

**By Anita Pisarsky
Project Manager**

The OMIS (Offender Management Information System) project team has been extremely busy in the months since the Youth Management System went into production.

While maintaining and providing several significant enhancements to both systems, the project team has been working on the next major step in the OMIS evolution, the Offender Management Plan (OMP). The first phase of OMP is to build a management plan that includes information on offender assessments and tests, programs needed and taken, and reviews and updates of the plan.

OMP is scheduled to be in production May 31, although the date may be changed if deadlines are not met.

The initial release will not include all assessments and tests. They will be added as the department officials identify them and determine the need and priority to include them in OMP.

The vision for OMP is ambitious: From the first day of an offender's supervision, the system will provide a progressive, organized approach for the management of each offender. OMP is a support tool that helps staff build a structured plan so that each offender has:

- Correct assessments performed
- Appropriate supervision
- Opportunities for self improvement
- Needs evaluated and managed in an organized manner
- Security requirements and needs measured and scored objectively

OMP is designed to allow for the development of treatment and programming for the duration of every offender's supervision. Once created with the cooperation of the offender, the plan will identify and address the specific need areas to assist in a successful reintegration to the community.

The foundation of the OMP is accountability, with each offender accepting responsibility to engage in productive actions. Corrections personnel review and modify the OMP with the offender on a regular basis throughout the term of supervision to assess progress towards agreed-upon goals.

In addition to offender participation in identified treatment, education and vocational programs, the OMP addresses safety and security issues. Additional components may include development of spiritual, family and community support systems. The final phase of the OMP prepares the inmate for transition into the community and ultimately the ability to become a responsible and productive member of society.

OMP's assessment capabilities include:

- Initial medical
- Mental health and suicide intake screening
- Orientation to incarceration
- Access to evidence-based programs such as education, cognitive behavioral, substance abuse treatment, anger management and parenting
- Individual community transition plan
- Screening for supervised community release
- Community supervision prior to the end of sentence

The development of the initial release began in earnest in August 2009 when the project team established an OMP User Group with participants from throughout the department. The group has a lot of groundwork to cover.

One of its first tasks was to transform the OMP prototype into what the agency needs. Another significant task is to get the necessary business data into the system. To accomplish the tasks, the group meets every Wednes-

day and works on identifying and determining OMP needs and the data required to fill those needs. As the project team and user group moves forward in development, the project has encountered several hurdles to date.

The first hurdle the project team encountered was that although the National Consortium of Offender Management's code could most likely meet our needs, it was not a great fit. As a result, the project team determined it was best to start over from scratch and create a system that would meet the department needs. This took more work, but we now have a working model customized to Montana.

The second hurdle is the way OMIS captures legal and offense information. The offender plan must be based upon current sentencing conditions, which is not possible to determine with the way historic sentences are stored. The user group decided that this would be the best time to make enhancements to the legal and offense features.

Jason Nelson, an application developer, took on this tremendous task and combined the two features currently found on multiple screens into one screen. The new feature performs the same tasks and captures the same information. It just offers a more convenient way to view and enter the information.

The project team is in the process of finalizing the new feature and will be sending out details to OMIS users shortly. Additionally, the project will include automating offender sentence calculations. This was a huge undertaking and the feature will be released later, once thorough testing is completed.

The OMP User Group meeting notes can be found on the DOC intranet at <http://cor.mine.mt.gov/Divisions/HIS/IBT/Applications/default.mcp>

The Training Times



Change... ...deal with it

By Rae Forseth
Professional Programs Manager

The one constant in our lives is change. Nothing truly remains the same, whether measured by days, months, years or decades.

As DOC employees prepare for the upcoming move to a new office building, CHANGE is coming to staffers' SPACE. Maybe it's beneficial to take a moment and look at what makes us resistant to change and how we can take a positive approach and improve our own mindset.

Remember, we are looking at change together and if we can help each other through this process, we ultimately have not only a better work area but a better work environment.

Whatever the kinds of change that people encounter, certain patterns of response occur and re-occur. It is important that leaders understand some of these patterns, since they are normal outcomes of the change process. Understanding them allows leaders to avoid overreacting to the behaviors of people who, at times, seem to be reacting in mysterious, non-adaptive ways.

Ken Blanchard, well-known management consultant, has described seven dynamics of change designed to help managers better address employee reactions to change. They are worth summarizing here.

1. People will feel awkward, ill-at-ease and self-conscious

Whenever you ask people to do things differently, you disrupt their habitual ways of doing things. This tends to make people feel awkward or uncomfortable as they struggle to eliminate the old responses and learn the new. Think back to your own experience and you will discover this theme. Whether it be learning to use a computer, the first time picking up your infant or dealing with a new on-the-job relationship, recall the self-consciousness that you probably felt. People want to get it right, and fear that they will appear inadequate.

2. People initially focus on what they have to give up

Even for positive changes such as promotions, or those that result in more autonomy or authority, people will concentrate on what they will be losing. Leaders need to acknowledge the loss

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Meeting addresses use-of-force issues

By Rae Forseth
Professional Programs Manager

Lisa Hunter and Curt Swenson from the Department of Corrections' Staff Development and Training Bureau facilitated a "use-of-force consortium" meeting for two days in early March at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in Helena.

The purpose of this consortium was to bring Corrections Department use-of-force trainers together to ensure consistency and standardization in training throughout the department, from secure care facilities to community corrections programs. A byproduct of the process is mitigation of liability for the department and staff.

Director Mike Ferriter told the gathering that staff must be trained and equipped so it can do its job. He said use of force must be appropriate, reasonable and necessary. What matters, Ferriter added, is that staff and offenders are safe at the end of the day.

Several DOC staffers provided presentations at the consortium. Brenda Elias, staff attorney, gave a presentation on legal aspects of use of force, which provided a legal context for how courts analyze use-of-force incidents and reviewed materials on use-of-force continuums.

Mary Greene, policy specialist, analyzed policy questions:

- Whether operational procedures comply with the format required by policy
- Is the procedures' wording consistent with DOC policy
- Whether procedures reflect the requirements in the use of force policy, including training, supervisory and reporting requirements.

Garrett Fawaz, DOC's emergency preparedness manager, provided an overview of the agency's emergency operations plan and its effects on the use of force during emergency incidents.

Erv Bohlman, security supervisor at Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility in Miles City, provided an overview of operations at the male juvenile facility and how incidents are handled at the facility.

Use of force must be appropriate, reasonable and necessary. What matters is that staff and offenders are safe at the end of the day.

Dan Kissner, director of operations at the Riverside Youth Correctional Facility in Boulder, provided information to Lisa Hunter who discussed operations at the female juvenile facility and how incidents are handled at the facility.

Steve Barry, interim chief of the legal services and investigations units, presented data on use-of-force incidents at Montana State Prison from 2005 through 2009. He stated the use-of-force reporting document for shift supervisors is being reviewed for revision.

Anita Pisarsky, development unit manager in the Information and Business Technology Bureau, said the staff is planning development of a use-of-force reporting tool in the Offender Management Information System.

Swenson, chief of department's training bureau, discussed liability issues for use-of-force instructors. He provided a use-of-force liability risk management checklist used in corrections settings.

The department must consider the importance of adequate staff training as proactive prevention against potential legal liability, he said.

Wayne Ternes, executive director of the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) program, shared activity by the POST Council. He discussed development of statewide firearms standard and mandatory training hours for POST certificates, how to get a POST course credit, and an update on the requirements for POST instructor certificates.

The 29 participants broke out into work groups to brainstorm ideas in areas of policy and legal, standardization and consistency, communication, in-service training, instructor development training and documentation. Swenson and Hunter collected the data and will present recommendations at the next DOC management team meeting.

A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.

*Colin Powell
Former Secretary of State*

Change

FROM Page 39

of the old ways and not get frustrated at what may seem to be an irrational or tentative response to change.

3. People will feel alone even if everyone else is going through the same change

Everyone feels (or wants to feel) that their situation is unique and special. Unfortunately, this tends to increase the sense of isolation for people undergoing change. It is important for leaders to be proactive and gentle in showing that an employee's situation is understood. If employees see a leader as emotionally and practically supportive during the tough times, the leader's position will be enhanced and the change will be easier.

4. People can handle only so much change

On a personal level, people who undergo too much change within too short a time will become dysfunctional and, in some cases, may become physically sick. While some changes are beyond our control, it is important not to pile change upon change upon change. While changes such as downsizing bring opportunity to do other positive things, the timing of additional changes is important. If someone is contemplating introducing changes (that are under one's control), it may be a good idea to bounce the idea off employees. A good question to ask is, "How would you feel if"

5. People are at different levels of readiness for change

Some people thrive and change. It's exciting to them. Others don't. It's threatening to them. Understand that any change will have supporters and people who have difficulty adapting. In time, many people who resist initially will come onside. Consider that those people who are

more ready for the change can influence others who are less ready. Open discussion allows this influence process to occur.

6. People will be concerned that they don't have enough resources

People perceive that change takes time and effort, even if it has the long term effect of reducing workload. They are correct that there is a learning time for most change, and that this may affect their work. It is important for leaders to acknowledge that this may occur, and to offer practical support if possible. In the downsizing scenario, this will be even more crucial, since resources themselves are cut. Consider following the downsizing with a work smart process, whereby job tasks are reviewed to examine whether they are still necessary.

7. If you take the pressure off, people will revert to their old behavior

If people perceive that a leader is not serious about doing things the new way, they will go back to the old way. Sometimes this will be in the open, and sometimes this will be covert. While Blanchard uses the word "pressure," I prefer to think of it in terms of leadership role. The leader must remind people that there is a new course and that the new course will remain. Coaching towards the new ways is also important.

Conclusion

It is important for leaders to anticipate and respond to employee concerns and feelings, whether they are expressed in terms of practical issues, or emotional responses. When planning for and anticipating change, include a detailed reaction analysis. Try to identify the kinds of reactions and questions that employees will have, and prepare your responses. Remember that the success of any change rests with the ability of leaders to address both the emotional and practical issues, in that order.

Training Schedule

(For more information, contact Geri Miller: gerimiller@mt.gov)

APRIL

13-15	8-5	Management Development for the Future-Phase I	DOC Training Center - Deer Lodge
23	9-12	Parole Report Writing	DOC Training Center - Deer Lodge
26-27	8-5	Investment in Excellence - Phase II	Montana Women's Prison – Billings

MAY

3-4	8-5	Investment in Excellence - Phase I	Annex Conference Room – Helena
11-13	8-5	Investment in Excellence - Phase I	DOC Training Center - Deer Lodge
12-13	8-5	Investment in Excellence - Phase II	DOC Training Center - Deer Lodge
18-21	8-5	Effective Commun (Motivational Interviewing)	Montana State Prison - Deer Lode
26-27	8-5	Investment in Excellence Phase II	DOC Training Center - Deer Lodge

JUNE

2-3	8-5	Investment in Excellence - Phase II	Annex Conference Room – Helena
9-10	8-5	Investment in Excellence - Phase II	DOC Training Center - Deer Lodge

Comings

These lists of new and departing employees are for the period from Jan. 30 through March 26. If you notice errors or omissions, please call the *Signpost* editor at banez@mt.gov.

Montana State Prison

Greg Budd
Stephen Byrne
Jevan Cole
Jeanie Hall
Miki Miller
Timothy Krum
Mary Ramirez
Patti Ward
Kelli Wheat-Jacobson

Cory Williams

Montana Women’s Prison

Tari Erfle
Erin Kuntz

Pine Hills

Karen Austin
Paul Gritz
Curtis Holum
Edna Jensen
Scott Johnson
Lindsey Michael
Jessie Schwartz

Probation & Parole

James Anderson, Glasgow
Adam Grainger, Hardin
Rod Johnson, Lewistown
Pati Killebrew-Hall, Havre
Sherill Powell-Balsley, Shelby
Tina Sander, Bozeman
Allison Wilson, Hamilton

Riverside

Bill Brancamp
Kimberly Wenger

Treasure State

Richard Atteberry

Goings

Jeremy Alvarez
Debbie Cooper
Theresa Cooper
William Cruce
Steve Ette

Craig Falcon
Myles Finlay
Bradley Fitzpatrick
Addison Gerstein
Whitney Hall

Ramya Hallimysore
Mike Hausler
Michael Jarrett
Gayla Kukes
Greg Maine

Carrie McCarthy
Rayetta Schmidt
Shawn Suda
Laura Thompson

Foundation offers support in tough times

For the past few years, the 11th Avenue Employee Committee has worked diligently to help staff. This group of volunteers meets and plan activities and events to raise money to help DOC employees through difficult times.

There is only a small amount of money available, so assistance are limited. Still, the committee does a lot. We try to take care of our own and show support when things are not at their best. What an endeavor – and it’s never ending. There is always someone who has a bump in the road of life and the \$25 to \$50 that the committee is able to send is not so much about dollars as it is about a sign of support.

We celebrate together and we try to pull each other through.

But there’s another resource – the Correctional Peace Officers Founda-

tion. When times are at the worst and there is a major catastrophe – and it’s more than our local committee can handle – you do have others willing and wanting to help.

The minimum membership donation can be \$5 a month and the payroll staff can make this an automatic deduction. The contribution is tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

So when you have time, take a moment to check out the Web site – <http://www.cpodf.org/homepage/> – and consider becoming a member. By doing this, you can help others during their rough times. And if you are ever in need, the foundation will be there for you. Just like the 11th Avenue Employee Committee.

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