



THE HUB

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER CELEBRATING WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND SHARING WHERE WE'RE GOING

NEW LOOK, SAME MISSION

Our newsletter, formerly called *New Beginnings*, got a facelift and a name change! "The Hub" is the name of our administrative building, and it was also the name of one of Great Falls' first stores at the turn of the 20th century.



Now *The Hub* is also the name of this newsletter — an embrace of our town's heritage, a celebration of what we've accomplished, and a promise of future success. Special thanks to Kathie Malby for the name suggestion!

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



Change! Change is good, right? Right! And Family Promise of Great Falls has seen lots of changes lately.

Maybe you've seen our new tagline— **"ending childhood homelessness... one family at a time."**

What you might not have seen is that I let the board know in October 2017 that I would be retiring by the end of September 2018. That decision did not come easily, but I think that it is a good time to pass the torch. The organization is in a much better spot financially than it was three years ago. We can now work on building reserves to ensure that Family Promise of Great Falls can be here into perpetuity.

We have proven that there is a need for our services in the community. Our program has been successful. We have one of the shortest lengths of stay in the nation. We just helped our 62nd family get into their permanent home! We truly

make a difference in the lives of our guests. We have over 800 superb volunteers. It is a good time to retire.

Initially, I had promised the board a year. That year turned into almost four amazing years, working on the hardest, most rewarding and fun job of my career! What a way to go!

So the search committee is working hard to find the best possible replacement! We will not quit until we find the right one. When we do, the board has asked me to stay on for a period of time so that the transition is smooth. And, truth be told, help to wean me away; cold turkey would not be pretty.

Till next time – Shalom, my friends!

COMFORT FOOD CLASSIC

A hungry crowd packed the Moose Lodge on February 10th to support Family Promise and try some local cooking.

“I was thrilled, actually,” said Sharon Odden, executive director. “At one point I had my back turned to the group, and there was barely anybody there, and I turned around and all of a sudden the place was full.”

Clint Reiman, Joe Ryan, and Piano Player took turns providing live music while the guests ate and voted for their favorites. Morning Light Coffee Roasters took top marks for their quiche, though they ran into stiff competition.

Event organizer Kate Triplett was glad to see them all there. “It’s wonderful to have all these restaurants participate,” she said, “and helping us to raise awareness as well as funds to help the homeless children and families of Great Falls.” When asked what dish was her favorite, she laughed. “My favorite dish was the Southwest Mac N’ Cheese from Clark and Lewie’s, as well as the mini pot pies from Bert and Ernie’s [...] They were all so good!”

Tim Luoma represented Morning Light, and expressed more than just the joy of victory. “In the past Morning Light hasn’t done a lot of these things,” he said, “but when we moved to [the new] location in July, we were able to expand our food offerings. So it was kind of a perfect opportunity for us to show these new things that we’re doing, while also helping out a good cause.”



Morning Light Coffee Roasters poses with their prize—a skillet etched with the Family Promise of Great Falls logo. They won the popular vote for best comfort food.



(LEFT)

Competitors from Beef O’ Brady’s and The Celtic Cowboy take in the sights and music.

(RIGHT)

Clint Reiman gets the party started at the beginning of the festivities.



TERIYAKI MADNESS

On February 26th, Teriyaki Madness donated 20% of their sales from participating customers to us! Owner Aaron Weismann told us that this is one of the most successful community fundraisers that he's held since opening!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Didn't get a chance to go to the Comfort Food Classic or Teriyaki Madness? There's plenty more events happening this year! One of the best ways to help end childhood homelessness in Great Falls is to bring yourself and your friends and family to one of our fundraising events!

Shop-A-Thon, March 12th-31st

 From March 12-31, if you use AmazonSmile to place an online order, 1.5% of that purchase goes to Family Promise of Great Falls! That's triple the amount we usually get! If you have birthday gifts, anniversary gifts, or wedding gifts, use AmazonSmile. If you have questions about how to use AmazonSmile, visit smile.amazon.com or give us a call at (406) 866-0288!

Family Promise Night at the Voyagers, June 30th

We are excited to announce our first-ever Family Promise Night at the Voyagers! Show up to the ballgame, and be sure to buy a couple of 50/50 raffle tickets to support our cause. If you'd like to volunteer to help with ticket sales or table work, call us at (406) 866-0288!

Ramp It Up! at the Sip N Dip, August 23rd

Here we go again! We're teaming up with El Wencho again for live music, along with a silent auction and a drink special all night! Bring all your friends!

Raise A Pint at the Mighty Mo Brewery

Back by popular demand — dates to be announced soon! Stop in for drinks, pizza, wings, and fantastic pretzel bites between 5-8 pm! For every pint sold, Mighty Mo will donate \$1 to Family Promise, and \$2 for T-shirt and hat sold!

Family Promise Week, October 21-27

Events to be announced soon! Get ready for a fun-filled celebration of Family Promise!

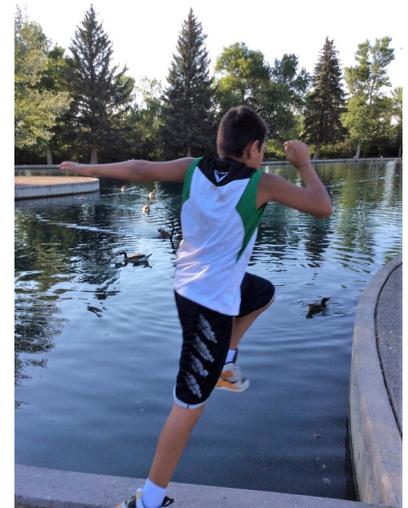
Choir Extravaganza

Dates, details, and choirs will be announced soon! If you're interested in participating, call us at (406) 866-0288, or email sharon@familypromsiegf.org

PHOTO ROUNDUP 2017



Santa came to visit all the kids last Christmas! He had a jolly good time meeting everybody! The holidays are an important time for us.



While it was still warm, the kids got a chance to play at Gibson Park! Don't worry; nobody got wet! It's important to have fun.



Our executive director poses with a representative from Scheels— they contributed a check last year to help us out!



Several of our volunteers wrap Christmas presents for our guests. It was definitely the most wonderful time of the year!

PHOTO ROUNDUP 2018



(TOP LEFT) One of our guests enjoys a classic game of Jenga at Bethel Lutheran Church **(TOP RIGHT)** Vicki Dunham, co-coordinator for Our Savior's Lutheran Church, smiles for the camera **(BOTTOM RIGHT)** This gorgeous quilt was raffled off at the Comfort Food Classic! **(BOTTOM LEFT)** A gruff posse of Bethel Lutheran volunteers enjoy some dessert.



PHOTO ROUNDUP 2018, PT. 2



(TOP) Central Christian Church volunteers say hi!

(LEFT) New volunteers listen in at their orientation.

MEET THE CHURCH

Our Savior's Lutheran Church has been a triple threat when it comes to ending childhood homelessness with Family Promise. Not only are they one of our host congregations, and not only is their pastor on our Board of Directors, but also they've helped print previous editions of our newsletter!

Pastor Anna Merritt has been involved since we started in 2015. In fact, she caught wind of us before she even started her term as OSLC's pastor.

"As I was being interviewed to come here," said Pastor Merritt, "that was about the same time that the congregation was considering their involvement into Family Promise [...] So from the beginning of my time here was also the beginning of Family Promise there."

Since then, they've evolved into a full team of 30-40 volunteers, including people who prepare meals, spend time with the kids, and stay overnight. Meredith Ludford and Vicki Dunham, two Our Savior's members, coordinate the efforts every week

Pastor Merritt reports great things from what she's seen as a volunteer and as a board member. "Being on the board, you hear more of the stories," she said, "and being a part not only of the ecumenical effort, which I think has done a tremendous amount for the community, [...] but also then seeing folks who have been through the program and are excelling in life, and now are giving back to the community."

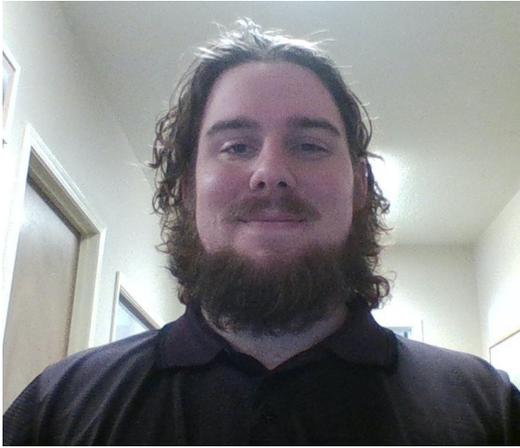
Her favorite moment, she says, was when she officiated at Family Promise's very first family wedding in summer 2017!

"The weather wasn't cooperating," she reminisced. "We were able to do it at the congregation, and it was a joyful day, and that family has been involved — or continues to be involved — in other ways, and it's just an exciting thing to see. That was a wonderful moment, to be a part of that."

You can find out more about OSLC at oslgreatfalls.org

Pastor Merritt also keeps a blog full of spiritual reflections! Get your daily dose at thedailyintersection.blogspot.com

MEET THE STAFF



Sean McGuire joined the Family Promise team in February! He's a volunteer with the AmeriCorps VISTA program, and he'll be working for us on a variety of projects— grant-writing, fundraising, annual reports, our newsletter, and more!

In 2014, Sean graduated from Benedictine College in Atchison, KS, with a Bachelor's in English. He started his career with Shopko for 2.5 years, before returning to Great Falls in 2016, getting involved with the University of Providence Performing Arts Center (you might have seen him in "1776: The Musical" as John Dickinson or "The Importance of Being Earnest" as Algernon Moncrieff), and working for Montana ExpoPark and KRTV.

He's excited to join the Family Promise team! When he's not squinting at Word documents in the office, he likes to listen to music, and spend time with his wonderful girlfriend.

SAY HELLO TO AMERICORPS!



Say hello to AmeriCorps! Volunteers from Montana and from out-of-state have already been working this year to help Family Promise of Great Falls fulfill its mission.

Not only do we have a year-long volunteer from the AmeriCorps VISTA program, but also we have already had several AmeriCorps volunteers help us move a family into their home!

In order to learn more about AmeriCorps, and the VISTA program, visit <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ Americorps>

KID'S CORNER

Ask Douglas about juggling, and his face immediately lights up with passion and energy.

"What first made me interested," Douglas said, "is that I used to like to fidget because I was bored, and I thought, 'Well, maybe I can learn to juggle,' but first I started off with two beanbags and I started doing that."

Teaching himself, with the help of some YouTube videos, he can easily juggle four beanbags at a time, and now he's trying for five! He juggles for his new friends at Family Promise, and sometimes shows off his skills at local parks in town.

His mother, Jessica, told us that she loves "[t]he joy it brings him. And I like it because it's hand-eye coordination."



HERE'S WHAT WE NEED

- All-purpose cleaner
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Toilet paper
- Diapers
- Printer paper
- Printer ink/toner (HP 950 XL or HP 951)
- Dish soap
- Laundry detergent
- Paper towels
- Disinfectant wipes
- Coffee and coffee creamer
- Quick Shine Floor Finish (green label— NOT BLUE)

DROP IT OFF AT

The Hub (behind Central Christian)
 1019 Central Avenue
 Great Falls, MT 59403

ABOUT US

Family Promise of Great Falls was founded in 2015. Our mission is to help homeless families achieve sustainable independence through a community-based response. The first Family Promise started in 1986, and expanded to 200+ locations across the country, while helping 750,000 people with intensive case management. You can learn more about us at familypromise.org, and about our national organization at familypromisegf.org

STAFF

Sharon Odden, Executive Director
 Peggy DeCelles, Case Manager
 Stacie Clayton, Saturday Staff
 Donna Powers, Sunday Staff
 Tom Gorman, Van Driver
 Anna Skinner, Van Driver
 Sean McGuire, VISTA Volunteer

BOARD

Trisha Gardner, President
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