

# MCA FORUM

Volume 41 No. 2

April 2018

@JoinMnCA



MCA's Annual Fall Institute  
*Past Reflections and Future Bridges*

DULUTH

OCTOBER 24-26th



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[mca-mn@hotmail.com](mailto:mca-mn@hotmail.com)

[www.mn-ca.org](http://www.mn-ca.org)

## In This Issue

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- DOC Employee Week
- Victim Resources

... AND MORE!!!!



## President's Message

Mark Groves, 2018 MCA President

**I am exceptionally honored to address you as the President of this tremendous association.**

Of course, I would not be here if not for the great efforts and thousands of hours contributed by all the terrific volunteers that came before me.

The strength of our Association, is our uniquely diverse membership. We are not a homogenous population doing the same things year after year. We are an ever-growing community of corrections, community corrections and human services professionals from around Minnesota. Our diversity is our strength. We must continue to reach out to students, the young and newly hired professionals who come from different backgrounds; and who bring with them different and new ideas.

While you may find yourself only occasionally attending MCA events, there are many opportunities to get even more involved with our association. Join a committee, attend one of our monthly education & training events, or connect with us to share your knowledge as a presenter at our monthly workshops or Annual Conference.

### American Correctional Association (ACA)

We are excited to announce that the American Correctional Association (ACA) will be hosting ACA's 148th Congress of Correction, August 2 - 7, 2018 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The 148th Congress of Correction will be hosting thousands of corrections professionals both from our nation and around the world. A group of distinguished corrections and criminal justice professionals from Minnesota including MCA and the DOC are participating as members of the Congress Host Committee. Commissioner Tom Roy and Sheriff Rich Stanek are Minnesota's co-chairs for this event.

There will be a special registration rate for those attendees residing in the State of Minnesota. The full conference registration rate for MN residents will be \$165 v. \$275 for the advanced member rate – a \$110 savings on individual registration. Another benefit to us are "Block Registrations" (a process for those attending one day on a rotating basis) for a cost of \$175 (one time charge) allowing up to 5 different people to attend on a rotating basis. This allows agencies to send line staff, which may have another opportunity to attend a national conference, while not short-staffing facilities.

# President's Message Continued...

Our very own, Dan Raden, is this year's ACA Congress Volunteer Coordinator. We need 100 volunteers. As host partners with ACA, we have opportunities for people that are willing to assist in a number of different volunteer positions over the course of this five day event. While these are strictly volunteer positions, ACA has agreed to allow any volunteer that desires to do so, to be able to attend any of the offered sessions on the date of their assigned volunteer shift at no charge, either before or after their shift. If interested, contact Dan Raden at [dan.raden@state.mn.us](mailto:dan.raden@state.mn.us). Slots will be filled by volunteers solicited from the following agencies: Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC), Minnesota Corrections Association (MCA), Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties (MACCAC), Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCC&R), and the Minnesota Sheriff's Association (MSA). Given there are a limited number of volunteer opportunities available, interested persons are encouraged to apply early. Once all slots have been filled, confirmation will be sent to all volunteers with their assigned dates and times, along with reporting instructions.

## MCA Involvement

I encourage you to learn even more about our association through our MCA web page (where you found this message) including seeing all the members of our board and committees, our upcoming events, program material from all our past events, the list of our sponsors (please support them) and news of interest. Feel free to contact Debbie Beltz (our MCA Administrator), a board member, committee chair, or myself if you have questions or comments.

**I am looking forward to a great 2018 with all you.**

## COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Student Services – Looking for members who are in the Duluth area and north.** Interested MCA members should e-mail Lloyd Grachek at [Lloyd.g.grachek@state.mn.us](mailto:Lloyd.g.grachek@state.mn.us)

**Sponsorship -** The Committee and its members are sponsor coordinators. Interested MCA members should e-mail JoAnn Brown at [joann.brown@state.mn.us](mailto:joann.brown@state.mn.us)

**Victim Services—**This is a newly formed committee that was approved as an MCA Committee through the formal by-law approval at the Annual Business Meeting in October, 2017. Interested MCA members should e-mail Lori Korts at [lori.korts@state.mn.us](mailto:lori.korts@state.mn.us)

**Fall Institute Registration Committee –** The committee is looking for interested members who work for county agencies. The committee takes care of all the arrangements for the on-site registration process. Interested MCA members should e-mail Jean Wipper [jean.wipper@state.mn.us](mailto:jean.wipper@state.mn.us) or Vicki Lanners at [vic-ki.lanners@state.mn.us](mailto:vic-ki.lanners@state.mn.us)

**Communications Committee—** The committee is looking for someone with writing skills, and someone who is familiar with social media, website design/maintenance and has access to editing or publishing software. If you are an MCA member, have any of these skills, and are interested in joining us, contact Tara Rathman at [Tara.Rathman@state.mn.us](mailto:Tara.Rathman@state.mn.us).

# Did you know...

## Packingham v. North Carolina 2017

North Carolina law made it a felony for a registered sex offender “to access a commercial social networking Website where the sex offender knows that the site permits minor children to become members or to create or maintain personal Webpages.” According to the challenge, the State had prosecuted over 1,000 people for violating this law, including petitioner, who was indicted after posting a statement on his personal Facebook profile about a positive experience in traffic court.

The trial court denied petitioner’s motion to dismiss the indictment on the ground that the law violated the First Amendment. He was convicted and given a suspended prison sentence. On appeal, the State Court of Appeals struck down the conviction on First Amendment grounds, but the State Supreme Court reversed their decision.

The United States Supreme Court cited it was a fundamental principle of the First Amendment that all persons have access to places where they can speak and listen, and then, after reflection, speak and listen once more. They now incorporate cyberspace into this arena. The court believes they must exercise extreme caution before suggesting that the First Amendment provides scant protection for access to vast networks.

To read more about this case, visit the following website.

[https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/16pdf/15-1194\\_08l1.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/16pdf/15-1194_08l1.pdf)



Victim Information  
Corner for Education

## Women's Rural Advocacy Programs, Inc. (WRAP)

**Business/24-Hour Crisis Line:** 320.564.2422 or 800.639.2350

**Main Office:** 700 N. 7<sup>th</sup> St., PO Box 1193, Marshall, MN 56258

**Granite Falls Office:** Minnesota West Community & Technical College Campus, 1593 11<sup>th</sup> Ave., Room 260, Granite Falls, MN 56241

**Redwood Falls Office:** 615 S. Mill Street, Redwood Falls, MN 56283

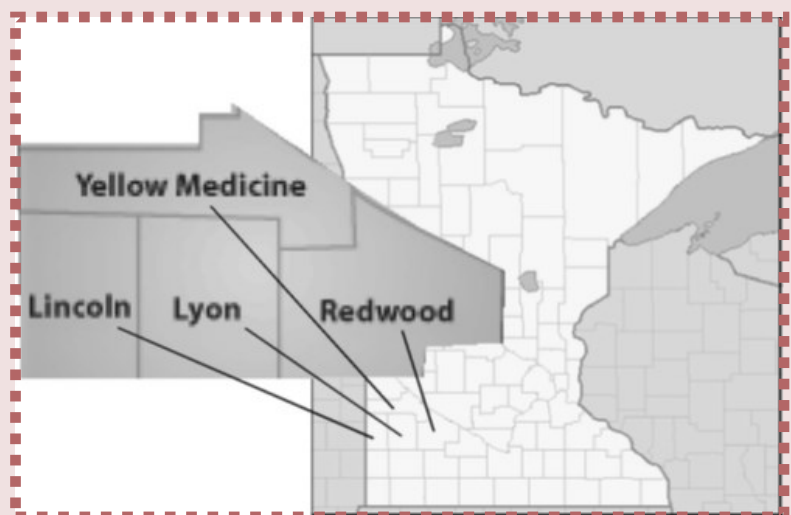
[director@letswrap.com](mailto:director@letswrap.com) or [yellowmedicine@letswrap.com](mailto:yellowmedicine@letswrap.com) [www.letswrap.com](http://www.letswrap.com)

**Current Office Location (s):** WRAP is funded to provide domestic abuse services through the State of Minnesota Office of Justice Programs, United Way of Southwest Minnesota and many community members and groups to provide domestic violence services to the citizens of Lyon, Lincoln, Redwood and Yellow Medicine Counties which are located in the Southwest Minnesota. WRAP currently occupies 3 physical offices locations. The main office is located in Marshall, the county seat of Lyon County, with 1 outreach office in Redwood Falls, the county seat of Redwood County and 1 outreach office located in Granite Falls, the county seat of Yellow Medicine County.



Services are offered by the 4 full-time and 1 part-time staff and 11+ volunteers within the counties of Lincoln, Lyon, Redwood and Yellow Medicine

**Women's  
Rural  
Advocacy  
Programs**







## Victim Information Corner for Education

Women's

Rural

Advocacy

Programs

Continued...

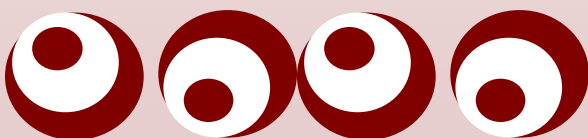
Population (s) Served: Source: [www.factfinder.census.gov](http://www.factfinder.census.gov)

|                                   | Yellow<br>Medicine | Redwood       | Lyon          | Lincoln      | WRAP Organiza-<br>tional<br>Total/Average |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---|
| Land area in square miles         | 759.10             | 878.57        | 714.56        | 536.76       | 2888.99                                   |
| Total Population                  | 10,233             | 15,834        | 25,724        | 5,821        | 57,602                                    |
| Median Age                        | 43.1               | 43.2          | 34.8          | 46.8         | 41.975                                    |
| Median Income                     | \$52,160           | \$47,999      | \$51,182      | \$49,122     | \$50,115.75                               |
| <b>Cultural or Racial Make-Up</b> |                    |               |               |              |   |
| <b>One Race</b>                   | <b>10,050</b>      | <b>15,662</b> | <b>25,568</b> | <b>5,795</b> | <b>57,075</b>                             |
| White                             | 9,534              | 14,117        | 23,169        | 5,676        | 52,496                                    |
| Asian                             | 44                 | 545           | 813           | 12           | 1,414                                     |
| Am. Indian/Alaskan Native         | 340                | 792           | 138           | 8            | 1,278                                     |
| Other                             | 104                | 104           | 756           | 71           | 1,035                                     |
| African American                  | 28                 | 104           | 692           | 28           | 852                                       |
| <b>Two or More Races</b>          | <b>183</b>         | <b>172</b>    | <b>156</b>    | <b>26</b>    | <b>527</b>                                |



WRAP identifies the traditionally underserved areas within the Lyon, Lincoln, Redwood and Yellow Medicine Counties as the following populations:

- Members of the Upper Sioux Reservation located near Granite Falls
- Members of the Lower Sioux Reservation located near Redwood Falls
- Large population of Hispanic descendants in Lyon, Lincoln, Redwood and Yellow Medicine counties due to full-time and seasonal employment opportunities
- WRAP recognizes that there has been an influx of Somalian and Hmong descendants in Lyon and Redwood Counties.



## Newer “IoT” Technology and Corrections

By: Dan Bick, MCA Technology Committee



Well, technology is continuing to advance faster than some of us would like, and regardless of our personal adoption of it or not, increasingly we will need to deal with it in corrections as it may present either risks or benefits.

This article discusses a newer type of technology known as the "Internet of Things", or IoT

And some of its relevance to corrections. IoT technologies can be defined as low cost, typically wireless, and often small in size devices which provide new capabilities. These devices may store information either on them or “in the cloud”.

There are a large and varied amount of personal IoT devices, ranging from remotely controlled light bulbs, thermostats, small pushbuttons which order your favorite products (Amazon), voice command devices such as Amazon Echo, and even wirelessly controlled door locks.

### General IoT Use

Users may have different levels of adoption of newer technology such as IoT. In part, this is related to their technical expertise and demographics. How different age groups adopt technology is relevant in corrections as it may assist in identifying risks. See this article for an in depth description of this concept: <https://www.iotforall.com/how-different-generations-use-iot/> For example, it could be useful for an Agent to know that an older Offender under supervision may use a phone more often than Facebook for communication.

Most users of devices such as cell phones do not perceive them to be a risk. However, as we know in secured environments, these need controls. With wider adoption of these type of newer devices, staff will need to remain even more vigilant, as visitors may attempt to bring them into secured areas.

### Medical IoT Devices

In addition to exercise tracker type wristband devices, there are newer IoT devices being developed to monitor health status such as heart rate and blood sugar. These could help reduce health care costs and provide better care for Offenders. One of the more interesting ones is a wearable temporary tattoo. One of these tattoos under development can detect blood alcohol levels, which could have some corrections applications in corrections areas such as supervision, see this article for more information: <https://www.nibib.nih.gov/news-events/newsroom/wearable-tattoo-sends-alcohol-levels-your-cell-phone>

# CONTINUED.... Newer “IoT” Technology and Corrections

By: Dan Bick, MCA Technology Committee

## Phone Wristwatch

An IoT device which is a useful example related to corrections is a "phone wristwatch" device. Several years before Apple released their phone wristwatch, a fully operational cell phone in the size and format of a wristwatch was available to buy. It uses either the AT&T or T-Mobile network to make and receive phone calls with a SIM card, and additionally it can hold a SD memory card which can enable the storage of thousands of files such as photos or videos. Its advanced features include a camera for taking photos or videos, GPS location capability, and built in apps such as Facebook, SMS, WeChat, web browser, and a fitness tracker. Pricing as of March 2018 is less than \$30. I have one of these, and while they are low quality and lack good instructions, they do work.

Such a device could present risk in some secure locations, or if used by some Offenders on supervision, due to its ability to communicate, be concealable, and store information.

## Final Thoughts

IoT devices will have both positive and negative effects in corrections in the future, depending on factors such as where they are used, for what purpose, and to the extent any needed controls are implemented. Unlike past waves of technology, some IoT devices will creep into personal and work locations without being known by users. In some cases these devices could present risk. IoT devices may store information which could be relevant evidence for those authorized to access it in supervision or detention environments. Corrections professionals, being user facing, will be among the first to encounter many of these newer devices. Diligence will be key for us to discover and report these devices so that they can be assessed for any security issues.

## Internet sites for Additional Information

Description of “IoT” devices: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet\\_of\\_things](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_of_things)

Watch phone on EBay for \$7.30: <https://tinyurl.com/yd7mrkff>

Wireless “Spy Nanny Cam”: <https://tinyurl.com/y8j6woq4>

Interesting article on how exercise monitors revealed sensitive military sites. However, situations like this don’t necessarily mean that such monitors can’t be used, just that additional controls are likely needed to reduce the unintended risks: <https://tinyurl.com/y952tphw>

Article on wearable and implantable medical devices including “Smart Tattoos”: <https://tinyurl.com/y94m2sz4>



# WOMEN'S WRITING PROGRAM

## IN COUNTY JAILS

**Submitted by: Gwen Lerner**

**Advisory Task Force on Justice Involved Women and Girls, Women's Writing Program, Project Chair**

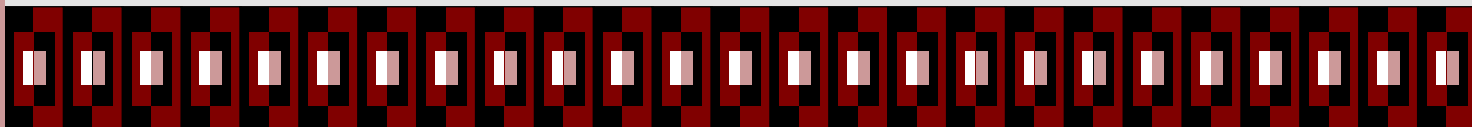
For over five years, beginning in 2012, a project called simply the Women's Writing Program has opened many eyes and minds to the tremendous power of creative writing instruction for women confined in Minnesota county jails. The idea arose in 2011 when the volunteer DOC Advisory Task Force on Justice Involved Women (formerly "Female Offenders") discovered that incarcerated women and girls had serious interest in creative writing and art submitted for prizes at its annual professional conference.

The program began in 2012 as a collaboration among the Task Force, The Saint Paul Public Library, the Ramsey County Correctional Facility and the Saint Paul Almanac. The Sherburne County Jail and the Great River Regional Library in St. Cloud came on board in 2014 when Bookmobile replaced the Saint Paul Almanac; and the successful program was transferred in 2016 to the longstanding nonprofit arts education organization, COMPAS,\* which added the Washington County Jail and Washington Library. The COMPAS Teaching Artists who are professional published writers teach creative writing skills to small groups and work with them to publish handsome anthologies that are cataloged in the three library collections.

Twenty-nine anthologies have been published to date (the 29<sup>th</sup> scheduled for publication in early April), with 200 authors, some of whom have participated in more than one of the two-week daily class sessions. Diego Vazquez, Jr., has taught throughout, with Marcie Rendon joining for the tenth program in 2015 and Karla Nweje conducting two in 2017. Now operating in Sherburne and Washington counties, artistic design and class instruction in very different styles cultivate interest and talent in artistic self-expression by these women, encouraged by their achievements to believe in themselves and to try to continue writing after their release from jail.

The project furthers the Task Force mission "to promote and advocate for gender and culturally-responsive services for women and girls in the criminal and juvenile justice systems" by providing a way for incarcerated women to build self-confidence and self-esteem which, based on a 2008 research report prepared with and for the DOC and the Task Force, found that in Minnesota "these needs appear to function as protective factors" in reducing recidivism.

These women exist at a point in their lives where they are disturbingly distanced from their own complex social surroundings and forced to adjust to a temporary new community (typically a few weeks to a few months) fraught with emotions. Anger and confusion, loneliness and sadness, guilt and shame among small groups stir introspection and affect their interactions while also coloring their own personal reflections.



Offered a safe zone for creative self-expression in both writing and artwork for publication in a beautiful anthology, the women who commit to the intense classes with gifted professional writers pour out their feelings in surprisingly honest ways. Sharing their fears and painful vulnerabilities, they tell the stories that have generated their trauma and shaped the way they see themselves in this constrained setting.

**"Ventriloquist,"** by Danika Johnson

*Ladies & Gentlemen!*

*I present to you "Dani The Dummy!"*

*On his quest to becoming the best puppet master*

*He must find the doll that everyone will clap for.*

*Finally one day she just fell in his lap*

*Having no idea it was the makings of a trap.*

*A little tweak here*

*A small repair there*

*Soon you will be ready for everyone's stare.*

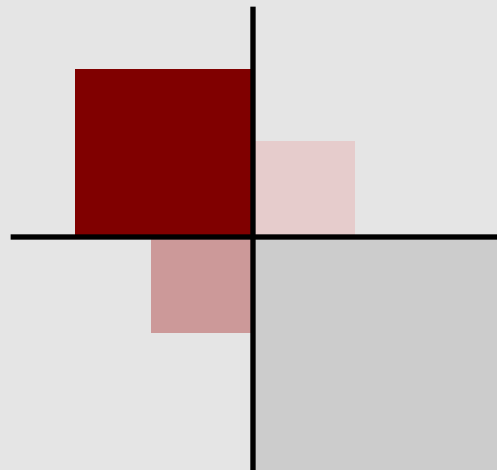
*Once on stage she is showered in praise*

*While behind the curtain is awaiting her cage.*

*Controlling the strings with a flick of his wrist*

*Acquiring a new name*

*The Ventriloquist.*



While some hold back the poems too personal to release, most reveal more than they ever dreamed they could disclose in a printed anthology that would appear in local libraries and the International Standard Book Numbers database and could be read by people they love and fear.

In the process, the women struggle to discern just who they are, identifying themselves by what they have done, how they have grown up, who has controlled them and who has loved them, who they would like to be and wish they were. The more they explore, the more insights emerge and the more their perspectives change. Most observable to the outsider (writing classmates and jail staff) is the developing compassion and understanding of some of their sister writers, a bonding with friendship and humor that is both self-deprecating and genuine. When it occurs, it seems that part of this comes from a new inner strength and courage to be more themselves among a small group of women who get it.

Perhaps it is the focus on writing styles and techniques, tools that promote the rhythm and imagery, that allow incarcerated women to step back from the particular memory or devastating mistake and put it into words that ring. For certain, it is the skillful and compassionate guidance and encouragement of the COMPAS Teaching Artists that convince them of their creative abilities. Many of the women come to believe in themselves and in their unquestionable motivation to achieve a visible testament to the value of their own lives.

Does this continue after the classes end and after the release from jail? We do know that many desire and intend to keep writing. Some hope to find more instruction; some to write on their own. A few have shown up to read in public at library events and some have attended open mic gatherings. Some have returned to jail or moved further into the criminal justice system. The creative writing paths of most remain unknown, but it would be astonishing if the impact of this creative experience does not deeply affect the life of each one.

*\*COMPAS works to unleash creativity for making better lives and better communities. It places professional COMPAS Teaching Artists at sites across Minnesota, reaching people from all walks of life right where they live, work, learn, and play. COMPAS Teaching Artists hail from more than 40 different cultural backgrounds and engage people in a wide variety of artistic experience, including literary, musical, visual and performing art genres. For more information about COMPAS, please visit [COMPAS.org](http://COMPAS.org).*

# MCA SPRING WORKSHOP

Ryan Busch and Katie Campbell—MCA Spring Workshop Co-Chairs

On March 22, 2018, the MCA Workshop “We are NOT invisible” was presented at the Willmar Event Center. The event’s focus was on female veterans and the challenges they may face during and after their career in the military and the resources that are being utilized in Minnesota for female veterans and their families. The event began with a very encouraging opening from our MCA President and Army Veteran, Mark Groves.

The increase in female veterans within our state and country is rising and will continue to do so. We have seen the effects on our veterans, and there are now efforts to better serve them drug courts and VA services in the State of Minnesota. This training highlighted the prevalence of PTSD in female veterans, and drew attention to the enormously higher rates of sexual assault, suicide, homelessness, chemical addiction, and divorce rates than what male veterans face.

It is encouraging that the VA Minnesota Women Veterans Program and the Minnesota Coalition against Sexual Assault (MNCASA) ensures our female veterans gain access to much needed services and benefits. The protocol for sexual assault victims in the military has improved over time and being aware of the resources in our communities is vital in supporting our female veterans.

The awareness of resources such as MNCASA and the Ars Bellum Foundation include unique programs offered that are a much needed resource for our female and male veterans. Ars Bellum provides art therapy for women veterans who have experienced military sexual trauma and mixed group art therapy and have mobile resources all over the state of Minnesota.

I would like to thank our informed speakers and the many resource fair attendees that appeared this day, Village Ranch for sponsoring the amazing lunch provided at the venue, and the Spring Workshop Committee members for their hard work and dedication to our yearly work-







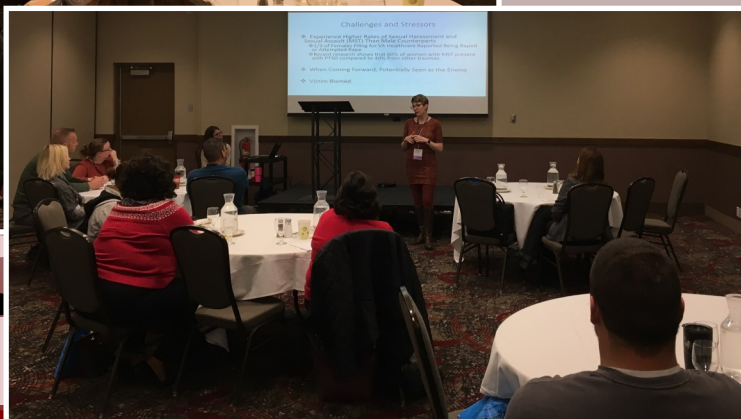
# Spring Workshop

**FEMALES IN THE MILITARY**

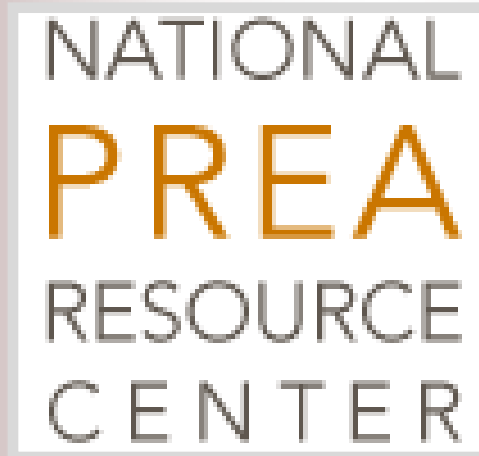
**Willmar Conference Center**

**March 22nd**

**Female veterans and their experience as military personnel and as civilians.**



# Expand your knowledge...



**P**rison

**R**ape

**E**limination

**A**ct

[www.prearesourcecenter.org](http://www.prearesourcecenter.org)

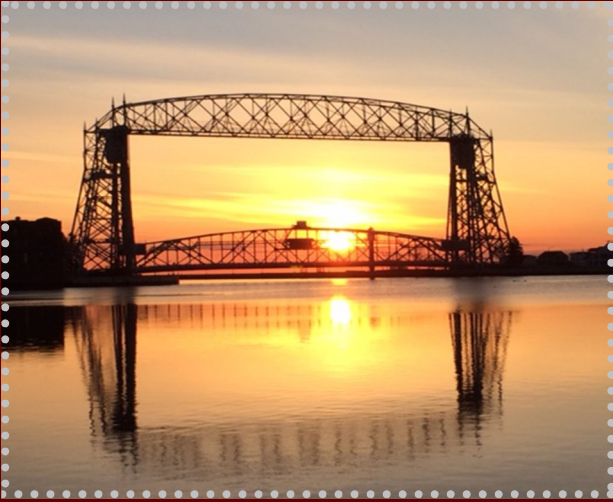
The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was passed in 2003 with unanimous support from both parties in Congress. The purpose of the act was to “provide for the analysis of the incidence and effects of prison rape in Federal, State, and local institutions and to provide information, resources, recommendations and funding to protect individuals from prison rape.” (Prison Rape Elimination Act, 2003). In addition to creating a mandate for significant research from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and through the National Institute of Justice, funding through the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Institute of Corrections supported major efforts in many state correctional, juvenile detention, community corrections, and jail systems.

The act also created the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission and charged it with developing draft standards for the elimination of prison rape. Those standards were published in June 2009, and were turned over to the Department of Justice for review and passage as a final rule. That final rule became effective August 20, 2012.

In 2010, the Bureau of Justice Assistance funded the National PREA Resource Center to continue to provide federally funded training and technical assistance to states and localities, as well as to serve as a single-stop resource for leading research and tools for all those in the field working to come into compliance with the federal standards.



## ***“Past Reflections and Future Bridges”***



**85 YEARS**

**Let's Celebrate 85 years of MCA!**

**MCA Annual Training Institute**

**AMY MOECKEL, DAN RADEN, SHANNON FETTE**

**MCA Annual Training Institute Chairs**

### **The mission and highlights of this year's Annual Training Institute Committee include:**

- Cutting edge training at the front of the latest trends in corrections
- Provide a top location for networking with fellow peers in corrections from all over the state
- 2 ½ day training
- Provide training that will attract a diverse population of participants
- Offer a conference with quality programming at a low cost to agencies/participants
- Provide a venue for the annual Association business meeting
- Awards recognition of staff that show exemplary service to the field
- Connect resources/vendors with agencies to meet their needs and include an excellent opportunity for sponsorships as well as the popular resource fair venue

The Minnesota Corrections Association (MCA) Annual Training Institute Committee is looking forward to what is sure to be a memorable conference in Duluth on October 24-26, 2018!

MCA is committed to making this year the most amazing year yet to celebrate the members!

Committee members are working hard right now planning memorable fun activities and a top notch training!

# 2018 MCA Awards

85 years

**Sarah Eischens (MCA President 2017)**  
**Award Committee Chair**

## **DEADLINE: JULY 15th!**

There are individuals and groups across the state of Minnesota who are making outstanding contributions in the field of corrections every day and now is the opportunity to nominate them!

**MCA is looking for your 2018 Award nominations for the following categories:**

### **Corrections Person of the Year**

This award is given for outstanding contribution in the field of corrections in Minnesota by an individual in any employment. It could be clergy, judge, legislator, group home parent, etc., as well as a correctional professional.

### **Professional Achievement Awards**

This award is given to two correctional staff persons (field services and correctional facilities) who have demonstrated achievement over a period of time, but shall not exclude professionals new to the field who have displayed outstanding achievement.

### **President's Award**

This award is given to programs, resources or facilities working in the broad field of corrections and criminal justice, which demonstrate creativity, resourcefulness, effectiveness and innovation.

### **Technology Award**

This award is given to individuals, programs, resources or facilities working with technology in the broad field of corrections and criminal justice, which demonstrate creativity, resourcefulness, effectiveness and innovation.

Submit your nominations to Award Committee Chair,  
Sarah Eischens, MCA President 2017

Awards will be presented at the Annual Training Institute in October in Duluth.



# Legislative

Submitted by Cal Saari

MCA Legislative Liaison

[sisuwithsaari@aol.com](mailto:sisuwithsaari@aol.com)

218-969-0151

As I prepare this legislative report to you for this edition, the Legislature begins it's final day of Committee hearings before beginning their 10 day Easter break beginning tomorrow, March 30th, and won't be returning to St Paul until April 9th. Then it will be a hectic final six weeks to this legislative session.

It has been a relatively quiet Session so far with all legislative priorities on issues not related to Public Safety and Corrections. As you probably are aware, there has been another concerted effort to revive the use of Appleton by the DOC. This has been primarily an economic growth proposal by the local officials in that area with little emphasis on this as a solution to the prison population issue. The Governor and Commissioner Roy have not supported this initiative while the Republican caucus continues efforts to revive this proposal. It will be interesting to see if this issue arises toward the end of the Session for further debate.

There have also been a good number of firearms legislation brought forward this year, mostly in response to the incidents that have happened across the country. Several have received hearings in Committee, but recently Public Safety Chair Rep. Brian Johnson publicly announced that no firearms legislation would pass this year. In a related issue, there has been an effort by a few Legislators to address school safety concerns. Rep. Jenifer Loon has introduced, and had hearings on HF 3796, which would appropriate money from bonds to make grants to school districts to enhance the safety of school facilities. \$ 5 million is the figure discussed at the Committee hearing, but a large number of questions have been asked by legislators. The bottom line is that even a \$ 5 million allocation is really such a minimal number when you consider the large number of school buildings in Minnesota, and also the difficulty in determining how the money would be shared. Several DFL legislators such as Rep. Alice Hausman have advocated for dollars to be spent on staff personnel such as counselors, resource staff, etc. Bottom line, again, is that there are such massive requests for funding this year with limited dollars that it's highly unlikely that we'll see movement in this area this year..

I keep hearing from folks that why is there such an issue with available funding considering there is a budget surplus. Yes, there is a projected surplus of approximately \$ 325 million, but it's an artificial surplus as most of that surplus comes from the federal government restoring medical aid for children which had been previously cut from federal subsidies to the state. So that pretty much brings us to a balanced budget as the Legislature works to fund needs for this next year. Again, this is a major election year, so you won't see anything controversial high on the agenda unless the political parties feel they have something to use as political fodder in the election process this Fall.

There continues to be a lot of political posturing in the Legislature even though there appears to be a growing number of new legislators who are committed to compromise and getting the job done. However, the party leadership calls the final shots, so don't expect any major move this Session. Another exciting election cycle will begin following legislative adjournment on May 21st, and we can all look forward to engaging our local elected officials in discussing our issues and concerns.

Watch my legislative update reports on the MCA webpage for updates on specific legislation, and please let me know if you'd like any further information on any proposal. One final item that I often get calls on, is the status of public pensions. I've been saying for a year now that we can expect changes in public pensions, and it's a sure thing that the Legislature will adopt the changes to pensions that were discussed at our workshop last October at the Fall Institute. There will be several changes to all the pension plans so contact me if you'd like details, or wait and I'll detail those changes in an upcoming legislative Update report. Thanks for your continuing support.

# STILL NO VOTING FOR FELONS ON PROBATION

*Taken from legislature news*

By Mike Cook

<http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/SessionDaily/Story/13162>

A close committee vote means certain Minnesotans still can't cast a ballot. Under current law, a person convicted of a felony cannot vote while behind bars or out on probation or parole. Rep. Raymond Dehn (DFL-Mpls) sponsors HF951 that would allow a felon to vote upon release from incarceration.

On an 8-7 vote that crossed party lines, the House Public Safety and Security Policy and Finance Committee tabled the bill Thursday. Of the 34 bill sponsors, nine are Republican.

"We're expecting them to be good, upstanding citizens. ... One of the basic sort of impacts of being a good citizen is actually participating in our voting," Dehn said. He said the issue is a statewide one with more than 60 percent of the estimated 50,000 people this would affect living outside Hennepin and Ramsey counties.

Elizer Darris killed a man when he was 15 and was released from prison in 2016. Now a community organizer, he is on parole until 2025. "We can pay taxes, but we can't vote," he said. "We abide by the regulations, the ordinances and the laws created by lawmakers, but we can't vote. We live within a representative democratic republic, but we can't vote." Working on political campaigns and having engaged, by his estimate, more than a thousand people to participate in the political process, it dismays him that he can't vote. "I'm right here in the community with all of you ... but I am invisible to society in one of the most fundamental ways of being a citizen," Darris said. "I'm here to represent those of us who matter. Our voices matter, our communities matter."

Rep. Brian Johnson (R-Cambridge), the committee chair, said he had a problem with the bill based on Article 7 of the state constitution which says a felon "shall not be entitled or permitted to vote." Minnesota has one of the lowest incarceration rates in the country, preferring to use things like probation and community service to punish lawbreakers, rather than prison time; however, Rep. Debra Hilstrom (DFL-Brooklyn Center) noted the state ranks fourth-highest when it comes to probation length and that inmates in three states are allowed to vote. Rep. Eric Lucero (R-Dayton) called the conversation "a healthy one," but said repaying one's debt to society equals incarceration time plus probation.

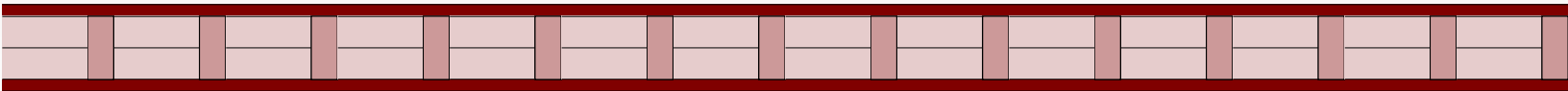
Lucero would welcome discussion about reducing "excessive" probation that sometimes goes for 30 or 40 years. "If we were to reduce those to a more reasonable time period, then I think this conversation essentially would solve itself for the most part," he said. Rep. Jim Newberger (R-Becker) voted against the bill, saying someone needs to speak for victims. "Murder is a felony, and when you are killed you do not get to vote ever again," he said. "I do not support restoring the right to vote for someone who has taken another person's life." A companion, SF3736, sponsored by Sen. Bobby Joe Champion (DFL-Mpls), awaits action by the Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee.



## [ MN DOC Corrections Employees Week ]

**The Minnesota Department of Corrections honors all Corrections staff during Corrections Employees Week. Events are held state-wide in agencies during the first full week of May.**

**This year, Corrections Employees Week will be the Week of May 6th through the 12th.**



# National Correctional Officer's Week in May

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan signed Proclamation 5187, creating "National Correctional Officers' Week." Each year, the first full week in May is recognized as National Correctional Officers and Employees Week, commemorating the contributions of correctional officers and personnel who work in jails, prisons, and community corrections across the country.

In 1996, Congress officially changed the name of the week to National Correctional Officers and Employees Week. The names of more than 580 correctional officers are engraved on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. These courageous heroes are forever remembered, and their light continues to shine through their memory, and through the selfless men and women who continue to serve each day.

To recognize the contributions made by corrections personnel, NCJRS presents a compilation of resources related to correctional facilities and staff within the facilities.

To learn more: [https://www.ncjrs.gov/correctional\\_officers\\_week/index.html](https://www.ncjrs.gov/correctional_officers_week/index.html)



# 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINNESOTA CORRECTIONS ASSOCIATION



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## Planning For Your Future

April 20, 2018  
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
DOC Central Office  
Afton Training Room,  
1450 Energy Park Drive,  
St. Paul  
(West Entrance, First Floor)

**\*\*Space is limited\*\***

**This training is being offered FREE for the first 50 MCA Members to register.**

**9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.**

**Melissa Bayne** from Larkin Hoffman Attorneys-Healthcare Directive/Estate Planning

**10:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**Dan Athmann** from Thrivent Financial-Financial Planning for Retirement

**Goals:** This Monthly Workshop is put together to help Corrections Employees plan for the future. Take advantage of the opportunity to learn how to plan your estate and have a healthy financial future.

### Presenters

**Melissa Hagstrum Bayne - Larkin Hoffman Daly & Lindgren, Ltd.**

This section of the workshop will include the topics of Estate Planning and Health Care Directives. Many assume decisions are easy and things will just fall right into place if you become incapacitated or pass away. The information provided here will open your eyes to the complexity of said topics. You will be provided the opportunity to fill out a Health Care Directive and a Statutory Short Form Power of Attorney.

**Dan Athmann, Financial Advisor - Thrivent Financial**

Your job is dangerous and unpredictable: My law enforcement career spanned 25 years, so I know and understand what police officers go through. I also know the importance of customized and proven strategies for strengthening your financial future. Through guidance and education, I can help you build a financial road map that gives you sense of reassurance and helps protect your family's future. Start today—your career will go by fast!



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### **About the MCA *FORUM***

*FORUM* is published six times a year by the Minnesota Corrections Association, a nonprofit professional association incorporated in Minnesota. Articles submitted by our membership do not express the views of MCA or the board of directors.

Articles may be submitted to the 2017 *FORUM* editor Tara Rathman at [tara.rathman@state.mn.us](mailto:tara.rathman@state.mn.us). Articles should not be of the nature of a commercial solicitation of products or services; rather, they should be informative on topics of interest to MCA membership at large.