

## CCCS does good things

### From Our Readers Speak

Montana Standard, 12/27/13

I have been undecided about writing to Our Reader Speak concerning the article presented on Community, Counseling, and Correctional Services, Inc. and Butte Pre-Release earlier this week, but when the Readers Speak letter in the Dec. 19, Montana Standard by Ristine Hall came out, I decided it was time to give my opinion. The original article about Pre-Release was nice, but it should have gone more in-depth as to what the Pre-Release residents do for the community. Does anyone have any idea how much money is saved in the summer by the Pre-Release residents who set up and take down the stages, tents and whatever else needs to be done for the festivals? The residents commit to at least 40 hours of community service.

The residents do not get everything for free. They have to pay for services just like everyone else. Pre-Release is a transitional living program for offenders to acclimate them back into the community and independent living. By not being incarcerated it also saves money for taxpayers in regard to the correctional system.

In the article by Ristine Hall, it seems she is implying that CCCS is getting some type of "break" when it comes to investing in the Uptown area. It was my impression that the so-called perks that CCCS is getting are not limited to that corporation. It is my understanding that anyone who wants to invest in the Uptown area has the same opportunities for financial aid. Maybe Ms. Hall would rather have the buildings occupied by Pre-Release and their administrative offices be vacant and become an eyesore like so many other buildings in the Uptown area. Please keep in mind that all of the remodeling of old structures and new structures built are done by union laborers. People seem to forget the "other" expenses CCCS pays for such as electricity, gas, water, telephone, building maintenance and repairs as well as the expense of food, etc. They are committed to using local vendors as much as possible. There are pre-release centers all over the state of Montana. The Pre-Release is not exclusive to Butte. I wonder if they get the same negative feedback the Butte center does? Do you have any idea what would happen if the Pre-Release closed? How many jobs would be lost and taxes not paid by homeowners because of the loss of their jobs?

The CCCS, Mike Thatcher, his staff and board of directors do an extremely hard job, yet all they ever receive is negative feedback.

From experience, it is not the Pre-Release residents who hamper the uptown area receiving customers.

There is another organization that cares for troubled people with offices in Uptown Butte and those are the people who scare me when I hear them yelling and preaching on the streets.

Yes, I do have relatives who work for CCCS and I am prejudiced in favor of CCCS but I also know what would be lost if they were not in our community. Prior to retiring and prior to having relatives working at CCCS, I was in an industry that deals and dealt with the Pre-Release residents. The residents were polite and respectful of the staff. They caused no problems and paid their bills. I would direct you to the CCCS website ([www.cccscorp.com](http://www.cccscorp.com)) so that you can see for yourself the contributions made not only to Butte, but to other communities in Montana, North Dakota and Washington.

Signed Judy McLaughlin, Butte