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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: June 18, 2024
CONTACT: Megan Sanford, 406-452-3462
Paris Gibson Committee



**Harold Spilde Winner of the
15th Annual Paris Gibson Award**

Great Falls, MT – Harold Spilde has dedicated over 30 years to volunteering and service to the Great Falls community. He has won the 2024 Paris Gibson Award, which is exemplified by the vision and excellence of Great Falls' founder Paris Gibson. Former winners of the Award chose him from a list of exceptional nominees.

Harold was born and raised in Decorah, Iowa. After graduation he enlisted in the United States Air Force. This is where he first experienced the beauty of Montana. Upon leaving the Air Force Harold eventually made Great Falls his home. It was here where he met his wife Judy and they had their son Paul.

While working at his second career with the Montana Department of Transportation, Harold embarked on his lifetime passion of volunteering and service.

In 1993 Harold started volunteering with FISH. FISH is an organization made up by members of 12 churches and 1 service group that is an emergency source of food to local residents in need. Each church supplies volunteers to work for one week, approximately every three months. During his time with FISH Harold served as President, and volunteered 5 days a week for roughly 4 hours a day.

In addition to the countless hours Harold dedicated with FISH he was an active member for over 50 years with the Great Falls Y's Men



(a YMCA service club). He served as the Club President, District Governor, Pacific Northwest Regional Director and member of the U.S. area council for 3 years.

Other awards and achievements that Harold has include:

2023 United Way Retired and Senior Volunteer Program service award.

Treasurer of the Montana Synod of the ELCA for 22 years.

Our Savior's Lutheran Church council for 12 years - 2 terms as president.

Concordia College Corporate board for 4 years.

Delegate to 3 church-wide assemblies.

Received Spirit of Hope Award as a volunteer for the work he performed at FISH.

Honored by two previous governors for his charity work.

Received 2017 Serve Montana Award.

“Harold gets along well with all the members of the FISH program. He’s always offering to help others even though he may not necessarily be asked to do so. He’s a real team player and an inspiration to all the FISH volunteers. He’s leads by showing positive examples such as how to be a team player!” ~ Shaun Tatarka, Great Falls Community Bank Executive Director.

To be eligible for the award, selected by previous Paris Gibson Award winners, a nominee must meet the following criteria: currently a resident of Great Falls; provided significant impact to the City of Great Falls; provided leadership for the community through volunteerism; and performed selfless action for the betterment of the community. The award winner will receive a \$500 check provided by Jimmy and Debbie Filipowicz of Steel Etc, which may be given to a local charity of the winner’s choice; a tree, donated by Steve Tilleraas of Tilleraas Landscape Nursery, planted in their honor, with a granite marker donated by Montana Granite; a plaque donated by Greg and Leanne Hall; a dinner for two at P. Gibson’s, donated by P. Gibson’s Sports Grill; and a ride in a 1918 Model T Ford at the Fourth of July Parade provided by Kurt Baltrusch of the Skunk Wagon Club.

Formal announcement of Harold Spilde as the winner of the 2024 Paris Gibson Award will be made at the first concert of the season by the Great Falls Municipal Band at 7 p.m. at the Mansfield Convention Center on Wednesday, June 26, 2024. Megan Sandford, Chairman of the Paris Gibson Month Celebration Committee will make the announcement. The concert is free and open to the public.



Former winners are: Doug Wicks, 2010; Norma Ashby, 2011; Greg Hall, 2012; Ian and Nancy Davidson, 2013; Gene Thayer, 2014; Bill and Joan-Nell Macfadden, 2015; Arlyne Reichert, 2016; Sheila Rice, 2017; Brad Talcott and Linda Caricaburu, 2018; Chuck and Gerry Jennings, 2019; Judy Ericksen, 2020; David and Tanya Cameron, 2021; and Bud Nicholls, 2022, Kathy Van Tighem, 2023.

For further information about the award, contact Megan Sanford, 406-452-3462.

