



correctional *Newsfront*

Changes to Prison Emergency Notification Began Oct. 1

Corrections Secretary Encourages Public to Register for Service

The Department of Corrections is moving forward with plans to use existing technology to achieve emergency notification in lieu of a separate system/contract. The move will save taxpayers more than \$38,000 per year. Effective Oct. 1, the AlertPA system will be the only system used to notify citizens of prison emergencies.

“Citizens will be notified about prison emergencies by the state’s AlertPA emergency notification system,” Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. “All they need to do is sign up.”

In 2009, the Commonwealth launched AlertPA, a system that helps officials quickly send emergency landline and cell telephone calls, texts and e-mail alerts, and other important notifications, to users to assist them in making informed decisions. Individuals can register for AlertPA by going to www.pa.gov and clicking on Alerts & Advisories. Users can choose the method of notification – pager, text, email and/or voice message to a landline and/or a cell phone.

“It makes more sense in today’s world of ever-advancing technology to be able to receive such notices on your cell phone or by text messaging,” Wetzel said. “Now, no matter where you are, you can receive instant notice of a prison emergency.”

For several years, the DOC has used two notification systems to insure coverage; however, with the call to reduce spending, this expense is being eliminated.

“Through press releases and newsletter articles, we informed citizens that a change was coming, but that action was required on their part,” Wetzel continued.

The DOC’s previous contractor automatically contacted listed telephone numbers within a one- or two-mile radius of each state prison. Cell phones, unlisted numbers and e-mail addresses were not included. DOC officials believe that this approach will actually allow for a wider range of individuals to be notified in the event of an emergency.

(Continued on Page 3)

In This Issue...	
Agencies Join Up to Help Offenders Succeed.....	4
Fine Dining.....	5
Time to Eat.....	6
Sharing Knowledge.....	8
One Way Ticket.....	9
Program Encourages Hiring Ex-Offenders.....	10
Repair or Replace.....	11
Facility News.....	12
Who’s Running Our Prisons.....	14
28 Agencies.....	17
NIC Training.....	18
Certified Peer Support.....	19

Secretary Wetzel Talks About...

Changes

This issue of "Correctional Newsfront" is filled with articles about changes, such as changes in how we notify the public about prison emergencies.

It also is filled with information about helping inmates to succeed -- through specialized training of staff, implementation of a culinary arts program and starting new offender training that will, upon completion, certify offenders as peer support specialists.

These articles, and many more in this issue, highlight work being performed in a variety of areas within the field of corrections.

None of this work could be conducted without the outstanding commitment and dedication of the Department of Corrections' 17,000 employees.

I applaud staff for their work and hope you will join me in realizing that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections continues to be a leader in many areas.



John Wetzel, Secretary

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ADMINISTRATION

TOM CORBETT

Governor

John E. Wetzel

Secretary

Susan McNaughton

Press Secretary/Editor

Susan Bensinger

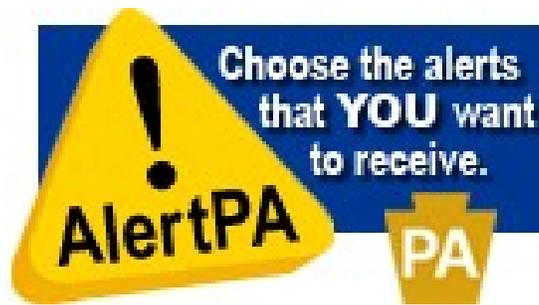
Deputy Press Secretary/Writer

www.cor.state.pa.us

To receive notifications, citizens must register via the Internet to be notified about emergencies. For those who do not have Internet access, they may contact their nearest state prison's critical incident manager who will enter their information into the system for them. Individuals who previously registered with AlertPA will not have to re-register.

"We are hopeful that citizens living and working around our state prisons will take advantage of this service, which will keep them informed, via a variety of methods, should a major incident happen at one of our prisons." Wetzel said.

In addition to calls from AlertPA, the DOC notifies citizens of a prison emergency by sounding the involved prison's whistle/siren, by posting information on the DOC website at www.cor.state.pa.us and by providing information via the DOC's emergency message line at 888-316-8950.



State Agencies Team Up to Help Offenders Rejoin Society, Succeed

Training Program Will Allow the Sharing of Re-entry Resources

Government officials and community service agency representatives have begun a training effort aimed at helping offenders successfully return to their communities after their release.

"When there is an issue that spans several agencies, invested agencies should work together to resolve the problem," Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. "This collaborative effort is what citizens should expect from their government – a willingness to work with all parties to resolve a situation. This is a perfect example of the new culture in Harrisburg under Gov. Tom Corbett."

The effort, which focuses primarily on helping former offenders find employment, will result in lower recidivism, higher rates of employment, savings to taxpayers and a reduction in the costs of incarceration, organizers said.

"Cabinet secretaries and the governor are working as one to ensure our communities are safe," said Labor & Industry Secretary Julia Hearthway. "One element of that effort is helping those who have served their time find employment so they can be productive members of society."

Held at the Department of Corrections' Elizabethtown Training Academy, more than 30 participants are undergoing 180-hours of training, offered once a week for three months. The first session was held in August. After completing the program, the participants will be able to better connect offenders with services in their communities and will work to train others in the area of offender re-entry. Participants include individuals from the DOC, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, the Department of Labor & Industry's PA CareerLink® network and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Penn State University, county prison officials and community service organizations.

The Offender Workforce Development Specialist training is a national initiative that promotes skill development and collaboration to improve employment outcomes, including job retention, for those re-entering the community from jails and prisons. The training in Pennsylvania was designed by the National Institute of Corrections and is funded by a \$25,000 grant, of which the DOC is the primary recipient.

"This project provides an opportunity to strengthen existing partnerships and establish new ones to address employment risk factors associated with recidivism," Board of Probation and Parole acting Chair Lloyd White said.

"With 90 percent of state prison inmates returning home one day, it is in our best interest to help offenders succeed," Wetzel said. "This initiative helps us to turn people who once were tax burdens into taxpayers."

Fine Dining

The DOC has revived the Inmate Culinary Class held at the DOC Training Academy. The class consists of inmates who have requested to attend the class. Each session consists of nine weeks of instruction.

The class is in progress with a new instructor at the helm. Todd Lewis brings more than 30 years of real world and varied experience. Lewis is a graduate of Johnson & Wales Providence, R.I.; as well as, a certified instructor/proctor for ServSafe.

Lewis used his education to work in a multitude of venues such as Disney World, fine dining establishments, hotels and casual dining restaurants.

“For many years, I have wanted to teach others the skills and knowledge gained in my 30 years of experience”, Lewis said.

Now the DOC will benefit from his training and experience as he instructs inmates toward their ServSafe certificate. ServSafe is a nationally recognized program for the safe handling preparation of food. The certificate will be issued by the American National Standards Institute and Conference for Food Protection and the National Restaurant Association.

The class is nine weeks in length and includes preparation of soups, sauces, salads, appetizers, side dishes, roasts, main dishes, breads and desserts. Instruction will include the many opportunities available as a culinary professional.

As the inmates re-enter society, they will have a basic skill set enabling them to obtain sustainable employment.



Time to Eat

By Marcia Noles, Chief
Bureau of Health Care Services, Food Services Division

Safe food handling and preparation are important “pieces to the puzzle” that is food service. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each year 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million people) get sick from and 3,000 die of foodborne diseases.

Poor personal hygiene, cross contamination, improper cooking temperatures and unclean conditions are just a few factors that lead to foodborne illnesses. Food service professionals need to be vigilant in supervision of procedures involving food handling and preparation; this becomes even more challenging in the correctional food service establishment. The additional layers of security and safety (i.e. locks, gates, inmate accountability, tool control, caustic control, etc.) make the already daunting task of food safety even more complex.

The department meets these challenges while preparing and serving approximately 155,000 meals every day, or approximately 56,560,079 meals per year.

Training:

All food service staff attends the ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification training and takes the examination as set forth by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. Corrections food service managers and supervisors are required by law to pass the certification exam and maintain certification by re-examination every five years.

Additionally, all food services staff are to receive ongoing, refresher training in safe food handling procedures, housekeeping and sanitation procedures and personal hygiene practices. Inmates employed in food services also are to receive this same ongoing, refresher training in addition to their initial orientation and equipment training.

Procedures:

This training is further enhanced by policies, procedures and practices to assist food services personnel with ensuring safe food handling and preparation is done in a manner which limits risk. The department has established some procedures and practices that exceed national standards in order to raise the bar on food safety as well as ensure compliance with ACA standards.

Audits:

Each institution's food service operation is audited annually by Bureau of Health Care, Food Services Division staff. These annual audits not only review

compliance with DOC policies and procedures but also Federal and State Food Codes (law). The department is self-regulatory and therefore conducts the food establishment inspection audit in lieu of the PA Department of Agriculture. Central Office Food Services Division staff attends meetings and trainings with the PA Department of Agriculture, the US Department of Agriculture, Food and Drug Administration and local Health Departments; along with networking frequently with PA Department of Agriculture and USDA regulators.

Home microwave use general knowledge:

How do you safely reheat cooked food in a microwave oven?

Cover foods with a lid or a microwave-safe plastic wrap to hold in moisture and provide safe, even heating. Turn back a corner for the steam to vent. Heat ready-to-eat foods such as hot dogs, luncheon meats, fully cooked ham, and leftovers until steaming hot. Stir or rotate foods midway through the microwaving time to even the cooking and eliminate cold spots where harmful bacteria can survive. Even if the microwave oven has a turntable, it's still helpful to stir and turn food top to bottom. After reheating foods in the microwave oven, allow standing time.

What is standing time?

Microwaves cause water, fat, and sugar molecules to vibrate 2.5 million times per second, producing heat. After the oven is off or food is removed from the oven, the molecules continue to generate heat as they come to a standstill. This additional cooking after microwaving stops is called "carryover cooking time," "resting time," or "standing time." It occurs for a longer time in dense foods such as a whole turkey or beef roast than in less-dense foods like breads, small vegetables and fruits. During this time, the temperature of a food can increase several degrees. For that reason, directions may advise to let a food "rest" for a few minutes after turning off the oven or removing food from the oven.

What containers and wraps are safe to use in the microwave oven?

Only use cookware that is specially manufactured for use in the microwave oven. Glass, ceramic containers, and all plastics that are safe to use usually will be labeled for microwave oven use.

SAFE TO USE:

Any utensil labeled for microwave use; heatproof glass (such as Pyrex, Anchor Hocking, etc.); glass-ceramic (such as Corning Ware); oven cooking bags; baskets (straw and wood) for quick warm-ups of rolls or bread (line the basket with napkins to absorb moisture from food); most paper plates, towels, napkins and bags (for optimal safety use white, unprinted materials); wax paper, parchment paper, heavy plastic wrap. Do not allow plastic wrap to touch food; vent it to allow a steam escape.

NOT SAFE TO USE:

Cold storage containers: margarine tubs, cottage cheese and yogurt cartons, etc. (these materials are not approved for cooking and chemicals can migrate into food); brown paper bags and newspapers; metal pans; styrofoam cups, bowls, plates or trays; china with metallic paint or trim; Chinese "take-out" containers with metal handles; metal "twist ties" on package wrapping; food completely wrapped in aluminum foil; food cooked in any container or packaging that has warped or melted during heating.

Sharing Knowledge

By sharing and teaching others, the DOC becomes stronger. Recently, training was attended by wardens, deputy wardens, majors, captains and intelligence staff from 15 county jails. The training, "Security Threat Group and Prison Radicalization Training for County Prison Staff," was held at the DOC Training Academy.

The training is part of the FBI Corrections Intelligence Initiative which provides valuable free seminars to correctional facilities on a variety of subjects.

Prison radicalization is the transformation from one set of beliefs to another more extreme set of beliefs. A recognition of the difference between devote practice of religion versus extremist beliefs is a crucial part of identifying individuals as radical or home grown terrorists.

The Office of Special Investigations and Intelligence (OSII) is working toward an official network of information sharing and communication in a continuous flow without interruption by staff changes. Currently, the dissemination of inmate adjustment or behavior at the county level is passed on between individuals, county to DOC, whom have fostered a working relationship. Information such as gang validation and affiliations will be beneficial to the DOC in identifying individuals of a higher concern.

Certain factors are presented at training to enable the participants to monitor indicators including tattoos, hand signs, membership documentation, gang affiliated colors and history of threat groups. Presence of these indicators is considered in the validation process.

The initial training was offered to 67 counties and was quickly booked to capacity. Plans are underway to conduct additional training by the OSII to counties upon their request. Captain Jim Giles, Lieutenant Larry Ellett and Lieutenant Jerry Jerome are full time members of the Joint Terrorism Task Force and have been deputized as Deputy U. S. Marshals since 2008. This distinction allows them to attend federal trainings and use federal equipment not normally available to DOC staff. The information they glean is shared with DOC institutions and county jails.

Opening remarks at the training were made by Corrections Secretary John Wetzel and OSII Director James Barnacle. The presenters were: DOC Captain Jim Giles, Lieutenants Larry Ellett and Jerry Jerome (security threat groups and prison radicalization), PA State Police Corporal John Kinsey (description of the PA Criminal Intelligence Center- PaCIC), Philadelphia FBI Special Agent Michael Thompson and Federal Bureau of Prisons Dave Garaway (description of the Joint Terrorism Task Force), and DOC Abuse Unit Supervisor Harold Kertes (abuse investigations).

One Way Ticket

For the past several years, Department of Corrections officials have been working with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials to better identify criminal aliens.

ICE's Criminal Alien Program (CAP) is responsible for identifying, processing and removing criminal aliens incarcerated in federal, state and local prisons and jails throughout the United States. The goal is to prevent the release of these criminal aliens into the general public by securing a final order of removal prior to the termination of their sentences, whenever possible.

Over the past two years, the number of such offenders in the PA DOC has increased from one to two percent of the state prison population. Today, there are presently 200 such individuals in the Pennsylvania state prison system, and 90 percent of them have had ICE hearings.

ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) officers and agents are assigned to CAP in federal, state and local prisons and jails throughout the country. These officers are responsible for screening inmates to identify criminal aliens.

When a criminal alien is identified, ICE places a detainer on that individual so they can be processed for removal from the United States, before they are released to the general public. After the screening process and interviews, when required, ERO issues charging documents to formally begin proceedings to remove the criminal alien from the United States.

ICE has two ERO officers at the Camp Hill state prison who interview every incoming inmate. In addition we share resources, such as electronic files and fingerprints with ICE to help them better identify potential criminal aliens.

Using videoconferencing technology, ICE officials hold deportation hearings twice a month at the prison. As a result of these efforts, we are experiencing the deportation of an average of five or six criminal aliens each week.

The benefit to the state prison system is that we are not spending taxpayer money housing individuals who simply should not be in the country in the first place.

In Pennsylvania, after the offender has served their court ordered time, the appropriate action is taken to deport the individual. A cooperative effort is a win-win for law enforcement and the DOC.

Several other states, such as Arizona, New Jersey and New York, have laws in which non-violent criminal aliens are deported without serving their prison sentence. Under Arizona state law, the state may release a criminal immigrant to federal authorities if it gets a deportation order and the inmate has served at least half of his or her sentence, typically for crimes like drunken driving and lower-level drug offenses. Prisoners convicted of murder or sex offenses aren't eligible for release. Since 2005, Arizona prison officials have been turning non-violent illegal immigrants over to federal authorities for deportation to their homelands. This policy has helped Arizona cut its budget deficit by millions of dollars.

Program Encourages Hiring Ex-Offenders

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections incarcerates some 51,300 offenders. Of that number, 15,335, or 29.87 percent, are from the Philadelphia County. Statistically, 90 percent of these inmates will be returning home to their communities.

As the DOC is only one body of incarceration — the federal and county systems also house any number of individuals from the state as well — it is estimated there are approximately 40,000 inmates released to Philadelphia alone on a yearly basis.

Studies have shown that individuals that were gainfully employed prior to incarceration were significantly less likely to recidivate than those who were not employed or attending school full time.

EARNING POTENTIAL PER YEAR

\$8,400 for individuals with no high school diploma

\$15,900 for individuals with a high school diploma or GED

\$21,600 for individuals with some college experience

\$32,700 for individuals with a bachelor's degree

To encourage Philadelphia employers to hire ex-offenders, the City of Philadelphia has made available to employers a tax credit of \$10,000 per year per former inmate employed full-time through the Philadelphia Re-entry Employment Program.

The program is available but has not seen any takers. The criteria to qualify for the PREP tax credit the employers must pay either 150 percent of the federal minimum was or \$10.88 per hour versus minimum wage of \$7.25. Or wages equal to other employees in the same or similar job position. When working a full time week of 37.5 hours for a 50 week year, the employee would earn \$13,600 at the minimum wage rate and \$20,400 at the 150 percent rate. The ex-offender would need to be employed for a continuous six months to qualify the employer for the PREP tax credit.

While barriers exist for inmates upon return to society, the DOC works to provide inmates with vocational and educational classes to help them be employable upon release from prison. Individuals have the opportunity to earn certificates in many areas such as HVAC, masonry, culinary, woodworking, barbershop/cosmetology and electrical. Most importantly, while attending the classes and performing the job trade, the inmates learn the value of a work ethic.

Re-entry is a complex topic with no simple answer. Programs to assist employers with wages may prove to be the answer. But each ex-offender must choose to become a productive citizen and a participant of the proud member workforce. Being given the tools is one part, individuals interested in employing ex-offenders is another valuable part.

REPAIR or REPLACE?

The DOC is in a state of inertia; meaning constantly in motion. In order to accommodate the miles of transportation, new vehicles were in order.

As most citizens are aware the DOC budget is \$1.8 billion. Always cognizant of being good stewards of tax payer dollars, grant monies were sought to fund the new vehicles needed. A grant provides money that does not need to be repaid and is for a specific purpose.

The ARRA Transportation Grant, federal stimulus funds, was obtained from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. The grant was to be used for the purchase and modification of vehicles to transport DOC inmates. The money also was earmarked for security equipment and related operational expenses. The funds, totaling \$500,000, were effective March 2010.



A 28-passenger bus was purchased to replace old DOC 3, a 1987 Bluebird style bus, which had in excess of 200,000 miles.

In addition, five turtle-top 13-passenger vans were purchased. A determination has not been made as to which current vans will be taken out of service but the odometers on those chosen will be well in excess of 100,000 miles. The old bus and vans will be put into surplus and most likely sold at auction.

The new turtle top vans will be more efficient as they will be able to transport inmates and their property at one time. Currently the 15-passenger vans can only transport nine inmates with the back seat removed to accommodate property. Even with the back seat removed an additional vehicle is required for overflow property. The turtle top style of van will be more cost effective by reducing the amount of staff needed to transport inmates and their property.

In addition, a handicapped-accessible van was purchased and assigned to SCI Laurel Highlands.

The DOC constantly reviews ways to be better stewards of tax payer dollars. The decision to purchase new equipment is not made lightly. Officials often stretch their resources as far as they will go and often consider repair vs. replacement. With the grant money, it was determined that purchasing these vehicles was fiscally responsible.

Albion CAMBRIDGE SPRINGS
 Camp Hill CHESTER Coal
 Township CRESSON Dallas
 Fayette Forest FRACKVILLE
 Graterford GREENE Greerburg
 HOUTZDAL Huntingdon
 LAUREL HIGHLANDS Mahanoy
 MERCER Muncy PINE GROVE
 Pittsburgh QUINNAPPA Retreat
 ROCKVIEW Smithfield
 SOMERSET Waymart ACADEMY
 Region I REGION II Region III
 Albion CAMBRIDGE SPRINGS
 Camp Hill CHESTER Coal
 Township CRESSON Dallas
 Fayette Forest FRACKVILLE
 Graterford GREENE Greerburg
 HOUTZDAL Huntingdon
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 Fayette Forest FRACKVILLE

SCI CAMP HILL

A celebration was held recently to acknowledge the second anniversary of the alcohol and other drug therapeutic community (TC) as well as the graduation of six TC members. Staff, inmate peer assistants and other TC participants were part of the ceremony.

SCI FOREST

Staff at Forest have implemented a new inmate organization they named H.O.P.E. for C.H.A.N.G.E. This acronym stands for Helping Other Prisoners Evolve for Confined Humans Aspiring New Goals Endlessly. This organization is dedicated to promoting social awareness, growth, development and positive change in individual inmates, while promoting and improving the quality of life for the inmate population of SCI Forest as a whole.

SCI GRATERFORD

Graterford, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, will conduct two, one-day antlerless deer hunts on prison grounds in January 2012. The first hunt, on Jan. 18, will be for 50 junior hunters between the ages of 12 and 16 years old. The second hunt, on Jan. 25, will be for 50 adult hunters.

SCI MAHANOY

Recently, SCI Mahanoy recognized 67 inmates for earning their GED certificates during the prison's 18th annual graduation ceremony.

Three graduates achieved a score of more than 3,000 points and have become members of the prestigious 3,000 Club. Their names will be placed on a plaque along with 51 others who have achieved this distinction since 1994. To pass the high school equivalency examination 2,250 points are needed and 4,000 is a perfect score.

In addition to the GED graduates, 187 credentials for various vocational programs and certifications were distributed to other inmates during the ceremony. Thirty-nine other inmates received a Kutztown University Fiber Optics Installers Certificate.

SCI MERCER

Mercer is teaming with an animal shelter to help inmates learn new job skills by training dogs for adoption.

The prison recently implemented a new program called Corrections Adoptive Rescue Endeavor (C.A.R.E.), which uses inmates to train dogs from Strayhaven Animal Shelter in basic behavioral and obedience skills. The program is funded primarily by the prison's Inmate General Welfare Fund and donations from Strayhaven.

After completing training, the dogs will be given the Canine Good Citizen test. Those that pass will be offered for adoption, while those that do not will receive additional training.

Individuals interested in adopting a dog should call Strayhaven at 724-588-6161. Dunlap Training Solutions can be reached at www.dunlaptrainingsolutions.com

SCI PINE GROVE

The son of an SCI Pine Grove employee recently was presented with a \$1,000 scholarship from the Association of State Correctional Administrators. Chad Nicholson, son of Corrections Officer M. Nicholson, received the 2011 Susan M. Hunter Correctional Scholarship.

Chad graduated from Derry High School in 2011 and will attend the Robert Morris College Honor Program this fall. He will major in bio-medical engineering.

SCI RETREAT

Along with donations made by staff, Retreat's Drug and Alcohol Treatment Supervisor Art Seymour, and his wife, Donna, coordinated a collection effort by Boy Scout Troop and Cub Scout Pack 34.

Donated items were provided to Luzerne County Community College evacuation site, Luzerne County Children and Youth, Volunteers of America and local shelters in the communities of Mocanaqua, West Nanticoke and Shickshinny.

Collections will continue at SCI Retreat in an effort to assist the many local families affected by the recent flooding.

Who's Running Our Prisons?

We thought this may be a good time to answer the much asked question, "Who is the superintendent at..."

We hope you find the following information enlightening:

After having served temporarily as an acting regional deputy secretary, Michael Harlow has returned to SCI Albion to resume his role of superintendent. Harlow transitioned from SCI Mercer to SCI Albion, where he was appointed superintendent in 2008.



Rhoda Winstead

SCI Cambridge Springs, one of the state's female facilities, is headed by one of the state's female superintendents, Rhoda Winstead, who was appointed in 2004. Superintendent Winstead rose to the top of her class after beginning her DOC career as corrections school principal at SCI Waynesburg.

SCI Camp Hill is being led by acting Superintendent Jeff Ditty. The former superintendent, John Murray, has transitioned to regional deputy secretary at the DOC's Central Office. SCI Camp Hill is the state's male diagnostic and classification center.



John Thomas

SCI Chester has been under the seasoned hand of John Thomas since 2007. This facility houses medium-security male offenders who benefit from therapeutic services focusing on drug and alcohol programs.

SCI Coal Township is guided by Superintendent David Varano.

SCI Cresson, since 2008, has been under the direction of Kenneth Cameron, who also serves as the central region's supervising superintendent.

SCI Dallas transitioned from former Superintendent Mike Klopotoski, who was appointed as regional deputy secretary, to the administrative style of Jerome Walsh. Beginning his career at SCI Dallas as a counselor in 1987, he transferred to other SCIs in the northeast and has returned to SCI Dallas as superintendent in 2009.

SCI Fayette is spearheaded by Superintendent Brian Coleman, who was appointed in 2008 after former Superintendent Harry Wilson retired.

SCI Forest is a male facility directed by female Superintendent Debra Sauers.

In May 2010, SCI Frackville saw the return of Robert Collins who began his career and is now the superintendent at the facility.

(Continued from Page 14)

SCI Graterford houses approximately 4,000 inmates, including death row inmates, and will be the site of two of the DOC's future institutions, SCIs Phoenix East and West. Graterford prison is led by Superintendent Michael Wenerowicz.

SCI Greene is home of the state's second male death row as well as in excess of 700 staff members who boast the DOC's softball championship trophy. They are skillfully guided by Superintendent Lou Folino, who earlier this year was named Warden of the Year by the National Association of Wardens and Superintendents.

SCI Greensburg is overseen by Superintendent Joseph Mazurkiewicz, who began his career as facility chaplaincy program director at SCI Somerset.

SCI Houtzdale opened in 1996 as a medium security facility and is under the direction of Superintendent Steven Glunt, who also serves as a security analysis and vulnerability assessment instructor and inspector.

SCI Huntingdon opened in 1889 as a reformatory for young offenders. In 1960 it began housing adult male offenders. This prison is overseen by Superintendent Tabb Bickell.

SCI Laurel Highlands, which provides specialized care, has separate housing units for geriatric and terminally ill offenders. This unique institution was led by Mardiann Vincent who has since transitioned to regional deputy secretary and passed the reigns to Superintendent David Pitkins who returned recently from duty as a regional deputy secretary. He also is the western region supervising superintendent.

SCI Mahanoy opened in 1996 and houses more than 2,000 inmates. The facility is steered by the calm, consistent style of Superintendent John Kerestes. He was also an original team member for the DOC's committee that was tasked with drafting initial policy and procedure for facility character profiles.



Brian Thompson

SCI Mercer is located on the extreme western side of the state and is headed by Superintendent Brian Thompson since 2008.

SCI Muncy is the second female facility in the state. It was built in 1920 as an industrial home to train younger female offenders. The campus is overseen by Nancy Giroux, the third female superintendent in the state.

SCI Pine Grove is a maximum-security facility for young adult male offenders ranging from 15 to 20 years of age and who are adjudicated as adults based on their criminal offense. Superintendent J. Barry Johnson is tasked with handling this section of the inmate population.



Michael Wenerowicz

(Continued on Page 16)

(Continued from Page 15)

SCI Pittsburgh sits on the banks of the Ohio River and is steeped in history. While it has the distinction of being the oldest prison, it was in mothball status for two years in 2005. The prison reopened in 2007 and is headed by Superintendent Dan Burns.

The Quehanna Boot Camp, which houses male and female inmates, is the only military-style motivational boot camp in Pennsylvania. The prison, which falls under the direction of Superintendent Steven Glunt, also is home to State Intermediate Punishment inmates.

SCI Retreat, which is small in stature but imposing in structure, sits along the banks of the Susquehanna River. The only access to this prison is over a bridge that symbolizes the division between society and incarceration. James McGrady serves as superintendent as well as the supervising superintendent for the eastern region.



Daniel Burns



Marirosa Lamas

SCI Rockview is the site for a new institution, SCI Benner Township, which is being built on shared property. The state's execution chamber is located on the grounds and has been the site of executions since 1915. Marirosa Lamas serves as superintendent.

SCI Smithfield was constructed on the reservation surrounding SCI Huntingdon and opened in 1988. Superintendent Jon Fisher oversees the facility which houses more than 1,300 inmates and employs approximately 500 staff members.

SCI Somerset is guided by Gerald Rozum who was appointed superintendent in 2004. He was also awarded the Pennsylvania Prison Wardens Association's Lifetime Achievement award in April 2011.

SCI Waymart is a minimum-security institution that houses male inmates and additionally houses the department's Forensic Treatment Center. Superintendent Wayne Gavin took control of operations in 2011. Prior to the prison's opening, the facility served as the Farview State Hospital.



Wayne Gavin

28 Agencies - 1 Mission

In Pennsylvania, 28 state agencies have been formed to take care of a multitude of functions. While it may seem each is tasked with a unique agenda, the agencies overlap in their duties. Also contained in the state's administration are offices, commissions and counsels, boards, as well as bureaus and authorities. The DOC is one of these 28 agencies.

The DOC is interconnected to a multitude of state agencies. One way is through a construction or improvement project governed by the Department of General Services. As the construction of new correctional facilities are coming to fruition, the bond between the DOC and DGS is close knit. Contracts are bid and blueprints are drawn through a cooperative effort of the two agencies.

A project after being completed is inspected by the Department of Labor & Industry before being utilized. This agency must approve usage and occupancy.

Issues arise concerning our system's impact upon our surrounding environment. These issues involve working with the Department of Environmental Protection. While these issues may be handled during construction or remodeling phases, the DOC remains cognizant of its long lasting effect on the surrounding communities' environments.

In the event of an emergency inside an institution or the surrounding community, the DOC is assisted by or provides assistance to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. Not only are drills held inside the facilities to prepare for emergencies, but drills are held at PEMA headquarters to prepare for large scale emergencies that would affect the institutions. These may be natural or man-made scenarios.

Each day inmates are paroled by a cooperative effort between DOC and Pennsylvania Probation and Parole. The lines of communication must be stellar in order to conduct day-to-day functions. This communication starts at the beginning of the inmates' incarceration and continues until they are granted parole. Even after being paroled, the communication line remains strong in the event the inmate/parolee is returned to incarceration.

The DOC works with the Department of Health and various county health offices regarding the care of inmates and the reporting of certain communicable diseases prisons may experience as a result of the close confinement of inmates.

The Pennsylvania State Police, along with local law enforcement, keep the DOC in business. The DOC shares information cooperatively with the PSP as both agencies encounter the same contingent. Currently, the PSP keeps the DNA database encompassing the samples sent from the DOC. The PSP also is responsible for investigating incidents that take place within our prisons.

These examples of interagency connections is just a small sampling of how the DOC works cooperatively with other agencies. Each cog in state government is intertwined with the others. The lines of communication and cooperation are necessary to make a complex operation run smoothly and efficiently and to successfully serve the citizens of this commonwealth.

Capitalizing on Staff Strengths

Recently, a team of DOC employees attended the National Institute of Corrections' training entitled Staff Analysis. The team, consisting of Cindy Rowe and Steve Freeman, both from the Bureau of Human Resources, SCI Rockview Superintendent Marirosa Lamas and Central Office's Security Division Captain Robert Cooper, traveled to Michigan as guests of NIC.

The training covered topics on how to capitalize on staff strengths and using those abilities for timely placement of staff in the right positions at the right times. Explaining how to expand their knowledge and understanding of basic staffing concepts, post identification, shift relief factors and staffing levels in both existing facilities and new operations.

The training was hosted and funded by the NIC. The NIC provides trainings in a variety of areas, such as performance based measurement system, conducting security audits, correctional industries, adult and juvenile female offenders, inmate behavior management, crisis intervention and offender employment are just a small list of the classes available.

The NIC is an agency with the U. S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons, that is a center of learning, innovation and leadership that shapes and advances effective correctional practices and public policy.

Persons having the responsibility for prison staffing, and those individuals with central office responsibility for monitoring staffing levels in federal, state and county facilities, are encouraged to attend the class.

To view a complete list visit the NIC at <http://nicic.gov>.

"This training provided a fresh look at institutional staffing, including discussion on relief factor, which is a function within my division. The training allowed us to receive input from not only the trainers, but also from other states to identify what is and perhaps is not appropriate when coming up with a relief factor. The training was part lecture and part hands-on training. It allowed us the opportunity to spend a day in a Michigan prison and do an actual staffing analysis, including completing the forms provided by NIC and ultimately presenting to the group at large our findings in terms of staffing. My responsibilities include overseeing manpower (i.e. staffing) surveys from the HR perspective, so this was definitely a training that was beneficial to me. I gained additional experience and training in this area."

Cindy Rowe, chief
Workforce Management Division

"What I found most interesting was the balance between designing and implementing a well-balanced staffing plan. You can set up a perfectly suited staffing pattern for an Institution, but if it is not maintained and managed correctly the facility can still run enormous overtime deficits."

Steve Freeman
Organization Planning Section
Supervisor

Certified Peer Support Specialist

In December 2010, the DOC received a grant through the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency to implement Certified Peer Support Specialist training for inmates in six state prisons. The grant will allow for the payment of the vendor who will train the inmates and will pay inmate certified peer specialists' salaries until the grant money is depleted. Then the wages will be absorbed into the institutional budget.

Under this grant, Peer Support Specialists will be trained to assist staff in providing direction in a housing community or program setting. This type of peer support is already in place in the DOC's therapeutic communities with success.

In September, SCI Cresson became the second institution to hold a graduation for a newly-offered inmate training. SCI Greensburg was the first to complete the training class for inmates, which consists of 80 hours of instruction followed by 60 days of on-the-job training in the special needs unit. The new certification is offered to the inmates with a strict set of criteria and will assist them in their re-entry efforts upon returning to society with employable skills. Other state prisons offering this training are SCIs Muncy, Retreat, Rockview and Waymart.

According to the DOC, approximately 43 percent of its inmates have or had at one time mental health issues and/or treatment in their lives. DOC special needs units house mentally ill inmates and segregate them from the general population. Staff on the SNU's must be trained to deal with the volatility of the inmates.

The expectation for this program is that by utilizing inmate peer specialists on the SNU's, the result will be less disruptive behaviors among this population. The approach is expected to increase stability of psychiatric symptoms among the SNU inmates. The anticipation will be a reduction in incidents and misconducts. The training and skills received will benefit the peer specialists by providing a usable job skill in a desirable market.

Jobs in this field have been expanding and many agencies hire peer specialists. Many agencies provide mental health services in a plethora of settings including residential programs, consumer and family satisfaction teams, advocacy organizations and drop-in centers. The PA Department of Public Welfare has established Peer Support Specialists as a civil service position with the PA Civil Service Commission to promote job creation in the private sector.

As with all employment, barriers exist. Inmates are cognizant of the criteria for this type of job position in the community and of the variety of clearances that are required. While it will not be a fit for all ex-offenders, the training will be beneficial to them in their day-to-day lives and certainly to those in the state's prison system.



Mary Finck, the DOC's Re-entry program manager, addresses inmate graduates of SCI Cresson's Peer Support Specialist Training.

Let's Be Clear

In the DOC, multiple layers of security are used to enhance the safety of staff and inmates. One of these layers is factored into determining the items that are available to be purchased by the inmates in the commissary.

Searches of cells and property are part of the daily operations of the prisons and to make the task easier and more efficient, many products are packaged and sold with clear wrapping.

Inmates' cells and property are searched for many reasons but one is to determine if the item has been altered.

In addition, dark covers provide spaces to conceal contraband. With the clear covers, officials can examine items without dismantling them. The contents being visible helps to eliminate a concern, and while it is not fool proof, it has proven to be an improvement.



Current items sold in the commissary with clear packaging:



- Sony AM/FM Cassette Player
- Clear Tunes CT-9 AM/FM Radio w/ear buds (hand-held)
- Clear Tunes CT-17 Personal AM/FM Radio (table top)
- Surge Protector
- Digital Converter Box
- Massey Desk Fan
- West Bend Desk Fan
- ID Holder
- Soap Dish
- Toothbrush Holder
- Mouth Guard w/out Strap
- Clear Tech Universal Adaptor
- Koss CL-3 Earbuds
- Typewriter Ribbon for the Swintec
- Various Food and Hygiene items w/ clear packaging