



correctional Newsfront

Corrections Population Decrease is Largest One-Year Drop Since 1971

Prison Reform Efforts are Showing Results

In January, Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel announced that the agency ended calendar year 2012 with a population of 51,184 inmates.

"This is a decrease of 454 inmates from the previous calendar year," said DOC Planning, Research and Statistics Director Kristofer Bucklen. "This also was the largest one-year drop in our population since 1971, and only the third time in the past 40 years that our population has shown an annual decrease rather than an increase."

"Our declining inmate population shows that we are on the right track to improving our corrections system," Wetzel said. "Gov. Corbett began leading this reform by ordering the corrections system to analyze and improve ourselves."

"This is a strong indication that the Corbett Corrections Reform is starting to yield results for the citizens of Pennsylvania. At the same time, the Governor initiated the Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI), in which he set the benchmark by urging JRI members to reach their goals in only a matter of months. In other states, similar efforts take years. Taking a bi-partisan, participatory planning approach, this process should allow us to build on the progress we've made within the administration."

This population decrease was a joint accomplishment involving many in the criminal justice continuum, especially the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, Wetzel said.

Fewer court commitments combined with policy changes that enable Pennsylvania to both reduce spending and increase public safety are beginning to take shape, Wetzel added.

"Gov. Corbett instructed state government to improve performance," Wetzel said. "System efficiencies are reducing backlogs in the parole process, enabling more people to be reviewed by the Parole Board."

"In this short period of time, we have seen the percent of parole board inmate interviews

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Secretary Wetzel Talks About...

Change - Leaning *Forward*



"Discipline isn't just punishing, forcing compliance or stamping out bad behavior. Rather, discipline has to do with teaching proper deportment, caring about others, controlling oneself and putting someone else's wishes before one's own when the occasion calls for it."

--Lawrence Balter, child psychologist and parenting expert.

This issue of "Correctional Newsfront" is filled with information about how our system is changing... for the better.

One article highlights how our population growth has stalled and even decreased.

Another article highlights our department's efforts to be in compliance with recent changes to the PREA law by naming a PREA compliance Manager.

The rebirth of an older program called Read to Your Children is reported.

We also are reprinting an article about alertness and avoiding complacency -- something we all should do every day.

One thing that remains the same are the wonderful examples of employee and inmate charity.

I trust you will find this issue informative.

Newsfront

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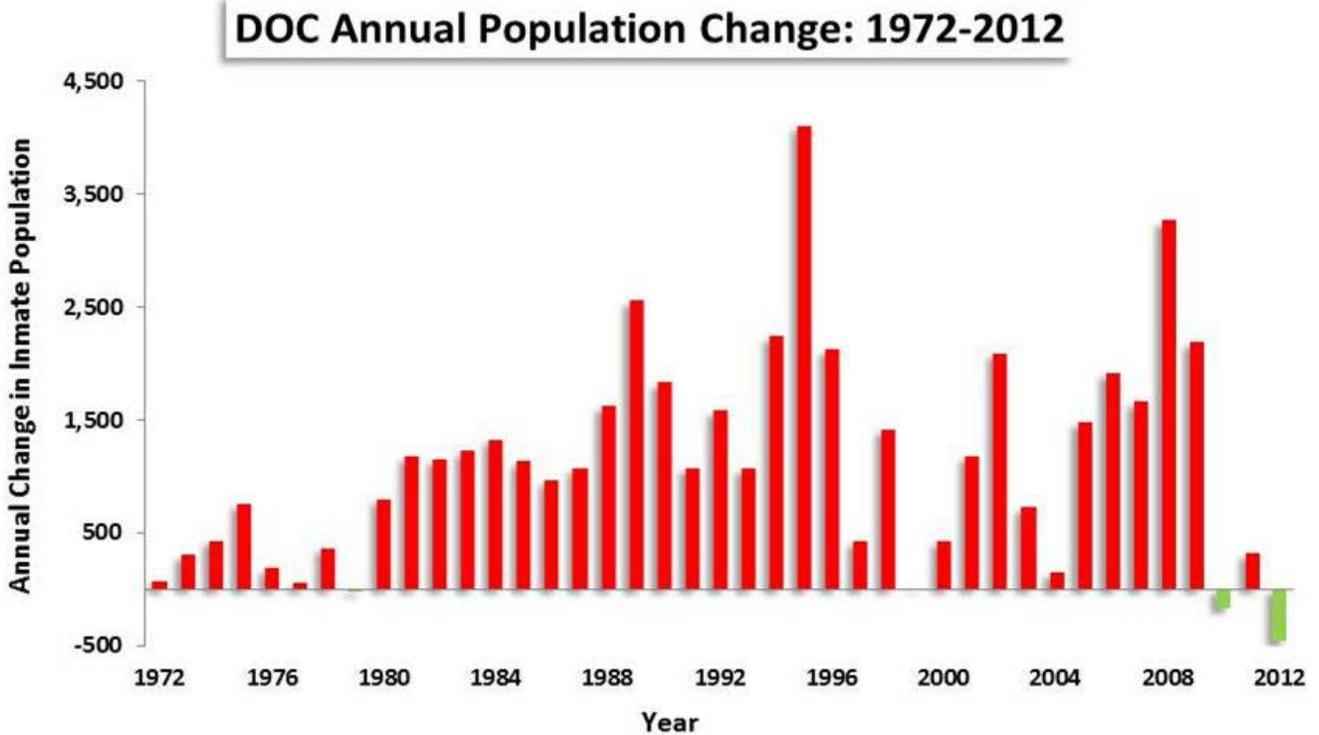
increase from 58 to 83 percent, which is the highest percentage of docketed cases ever seen historically," Wetzel said.

In addition, new court admissions were down 154 inmates, compared to 2011, and parole releases were up by 1,176 inmates.

Wetzel also pointed out that "short min" inmates – or those inmates committed to the DOC who have less than one year to serve until they reach their minimum sentence expiration date — are being classified quicker by DOC staff.

"This increase in the classification process means that 'short min' inmates are more likely to be prepared for parole at their minimum sentence date rather than months beyond that date," Wetzel said. "In 2012, the average time for classification of a short minimum sentenced inmate dropped from 75 days to 30 days (a drop of about a month and a half)."

"These indicators of progress are a credit to all staff across all agencies that we are doing what we need to do," Wetzel said. "We are heading in the right direction thanks to everyone's efforts. I especially want to acknowledge the leadership of Executive Deputy Secretary Shirley Moore Smeal, who has headed up the internal improvement efforts." Wetzel also said that his agency plans to release a new landmark recidivism report within the next few months which will become the benchmark for reporting recidivism and crime reduction resulting from corrections reform, as well as provide citizens the opportunity to measure the results.



Feicht Named Corrections' PREA Compliance Manager

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has taken steps to ensure compliance with Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) changes by contracting with Jennifer Feicht to serve as its contract PREA compliance manager/statewide coordinator. The contract is for a period of three years, effective Dec. 10, 2012.

"Contracting with Jennifer is in line with Gov. Tom Corbett's commitment to eliminating all victimization within our prison system," Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. "While we have followed PREA standards, the recent changes call for improvements, and I am confident that Jennifer will lead the agency in the right direction."

There are many changes to PREA. For example, each facility is required to have a PREA coordinator and will be subject to PREA audits. In addition, reporting procedures will be impacted as will the department's current method of searching inmates.



As PREA compliance manager/statewide coordinator, Feicht will be responsible for:

- directing the administration and all pertinent aspects of the Prison Rape Elimination Act program statewide
- providing technical assistance regarding the program management on a department-wide basis, as well as external stakeholders
- monitoring the implementation process of the project
- supervising research and data collection regarding prison rape and sexual violence in prisons
- providing assistance in key investigations
- preparing reports for DOC executive staff and the secretary of corrections
- overseeing the preparation and presentation of program specific training to offender and staff populations

"Jennifer will have access to agency and facility senior staff on a regular basis and will have the authority to work with staff, managers and supervisors to effectuate change if necessary," Wetzel added.

Prior to Feicht's appointment she worked for the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) as a contract liaison and a prison project consultant. She has a background of working to enhance the response to crime victims, communities and offenders through research, training and technical assistance.

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Korean Delegate Studied DOC Treatment Programs, Risk Assessment

Three individuals from the Correctional Service of South Korea visited the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections' Office of Planning, Research and Statistics in November to research the agency's treatment programs and risk assessment for sex offenders.

"We were pleased to meet with these individuals and to discuss with them how Pennsylvania's prison system works," Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. "We are proud of our system and look forward to sharing our knowledge and experience with others."

Touring the DOC were Han Hee Do, Lee Jaeho and Yoon Jongwon. They were selected for a Korean Government Overseas Fellowship, which is awarded only to a small number of applicants each year. The fellowship is designed for government officials helping Korea adapt to a changing international society.



In addition to Pennsylvania, the group visited the Minnesota DOC and one of Ontario's correctional facilities.

"Our system is widely recognized as one of the most, if not *the* most, advanced corrections systems in the nation for using research and evidence to guide every aspect of our practice including our treatment programming," said Planning, Research and Statistics Director Kristopher "Bret" Bucklen.

"Our use of research and technology to develop a more effective and efficient correctional system is one of our hallmarks. It is our hope that we can share our experience of developing a more rational and evidence-based corrections system with the Korean delegation and to learn from their experience as well," Bucklen said.

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She also served as a project assessment and technical assistance consultant with the Coalition of Pennsylvania Crime Victims Organizations; as executive director of the Victim's Resource Center Inc., located in Franklin, Pa.; and as direct services supervisor and prevention/education coordinator for PASSAGES, Inc., in Clarion, Pa.

Feicht, who earned a bachelor of arts degree with a major in psychology and a minor in women's studies from Clarion University of Pennsylvania, has served on the board of directors for the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape and the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She also served on the Keystone Crisis Intervention Team with the National Organization of Victim's Assistance.

Criminal Justice Experts Tour Prisons to Prepare for European Trip

In December, Pennsylvania criminal justice officials and policymakers concluded a two-day conference, sponsored by the Department of Corrections, to examine the state's prison system in preparation for a tour of corrections facilities and practices in Europe.

The European-American Prison Project, which is a new project managed by the Vera Institute of Justice in collaboration with the Pennsylvania DOC and funded by the Prison Law Office, aims to educate American and European policymakers about successful corrections policies and practices used in the United States and Europe.

The goal of the project is to advance the international discussion among professionals around what works in corrections, how to communicate those beliefs to stakeholders and stimulate reform efforts in the United States.

"Criminal justice reform is important to the governor and to this state," Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said.

"Earlier this year Gov. Tom Corbett spearheaded Pennsylvania's Justice Reinvestment Initiative. This bi-partisan effort to reform the system in Pennsylvania involved individuals from all aspects of the system. The experiences and information shared over this two-day conference fits in with our state's ongoing efforts to ensure our criminal justice system is efficient and effective," Wetzel said.

The conferences and facility tours, held at the State Correctional Institutions at Graterford and Chester, preceded the PA State Team's February visit to Germany and the Netherlands, which included tours of facilities and roundtable discussions.

"We have shared a lot of information over the past several months," Wetzel said.



Members of the European-American Project tour SCI Graterford.

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Officials tour the Hispanic therapeutic community at SCI Chester.

On the PA State Team are:

- Corrections Secretary John Wetzel
- DOC director of Planning, Research & Statistics Bret Bucklen
- Dauphin County District Attorney Ed Marsico
- Sen. Stewart Greenleaf (R-Montgomery/Bucks)
- Rep. Glen Grell (R-Cumberland)
- Rep. Ron Waters (D-Delaware/Philadelphia)
- County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania Deputy Director Brinda Carroll Penyak
- Executive Director of the PA Commission on Sentencing Mark Bergstrom
- Allegheny County Judge John Zottola
- Jane Janeczek, former Governor George Leader's daughter and Commonwealth Foundation board member

In late spring, Vera will convene state debriefing sessions where participants will discuss their experiences and determine whether concepts can be used in Pennsylvania and the United States.

Corrections Department Releases 2011 Annual Statistical Report

In October, the Department of Corrections released its 2011 annual statistical report.

"This report provides a statistical overview of inmates admitted to, incarcerated in and released from correctional facilities in 2011," Wetzel said. "During the past year, the department has implemented internal procedural efficiencies to help reduce inmate population. We also were successful in pursuing legislative reforms based upon best practices that have been successful in other states which should further reduce population and costs, ultimately resulting in increased public safety."

Wetzel said that one of the key methods to accomplishing the department's goals is the utilization of timely, accurate and reliable data to ensure effective planning and evaluation of reforms in a public and transparent manner.

"The department has historically and will continue to rely on data to inform us of our progress," Wetzel said. "Not only will this data aid us in achieving our reform goals, but this information also help us to effectively manage our agency."

Highlights of the 2011 report include:

- * On Dec. 31, 2011, the DOC's inmate population was 51,638 – a 0.6 percent increase from 2010's year-end population of 51,321.
- * There were no breach escapes in 2011.
- * On Dec. 31, 2011, the DOC incarceration rate in Pennsylvania was 405 inmates per 100,000 state residents.
- * More than half of the 2011 new court commitments were sentenced to a minimum sentence of two years or less.
- * Eighty-five percent of new court commitments received a maximum sentence of 10 years or less.
- * The average age of inmates serving life sentences in 2011 was 45 years.
- * The average time served for inmates released in 2011 was 47.4 months.

To view the report in its entirety, visit www.cor.state.pa.us and click on Research & Statistics, and then Annual Reports.

When is a Basketball Just a Basketball?

By Susan McNaughton
(Reprint of 2009 "Newsfront" article)

The other day, while leaving Central Office to go home, I noticed a basketball lying in a grassy area of our parking lot, which is adjacent to SCI Camp Hill's perimeter and several exercise yards. I didn't think much about it and figured some inmate had probably thrown it over the fence.

When I returned to work the next day, the ball was in the same spot. It remained there when I went to lunch later that same day.

I thought to myself, "What a shame it is that the ball was outside the perimeter and that no one had gotten it yet."

Many times during my years with the department, I have seen a variety of balls caught in the razor wire, but this was probably the first ball I have seen make it over the fence and so far out into the parking lot.

After returning from lunch, I decided to call Camp Hill to have someone get the ball. The Inmate General Welfare Fund paid for the ball and the inmates should get it back.

I had thought about tossing it back over the fence, but figured that I would hit the fence and set off the alarms (plus, that's not really

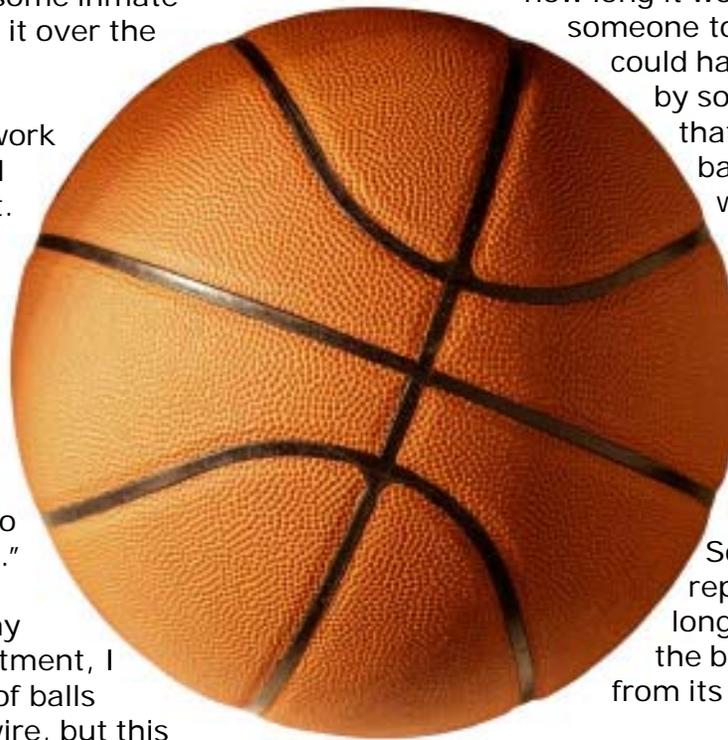
an appropriate thing to do), but I also wondered... what if the ball had been placed there by someone.

It could have been an alertness drill to see how long it would take for someone to notice it. Or it could have been placed there by someone in the hope that it would be tossed back into the prison without being checked. Believe it or not, the latter has happened in other jurisdictions, and prison officials found that the ball had been stuffed with drugs.

So, knowing that, I reported the ball. Not long after reporting it, the ball had disappeared from its resting place.

But the situation begs a few questions. What if that ball had been placed there by an outsider who was trying to get drugs into the prison? What if it had been a briefcase or a package? Aren't we all supposed to be alert to such things and report them? What if it had been a bomb?

Perhaps I over think things. I know I do, but sometimes we have to, especially in the line of work we are in.



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“Read to Your Child/Grandchild” Program is Reimplemented

Many years ago the “Read to Your Child/Grandchild” Program was available in every state prison, but some facilities eliminated it due to staffing and cost issues.

The DOC is bringing back this program beginning in Fiscal Year 2012-2013 with funding provided by the Inmate General Welfare Fund. The IGWF earns money through the sale of vending machine items in prison visiting rooms and through inmate telephone calls.

Coordinated by the DOC’s Bureau of Correction Education, the program’s mission is:

Read to Your Child/Grandchild is a program designed to increase the relationship between the child and adult, enhance family literacy, enrich one’s life through reading and to make a positive influence stressing the importance of literacy development through a shared reading experience.

Objectives of the program are to:

- motivate the inmate student and the child/grandchild to improve reading skills
- develop family communication and relationship
- build self-esteem/self-worth
- increase expectations of family members
- building family connections and positive bonds through reading and writing.

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As it turns out, in this case this basketball was just a basketball, but it could have been something more.

Sometimes in our careers we become comfortable with our routines. Things go smoothly and there are no problems, but that’s when we all tend to relax and let our guard down. I could have continued each day to walk by the ball and not give it another thought, but we all play a role in security ... even if it’s something that seems so harmless as a stray basketball.

Remember to be vigilant and observant. If you see something out of place, question it. You shouldn’t pick it up, but you should report it.

I’m sure facility staff must have thought I was silly for reporting the ball, but in these post-9/11 years and at a time when drug smuggling is becoming too tricky, was I?

The program works by having inmate students select and practice reading a book they believe will be of interest to their child/grandchild. They also have the option of preparing art work which can be used as a backdrop during filming. Once prepared, staff members videotape the reading. Then the book, the video and related artwork are sent to the child/grandchild.

The guardian of the child/grandchild are sent a letter at the beginning of the program to educate them about the program

Inmates convicted of sexual offenses involving a child or those higher than minimum security are not eligible to participate in the program.

Employees Receive National Award



Pictured from left to right are: CUSA Treasurer Todd Dunn; CUSA Chairman James T. Baiardi; SCI Mercer's Lt. Michael Glenn; and PA DOC Special Assistant to the Secretary Patti Stover.

On Feb. 6, in Las Vegas, SCI Mercer's Lt. Michael Glenn received the Corrections USA Image Award for heroic deeds performed earlier in 2012.

Lt. Glenn was commended in 2012 by the Pennsylvania State Police, Troop D, for his assistance in June 2012 when, after leaving work, he checked on an injured trooper who had been in the process of pursuing an individual. Glenn, after checking on the injured trooper, assisted another trooper in the apprehension of the individual after a brief foot pursuit.

Also receiving awards were SCI Chester's Sgt. Quilter and SCI Muncy's Sgt. Barger, who each received the Corrections USA Professional Award.

Corrections USA (CUSA) is a not-for-profit corporation formed by correctional officers in 1998 to provide national representation to correctional officers employed by federal, state and local governments. Their mission is to advance the correctional officer profession and serve as a national voice on issues of universal concern. CUSA educates the public, media and elected officials, advocates for change and provides a network of information on corrections.

Cambridge Springs Inmates Donate to Local Charities

Inmates at SCI Cambridge Springs recently participated in a community service project where they made prayer shawls and lap blankets for cancer center patients.

The inmates purchased the yarn and materials using their own funds, were given specific guidelines and created a variety of beautiful pieces. The items were donated to the Yolanda G. Barco Oncology Institute in Meadville, Pa.

SCI Cambridge Springs staff has already received correspondence from the Oncology Institute about the positive effect this donation has had upon their patients. It is truly a win-win situation for the inmates and the cancer patients.

A few other recent Fall/Winter inmate programs that have benefitted the local community include:

-- The Phoenix Inmate Organization sponsored the annual runathon and was able to make a donation of \$7,368 to Big Brothers and Sisters of Crawford County. The proceeds were generated by a general population concession fundraiser as well as through the participating inmates being sponsored by the inmate organization. This year the inmates walked/ran a total of 1,881 miles.

-- As initiated by inmates in the general population and coordinated by the Inmate General Welfare Fund and the prison's Honors Unit, a food drive was planned, and the inmates donated items such as boxes of oatmeal and peanut butter. The items, in turn, were donated to the local Center for Family Services and benefitted families during the holiday season.

-- The inmates in the Honors Unit made more than 100 winter hats for the at-risk troubled youth housed at Hermitage House, a facility that offers residential rehabilitative services and treatment through a variety of programs.

-- Inmates in the Create for Kids Program (funded by the Meadville Lions Club) continue to knit children's sweaters, hats, gloves and lap blankets for donation to those in need in the local community.



Employees Hold Food Drive

Earlier this year, SCI Smithfield employees held a food drive to benefit the Huntingdon Food Pantry. Robert Feagley, a representative from the food pantry accepted the donation. This is one of many charitable events prison staff holds to support their local communities.



Inmates Donate to Humane Society

Inmates from the State Correctional Institution at Forest donated \$250 to the Elk County Humane Society.

Hope for a Change, an inmate-run charitable organization, is dedicated to improving inmates' lives and giving back to the community.

The Elk County Humane Society provides the dogs for SCI Forest's Pups Assisting Wounded Soldiers Program. Shelter dogs live at SCI Forest for several months. Selected inmates socialize the dogs and train them for the American Kennel Club Canine Good Citizen Award.

The dogs then are available for consideration by Wags 4 Warriors, an organization assisting veterans with traumatic brain injury or post-traumatic stress disorder. If the dogs are not chosen by Wags 4 Warriors, they are available for adoption by the public at the Elk County Humane Society.

Mahanoy Employees Donate to Feed-A-Friend Campaign

SCI Mahanoy employees were especially generous this past year during the annual Feed-A-Friend Campaign, sponsored by WNEP-TV and Pepsi-Cola.

Cash donations and dress-down days resulted in the collection of more than 250 cans and \$600. Included in the cash total was a \$200 donation from SCI Mahanoy's Employee Recreation Association.

Cans and cash was donated to the Salvation Army in Pottsville, Pa.

Retreat Employees Donate Hats, Gloves and Coats

Employees at SCI Retreat conducted a coat, hat, glove and toy collection to help children throughout Luzerne County. Donated items were provided to Luzerne County Children and Youth and the United States Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots.

"We live and work in the surrounding community," said Superintendent James McGrady. "Our DOC family is always generous with their contributions, and I am proud of staff for stepping up to give to those less fortunate."

In response to the donations, Luzerne County Children and Youth Services Permanency Concurrent Planning Supervisor Brian T. Steve wrote:

"On behalf of the entire staff at Luzerne County Children and Youth Services, I would like to extend our sincere appreciation for the numerous coats, gloves, hats and other items that you donated to our agency. Thanks to your overwhelming generosity, we were able to make this winter season a little 'warmer' for the children we serve throughout Luzerne County and the state of Pennsylvania."



Pictured with the toys, from left to right, are: Major Kurt Girmen and Lt. Bernie Panasiewicz.

Rockview Employees Participate in Angel Tree Project



SCI Rockview employees continue to give back to the local communities in a very special way. Last year, as a result of an employee suggestion, SCI Rockview participated in the "Angel Tree" project, in conjunction with Centre County and Mifflin County Children & Youth Services. The "Angel Tree" project attempts to bring some sunshine into the sometimes dreary lives of children at Christmas time, which is a time when every other "good little boy or girl" they know receives a visit from Santa Claus.

The "Angel Tree" provides much-needed items, special needed gifts and other wished-for toys to some of the neediest children in the local communities. As a result of the generosity of SCI Rockview employees, approximately 60 young angels received much-needed Christmas gifts in 2011. Because of the success of the "Angel Tree" project, SCI Rockview employees once again were asked to help out in 2012. As is the usual tradition of SCI Rockview employees, once again they came through with even bigger and better for Christmas 2012, where employees provided gives for more than 115 young angels.

Somerset Employees Donate Gifts for Children

SCI Somerset employees bought presents for 69 children from their wish list in addition to wrapping paper for the group. The Alternative Community Resource Program works with children and their families who struggle with abuse, neglect of psychological and emotional disorders that keep them from living a normal, happy life. They provide an alternative to placement while providing comprehensive programs and treatment to address these issues. SCI Somerset has been working with this group for many years to provide gifts to those who may not receive them otherwise.

The SOAR inmate organization at SCI Somerset also gave to the Somerset community this year with a donation of \$1,000 to Joyce Murtha Breast Care Center; \$500 to Somerset County Humane Society; and \$300 each to the Somerset Food Pantry, Helping Hands Food Pantry and Berlin Food Pantry. SOAR raised the money through its annual Charity-a-Thon, a program at the facility with sporting events and sales of food to be eaten on that day. Approximately 720 inmates participated in this event in August, and the inmates were proud to make such large donations to charities that they chose.

All of these projects, by staff and inmates, show the generosity and care at SCI Somerset for those who truly are in need during the holiday season.

Bishop McFadden Visits SCI Coal Township

In November, Bishop Joseph P. McFadden, bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg, recently visited the State Correctional Institution at Coal Township in order to conduct Mass and bestow the sacrament of confirmation upon three prison inmates.

"Bishop McFadden's sermon inspired all of the inmates who attended the Mass," said SCI Coal Township Superintendent David Varano. "Everyone appreciates the fact that the religious community has not forgotten about incarcerated individuals."



SCI Houtzdale Holds Annual Graduation

In October, the executive and education staff at SCI Houtzdale held its 16th annual graduation for inmates who achieved their Commonwealth Secondary Diploma and for those who earned their GED.

This year's ceremony recognized 19 Commonwealth Secondary Diplomas. These students completed their graduation requirements and presented their senior projects on varied subjects to a panel of educators who then made recommendations to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Of the 11 students who attended graduation, the presence of their family members made it a special moment.

The 60 students who earned their GED during the past year were also recognized. The 22 students in attendance also had an opportunity to visit with family members.

Also recognized at this year's ceremony was one student who earned his barber license and one student who earned a paralegal certification from the Blackstone Career Institute.

The Institution's Journey for Change Committee was instrumental in providing refreshments and serving the graduates and their family members. In addition, the JFC committee provided each attending graduate two photographs at no charge.

The valedictorians for the Commonwealth Secondary Diploma and GED graduates spoke of their thanks for the support of their families and the help received from the education staff in earning their education and of their hopes for the future.

Mahanoy Hosts Regional Empowerment Symposium

In September, SCI Mahanoy hosted the Regional Empowerment Symposium with the theme of "Strive to be Happy."

Approximately 100 employees from SCIs Coal Township, Muncy, Frackville and Mahanoy and Wernersville and Allentown CCCs, and members from the Statewide Empowerment Committee, attended a variety of workshops.

Workshops covered issues such as personal balance-wellness, working smarter to achieve balance, your universe, laugh track, whining 101, games criminals play on correctional staff, and the secrets of reading body language provided by the PA State Police. Welcoming and opening remarks were provided by SCI Mahanoy Superintendent John Kerestes, DOC Deputy Secretary David Pitkins and SCI Rockview Superintendent Marirosa Lamas.

Prison Holds Inmate Job Fair

SCI Mahanoy held an inmate job fair in August for the first time in several years. Through the hard work of staff, fourteen community participants attended representing employers, service agencies and higher education from Berks, Dauphin, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne and Schuylkill counties. The job fair was attended by more than 160 inmates within one year of release. Both the inmates and the community participants had positive comments about the experience and were thankful for the opportunity to participate.



Update on the Security Threat Group Management Unit

The Security Threat Group Management Unit (STGMU) program was introduced earlier in 2012 as a way to eliminate Security Threat Groups – or gangs — from the prison system.

Due to a growing problem of these groups causing problems in the system the five-phase management program was initiated.

Inmates are centralized on one unit at the State Correctional Institution at Greene and are presented in-cell programming. Compliance, completion and adjustment effect progression through the phases, achieving more privileges; with eventual, successful return to general population in an institution or (projected) release to a step down housing unit if inmates choose to renounce their affiliation.

The unit began receiving inmates for the pilot program in August. A group of 62 inmates were processed and approved as the initial pilot group. Fifty-two inmates were received that week and the remainder were held off until routines could be established. The remainder are upper level leaders and more disruptive participants, and they are expected to be transferred here by the end of the year. Currently we are averaging 92 percent program compliance.

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"With the first three months behind us, most inmates have progressed to Phase 4," said STGMU Unit Manager Paul Palya.

Inmates that received misconduct reports or have participated in unauthorized activity are either being held for another 30 days, are frozen in their current phase or are suspended from the program.

"We only have one suspended for total refusal to cooperate," Palya said.

Inmates determined to be complete refusals will be evaluated every 90 days, and after three evaluations of still refusing, they will be discharged from the program and processed for "restricted release list" status. In this status, they will remain in segregated housing for the remainder of their sentence.

STGMU unit team observations are that most of the inmates in total compliance are motivated by completing the program and getting back to general population. Inmates already on the restricted release list can be removed from that status upon completion, which also is a big motivator. Unfortunately, there are some that are just going through the moves and continue to dispute their placement. We are very critical of their assignments and can identify those that are providing false or generic work results. Right now it is too early to tell how these inmates will progress.

As for the effect on the department as a whole, information has been received through our intelligence units and mail monitoring that inmates are aware of the program being initiated and are letting affiliates know they are going to be "laying low" and "backing off."

It's too early to tell, statistically, whether violence in the institutions has declined, but the word is out.

Community Corrections News



Earlier this year, Progress CCC and Riverside CCC passed their American Correctional Association audits. Each center achieved 100 percent each in their mandatory and non-mandatory standards. Congratulations to staff centers for their work in this area!

In November, Harrisburg CCC residents held a food drive to collect items for the local food bank. Another drive, but for a local animal shelter, may be in the works!

M a i l !



Angel Baez-Sprague, Center Director
Erie Community Corrections Center

Dear Mr. Baez-Sprague

On behalf of my "Probation, Parole and Community-Based Corrections" class and myself, I would like to thank you for the presentation and tour provided by you, Ms. Ebony Frith and Lt. Jamie Harmon on Monday, October 29th.

We learned a great deal from the visit and we all appreciate you and members of your staff spending so much time with us. It was very helpful to hear from various staff regarding their specific role and job functions within the center. Please allow this letter to serve as thanks and gratitude to all of your staff involved with the tour that day.

Should your facility ever be in need of research or research-related assistance that I and/or my students could provide or assist with, please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss.

Best regards,

Kevin E. Courtright, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Criminal Justice
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

DOC Honors Volunteers



Award recipients, in alphabetical order by state prison, are: Joseph Quinn, Ruben and Wanda Claudio, Charlie B., Donald Thomas Nelson, Jonathan Fedako, Tom Haberkorn, Florence Hozempa, Dale Williamson, Frank Dellenger, Tine Liebman, Anne Marie DiCesare, Thomas G. Cumpston, Sue B. Wiseman, Angela Witherow, George Vahoviak, Stephen T., Yasin Kucak, Lois Kilbert, Coralynn V. Davis, Lynne Jones, James D., Al Sievers, Michael P. Garrigan, Dwight Freed, John D., Christopher Maurer, Pat Santoro and Debra Germany.

In November, Department of Corrections officials recognized the contributions of 29 volunteers during the agency's annual banquet on Saturday, Nov. 3, celebrating those who give their time and talents to help meet prison inmates' educational, health and spiritual needs.

"Our volunteers truly epitomize the notion of 'proactive compassion,' donating thousands of hours of their own time specifically to impact the lives of our inmates," Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. "As an organization, we laud them for their efforts and the positive impact they have on our facilities."

Wetzel served as keynote speaker at this year's banquet, held at the department's Elizabethtown Training Academy. He spoke about the important services that volunteers provide to inmates and how they offer inmates guidance and hope.

Volunteers were presented with an attaché bag, provided by Pennsylvania Correctional Industries, and a framed letter signed by Governor Tom Corbett and Secretary Wetzel.