

# *Correctional Newsfront*

*The official newsletter of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections*



## **2016 News ~ July to September**

Week of September 26...

### **GO-TIME Savings!**

#### **DOC & Temple University Hospital Partnership Saves Costs and Improves Post-Incarceration Medical Care**

A unique partnership between Temple University Hospital and the Department of Corrections is realizing significant savings and improving the health of hundreds of inmates returning to the community. More than 600 inmates are currently being served and the program is expected to save more than \$21 million over five years.

"This unique partnership with Temple University Hospital benefits the DOC by providing a continuity of care and timely information sharing which will help inmates to experience a more successful return to society," Wetzelsaid. "The better the return experience, the less likely an individual will reoffend."

In mid-2015, the DOC joined with Temple to provide health care services for state prison inmates with infectious diseases by taking advantage of a federal program for reduced-cost pharmaceuticals.

Under the 340B program, drug manufacturers are required to provide outpatient drugs to eligible health care organizations at significantly-reduced prices. The program also enables covered entities to better leverage scarce federal resources, reach the optimum number of eligible patients and provide comprehensive services.

During the two-year period ending in fiscal year 2016-17, the program will yield a savings of approximately \$4.2 million for the Commonwealth. Over five years, the projected savings are expected to total more than \$21.6 million.

The program is currently serving more than 600 inmates diagnosed with infectious diseases with the expectation that more will be served in the future.

With 40 percent of DOC reentrants returning to the Philadelphia region, this local program ensures that they have an established patient status with a practitioner in the area and therefore provides continuity of care upon reintegration into the community.

The Governor's Office of Transformation, Innovation, Management and Efficiency (GO-TIME) works with state agencies to maximize efficiency, modernize operations and improve the delivery of services. The goal of the office is to exceed \$500 million in savings by 2020. GO-TIME has saved over \$156 million in the 15-16 fiscal year.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **GO-TIME Savings!**

### **DOC Realizes Energy Savings in Pilot Program**

In August, Governor Tom Wolf announced that the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has implemented a new energy savings pilot program that will reduce utility costs at State Correctional Institution Dallas by more than \$1.7 million over five years. This initiative is part of the Governor's Office of Transformation, Innovation, Modernization and Efficiency (GO-TIME).

"Department of Corrections has been a leader in working to reduce costs and improve outcomes at the same time," Governor Wolf said. "We are working to mitigate any and all costs in order to allow for more funding to go towards programs that help improve public safety and generate better outcomes."

The Guaranteed Energy Savings Act (GESA) provides an innovative financing technique that uses cost savings from reduced energy consumption to repay the cost of installing energy conservation measures.

The DOC expects significant utility savings from a reduction in facility water and electrical usage. The project also includes other energy conservation measures that will result in energy savings.

The savings for the 5-year period beginning in October and ending in June FY 2020/21 is expected to be \$1,725,000.

"We are always looking for ways to reduce prison costs," said Corrections Secretary John Wetzel. "The GESA project affords us the opportunity to not only save money but reduce energy usage as well."

The project plan involved replacing existing interior and exterior lighting with new light emitting diode (LED) lighting to improve the quality of lighting as well as reduce its energy costs and enhance security. The LED power supplies have a 100-year life expectancy that will significantly reduce maintenance costs, allowing electricians to fulfill other maintenance needs throughout the institution.

The DOC is exploring expanding the program to other state correctional institutions based on the success of the program at SCI Dallas.

GO-TIME was created by Gov. Tom Wolf in 2015 to maximize efficiency, modernize state government operations and provide the highest quality services. As a result, state agencies saved more than \$156 million in FY 15-16, exceeding the \$150 million savings goal he set by the Governor. Wolf has set a new GO-TIME savings goal of \$500 million by 2020.

To learn more about GO-TIME, visit <https://www.governor.pa.gov/go-time>

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Work Continues!

### Administrative Segregation/Violence Reduction Initiative

On September 26, 2016, more than 100 DOC employees of all classifications gathered again at the DOC Training Academy to listen to experts and to participate in committee meetings.

The day began with opening remarks from **Secretary John Wetzel**, who reminded everyone again of the purpose of the Administrative Segregation/Violence Reduction Initiative.

"It's not that we shouldn't use restricted housing, it about having a legitimate nexus between behavior, using restricted housing and public safety," Secretary Wetzel said. "And the work we do must be done while reducing violence."

Wetzel confirmed again the importance of a "bottom up" smart approach that involves line staff playing key roles in suggesting ideas and concepts and in making initiatives a reality.

#### Ad Seg/Violence Reduction Committees

Long-Term Segregation

Sanction Options/Intervention

Programming

Wellness

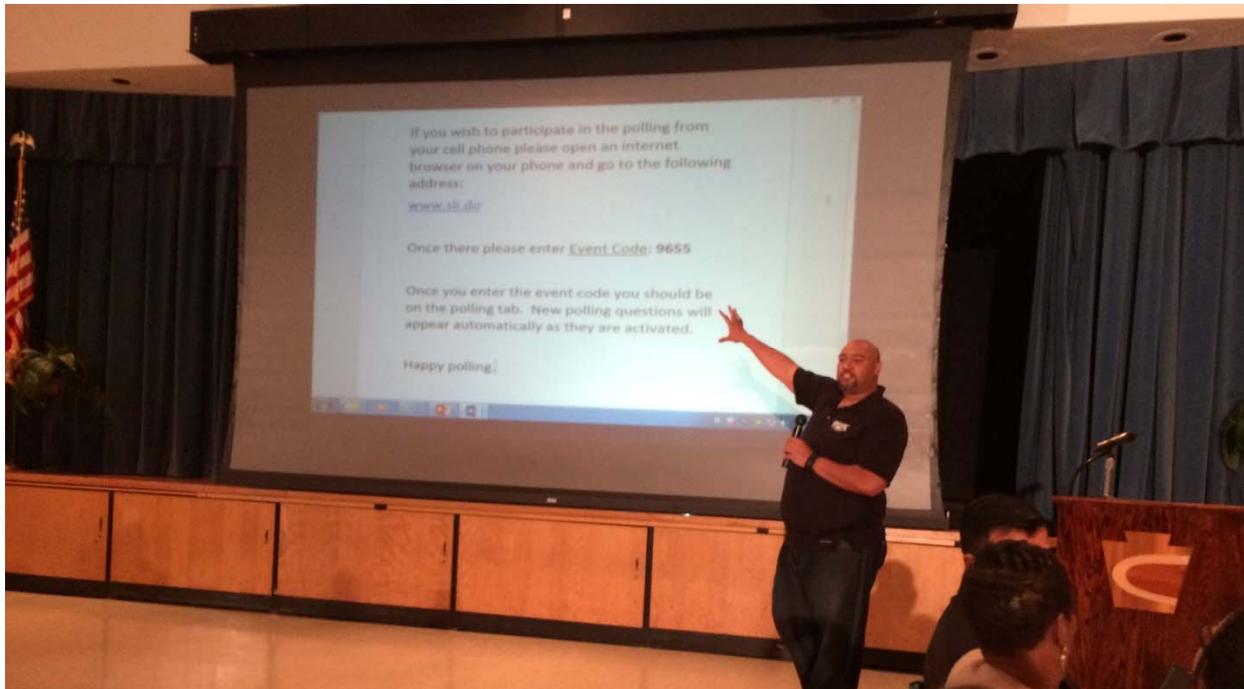
Conditions of Confinement

Female Inmates

Classification

Violence Prevention

Training & Culture



Following Secretary Wetzel's opening, employees heard from **SCI Somerset Superintendent Trevor Wingard**, who spoke about Swift, Certain and Fair (SCF), which was begun at his prison more than a year ago.

He spoke about the importance of receiving input from housing unit officers and staff and highlighted the fact that the program is doing so well that it was expanded to another unit. He also said that inmates ask to be moved to the housing unit where SCF is used, and employees talk about how they have lower stress, a quieter housing unit and better control of the unit.

"The program began in January 2016, and I have to say that for the first time in my career, this is the first initiative where staff and inmates buy into something and it's something that actually works," Wingard said.



"Inmates were made aware of the clear expectations and the various sanctions. They know that if they do a specific thing, a specific sanction will happen right then.

#### **Details of Somerset's SCF**

It involves an L-4 unit of 130 inmates who volunteer for the initiatives.

Initially everyone was skeptical.

It's about dealing with lower level misconducts and applying sanctions right away – at that very moment the inmate does something wrong.

"At the end of the day it is about violence reduction and staff going home not hurt," Wingard said.

After nine months, the initiative is showing positive trends. Previously inmate grievances would be in the double digits. Since implementing SCF, this unit only has had ONE inmate grievance.

The SCF initiative is being expanded to 12 other state prisons. Wingard stressed that what works for one prison may not work for another, so each prison has the ability to modify the program to suit their own facility.

Some of the immediate sanctions include loss of privileges like phone and yard. The inmates have little resistance, because they volunteered to participate and because they like knowing the consequences.

Somerset's inmate on staff assaults are down 69% from 2013!

The next speaker was **David Kennedy**, a world expert in violence reduction, who worked with several large police departments to study and reduce street violence.

Kennedy discussed his work which began in the mid-1980s and the lessons learned while studying gangs and crack markets in cities such as Los Angeles and Boston.

DOC officials are taking his work and adapting it to work in prisons.

### **Who is David Kennedy?**

David Kennedy is a professor of criminal justice at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

His areas of expertise are Gang violence, focused deterrence, problem-oriented policing, community policing, drug markets and domestic violence.

Kennedy is the director of the National Network for Safe Communities, where he supports cities implementing strategic interventions to reduce violence, minimize arrest and incarceration, enhance police legitimacy and strengthen relationships between law enforcement and communities. He helped develop the High Point Drug Market Intervention strategy; the Justice Department's Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative; the Treasury Department's Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative; the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Drug Market Intervention Program; and the High Point Domestic Violence Intervention Program.

He has been published in academic journals and is the author of Deterrence and Crime Prevention: Reconsidering the Prospect of Sanction and Don't Shoot, One Man, a Street Fellowship, and the End of Violence in Inner-City America as well as co-author of Beyond 911: A New Era for Policing.



**Following David Kennedy's presentation, DOC Secretary John Wetzel, David Kennedy and DOC Director of Planning, Research & Statistics Bret Bucklen discussed ways to prevent violence.**

In Boston at that time, there were 61 gangs with 1,500 members. Officials approached the most violent gang – due to gun use – and explained to them the consequences of their actions. The police were now going to focus on them specifically and make their lives uncomfortable. The police knew everything about them through surveillance work and were prepared to hit the gang members where it hurt them – whatever that may be.

Police told the gang – when guns come out, you lose. If you want things to go back to normal, put your guns down. In the end, Kennedy said, the police told the gang to hand over their guns and they did. This was known as "The Boston Miracle."

Kennedy said the goal is to get the group's attention and then stop the violence. And it always works.

The messages delivered to the gang/group were:

- The killing has to stop
- The heartbreak you are causing your others, etc., is intolerable – and have the mothers give that message
- Your community says this has to stop
- We – the police – will help you.

The whole city changed.

This is what is known as “Focused Deterrence.”

Kennedy provided the basic facts and principles that came out of this work in Boston.

“Criminal justice work – specifically policing – is aimed at individuals when it should be aimed at the group,” Kennedy said. “You can put group members in prison, but the crime continues. But if you make their lives uncomfortable, they will conform.”

Kennedy talked about how police knew gang members were stealing electricity and cable. Police told them that if they continued the specific activity they wanted stopped, the police would cut their power and TV. The gang members didn’t like that.

Kennedy said, “We can focus on small parts of a problem and focus our energy so we win and they lose.”

As legitimacy goes up, offending goes down.

Kennedy ended by telling the group, “People want the law – just not the way they’ve been getting it. So we need to focus on the very small number of actual offenders, offer them help to do better and be clear with the rules. The outcomes work every time.”

Just prior to lunch, **Angela Hawken** from [BetaGov](#) spoke to the group about BetaGov and the number of ideas DOC employee submitted since BetaGov began working with the DOC.

“Since we created the submission process for DOC employees to submit ideas, we’ve received more than 100 ideas,” Hawkins said. “Forty of those ideas have been launched or are about to be launched. Pennsylvania DOC is THE BEST agency to work with.”

Following lunch, the individual committees met. They later regrouped to report back to the entire group of co-workers and then were sent back to their facilities to continue their excellent work.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## DOC Adding Inmate Account Kiosks to Lobbies

On October 4, 2016, each Pennsylvania state prison will have a kiosk in its lobby from which individuals can add money to an inmate's account using cash, credit or debit cards.

The DOC has worked with GTL (the company that provides the kiosk services) and JPay (the company that provides inmate account services) to ensure that the two work seamlessly to process transactions.

It should be noted that while the DOC is making the kiosks available at its prisons, doing so does not change the way inmate accounts are handled – meaning no money should be submitted to the prisons' business offices – and applicable charges/rates apply. It also doesn't change the fact that individuals can still use the internet to place money on an inmate's account.

This is yet another way the DOC is working to be more "user friendly" for inmates' families and friends.

The fee for using the lobby kiosks is \$2.00 per transaction. This fee will be deducted from cash transactions – if depositing \$100.00 in cash, the inmate will receive \$98.00. If you are using a credit card, the fee will be added to the amount being charged to your card – if depositing \$100.00 via credit/debit card to an inmate's account, your card will be charged \$102.00 and the inmate will receive \$100.00.

The lobby kiosks are user friendly and will guide you through the deposit process. Please follow the prompts and information on the screen.

NOTE: Additional information about inmate accounts can be obtained from the DOC's website at [www.cor.pa.gov](http://www.cor.pa.gov) - select the "Inmates" drop down menu.

**Make Deposits for Inmates**

For Trust

Pay By

Pay Here with CASH & Credit/Debit Cards

Deposit to:

TRUST ACCOUNT - Funds can be used for Commissary Fund, Unit Store (Food, Purchases, Medical/Mental purchased), Message Link (Message Management)

LOBBY KIOSK: Located at Facility

The depositor should know:

- Offender's First and Last Name
- Offender ID # or
- Offender Date of Birth (including the year)

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

FAST, SECURE, AND CONVENIENT WAYS TO PAY

There's a fee to use automatic payment services.

Recarga de depósitos en efectivo o con tarjeta de crédito o débito.

GTL FINANCIAL SERVICES

**Cómo Hacer Depósitos para Presidarios**

Para Cuenta Fiduciaria

Pague

Pay Here with CASH & Credit/Debit Cards

Depósito en:

CUENTA FIDUCIARIA - Los fondos pueden ser utilizados para COMISARIO (Fondos para la tienda), Unit Store (compra de alimentos, compra de medicinas y más), Mensaje Link (Mensaje del presidiario)

KIOSCO DEL VESTIBULO: Ubicado en la dirección

El depositante debe contar con la siguiente información:

- Nombre y Apellido del Presidiario
- Offender ID # o Fecha de Nacimiento del Presidiario (Incluyendo el año)

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

MANEBA RÁPIDA, SEGURA Y CONVENIENTE DE PAGAR

Hay un cargo por servicio de pago automático.

Los fondos depositados a cuentas del presidiario cuando el sistema del certificado no dispone de los fondos suficientes para cubrir el importe del depósito.

GTL FINANCIAL SERVICES

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## SCI Huntingdon Holds Open House

On September 20, SCI Huntingdon held an open house for nearly 300 employees and their friends and families.

It was a beautiful evening, not too hot and not too cold, for touring the institution.

Special teams, including the Corrections Emergency Response Team, Corrections Rifle Specialist Team and Fire Emergency Response Team, were available to demonstrate their gear and answer questions.

In addition, employees who participate in the Canine Partners for Life program had the puppies in training on hand to greet visitors. Many maintenance shops and Correctional Industries shops were open for the guests to tour. Various other areas of interest such as the barber school, several classrooms, the library, the kitchen area, the chapel and the commissary were open. The Food Service Department provided cookies, ice cream and drinks for everyone at the end of their tour.



Week of September 19...

## Friends and Family Days for Juvenile Lifers

SCI Cambridge Springs held a Friends and Family Day on September 20 for juvenile lifers housed at the prison.



Similar events have been held at other state prisons so that juvenile lifers may reconnect with those closest to them in advance of the possibility they may be reunited outside the walls.

Juvenile lifers are individuals who were under 18 at the time they committed their crimes and were sentenced to life without parole.

That changed in 2012 when the United States Supreme Court held in *Miller v. Alabama* that it was unconstitutional to sentence a juvenile offender to mandatory life without parole.

Since the ruling, the DOC has been working with the Board of Probation and Parole and the Office of Victim Advocate to help prepare the some 515 affected inmates and crime victims' family members for the possibility they may be resentenced and released.

Steps being taken by the DOC include:

- Fast-tracking juvenile lifers into prison educational and treatment programs.
- Helping obtain various necessary identification documents such as Social Security cards.
- Providing a wide range of guidance for reentry.

- Reestablishing and strengthening relationships with family members and friends.

The Friends and Family Days held at prisons provide not only a time for reconnection, but also the opportunity to hear a variety of speakers provide details about a wide range of topics juvenile lifers will need to know about upon their release from prison.

It is the responsibility of each juvenile lifer to work with their attorney to petition the court for resentencing. A judge could sentence the individual to time served and put them on probation. In other cases, the inmate could be resentenced to additional years in prison up to and including life.

In all juvenile lifer cases, the DOC is working to provide individuals with the tools necessary to adapt to their circumstances no matter their outcome. Special monitoring and assistance by psychological staff is being provided to help individuals who once thought they would spend the rest of their lives in prison.

With hundreds of juvenile lifers from counties across the commonwealth now able to file court petitions in their cases, it may take several years before the courts hear these cases. Several individuals already have been released from prison, either directly to the community or to community corrections centers.

DOC Secretary John Wetzel has said that he wants to set up these individuals for success and has directed resources be made available immediately to assist them. Those who are released to parole supervision will be housed for a period of time at a community corrections center so the DOC and parole staff can help them transition back home.

After spending several decades in prison, adjusting to "life on the outside," with all of the changes that have taken place in society and with technology, could cause



anxiety for juvenile lifers. That's why the DOC feels that a transition through a community corrections center is so important to an individual's success beyond the prison walls.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Taking a Pledge to Prevent Suicide

As part of Suicide Prevention Month, SCI Albion's Suicide Prevention Committee discussed a number of ways to raise awareness among inmates at the prison. One way that this is being done is to have inmate Certified Peer Support Specialists conduct workshops related to suicide awareness and prevention for interested general population inmates.

One of the CPSS' at SCI Albion also will conduct a workshop for inmates on basic suicide education and myths. As part of his workshop, he developed a pledge that all CPSS inmates are going to sign and that all inmates attending the workshop will have a choice to sign as well.

The members of the prison's Suicide Prevention Committee really liked this pledge, especially because it promotes looking out for one another and "selflessness" instead of "selfishness."

This pledge also will be turned into a mural in the education building and in the visiting room so that it is available to as many inmates and their families and friends as possible.

It is hoped that this pledge will be incorporated into other state prisons' programming.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

### The Guardian Pledge

I, \_\_\_\_\_ hereby pledge to be a Guardian for those struggling with thoughts of suicide, and an advocate for those without a voice. I will seek to gain the knowledge needed to understand and assist those in pain. With this knowledge I will be equipped to recognize the warning signs of someone who may be contemplating suicide and with it I will....

- Watch after those who feel that no one else is watching
- Be the one to hear them when no one else will listen
- Provide hope to those who feel as though all hope is lost
- Be a light for anyone when all they see is darkness
- Understand the pain that hides behind their smile
- Not be afraid to ask if someone is contemplating suicide
- Report and ask for assistance when someone threatens to harm themselves or take their own life
- Encourage them to seek help
- Do what is necessary to save the lives of those who feel as though their lives aren't worth saving
- Show compassion and understand that I can make a difference in someone else's life

By signing this I am taking the first step towards preserving the lives of those around me and selflessly give this part of me to anyone in need.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## End of the Summer BBQ

SCI Rockview recently held its end of the summer chicken barbeque -- sponsored by the prison's Empowerment Committee and employee association.

Rockview retirees were invited back to share in the luncheon with staff. Approximately 55 retirees responded to the event.



Pictured are Brian Miller (CEVC), Greg Richner (CPTI) and Capt. Herb Probst, turning racks of barbeque and bread/butter chicken.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Muncy Holds Inmate Graduation



Congratulations are in order for several inmates at the State Correctional Institution at Muncy. On September 8, 2016, 40 inmates participated in SCI Muncy's annual graduation ceremony, held in the facility's chapel.

Although several other inmates also received diplomas and certification, many were not able to attend because they were released prior to the ceremony. Graduates were able to invite outside guest to share in their special accomplishments, and a light luncheon was held after the ceremony in the institution's center circle area to honor the graduates.

Thirteen students obtained their secondary school diplomas, while the remaining 27 students graduated from several different vocational programs, including Business Education, Cosmetology, Building Trades, Computer Aided Design, Machine Shop and Stratford Career Institute.

DOC Bureau of Correction Education's Chief of Specialized Facilities Program Elizabeth Hnylanski served as this year's guest speaker.

Graduates and guests were treated to two different musical selections performed by SCI Muncy's graduation choir. Superintendent Robert Smith and Deputy

Superintendent for Centralized Services William Frantz, along with the prison's Education Department employees attended the event, congratulated graduates and present diplomas and certifications.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## SCI Mercer Holds School Supply Drive

On August 28, Fayette County was hit by severe storms and extensive flood damage, notably to the Connellsville Area School District, that resulted in a state of emergency being declared for this area. Carts, wheelbarrows and a forklift were used to haul out mud-soaked computers, televisions and school supplies from the flooded basement of the Connellsville High School. As the high school was under eight feet of water, it will have to undergo a massive restoration process.



To support the school, SCI Mercer employees and inmates held a School Supply Drive to collect donations for the Connellsville area students. Staff made cash donations as well as school supplies and backpacks. Inmates donated \$367, along with various supplies such as dictionaries, notebooks, pencils and erasers.

It is always nice to be able to help when and where it is needed. Thanks to those who generously donated.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Fayette Holds Local Employee Symposium**

On September 23, SCI Fayette held its 6th local employee symposium, which was sponsored by the prison's employee Empowerment Committee.

In addition to SCI Fayette staff attending, employees from SCIs Greene, Laurel Highlands, Pittsburgh and Somerset participated.

The symposium opened with guest speakers Dave and Mary Neese speaking about "The Skylar Promise."



According to information on [www.gofundme.com](http://www.gofundme.com), Skylar Neese was murdered in 2012 by two people she thought were her best friends.

According to Wikipedia, Skylar Neese was an American girl who disappeared from her home in Star City, West Virginia around midnight on July 6, 2012.<sup>[1]</sup> Neese's remains were found on January 16, 2013, in Wayne Township, Greene County, Pennsylvania.<sup>[2]</sup>

On May 1, 2013, teenager Rachel Shoaf plead guilty to second-degree murder. Shoaf told authorities that she and another teenager, Shelia Eddy, both friends of Neese, planned and carried out Neese's murder.<sup>[3]</sup> Neese's disappearance led to new West Virginia legislation that made changes to the Amber Alert missing child alert system.<sup>[4]</sup>

Other programs offered during the symposium included:

- "Living the Life you Choose"
- "Developing a plan for life"
- "Bad, Worse, Worst: Antisocial Personality Disorder, Sociopathy and Psychopathy"
- "Cyber Security"
- "Gun Laws"
- "Security Threat Groups and Sovereign Citizens Group"
- "Civil Rights and Civil Liabilities"

As a token of its appreciation the Empowerment Committee provided each presenter with a blanket with the SCI Fayette logo on it.

Lunch included pizza and an ice cream bar, all provided by the Empowerment Committee and the prison's Culture Change Committee.

---

## References

1. ^ [Jump up to:](#) <sup>a b</sup> Kelly Rippin, "Father of Star City Teen Begs for Return Home," WBOY News, August 2, 2012. <http://www.wboy.com/story/19069371/father-of-star-city-teen-begs-for-return-home>, Retrieved May 31, 2013.
2. ^ [Jump up to:](#) <sup>a b c</sup> CBS News Crimesider, "Skylar Neese Death: Body Found in Pennsylvania is Missing West Virginia Teen, Federal Officials Say," March 14, 2013. [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504083\\_162-57574289-504083/skylar-neese-death-body-found-in-pennsylvania-is-missing-west-virginia-teen-federal-officials-say/](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504083_162-57574289-504083/skylar-neese-death-body-found-in-pennsylvania-is-missing-west-virginia-teen-federal-officials-say/) Retrieved May 31, 2013.
3. ^ [Jump up to:](#) <sup>a b c</sup> Kim Freda, "Court Transcript: Shoaf and Co-conspirator Planned Skylar Neese's Murder," WBOY news, May 16, 2013. <http://www.wboy.com/story/22274120/court-transcript-shoaf-and-co-conspirator-planned-skylar-neeses-murder>, Retrieved May 31, 2013
4. ^ [Jump up to:](#) <sup>a b c</sup> Shauna Johnson, "House Approves Skylar's Law," West Virginia MetroNews, March 27, 2013. <http://wvmetronews.com/house-approves-skylars-law/>, Retrieved May 31, 2013.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Laurel Highlands Hold Friends and Family Day for Juvenile Lifers

On September 21, 2016, SCI Laurel Highlands held a Friends and Family Day for the juvenile lifers residing there as well as some of the reentrants in the transitional housing unit. Many community agencies present -- such as CareerLink, Good Will Industries, Community Action, PA DMV, Peer Star, Healthcare Navigators -- to offer guidance, advice and support to the participants. Additionally, the event was well attended by the Bureau of Community Corrections, PA Board of Probation and Parole members ranging from institutional agents, reentry parole agents, ASCRA agents, regional managers and supervisors.



The day kicked off with a welcome from SCI Laurel Highlands Deputy Superintendents Michelle Houser and Leo Glass and Classification & Program

Manager John Cree. They were followed by a presentation from Regional Reentry Administrator for the Western Region Janeen Christ that included a PowerPoint presentation about the use of virtual reality to assist and alleviate some stress for those individuals facing the possibility of release from incarceration.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Speak UP Competition Held

On September 20, 2016, SCI Laurel Highlands' Transitional Housing Unit (THU) reentrants participated in the 2nd Annual Speak UP competition, which is a public speaking competition stemming from reentrants who have previously completed a public speaking workshop in the THU. Reentrants voluntarily sign up and are provided with two options for a topic on which to speak. Ten reentrants showed off their newly acquired speaking skills.

A panel of judges was comprised of Superintendent Jamey Luther, Deputy Michelle Houser, Security Captain Ben Grove, CCPM John Cree and Lieutenant John Beers.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Celebrating 20 Years of Operation

In celebration of SCI Laurel Highlands' 20th Anniversary, staff enjoyed a picnic lunch which was served in the staff dining hall by Superintendent Jamey Luther and department heads. Food was provided by the Employee Association and the Empowerment Committee.

Also to celebrate the 20th Anniversary, 20 staff were winners of a Sheetz gift card donated by the Employee Association.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Week of September 12...

## Rockview Donates Crops

Last month, SCI Rockview's farm provided 3,480 pounds of sweet corn, or approximately 6,000 ears, to the Central PA food bank. In addition, last Tuesday (Sept. 6), the two-acre garden at Rockview's nursery provided an additional 1,446 pounds of fresh eggplant, peppers, cauliflower and broccoli as well.



Not only has Rockview donated the fresh food to charity, it has supplied other PA state prisons with sweet corn and Rockview and Benner Township kitchens with other fresh produce.

The prison is still in the process of disseminating sweet corn and produce and also just began shipping potatoes, so final numbers aren't available yet.

The photo depicts Rockview inmates harvesting tomatoes and is intended only to illustrate the general process of harvesting.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Albion Holds Employee Symposium

On September 8, SCI Albion's Empowerment Committee held its local symposium for employees. The event focused on embracing change in the DOC and the community. Staff from SCI Cambridge Springs, SCI Mercer, SCI Forest and the Erie CCC were



invited. Guest speakers included DOC Regional Deputy Secretary Steven Glunt, Superintendent Michael Clark, Mental Health Advocate Lynn Patrone and Dr. Parris Baker from Gannon University. Besides having these dynamic speakers, the committee also provided an array of mental health and cancer awareness literature.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Delilah's Adoption is Complete!

Delilah, a four-month-old Blue Merle Cocker Spaniel who is blind in her right eye and partially blind in her left eye only seeing shadows, was recently adopted by a Coal Township employee.

She is doing well in her new home. She follows commands, has had no accidents and loves going for walks.

Delilah's new family absolutely loves her!! They say, "Delilah is the sweetest thing ever!"

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



## Expanding Dog Training Programs

SCI Chester today became the 20th state correctional institution in Pennsylvania to establish a dog training program.

The start of the Chester program comes just months after SCI Mahanoy began its dog training program in July with six rescue puppies and 12 inmate handlers.



**Activities Specialist Ryan Shayka poses with Addie and Harvey, SCI Chester's first dogs that will be trained by inmates.**

---

The P.U.P. Program, which stands for Puppies Unleashing Progress, at SCI Mahanoy while inmates take care of them, train them, and prepare them for adoption to forever homes.

Amy and Steve Eckert, veteran trainers and owners of Brierwood Boarding Kennels in Schuylkill County, come twice a week to work with the inmate handlers and teach them how to care for and train the puppies.

The inmate handlers learn to housebreak, groom, and train their dogs, teaching them to sit, go into their kennel, and walk on a leash.

"The puppy program has produced a swift and noticeable atmosphere and morale boost here at SCI Mahanoy, said Superintendent Theresa DelBalso. "These puppies bring instant smiles to staff and inmates alike and we are increasing their benefit to include programming on all housing units. Most programs take some time to make an impact but this one has brought immediate positive changes to any and all who take the time to interact with the puppies and their trainers – an investment in time, planning, and resources that is well worth it."

Since the start of the program, 10 puppies have graduated from the program and found new "forever" homes. Several staff members have adopted dogs from the program and they report that the dogs are all doing well in their new homes.

In addition to basic dog obedience training, the inmates in the program have also learned other valuable pet grooming skills including bathing, nail clipping, and ear cleaning. In the near future the inmate's will also be participating in a pet CPR certification, where they will attend a training and earn a certificate upon successful completion.

---

The first prison dog training program began at SCI Cambridge Springs in 2001. Since then hundreds of dogs who might have been euthanized at shelters have found permanent homes. Many others are now helping disabled people as certified service dogs. The goal is to have dog training programs in all 26 state institutions.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Celebrating 30 Years of Specialized Service to Children**

Being a mom behind bars doesn't mean family bonds have to be broken. In fact, sometimes frayed relationships can be strengthened thanks to the dedication of inmates, staff and volunteers.



From the artwork on the walls, to the comfortable furniture, soft lighting and toys for all age groups, Project IMPACT at SCI Muncy has the feel of a home.

This model program is now celebrating 30 years of making connections stronger between incarcerated women and their families.

What started as a small volunteer program on September 13, 1986, Project IMPACT (Inside Muncy Parents and Children Together) has become an institution within an institution. Project IMPACT is a special visitation center in which inmates and their children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews and siblings come to keep family ties alive.

Initially funded by a local community church organization and other community donors, Project IMPACT grew and was later staffed by outside contract employees. In mid-1999, the Department of Corrections officially assumed responsibility for and supervision of Project IMPACT.

At an anniversary celebration held at the prison on August 11, Superintendent Robert Smith welcomed the group, which included DOC executive staff, families, along with current and past Project IMPACT volunteers and staff, and spoke about the significance of their work.

Scott Williams of Project IMPACT in Williamsport, Pa., who was the keynote speaker at the grand opening of Project IMPACT, discussed the history of the program, and outlined the many services that volunteers and contract employees provided to incarcerated mothers and their children.

Janet Kelley, special assistant to Secretary of Corrections John Wetzel, shared both personal and professional thoughts about the importance of maintaining and nurturing the bond between mothers and their children.

Several inmates told the Williamsport Gazette that the program was "life-changing" and allowed them a sense of normalcy with their children.

"This program was a lifesaver," one said. "This is an enriched environment where I get to see my kids. They keep me going while I'm in here."

Four current SCI Muncy employees also were recognized for their exemplary work at Project IMPACT – Deputy Superintendent for Facility Management Wendy Nicholas, Special Education Teacher Matt Shively, Psychological Services Specialist Susan Springer and Corrections Counselor 2 Latisha Spigelmyer.



**An SCI Muncy inmate shares quality time with her son during the recent celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Project IMPACT.**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Coal Township Employees Give to Children's Miracle Network

SCI Coal Township employees recently donated to the Children's Miracle Network Telethon by participating in the Janet Weis Children's Hospital 2016 Caring for Kids T-Shirt fundraiser.

Each year, companies, schools, organizations and individuals come together for a common cause to make miracles happen at the Janet Weis Children's Hospital. SCI Coal Township's participation resulted in a \$1,540 donation to the Janet Weis Children's Hospital.

Corrections Counselor Mike Wegrzynowicz presented the check at the telethon in June at Danville Geisinger.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Welcome Back!

SCI Coal Township Medical Department employees recently welcomed Registered Nurse Helen Frye-Lewis back to work after a year-long deployment to Afghanistan.

"We are so proud of Helen and thankful for her safe return," said prison Health Care Administrator Karen Merritt.

Welcome back, Helen!



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Thanks Received from an Inmate's Family Member

I just wanted to write and commend you for Coal Township prison, where my son is currently incarcerated.

He has been to several facilities throughout the state of Pennsylvania, and by far this prison is the best.

I visited him on Friday, and I must say, that I was very impressed. The guards (corrections officers) were extremely friendly and helpful. They went out of their way to assist me with anything that I needed.

The visiting room was absolutely beautiful and very comfortable to be in.

When I met with my son, he also stated that he was happy there and that it was the best prison he has been in. He stated the guards actually treat him like a human being.

This is quite different from other facilities.

I just wanted to commend the staff there and the guards because they were absolutely wonderful.

Although no one wants to have a loved one in prison, my mind is at ease knowing that he is comfortable there.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Mahanoy Gets New Group of Pups

SCI Mahanoy employees are processing a new group of rambunctious "inmates." Hugo, Sprite, Raja, Sheeba and Eve arrived in the last week to begin serving their six-to-eight-week sentence. They will be trained by inmates at Mahanoy under the supervision of professional trainers from Brierwood Boarding Kennels in Pottsville, Pa. This summer Mahanoy became the 19th state prison in Pennsylvania to start a dog training program. The first group of puppies finished their training and were paroled to good homes last month.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Smithfield Opens New Unit

SCI Smithfield is slated to open a nine-bed Behavior Modification Unit on September 14, 2016. In preparation of this new unit's operation, an open house was held for employees on September 9.



**SCI Smithfield employees tour the newly-opened Behavior Management Unit.**

The Behavior Management Unit (BMU) is designed to provide management, programming and treatment for inmate who exhibit severe personality disorder with functional impairment, chronic disciplinary issues and demonstrate an inability to adapt to a general population setting.



This is a secure diversionary unit for mentally ill inmates who are not acutely mentally ill and do require a secure setting due to their demonstrated problematic behavior in less secure environments. The unit is intended to provide focused staff interaction, programming and behavior management for this select inmate population. The focus of the BMU is to convey sufficient skills in behavioral control, coping and compliance with recommended interventions.

**Pictured is the 6-2 unit officers along with unit management staff and the deputies. Back row: Deputy Wakefield, Candace Snyder, Officer S. Glasgow, Sgt. T Miller, Deputy Chism, Officer Wasko. Front row: Ashley Shope, Lt. J. Williams, Officer Dell**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Family and Friends Day Thanks

On September 3, 2016, SCI Laurel Highlands held a Family and Friends Day. The prison holds this event annually, and it is open to all inmates.

*Here is an e-mail received from an inmate's mother:*

*Just wanted to thank you for The Friends and Family day this past Saturday. What a wonderful day. So great worshiping next to my son. So nice to see someone like you, that truly cares about these inmates. I have been in the system, off and on for yrs with my son, who suffers with addiction. I must say Laurel Highlands is a wonderful place as far as prisons go. 99% of the people who work there have been phenomenal. My prayer is that there will be more people who love their job and care for these individuals. May be the only time they get that kind of care. Too often inmates are thrown away and looked down upon.*

*This day was wonderful.*

*Do you have a list of the songs we sang, and besides amazing grace were these songs written by inmates? I would like to look up the words to the second song we sang. Words really hit home.*

*Thank you again, keep up the good work.*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of September 6...

## Family and Friends Day

SCI Benner Township officials recently held a Friends and Family Day for juvenile lifers at the prison.

The special day was intended to give juvenile lifers a chance to meet with their family and friends and outside organizations to discuss their possible re-entry. It also gave them the opportunity to meet with friends and family of other juvenile lifers so they could talk about and share their concerns for their loved one.

The day included guest speakers from the Wernersville Community Corrections Center and the PA Prison Society. Inmates were also afforded the opportunity to speak and express their gratitude towards their family.

Staff, inmates and family and friends all gathered to show support for individuals who now have the possibility of returning home after being told for years that they would never see outside of the fence again.

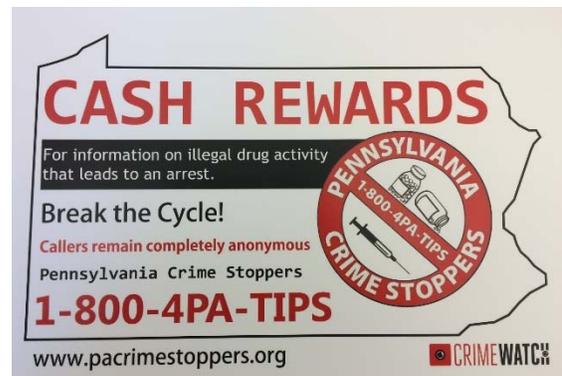
To learn more about the juvenile lifer issue, please visit the DOC's website at [www.cor.pa.gov](http://www.cor.pa.gov). Select General Information and then Juvenile Lifers Information.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Reporting Criminal Activity

The DOC's Bureau of Community Corrections and Pennsylvania Crime Stoppers are teaming up to fight illegal drug activity in DOC centers and communities. These posters were distributed this week to every community corrections center and contracted facility across the Commonwealth. They will be displayed in areas where reentrants will frequently see them.

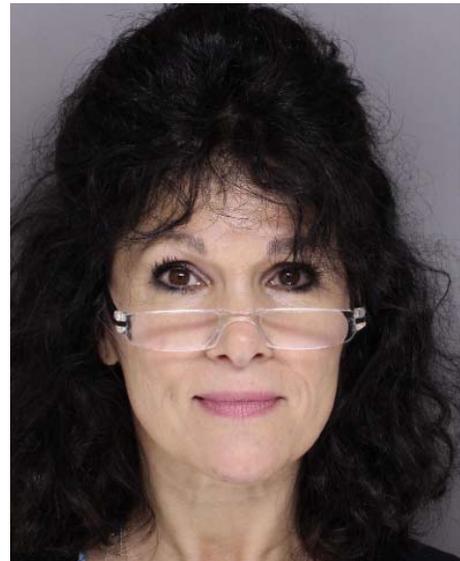


Pennsylvania Crime Stoppers will contact the DOC by phone and email when they receive a tip about illegal activity in a DOC center. Depending on the information received, reentrants may be paid by Pennsylvania Crime Stoppers for tips that lead to an arrest.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Drum Named DOC's Health Care Systems Advocate**

Earlier this month, Kimberlee Drum was named the director of the DOC's Office Health Care Systems Advocate. A newly-created position, the Health Care Systems Advocate is responsible for identifying, monitoring and evaluating the delivery of health care services to the inmate population. This individual also is responsible for the planning, development and implementation of policies and procedures relative to the health care advocacy needs of the department.



"Similar to the DOC's Mental Health Advocate, this newly-created position of Health Care Systems Advocate is responsible for performing duties that protect and advocate for inmates to ensure they receive appropriate health care while in the custody of the DOC," Secretary Wetzel said.

Wetzel said the DOC strives to do its best in all areas, including inmate health care and this position will reinforce that commitment.

"This is not indicative of any problems. Kimberlee's appointment allows this agency to be proactive in its efforts to improve processes," Wetzel said

Wetzel said Drum, who will report to both him and his deputy secretary for administration, also will:

- Make regular facility visits
- Recommend improvements to services
- Improve outreach to inmate families
- Respond to and investigate complaints about services received from inmates, inmates' families, other medical services providers and other agencies
- Advocate on behalf of inmates to ensure the DOC is meeting recognized needs
- Assist in developing health care related policies and procedures
- Provide program assistance and technical support for complex care needs
- Review elements of the DOC's quality improvement plan
- Review cases referred to the DOC's Central Office Gender Review Committee

Drum is a 30-year employee of the Commonwealth, having worked as a psychiatric nurse, and later as RNS, at the Harrisburg State Hospital for 19 years until its closure in 2006.

From 2006 until 2013, she served as a community health nurse supervisor with the PA Department of Health providing direct clinical oversight of communicable disease management in five of the 13 counties in the South Central District. Services included immunization and TB clinic, STD testing and counseling, animal bite investigations, as well as H1N1 Pandemic initiatives and activities. Additionally, she supervised the Chronic Disease Team, a team of six specialty community health nurses who provided health educational services throughout the South Central District.

For the past three years Drum served as the RNS for Loysville Youth Development Center.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Inmates Paint Mural in Honor of U.S. Military**

In August, SCI Laurel Highlands revealed a mural in honor of our Armed Forces. According to Ryan Yoder, who is the Veteran Services Coordinator at LAU, the mural was initiated, designed and painted by inmates at the institution. In addition, the inmates chose to utilize the officer station as its canvas, in honor of the many DOC staff who have served our great Nation.



Pictured are Corrections Officer 1 Darren Deneen and Corrections Counselor 2 Ryan Yoder, whom are U.S. Marine Corps veterans.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Rockview Donates Nearly 5,000 Pounds of Food**

Earlier this week, SCI Rockview officials donated 4,926 pounds worth of sweet corn and fresh vegetables to Harvest Now.

Harvest Now is a non-profit organization out of Connecticut that works with agencies/organizations to grow additional crops/food items that are then donated to various food banks/pantries to help feed the hungry. The organization works with nearly 2,500 organizations throughout the United States.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of August 29...

## Turning Over Historic Items

On August 31, PA Historical and Museum Commission Division Chief Cynthia Bendroth and Archivist Tyler Stump visited SCI Waymart to examine old documents from the Farview State Hospital era. They also were given a tour of SCI Waymart, including the Forensic TC units. They were thrilled to have a chance to preserve several pieces of Pennsylvania history by bringing a number of items (including an admission book of Farview inmates from 1912 and a discharge book, old photos, etc.) back with them. They will keep these items in the PA State Archives in Harrisburg.



**SCI Waymart Deputy Superintendent Paul DelRosso poses with employees from the PA Historical and Museum Commission.**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Officer Assists Injured Motorist

SCI Fayette Corrections Officer Craig Thomas was honored recently for coming to the rescue of an injured motorist.

Superintendent Jay Lane presented CO Thomas with a letter of commendation for his quick response and assessment of a vehicle accident that occurred on the road outside of the institution on August 20.

Upon his arrival on the scene, CO Thomas found the civilian lying on the ground next to the vehicle. He secured the individual's head and neck in order to immobilize them and prevent further injury. CO Thomas' immediate response and first responder actions made a difference for the individual involved.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Mahanoy Has a Prison Garden

Prison gardens are "cropping" up all over the state.

Here is the lovely garden at SCI Mahanoy. It is tended by the Residential Treatment Unit (RTU) inmates with "A" Housing Unit staff.

They planted cabbage, bell peppers, tomatoes, cantaloupe, rhubarb, kale, basil, chives, lemon thyme, oregano, lavender and sunflowers.

The produce harvested is used in the food service department.

Carol Pannulla is overseeing this green project.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## A Way to Properly Retire a U.S. Flag

SCI Muncy's Employee Empowerment Committee, along with SCI Muncy PRIDE motorcycle club, have placed a flag deposit box in the front of the institution. The box was constructed by Mr. Zeigler, whose dedication and great craftsmanship are appreciated.

Employees are encouraged to use the box to deposit torn or tattered American flags so they may be retired properly. The SCI Muncy PRIDE MC will periodically take the deposited flags to the American Legion where they will be retired on Flag Day at an annual ceremony.

Participating in the dedication of the Flag Box were: Unit Manager Schmid, CO1 Blanton, Captain Curham, CO1 Connelly, FMM1 Heinrich, Welding Trade Instructor Zeigler, CO1 B. Wright, LT. Minier, CO1 McPeck, Corrections Counselor Magargle, LT. Meyer and Chaplain Caudle.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## SCI Chester holds School Bag Drive

SCI Chester staff and the Inmate Improvement Organization collected donations of backpacks and school supplies for the local children. Forty-nine school bags were filled with notebooks, loose leaf paper, pencils, pens, eraser, ruler, crayons, colored pencils, markers, sharpener, pencil case, tissues and hand sanitizer. The donations were presented to City Teams of Chester, Pa.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## DOC Holds 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Softball Tournament

The Annual Department of Corrections Softball Invitational was held on July 30th and 31st, 2016, in Williamsport (Elm Park). The tournament was a success with SCIs Benner Township and Rockview sponsoring it again this year.

SCI Greene had an excellent tournament this year and took 1st Place. SCI Greene and SCI Rockview met in the finals, with SCI Greene coming out on top. Special thanks to all of the institutions that participated in the tournament this year. We hope to see additional teams for next year's tournament.

The MVP Trophy is presented to a member of the 1st place team and selected by the players of that team. The All-Tournament Team (ATT) trophies are presented to members of the top four teams with the 1st Place team receiving four spots, 2nd place three spots, 3rd place receiving two, and 4th place receiving one.

1st Place: SCI GREENE

2nd Place: SCI Rockview

3rd Place: SCI Muncy

4th Place SCI Dallas

MVP: Wesley Hughes

All-Tournament Team members:

SCI Greene:

1. Jeremy Lewis
2. Chris Hechavarria
3. Phil Peters
4. Craig Haywood

SCI Rockview:

1. Scott Druckemiller
2. Matt Fisher
3. Brandon Behrer

SCI Muncy:

1. Jason Brandis
2. Paul Roman

SCI Dallas:

1. Dave Mosier

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Wetzel Addresses Lehigh County Officials**

On August 19, Secretary John Wetzel spoke at a Lehigh County Office of the Public Defender event in Allentown.

He spoke about the DOC's efforts to make reentry smoother and reduce recidivism, including the use of transitional housing units, which teach job skills among other programs, Medication Assisted Treatment for substance abusers and enhanced mental services.

The event was hosted by Lehigh County Chief Public Defender Kim Makoul and included area lawmakers and members of the district attorney's office, as well as other law enforcement stakeholders.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Inmate Paints New Backdrop for Parenting Program**

In August, SCI Mercer revealed the newest addition for its Read to Your Child Program.

After 228 hours of hard work, an inmate completed the project. The mural will be used as the background for the Read to Your Child videotaping.

The Education Department had been considering purchasing a backdrop; however, looking to save money, decided to have one created.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

# Employees Collect Backpacks

SCI Huntingdon's Employee Social Events and Morale Committees, in conjunction with the Salvation Army, recently sponsored a backpack project to ensure every child in need of a backpack and school supplies is ready for school.

Pictured is Officer Bender of the Salvation Army who received the items donated by staff. He was thrilled with the participation of staff and the amount collected.



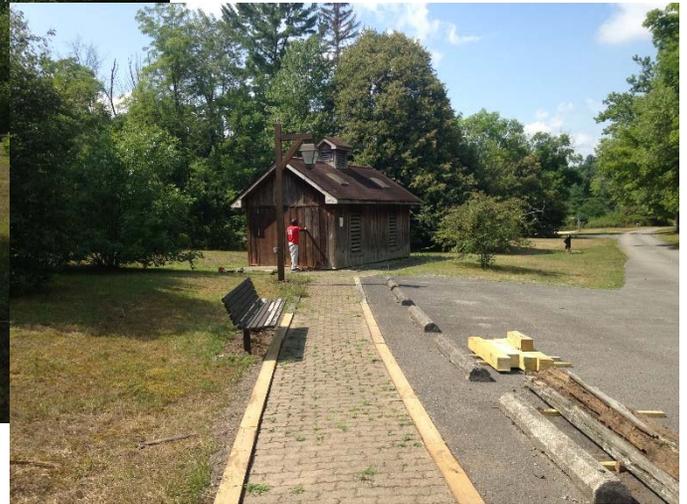
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Highlighting Inmate Work Crew Projects

This summer, one of SCI Huntingdon's CWP crews worked at Greenwood Forest State Park sprucing up and doing repairs to the Blacksmith Shop, wash house and the surrounding areas. The crew was supervised by Ken Holmes.

Park Maintenance Supervisor Duane Harer said the areas are looking better than he's ever seen them.

The pictured areas are used for Civil War reenactments.



The same crew also helped the Friends of the Huntingdon County Library with their annual used book sale. The crew carried boxes and boxes of books out of the library and loaded them into a truck for delivery to the gymnasium at the Dubois Business College where the sale was held.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of August 15...

## **“Juvenile Lifers” Community Support Day Held**

SCI Huntingdon held a community support day for juvenile lifers on August 16, 2016, that included family and friends of the inmates, as well as various agencies and organizations.

Representatives from the Department of Corrections’ central office, PA Board of Probation and Parole, PA Prison Society, Department of Human Services, CareerLink, Office of Vocational Rehab and SCI Huntingdon employees were stationed around the visiting room.

After initial introductions were complete, inmates and their guests had the opportunity to visit each station and individually have their questions answered and concerns addressed.

The event received very positive feedback from all in attendance.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## SCI Chester holds "A Day of Responsibility"

A Day of Responsibility was held at SCI Chester on August 10, 2016. This program is intended to provide an opportunity for inmates to reflect on their past and how their crimes affected their victims as well as the communities in which they lived. It also is meant to "bridge the gap" between the offender and the offended for a tomorrow that is better than yesterday.

At this event, a play entitled "Street Language" was presented. It is a story about how one violent crime touches the four corners of an American community. In the play, inmates portray a fight that results in a little girl being shot and of her dying at the hospital, followed by her funeral. Throughout the play, the impact of crime is stressed.

Attending this special day were representatives from the DOC, the Office of Victim Advocate, the End of Violence Organization, Mr. King (who is the liaison for Chester's Mayor's Office for Reentry) and members of the Philadelphia Cease Fire Office.



**Petterece Jenkins, SCI Chester's Activities Manager, introduces "A Day of Responsibility" and the play "Street Language."**



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Waymart Employees Hold Backpack Drive

Over the past month, SCI Waymart's Community Support Committee – in an effort to give back to the community -- collected donations of backpacks and school supplies for local children in need. SCI Waymart employees generously donated 38 backpacks that benefited Children and Youth, Victims Intervention and MH/ID.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of August 8...

## End of Life Care for Inmates at SCI Laurel Highlands

SCI Laurel Highlands is a minimum-security state prison for men that is located in Somerset, Pa. While the prison has an inmate population of approximately 1,600, 315 of those inmates require some form of skilled or personal care. The ages of those 315 inmates ranges from 20 to 95 years.

Opened in 1996, SCI Laurel Highlands is the Pennsylvania DOC's only facility that provides skilled nursing and personal care nursing to male inmates on a 24/7 basis. As a result, inmates from throughout the DOC who require more advanced care than can be provided at regular prison infirmaries often are referred to Laurel Highlands.

A variety of disorders and medical conditions are cared for at the prison, including, but not limited to, Alzheimer's and dementia and high blood pressure, stroke, wound care and diabetes.

Prison employees say the care provided at the prison is in line with the type of care provided in the community. The only difference would be providing that care while under the security offered by a prison.

"We meet the expectations of what's being provided in the community. In fact, we exceed those standards," said Superintendent Jamey Luther.

Luther went on to explain that the prison has the ability to care for nine hospice cases and that the prison also uses inmate volunteers to provide services to hospice inmates.



The volunteers are used to supplement the care the nursing staff provides, such as reading to the inmates, helping the inmates write letters, help with feeding and dressing the inmates, etc.

---

*“Inmates are people too, they’re just incarcerated people.”*

---

The criteria for an inmate to become a volunteer is strict. Inmates must have at least a year left to serve on their sentence and cannot have any recent misconducts. The inmate is voted upon by many prison employees, such as the inmate’s counselor, psychology staff, prison chaplain, security staff, deputy superintendent and superintendent.

Once approved by staff to be a volunteer, the inmate then must complete an intense 40-hour course. The first day of the class covers religion and spirituality. The second day covers all aspects of what it means to be a volunteer, including confidentiality, bereavement, universal precautions, etc. Another day is spent working with the nursing staff, where inmate volunteers are taught how to use a lift with staff supervision and are instructed how to help nursing staff to turn an inmate, among other things. After their training, the inmate volunteers are requested to assist at least two hours per week. After volunteering in the skilled care unit for a six month period, the inmate can then move on to being a hospice volunteer.



**SCI Laurel Highlands Registered Nurse/QI Nurse Paula Sroka checks on a hospice inmate.**

The goal of the hospice care provided at the prison is that no inmate dies alone. As an inmate nears the end of his life, a vigil is held.

"Someone is at the inmate's side 24/7, whether it's a nurse, a nurse practitioner, nurse's aide or inmate volunteer," said Health Care Administrator Annette Kowalewski. "No one dies alone."

Sometimes the inmate family is allowed to be at his side during this time. The nursing staff works diligently to keep the inmate's family involved and informed throughout the inmate's care. Sadly though some inmates don't have any family to support them, and that is where the inmate volunteers are so important.

When asked, the inmate volunteers say they like volunteering because it allows them to give back.

"Sometimes these guys are more comfortable with another inmate rather than a prison employee. It's like they're with one of their own and they are more comfortable," one volunteer said.

The inmate volunteers said that toward the end of an inmate's life, they spend time reading from the Bible (or Koran or whatever the hospice inmate's faith is because we try to honor all religions) and praying for and with the dying inmate.

"Some express their sorrow for the crime they committed," one volunteer said. "I'm just grateful to be there to help them pass on. Inmates are people too, they're just incarcerated people."

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



**An inmate hospice volunteer spends time with an inmate.**

## DOC Pilots Pell Grant Program

Earlier this month, DOC Secretary John Wetzel sent direction to facility staff and to inmates about the "PA DOC's Second Chance Pell Pilot Program."

According to a flyer aimed at inmates, "For the first time since the 1990s, four PA colleges/universities will implement college education programs for inmate students."

The four institutions of higher learning, the six DOC facilities involved for each and the educational programs to be offered are:

School Name	Program Name(s)	DOC Facility(ies)	Program Capacity	Method of Delivery	Credit Hours
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	A.A. in General Studies	SCI Houtzdale; SCI Pine Grove	SCI HOU: 20 students SCI PNG: 10 students	Online/On Site	60 credits
Bloomsburg University	Certificate in Rehabilitative Justice	SCI Muncy; SCI Mahanoy	SCI MUN: 10 students SCI MAH: 20 students	On site	24 credits
Lehigh Carbon CC	A.A.S. in Business Management; A.A.S. in Accounting; Specialized Credit Diploma in Entrepreneurship/Small Business	SCI Frackville; SCI Mahanoy	SCI FRA: 15 students SCI MAH: 20 students	On Site	Business Mngt: 60.5-68.5 credits Accounting: 61-65 credits Entrepreneurship: 24 credits
Villanova University	A.A. or B.A. in General Studies	SCI Graterford	SCI GRA: 60 (original) + 25 students (new)	On site	TBA

The initiative is intended to begin nationwide during the 2016-2017 school year through the U.S. Department of Education. The PA DOC is working toward a January 2017 start for these program. Pennsylvania's DOC was one of 20 systems selected to participate in this initiative. More than 200 applications were received from institutions of higher learning, of which 69 were ultimately selected, including Pennsylvania's four participating schools.

To qualify to participate, inmates must:

- Have a GED/High School Diploma
- Have a TABE reading score of 11 or higher
- Be program compliant with recommended programs
- Be within 5 years of their minimum sentence date but no closer than 6 months
- Not be convicted of a sex offense
- Not have any misconducts in the past year
- Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and may need access to parental income information if under the age of 24

Inmates who meet the eligibility criteria are instructed to contact their education guidance counselor to initiate the process. The facilities will work with the DOC's Central Office to compile a listing of eligible and appropriate inmates that will then

be shared with the universities. Because only certain state prisons are included in this pilot program, inmates may require transfer to the participating prison for the entirety of the education pilot program. The inmates will be randomly assigned, so even though some may fill out an application as required by the initiative, not all may be selected for program placement.

Because this initiative includes a research component, the DOC's Office of Planning, Research and Statistics will evaluate the effectiveness of post-secondary education through the use of randomized controlled trial measuring outcomes for a treatment group (for those who receive Pell grants) versus the control group (for those who do not receive Pell grants).

Program descriptions by school are:

### **Indiana University of Pennsylvania**

Students will take classes towards an Associate of Arts degrees in General Studies Designed for non-traditional adult learners, the instructional program will provide a broad base of knowledge in the liberal arts over the course of two years. Upon completion of the Associate of Arts degree, students may elect to pursue a Bachelor of Science or Arts degree at Indiana University of Pennsylvania or at other institutions.

### **Bloomsburg University**

The Certificate in Rehabilitative Justice can complement certified peer specialist training and provides education and training and a foundation for achievement to complete two-year and four-year degrees for career positions in areas of potential. Courses are selected for transferability to maximize opportunities for future two-year or four-year degree completion at any institution of higher education.

### **Lehigh Carbon Community College**

Business Management A.A.S. is a two-year associate in applied science degree program accredited by the Accreditation Council of Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). The total length is 60.5-68.5 credit hours. The program is designed to provide the student with knowledge of general business procedures and other areas for preparation to enter business as an owner, assistant manager, or supervisor trainee.

Accounting A.A.S. is a two-year associate in applied science degree program accredited by the Accreditation Council of Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). The total length is 61-65 credit hours. The program is designed to provide students with the necessary skills for entry-level accounting positions in such areas as accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, and purchasing. Students who subsequently

pursue a bachelor's degree may find careers in corporate accounting, public accounting and auditing, nonprofit and government accounting, and tax and consulting services.

Entrepreneurship and Small Business Specialized Credit Diploma is a 24-credit program that enables students to explore the world of free enterprise. Students learn the business skills and commitment necessary to successfully operate an entrepreneurial venture, as well as the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship.

**Villanova University:** Program description forthcoming.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Reentry – Teaching Computer Basics

Imagine spending a considerable amount of time behind prison bars and fences during a time when technology has advanced from a time of basic electronic typewriters to one of advanced computers and electronic devices. Or perhaps when you should have been in school learning how to use a computer you skipped school instead. Think of all that you'd have missed out on.



Using a computer nowadays is vital, not only for work but also in everyday communications.

To help prepare inmates for their return home after incarceration – by the way, 90 percent of state prison inmates will return home at some point – the DOC offers a course in computer basics for inmates housed in Transitional Housing Units.

The course first gauges inmates' computer knowledge and from there goes on to provide information about key components, such as the keyboard, mouse, the computer's central processing unit (or CPU), monitor, disks, USB devices, hard drives and software. In addition, general formatting is taught.

The instructor also provides a general explanation of the internet and various terms used to describe the internet, use of search engines, how links work, etc.

The main part of the course teaches inmates how to use the internet to search for jobs, because that is a main goal they should achieve upon release from prison... finding and getting a job. In today's world, most job applications are submitted "online," so knowing your way around a computer, and the internet, is extremely important, and that's why we provide this information to our inmates.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Piloting a Limited Privilege Housing Unit

In March, SCI Laurel Highlands began piloting a project called "Limited Privilege Housing Unit" (LPHU) as part of the Admin Segregation/Violence Reduction Initiative.



**The day room on the LPHU at SCI Laurel Highlands**

Piloted on F Block, the purpose of the LPHU is to reduce restricted housing unit (RHU) placement/segregation resulting from misconducts that are non-violent offenses. Inmates held in administrative custody (AC) status also may be placed in the unit if appropriate.

Inmates targeted for this pilot are those not normally considered an elevated physical or security threat.

The mission of the unit is to effect behavior change and reduce segregation by providing an alternative or additional step in the current discipline process between cell restriction and RHU placement for those that repeatedly violate rules.

Inmates in this unit are not considered AC or disciplinary custody (DC) status inmates, and they are permitted to leave their cells for approved activities on the unit. They are not restrained while moving to and from approved out-of-cell activities. Although all movement within the unit is controlled by the unit control center and directly observed by unit officers.

When not participating in approved or scheduled out-of-cell activity, inmates will be secured in their cells. The program review committee reviews cases to determine whether they are appropriate for LPHU placement.

Inmates in this unit are permitted out of their cells 7 days a week for: Meals - .5 hours x3 - 1.5 total hours; yard - 1 hour; showers - .3 hours; inmate-led programming - 1 hour; dayroom (TVs are mounted in dayroom) - 1 hour. This all equals a total of 4.8 hours.

There are more details to this pilot that we haven't included here.

But please know that any inmate who violates the rules of the LPHU may be issued a misconduct and could be sanctioned additional time in the LPHU or placed under disciplinary custody status for the remainder of his sanction, if warranted.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **HJC Tours Laurel Highlands**

On August 9, 2016, members of the House Judiciary Committee (HJC) toured SCI Laurel Highlands.

The DOC regularly invites members of the state legislature to tour its facilities.

As part of this tour, HJC members were escorted to the prison's medical units, the therapeutic community and other specialized units.

DOC officials believe such tours are vital for individuals who create laws and who provide for the agency's funding.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Gardening is in Full Swing!

The gardening season is in full swing at SCI Cambridge Springs, so here are some pictures of the prison's garden and flowers.





## Before and After Pics of Inmate Work

SCI Houtzdale's inmate Community Work Project crew has been busy lately...

Before



After



Before



After



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## DOC Approves Use of PCI CorrectPac Cleaning System

CorrectPac portion-controlled cleaning products have been approved for use in all DOC institutions. The product line is in use in hundreds of correctional, educational and municipal facilities nation-wide for its effective cleaning, ease of use and control, simple inventorying, accountability and standardization of cleaning across all institutions.



More than 98% of CorrectPac products are certified by the nationally-recognized Green Seal mark of environmental responsibility.

Green Seal is an independent, not-for-profit organization that is generally recognized as the national authority in science-based environmental certification standards. Every CorrectPac product delivers effective cleaning, cost savings and environmentally responsible formulations. Minimal packaging saves energy used to ship and store and reduces disposal costs. Concentrated products conserve energy in manufacture, shipping and distribution. Portion control improves performance through more accurate dilution and reduces the amount of solution disposed of into the waste stream.

Color-matched products, accessories and MSDS simplify training and help ensure the right products are used correctly. The CorrectPac system helps ensure proper use of products with ongoing, in-person support and sanitation education for officers and offenders.

Pennsylvania Correctional Industries has partnered with CorrectPac to package and distribute their products and will begin implementing the CorrectPac cleaning system in DOC institutions in September. CorrectPac's affiliations with organizations

including the American Corrections Association (ACA), Correctional Accreditation Manager's Association (CAMA), North American Association of Wardens & Superintendents (NAAWS) and the National Correctional Industries Association (NCIA) have all helped the CorrectPAC system evolve into the most cost-effective, sustainable corrections cleaning program available.

Implementation of the CorrectPac system at DOC will allow institutions to save up to 30% over current cleaning costs while allowing PCI to employ up to 20 additional inmate staff at the Correctional Industry operation at SCI-Huntingdon.

Contact Pennsylvania Correctional Industries at [pci@pa.gov](mailto:pci@pa.gov) or call PCI Customer Service at **877-ORDER-CI** for more information.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of August 1...

## Finally...

After serving as ACTING regional deputy secretaries for quite some time now (a few have been in the capacity for more than a year), the regional deputy secretaries finally were sworn in on August 2, 2016, and now no longer are "acting."

### **Deputy Secretary Michael Wenerowicz, Eastern Region**

Since June 2015, Mike Wenerowicz has served as acting regional deputy secretary.

"I have known Mike for several years now, and I continue to be impressed by his corrections expertise and leadership skills," Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. "I have confidence that his experience, which includes the successful operation of the DOC's largest prison, will greatly assist the superintendents in his region and be a great resource to them."



From May 2010 until June 2015, Wenerowicz has been superintendent of the State Correctional Institution at Graterford, a facility located in Montgomery County that houses more than 3,400 inmates and employs more than 1,200 individuals.

As regional deputy secretary, he oversees facilities in the eastern region of the state: Chester, Coal Township, Dallas, Frackville, Graterford, Mahanoy, Phoenix, Retreat and Waymart.

Wenerowicz began his corrections career as a counselor at SCI Dallas in 1992. From 1998 to 2000, he served as a parole agent with the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole. In June 2000, he returned to the DOC as a unit manager at SCI Graterford, where he later served as classification and program manager. He was named staff assistant to the eastern regional deputy secretary in 2005, and in 2006 he was appointed director of the DOC's Bureau of Treatment Services. In 2007, Wenerowicz was named deputy superintendent for centralized services at SCI Frackville. One year later he was named deputy superintendent facility management at Frackville. In 2009, he was named that prison's superintendent. .

Wenerowicz earned a BA in criminal justice from Mansfield University and is a member of Pennsylvania Prison Wardens Association.

### **Deputy Secretary Tabb Bickell, Central Region**

Tabb Bickell began serving as regional deputy in September 2014.

"Tabb has 28 years of experience with the Department of Corrections. He has progressed in his responsibilities and supervisory positions to become one of the department's top leaders and mentors," said Secretary Wetzel.



As regional deputy secretary, he oversees facilities in the central region of the state: Benner Township, Camp Hill, Houtzdale, Huntingdon, Muncy, Pine Grove, Quehanna, Rockview and Smithfield. He also oversees the DOC's Security Division.

Bickell began his career in 1988 as a corrections officer at SCI Camp Hill, where he was promoted to sergeant in 1991 and to lieutenant in 1993. He was subsequently assigned to oversee the basic training program at the DOC's Elizabethtown Training Academy.

In 1996, Bickell was promoted to captain at SCI Coal Township and then major of the guard at SCI Mahanoy in 2007. Two years later, also at SCI Mahanoy, Bickell was named deputy superintendent for facility management. Bickell was named superintendent at SCI Huntingdon April 3, 2011.

Bickell has participated in and led a number of DOC training courses, completed institutional training audits, vulnerability assessments, security analyses and security inspections. He also was instrumental in the opening of the special management unit at SCI Camp Hill.

Bickell, a native of Lebanon, also is a veteran, having served in the U.S. Coast Guard.

## Deputy Secretary Steven Glunt, Western Region

Steve Glunt began serving as regional deputy in July 2015. From 2013 until July 2015, Glunt served as superintendent at the State Correctional Institution at Rockview.

"Steve has demonstrated his exceptional leadership skills by diligently encouraging employees to be the best they can be and to give 100 percent every day. He leads with determination and is dedicated in moving the department into the future," stated Secretary John Wetzel.



As regional deputy secretary, he oversees facilities in the western region of the state, including: Albion, Cambridge Springs, Fayette, Forest, Greene, Laurel Highlands, Mercer, Pittsburgh and Somerset.

Glunt began his career in 1988 as a corrections officer at SCI Smithfield. While at Smithfield, he promoted through the ranks of sergeant, lieutenant, unit manager and captain. In June 2005, he accepted a transfer to SCI Huntingdon as major. In January 2008, he transferred to the Department of Corrections Central Office, serving as chief of security. The following year, he advanced to the rank of deputy superintendent at SCI Somerset. In June 2010, Glunt was promoted to superintendent at SCI Houtzdale and the Quehanna Boot Camp. Three years later Glunt was named superintendent at SCI Rockview.

Glunt is a 1982 graduate of the Mount Union Area High School. He continued his education while employed by the Department of Corrections at Shippensburg University, graduating in 1991 with a B.S. degree in criminal justice.

## Also Officially Sworn In...

Also officially sworn in on August 2, 2016, as Deputy Secretary for Administration was Christopher Oppman.

Earlier in 2015, Oppman was named DOC acting deputy secretary for administration. As deputy secretary, Oppman is responsible for Correctional Industries, Equal Opportunity Office, the DOC's Bureaus of Administration, Operation and Health Care.

Oppman began working for the Department of Corrections in January 2010 as the health care administrator at SCI Pittsburgh. In April 2013, he was named director of the DOC's Bureau of Health Care Services. Prior to working for the DOC, he worked for the private sector as practice manager, center administrator, controller, contracts manager and human resource manager. He was named acting deputy secretary of administration in May 2015.

Oppman received his bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh. He also obtained a Master of Business Administration and Master of Health Administration from the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Former TN Commissioner Named to Head PA DOC's Bureau of Community Corrections

Secretary John Wetzel has named George Little, the former commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Corrections, director of the Community Based Correction Program.

Little previously served as chief administrative officer/chief of staff for the City of Memphis.

In his new role, Little will oversee operations at the 15 state-run



community corrections centers and more than 40 contract facilities, also known as halfway houses.

Little brings to his new job experience leading a state corrections agency, and also as a director of regional probation and a county corrections program, which allowed him to see first-hand the impact of successful community re-entry.

"Pennsylvanians will surely benefit from someone of George's caliber overseeing the re-entry of more than 20,000 individuals into our communities," said Wetzel. "When people reenter society and become successful citizens, it benefits all of us."

From 2005 to 2009 Little was Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Corrections where he promoted the importance of addressing the needs of people in state custody so that they were better prepared to return home.

Little previously served as chief administrative officer/chief of staff for the City of Memphis.

Little also was director of Shelby County (TN) Division of Correction, assistant to the executive director of the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole, regional director for the Tennessee Department of Corrections and warden of the DeBerry Correctional Institute. He also worked for Corrections Consulting/Nationwide.

Little, who was raised in Harrisburg, graduated from Morehouse College with a BA in Economics and Business Administration. He did graduate study in economics and urban/regional development at the University of Texas.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## DVD for Vets

SCI Retreat employees recently conducted a DVD drive for the Gino J. Merli Veterans' Center in Scranton, Pa. The center is updating their video equipment from VHS tapes to DVDs for their 196 residents. SCI Retreat staff donated any new or used DVD to the center. Some of the DVDs that were donated include:



The Three Stooges, Hee-Haw, The Rat Pack and a variety of westerns, and military action movies.

**Pictured, from left to right, are: Lt. Jim Provow, Lt. Bill Robbins, Acting Food Service Supervisor Jim Cagle, Cathy Mackin, Theresa Shibilski, Carin Ives and Tara Hoey. Front row – Joy and Hope.**

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Muncy Presents Funds to East Lycoming YMCA

On July 27, SCI Muncy employees presented a \$500 check to Ms. Gail Kulp, East Lycoming YMCA Branch executive director, for their "Fostering Friendships Superstars" program. This is a unique class designed especially for children with special needs and developmental delays. Superstars is a movement class where children can develop motor skills, coordination, stamina and strength and enjoy a peer friendly social environment.

SCI Muncy employees held a "dollar card" sale through the month of April recognizing Autism Awareness month. The staff were able to make the donation, place their name on a card and the card was hung in the Administration Building sharing the donor information and messages.

"This was truly a Muncy family effort, and I am proud and humbled by their dedication to this community need," said Sergeant Renee Rippey.

Rippey and Records Supervisor Jan Lamper, who co-coordinated the event, both agreed, "This was fabulous, sharing with the community. Knowing this donation is so appreciated makes your heart feel good."

YMCA Director Kulp said, "Your team has certainly put smiles on faces and you are so appreciated by the many families this gift will affect. Thank you SCI Muncy!!"



The following SCI Muncy employees participated in the check presentation; Lt. Savage, Captain Curham, Food Service Supervisor Rob Wheeler, Chaplain Reitz, Sgt. Rippey, Parole Supervisor Stacy Miller, Records Supervisor Jan Lamper, Teacher Matt Shively, CO E. Robbins, CO M. Hopkins, Sgt. Gearhart, Sgt. Rippey, Clerk Typist Margaret Bitler and CO O. Blanton.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Huntingdon Participates in Night Out Against Crime

SCI Huntingdon employees participated in the 32nd Annual Night Out Against Crime in Duncansville, Pa., on August 2, 2016.

Sgt. Boal, CO1 Oldham, CC2 Johnson and HR Analyst Ed McEwen represented the institution with a contraband display and a recruiting display. Forty organizations distributed information to the community, and approximately 1,700 people attended the event.

Employees had the opportunity to personally interact with around 400 people explaining various aspects about the Department of Corrections.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

# Career Fair Held

Earlier this week, SCI Houtzdale held an inmate career fair that was attended by 206 inmates and included 12 outside vendors.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## New FIDOS at Coal Township

Look who arrived at SCI Coal Township today (Aug. 5) – Peggy and Baxter.



They are the prison's newest FIDOS members (dogs being trained by inmates so they can become adoptable to their new, forever homes.

Peggy is a 7-year-old female Jack Russell. She is quiet and well behaved. Crate and house trained, Peggy loves other dogs and people. She has had some previous medical conditions, but is doing well.

Baxter is a 5-year-old male Papillon who is crate and house trained and who likes other dogs, but is afraid of little kids.

To learn more about these dogs, and others, visit Mommy & Me Rescue at [www.mommyandmerescue.com](http://www.mommyandmerescue.com).

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of July 25...

## **DOC Introduces Interactive Map Showing Numbers of Individuals Admitted to the DOC by Committing County**

One month after releasing an interactive map showing releases by year and county, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections has now created an interactive map that shows admissions to the DOC by committing county and year.

“Our Office of Planning, Research and Statistics, which is headed by Dr. Bret Bucklen, is on the leading edge of technology both in the way it captures data and how it reports data,” Corrections Secretary John Wetzel said. “Our goals are to be transparent and to use data to drive policy. With these maps, everyone can obtain the information and drive down into data that is from their local areas. This helps them to potentially determine needs and services that may be required in the local communities for not only those leaving our system, but also potentially for those entering the DOC.”

Wetzel also said that the agency receives numerous requests for this statistical data from researchers, other state agencies and college students.

The interactive map, which is available on the DOC’s website, provides statewide admissions totals for the years 2013, 2014 and 2015, broken down by type of admission, such as new court commitments and parole violators. In addition, individual county information includes gender, race and risk scores.

The risk score is a risk screening tool that was developed and is used by DOC staff to determining an offender’s general risk to re-offend after his/her release from prison. According to the tool, individuals are classified as low, medium or high risk for re-offending. This helps to show the general risk composition of different individuals returning to communities.

The DOC will continue to update both the admissions and releases maps with new tabs as each subsequent year’s statistical information becomes available. Individuals can access this new, interactive map at [www.cor.pa.gov](http://www.cor.pa.gov)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Corrections Secretary Takes Administrative Action in Response to Death of K9 Totti**

*Handler & supervisor are reassigned, investigative report forwarded to law enforcement*

Following a full internal investigation into the death of K9 Totti, Corrections Secretary John Wetzel has taken immediate administrative action and reassigned the two individuals involved to non-canine duties at a state correctional institution.

Wetzel removed Totti's handler and his supervisor from their positions with the Drug Interdiction Unit on Wednesday after the completion of a report by the Office of Special Investigations and Intelligence into K9 Totti's death.

The two individuals involved, a captain and a sergeant, have been reassigned to positions at SCI Rockview effective today. A senior DOC officer with military K9 experience has been assigned to lead the Drug Interdiction Unit.

An internal disciplinary review will be conducted to determine what if any disciplinary actions will be taken against the officers involved.

"While the investigation concluded that this was not an intentional act and we recognize that those involved are devastated by what happened – as all of us are – this does not excuse the outcome," said Wetzel. "Therefore I have moved both individuals out of the unit and we will let the disciplinary process take its course."

The DOC is fully cooperating with the Centre County District Attorney's Office and is providing the investigative report, along with any additional information requested, to the DA's office and to the Pennsylvania State Police.

On July 7, Totti, a member of the Drug Interdiction Unit team, was left unattended in a hot vehicle for three hours. The two-year-old dog was unconscious but alive when he was discovered. First aid was rendered at the scene and he was rushed to an area veterinarian. Despite the emergency treatment, Totti died several hours later from a heat-related seizure while in veterinary care.

In addition to pursuing the disciplinary review, the report made a series of recommendations which the DOC is in the process of actively evaluating including:

- Updating position descriptions to specifically reflect the duties and responsibilities of employees while working/training at the K9 training academy.
- Reviewing the DOC's Drug Interdiction Unit policy to address specific responsibilities for staff assigned to the K9 training academy.

- Reviewing the DOC's Drug Interdiction Unit policy to address specific responsibility and care of unassigned dogs while kept at the K9 training academy, including the transporting and holding of dogs in vehicles.

The DOC also is examining the purchase of heat alarm equipment that can be used in K9 vehicles in order to help prevent a similar situation from happening in the future.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

### **Called to Assist (Again)...**

On July 23, SCI Rockview's inmate Forest Fire Crew was called upon again for assistance with a 60-acre fire on Warrior Ridge in Porter Township, Huntingdon County. The crew recently assisted with a smoldering fire that had bordered the grounds of the Rockview state prison.

This most recent call for assistance involved private forestland that was within the Bureau of Forestry's (BOF) fire suppression jurisdiction and that was not far from SCI Huntingdon's property. Assistance was needed because BOF and local fire crews had been fighting the fire since the day before and were tired due to the heat and humidity.

"The specific request for the prison's wildfire crew was for them to reinforce established fire lines with chain saws and hand tools and also to monitor hot spots in burned-over areas and provide mop-up," Wade Renninger, SCI Rockview's forest assistant manager said.

Two employees and 10 inmates were sent to assist.

"Dan LeCrone personally trained our current crew, and I couldn't think of anyone more skilled to lead this crew. He has firsthand experience working with inmate fire crews from when we were last active in the '90s," Renninger said.

*Information on the earlier assistance provided by this crew can be found later on in this newsletter under "Rockview Inmates, Employees Assist Local Fire Department."*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Coming Soon to a State Prison Near You

Coming to the lobby of a state prison visiting room near you... a kiosk from which you can add money to an inmate's account using cash or credit or debit cards.

The DOC has worked with GTL (the company that provides the kiosk services) and JPay (the company that provides inmate account services) to ensure that the two work seamlessly to process transactions.

It should be noted that while the DOC is making the kiosks available at its prisons, doing so does not change the way inmate accounts are handled – meaning no money should be submitted to the prisons' business offices – and usual charges/rates apply. It also doesn't change the fact that individuals can use the internet to place money on an inmate's account.

This is yet another way the DOC is working to be more "user friendly" for inmates' families and friends.

It is expected that the kiosks will be installed and operating at all state prisons by the end of September.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~



## Retreat Names Employee of the Quarter

SCI Retreat has named Corrections Officer Curt Miller Employee of the Quarter for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter of 2016.

In a letter to Officer Miller, SCI Retreat Superintendent Vincent Mooney said:

“You have been nominated for this recognition because, in this time of constant change, you maintain a very positive and professional demeanor, especially with the mentally-ill population. You are often required to transport inmates to high-crime areas, along with private funeral visits and CCC transports. Although your job can be demanding and stressful, you always represent SCI Retreat is a positive light in the community. You are a credit to the Department of Corrections; and therefore, have earned this recognition along with my personal thanks!”

Pictured with Officer Curt Miller is Deputy Superintendent Lloyd Kerschner.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Link Honored Among Those “Women Making History”

Graterford Superintendent Cynthia Link was among the women leaders honored at a luncheon held at the Philadelphia Water Works on Sunday. The ceremony was hosted by the Walnut Club of Philadelphia to recognize “Women Making History,” inspired by the nomination this week in Philadelphia of the first woman by a major political party for President of the United States.

Superintendent Link was honored as the first female Superintendent at the State Correctional Institution at Graterford.

Other honorees included Judge Renee Cardwell Hughes, first



African-American woman to be appointed CEO of the American Red Cross, Eastern PA Region; Maria Quinones-Sanchez, first Latina woman elected to City Council of Philadelphia and Leslie Richards, first female Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (posing on right with Superintendent Link).

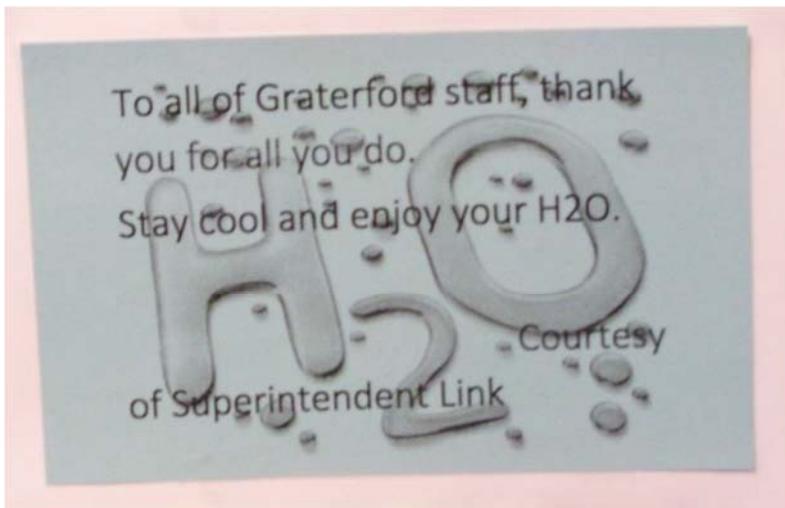
The Walnut Club is a community of forward-thinking, ambitious and supportive professional women. The Club curates resources and experiences that provide members opportunities to gain access to knowledge and networks that foster professional and personal growth.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Keeping Employees Hydrated

Recently, during a spell of high temperatures and high humidity indexes, SCI Graterford Superintendent Cynthia Link provided employees with bottles of water. It was intended to not only keep employees of the prison – that does not have air conditioning in all of its buildings/areas – cool, but it also served to thank them for their work during recent audits.

A table was set up in the main corridor from which employees could grab a bottle of water on their way to work/their posts.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of July 18...

## **SCI Somerset Holds Summer Graduation**

SCI Somerset held Summer Graduation for the Class of 2016 on Wednesday, July 20. Friends and family of the graduates were in attendance to celebrate with inmates who graduated from a number of different programs.

Twenty-two inmates graduated with Commonwealth Secondary, GED and Adult Commonwealth Secondary Diplomas. In addition, 42 inmates graduated with Certificate Programs in Business Education, Carpentry, HVAC, Plumbing and Electrical.

At the ceremony, which was held in the prison's visiting room, Principal Annamarie Swanlek welcomed everyone and congratulated the students. Superintendent Trevor Wingard commended the class for their efforts and reminding them about how much this means for both them and their families and loved ones.

Student speakers spoke to their fellow classmates about how they should be proud of their accomplishments and that they can decide to change their lives and continue to transform. The students also thanked the teaching staff for their hard work and encouragement.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Kid's Corner Held at SCI Dallas

On July 20, SCI Dallas held its second "Kid's Corner," which was a day-long event held at the prison that included representatives from Luzerne County Head Start, Penn State Extension and others who provided presentations on the prison's child-related programs, such as "Reading to Your Children," homework help and the Sesame Street Incarceration program. In addition, information about healthy foods and exercises was shared.

"The kids had a great time, and the parents got some great information and handouts," said SCI Dallas' Major of Unit Management Lori White. "Head Start provided all of the parents with reference guides for medical and dental questions which were great. Penn State extension gave them the safe food handling portion of their program (including providing food thermometers and plastic cutting boards)."

The afternoon was set aside for incarcerated parents to spend time with their kids, ages 2 to 12. Nine inmates, 16 children and their families participated, and feedback from both inmates and family members was very positive.



During the afternoon session, Tammi Burke, from The Victim's Resource Center, presented a workshop highlighting the Sesame Street Incarceration Program. The prison's dietary department provided lunch where all items were from the healthy, kid friendly cookbook which was given out by Penn State.

**Head Start: Childhood Specialist Kelly Chamberlain; Family Specialist Ellen Lyons; Family Education Cindy Zakarauskas; Infant Toddler Specialist Britany Schoemaker; and Health Specialist Alley Leskowsky.**

Overall, the day was a huge success, and the prison is planning the next "Kid's Corner" event for later this year.

**Pictured is Ms. Burke from Victim Resource Center as she speaks with inmates and family members.**



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Rockview Inmates, Employees Assist Local Fire Department**

When it comes to fighting wildfires, most people rely on their local fire departments to tackle the challenge, but did you know that at the DOC, specifically at SCI Rockview, there are other individuals who can provide assistance?



**Source: Alpha Fire Company Facebook Page July 20, 2016**

SCI Rockview has an inmate forestry camp where staff and inmates are charged with the care and maintenance of the prison's 2,500 acre forest. Inmates in the program are educated about the different types of trees and plants and how to care for them, including care through harvesting trees. The care also includes being educated about the different types of equipment and machinery required, such as saws and skidders. Some of the inmates receive annual training through the DCNR Bureau of Forestry in basic forest fire suppression and mop-up.

Recently the ALPHA Fire Department in State College sought assistance from SCI Rockview. A brush fire had been located on the mountain bordering the prison's property in a dense wooded area with no access by vehicle or ATV. The brush fire was described as not free burning but in a smoldering stage burning into the ground.

The prison responded by sending a crew of eight forestry camp inmates to assist, supervised by Labor Foremen Terry Royer and Charles Gardner.

Each inmate carried a bladder pack with five gallons of water, as well as a shovel, fire rake or Pulaski up the mountain approximately one mile (including an elevation gain of 600 feet) until they reached the fire location where the fire department was working to extinguish the smoldering fire. At this location, the inmates dug trenches and grubbed stumps and rocks to apply water to the fire until the "hot spots" were reasonably extinguished.

What everyone thought would be an overnight fire fight, took less than two hours to complete thanks to the water and manpower SCI Rockview provided. SCI Rockview expresses its appreciation to Forest Assistant Manager Wade Renninger, his staff and the inmates of the Forestry Camp for a job well done!



DOC 2016 Outstanding Performance Award Recipient:

### **Wade Renninger**

Forestry Assistant Manager, SCI Rockview

Wade Renninger is the only forestry assistant manager in the Department of Corrections.

As such, he is responsible for the 2,500-acre forest reservation at SCI Rockview, which includes the planning and coordination of all forestry projects, such as harvesting, firewood production, storm damage clean-up, as well as tree planting, trail work and boundary line maintenance. He ensures best practices are used to conserve water quality, minimize soil erosion and monitors the forest for insects and diseases.

Renninger also manages the 580-acre farm program which produces sweet corn, potatoes, soy beans and other items which are used by the facility. The excess is share with neighboring facilities or sold, with annual proceeds of about \$250,000.

In addition, Renninger also manages the 60-acre nursery which includes digging, planting, transplanting and maintenance of trees, shrubs and annual flowers.

Renninger also manages the SCI Rockview Community Work Program which includes processing of new projects, conducting site inspections for security and safety, coordinating the scheduling of site projects and the overall supervision of the corrections' labor foreman and offenders in the program.

The overall operation of the Forestry Camp is also under Renninger's jurisdiction. In addition to the care, custody and control of the 72 offenders residing at the camp, he is responsible for the oversight of the overall maintenance of the camp, services offered to those assigned to it, as well as staff supervision.

Lastly, Renninger is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the vehicles and equipment in the program, as well as the safety and operational training for assigned staff and inmates.

A graduate of Penn State University, Renninger began working at SCI Rockview in 2002 as the assistant manager. He was promoted to manager in 2004. In his spare time, he volunteers as an assistant coach for the Nittany Valley Little League.



Centre Region Council of Governments

**REGIONAL FIRE PROTECTION PLAN**

400 West Beaver Avenue, State College, PA 16801-4032  
(814) 237-4127 Fax (814) 237-6538



July 25, 2016

Wade Renninger, Forester  
SCI Rockview  
1 Rockview Place  
Bellefonte, PA 16823

Dear Mr. Renninger,

On behalf of the Alpha Fire Company, please extend our thanks to the inmates and staff who assisted us on the scene of a brush fire atop Mount Nittany on Thursday, July 21. This fire was actually a rekindle of a fire which occurred on Sunday, July 10. Prolonged drought conditions and the rocky contour of the forest in this area allowed the original fire to sustain itself deep in the forest duff. The smoldering fire re-emerged on Thursday morning and was reported to our department by hikers.

Our initial plan was to access the top of the mountain via the Rockview lands adjacent to the Conservancy property. Your forestry staff was very helpful in this regard, escorting us through institution property and guiding us along the top of the ridge on foot to the Conservancy's trail system. Unfortunately, it was not possible to get our suppression ATV with its water supply onto the trail system from this location. This created a need to deliver water and tools to the fire by foot, with the closest point of departure being the main parking area in the Village of Lemont.

The access to the trail system and the fire from Lemont is particularly steep and rocky, rising 700 feet in just one-half mile. Each of the inmates and several of your staff carried tools and water, approximately 40 pounds of gear, to the top of the mountain to access the fire. At the scene of the fire, the combined Rockview and volunteer fire department crew dug containment trenches up to 18 inches deep to surround and ultimately extinguish the fire.

Your inmates and staff were essential to the success of this operation. We deeply appreciated their hard work and their competence. Again, please pass along our thanks to those involved in this operation.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven W. Bair".

Steven W. Bair  
Fire Director/Chief of Department

*Serving the Townships of College, Ferguson, Patton, the Borough of State College, and Penn State University.*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Justice Reinvestment Initiative (JRI) Update Provided

On July 20 at the state capitol, Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency Chairman Josh Shapiro, Corrections Secretary John Wetzel and staff from the Council of State Governments provided an update on the status of the Justice Reinvestment Initiative's working group progress.

The working group, [which was convened earlier this year by Gov. Tom Wolf](#), is focused on gathering data on the state of Pennsylvania's criminal justice system. The group also is working to deliver policy proposals that will address identified areas of concern.

JRI is a bipartisan, inter-branch effort that is using data and facts to arrive at policy decisions to effect positive change in our criminal justice system. Members of the working group include officials and stakeholders from across state and local policymaking, law enforcement, and criminal justice communities.

To learn more about the continued work of JRI, visit the following websites:

---

**“The way to better public safety is getting all the stakeholders to the table.”**

John Wetzel, PA DOC Secretary

---



[PA DOC's JRI page](#) at  
[www.cor.pa.gov](http://www.cor.pa.gov)

[Council of State Governments Justice Center JRI page](#) at

[www.csjusticecenter.org/jr/](http://www.csjusticecenter.org/jr/)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Supporting Dallas Police

SCI Houtzdale's employees and their family members participated in the Pennsylvania Criminal Intelligence Center's initiative Outreach Program to Support Dallas Police. The prison received a variety of cards that will be forwarded to show these fellow law enforcement officers support during their time of great loss and tragedy. Not only did people take the time to sign the cards that were set out in the breakroom, but also brought in were individual cards and homemade cards from children. Houtzdale's employees were proud to be able to show their support in this way.



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Behind-the-Walls Treatment

The number of individuals entering state prisons with opioid-addiction has doubled over the past 10 years, from 6 to 12 percent. Roughly 68 percent of inmates have substance abuse problems.

The Department of Corrections is tailoring comprehensive drug and alcohol treatment to inmates through a variety of services, including assessment, outpatient care, inpatient care or aftercare.

As part of our "Behind-the-Walls Treatment," the department is working to reduce criminal behaviors through individualized substance abuse disorder treatment and education to ensure successful community reintegration.



Health  
&  
Wellness

*The DOC is not seeking to be the model for addiction treatment in the commonwealth but we want to be part of the solution to the opioid epidemic. The goal for all of us should be addressing the root cause of crime and in the case of drug addiction, diverting those individuals from the path to prison to the road to wellness.*



Learn more about the DOC's Medication Assisted Treatment by visiting [www.cor.pa.gov](http://www.cor.pa.gov) and choosing General Information – Medication Assisted Treatment.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Carlisle Sentinel (07/20/2016)

[http://cumberlandlink.com/news/opinion/columnists/guest/guest-editorial-anti-drug-approach-underway-in-state-s-prisons/article\\_97616169-d721-5bd4-a7b5-70e223bc2dde.html](http://cumberlandlink.com/news/opinion/columnists/guest/guest-editorial-anti-drug-approach-underway-in-state-s-prisons/article_97616169-d721-5bd4-a7b5-70e223bc2dde.html)

### **Anti-drug approach underway in state prisons**

By John Wetzel

The noted American psychologist Abraham Maslow once said that when the only tool in your tool chest is a hammer, you view each problem as a nail. I can't think of a better analogy to represent Pennsylvania's historic approach to addressing the drug epidemic that is upon us.

Because most drugs are illegal, our primary approach was a law enforcement one. In other words, we hammered drug addicts.

Perhaps a better analogy today is an “inner tube” approach to solving this complex problem, wrapping someone who is suffering with the right services to keep them from being yet another inmate number.

While fully acknowledging that drug kingpins need to be identified, arrested and incarcerated for long periods of time, merely responding to the “supply” side of the drug equation has proved inadequate. Instead, we are working toward attacking the “demand” side in a more holistic way with effective, research-based, and properly-dosed treatment plans as an essential component of a modern approach to addressing the current opioid drug epidemic.

That’s what Gov. Tom Wolf and those of us on the front lines of confronting substance abuse disorder are moving quickly to put in place. According to a recent analysis by the Drug Enforcement Agency Philadelphia Field Division, 3,383 Pennsylvanians — approximately nine people per day — died from drug-related overdoses in 2015. More distressing is that that number is a 23.4 percent increase from the number of drug-related overdose deaths (2,742) in 2014.

Clearly, business as usual is not working. Our conceptual framework is predicated on the assumption that we need to “divert” drug users out of the criminal justice system. Now, while we certainly need to get folks who are addicts out of the criminal justice system, why put them there in the first place?

Absent our current point of reference, if we were designing a system to effectively respond to the scourge of addiction, our first step would be to engage the individual into the system which had the greatest likelihood to address the addiction.

Note that this doesn’t put them in a system that we know isn’t designed to achieve the goal and then hope to move them into another system. Rather it is to put them directly in the proper system. Now the question becomes how to mimic this approach given the current legal and historical restraints?

The 2016-2017 state budget means Gov. Wolf can dedicate \$20.4 million to fund 20 Centers of Excellence across the Commonwealth to treat 4,500 Pennsylvanians with opioid-use disorder in phase one of the program.

Rather than treat solely the addiction, this program will treat the whole person, providing a network of support and coordination to ensure those who need help do not fall through the cracks. The use of medication coupled with wrap-around supportive services, can prevent people from relapsing and improve their chances for recovery. Last month, I joined national leaders at the White House for a conference hosted by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, designed to raise awareness about the importance of including medication-assisted treatment as part of a comprehensive treatment regimen in prisons.

As part of our “Behind-the-Walls Treatment,” the department is working to reduce criminal behaviors through individualized substance abuse disorder treatment and education to ensure successful community reintegration.

The number of individuals entering state prisons with opioid-addiction has doubled over the past 10 years, from 6 to 12 percent. Roughly 68 percent of inmates have substance abuse problems.

The Department of Corrections is tailoring comprehensive drug and alcohol treatment to inmates through a variety of services, including assessment, outpatient care, inpatient care or aftercare.

We launched a pilot program using Vivitrol, a long-acting injectable form of naltrexone that blocks certain receptors to prevent a ‘high” and removes the craving for drugs or alcohol.

Under that program, female inmates at State Correctional Institution Muncy received an injection prior to leaving and then five subsequent injections after release.

As a result of the program’s success it was expanded to include male inmates at four additional prisons and we directed \$1.5 million in grant funding to county prisons for Vivitrol use.

The department is not seeking to be the model for addiction treatment in the commonwealth but we want to be part of the solution to the opioid epidemic. The goal for all of us should be addressing the root cause of crime and in the case of drug addiction, diverting those individuals from the path to prison to the road to wellness.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

(The rest of this page is intentionally blank.)

## Correctional Industries Completes Significant Project

By Tracey Meyers

In June, a Mass was celebrated at the Holy Infant Roman Catholic Church in Manchester, Pa., to dedicate the church following the installation of furniture items that had been designed, built and installed by Pennsylvania Correctional Industries (PCI), as well as pieces that included marble insets and altar stone original to the parish's first York Haven church.



The entire project, built at a cost of \$3.6 million, includes a number of PCI custom designed and refinished pieces in addition to the altar, including the crucifix, pulpit, and tabernacle, baptismal font, hymnal board, seating and tables. Future orders are pending for a new sign and commemorative items.

PCI employees and inmates at SCI Rockview were instrumental in the design and manufacture of the furnishings.

This is the second custom church furniture project completed by PCI this year on the heels of a job manufacturing and installing pews at the Ss. Peter and Paul church in Philipsburg, Pa.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **DOC Holds First Transgender Support Group for Inmates**

On July 19, 2016, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, in partnership with TransCentral PA, hosted the first monthly transgender support group for DOC inmates who voluntarily agreed to participate via video conference.

The support group was guided by TransCentral PA President Joanne Carroll, a former military veteran, and licensed attorney Gretchen Little, along with Elizabeth Leen, director of clinical services for Alder Health Center. Also in attendance was the DOC's Mental Health Advocate Lynn Patrone and Department of Health's Sarah Boateng, who serves as special assistant to Pennsylvania's Physician General Dr. Rachel Levine.

Panel members responded to a wide range of profound questions about:

- the emotional and physical toll experienced by transgender individuals during the transitioning period
- the first time some participants became aware of their true gender identity
- the unintended consequences of sharing this knowledge.

Individuals who transitioned later in life shared experiences of feeling shame and fear that they would be alienated by friends and loved ones but said once they became courageous to "come out" they felt a sense of relief and authenticity.

While the forum is not clinically focused, facilitators shared their own experiences regarding the medical treatment they received during their transitions and suggested medical resources reentrants could explore upon release from prison. Facilitators emphasized the importance of seeking treatment through licensed medical professionals and the health risks associated with unlicensed care that some transgender individuals seek out.

The support group experience was well received. Participants expressed their thanks for the support from the DOC's leadership and the agency's commitment to provide similar services available in the community to inmates with the goal of a successful reintegration upon release from prison.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Inmates Donate to Local Reentry Organization**

On July 19th, a representative from SCI Fayette's Activities Department presented Genesis House Ministries, Inc., with a check for \$2121.04. This check represented the proceeds from a recently-held Little Debbie Snack Sale for the inmate population.

Genesis House Ministries, Inc., is a faith-based, holistic, non-profit 501c3 initiative for men leaving the prison system. At their core is a resident house where clients receive far more than a warm bed. Rather than sending former inmates aimlessly into the streets during daylight hours as most other local programs do, they provide counseling, mentoring, job skill development, substance abuse programming, job placement services and family reintegration assistance. According to the prison's activities manager, Jeff Bigam, "This place is legit, they are doing everything the right way."



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Correction Education Employees Share Information**

By Jeff Chiampi, Division Chief, DOC Bureau of Correction Education

On July 21, DOC's Bureau of Correction Education Division Chiefs Jeff Chiampi and Betty Hnylanski presented a session entitled "Education/Transition Services for Youth in Adult Prisons" at the Pennsylvania Community on Transition Conference at Penn State.

Randall Loss from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) had approached the chiefs about the transition plans in corrections for youth offenders and asked them to present at this conference. His question to Chiampi and Hnylanski was, "HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?"

As division chief of specialized programs, Hnylanski discussed IEP transition plans as required for school age, pre-identified special education students, who are incarcerated. Discussions on academics goals, as well as bridges to success upon reentry into the community, were entertained.

The state prisons that house and educate school-age individuals are Camp Hill, Coal Township, Dallas, Forest, Houtzdale, Muncy, Pine Grove, Quehanna, Retreat and Somerset.

A GED program and a Commonwealth Secondary Diploma Program are offered to school age students. An Adult Commonwealth Diploma Program, GED and a variety of vocational programs offering industry recognized certifications are offered to adults and those youth, who have met their academic requirements.

During the presentation, Chiampi shared information about the history of the Bureau of Correction Education, as well as the programming offered to inmates in transitional housing units. These multi-aged inmates are nearing release and receive intense preparation, based on individual need, to help them prepare for a successful and productive transition into the community. The DOC offers a variety of short term vocational certification programs to these inmates preparing for release, as well as Tools for Success and Money Smart classes. Other departments and support systems offer Healthy Living, Mental Health, Computer basics, Life Skills, Parenting, Relationships, Employment and Living under Supervision Workshops.



“GREAT INFO PRESENTED AT THE PA  
COMMUNITY ON TRANSITION CONFERENCE  
BY THE BUREAU OF CORRECTION  
EDUCATION DIVISION CHIEFS”

[Recent Tweet](#)

Many questions were answered and information was shared with this engaging audience.

OVR and others are interested in the transition plans that have been and continue to be put into place for successful reentry for our inmate population. Their interest is raised to a level where they are eager to become actively involved in the process of helping to successfully prepare inmates for transition into the community, where they will be productive citizens.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## DOC Community Work Programs

Begun in 1995 was the DOC's Community Work Program. Referred to as CWP, the program is for lower-security inmates who meet policy criteria to participate in projects for non-profit organizations or other state or local governments. Jobs performed in the past included, cleanup following flood or hurricanes, erecting playground equipment, washing police department vehicles, reconstructing sidewalks and complete refurbishing of buildings.

This article will highlight some of the more recent projects.

Earlier in July, **SCI Benner Township's** CWP performed its first project at R.B Winter State Park Complex, which includes R.B. Winter State Park, McCall Dam State Park and Revensburg State Park.



Individuals interested in scheduling Benner Township's CWP should contact Bobbi Jo Salamon at (814) 353-3630.

**SCI Houtzdale's** CWP has been very busy completing projects in the community. The projects include many tasks to assist the community such as insulating the Houtzdale Borough Building, painting at youth baseball fields, clearing brush at the world famous Horseshoe curve, as well as assisting many churches and fire halls with requests.



The CWP is tentatively scheduled to work nearly every weekday through 2016. To contact SCI Houtzdale's CWP Supervisor David McCarthy, call (814) 592-2675.

**SCI Laurel Highlands'** CWP has been busy working at Alleghenies Unlimited Care Providers, a non-profit community service center. The inmates performed a variety of projects, including mulched, trimmed shrubs, cut down trees, power wash and painting.

Other recently completed projects are:

- Berlin Cemetery Association – tombstone restoration project: dug new footers, poured concrete and reset stones that were crooked or fell over.
- Windber Municipal Authority –landscaping, paint and cleanup at a local park.
- St. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church – mulched, trimmed trees and shrubs, pressure wash, set up tables and chairs for a church event.
- Cambria Improvement Association – cleaned catch basins, shovel ditches and painted fire hydrants.



To schedule the CWP, contact Labor Foreman Craig Rodman at (814) 445-6501, extension 1442.

**SCI Muncy's CWP** has been busy working on projects for Bethany Church, Lime Bluff Park, Trinity Methodist Church and Turbotville Borough. Some of the work included deck removal, front porch painting, improving spouting on a building, and waxing hardwood floors.



**SCI Smithfield's CWP** has been busy installing hand railing, did concrete work, painted, installed a ventilation fan, installed a kitchen, built picnic tables, assisted with the opening of a pool, built a pavilion, repaired a small roof, collected litter from along local routes, and so much more.



To schedule Smithfield's CWP, contact Mandy Biser at (814) 643-6520.

**SCI Somerset's CWP** recently completed the following projects:

- The loading and unloading of food items and assisting in processing produce items, such as potatoes, at the Somerset Food Bank. The inmate crew also provided assistance in assembling a walk-in cooler that was donated to the food pantry for their new facility.
- For Salt Lick Township, CWP crews have regularly provided assistance to this small township in various forms. They have assisted in spring clean-up, provided labor in patching holes in roads, set up and removal of snow fences, and other cleaning and labor projects.
- The CWP also perform a variety of projects for the Somerset Area School District, such as weed and brush cutting along Parson's Run at the Senior High School, trimming hedges at the Maple Ridge Elementary School, and spreading mulch at the Eagle View and Maple Ridge Elementary Schools.
- In Conemaugh Township, the CWP assisted the township road crews with their annual spring clean-up. They helped pick up 190.24 tons of trash.
- For Calvary Unit Methodist Church, the CWP crew did extensive painting inside the church providing a service that could not be done with church labor alone.

**CONEMAUGH TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS**  
SOMERSET COUNTY

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**  
STEVEN M. BUNCICH, Chairman  
DEAN L. GLESSNER, Vice Chairman  
KENNETH J. TRESSLER



**OFFICES LOCATED AT:**  
1120 Tire Hill Road, Johnstown, PA 15905  
Phone: (814) 288-1400 Fax: 288-2135  
www.contwp-supers.us  
Email: supers@contwpsupers.us

May 16, 2016

SCI- Somerset  
c/o Al Joseph, Supervisor  
1590 Walters Mill Road  
Somerset, PA 15510-0001

Dear Mr. Joseph:

The Conemaugh Township Supervisors would like to thank you once again for the valuable assistance provided to us by your Community Work Program.

The Township's road crew was assisted by Mike Moslak and his crew during our annual Spring Clean Up which was recently completed during the first week of May. Their help enabled our employees to complete this task in a timely manner. A total of 190.24 tons of trash was picked up.

The group from SCI Somerset conducted themselves in a professional manner and we commend you and everyone involved in providing this service. We appreciate all of their hard work.

CONEMAUGH TWP. SUPERVISORS



Steven M. Buncich, Roadmaster



Dean L. Glessner, Roadmaster

Calvary United Methodist Church  
328 Calvary Church Road  
Acme, PA. 15610

Mr. Allen Joseph  
SCI Somerset  
1600 Waltersmill Rd.  
Somerset, PA. 15501

Dear Mr. Joseph,

We at Calvary UM Church would like to say Thank You to Mr. Jim Fraley CWP#2 and the Inmates that came to our church and did a wonderful job painting.....and for all the work that they did, we extend our Thanks and Gratitude. Their work is done very professional and our church looks beautiful!

Thank You Again, and may God continue to Bless and Keep you.

Respectfully,

Calvary United Methodist Church  
Robert Kalp

To schedule SCI Somerset's CWP, call the prison at (814) 443-8100.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Changes at SCI Graterford

By Gina Clark and Rachael DiGideo



The Transitional Housing Unit (THU) at SCI Graterford has been revamped! THU employees transformed the old major's office into a reentry hub, which includes a new computer lab.

Workshops have been up and running since March, and guest speakers have been visiting the unit. These guest speakers include OVR, PeerStar, IMPACT and professors from the University of Penn, just to name a few.

Employees also are working with the juvenile lifer population to get them acclimated to new advances in technology and employment to prepare them should any be resentenced to a sentence that will allow them to be released from prison at some point in time.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## SCI Pine Grove Opens THU

Submitted by Stephanie Ackley

Earlier this year, SCI Pine Grove kicked off the opening of its new Transitional Housing Unit (THU) with a host of speakers to set the tone for the program.

Curtis Lofton presented the Salvation Army as a living and program alternative for those reentrants who don't have viable home plans. As of this writing, the facility has three reentrants who have applied for housing in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Altoona.



Teri Butler of the Indiana County Domestic Relations Office explained the purpose and process of Domestic Relations Offices across the state and offered to assist those who want to reconnect with and care for their children upon release.

Debra Germany, founder of Divine Intervention Ministries, presented "A Mother's Plea" -- a dramatic re-enactment of the emotional devastation she experienced on the night of her son's murder. She talked about the mission of Divine Intervention Ministries in the wake of her personal tragedy. Members of her ministry accompanied her and filmed the presentation for a documentary.

Dr. Richard Stanko told us about his missionary work in the U.S and around the world. He shared stories of reentrants who work with him to spread spirituality while helping the less fortunate. Dr. Stanko is a publisher and donated several books on successful reentry to the prison's library.

Erie County Councilwoman and Mothers Against Teen Violence founder, Sonya Arrington, spoke about the loss of her son. Sonya has dedicated her life to activism and changing the culture of the Erie area through the mentoring of at-risk youth. Sonya met with two of the prison's young adult reentrants after the presentation to talk and arrange for mentoring services upon their release. Mrs. Arrington has hopes of becoming a regular service provider at SCI Pine Grove.

Katherine Brown, a long-time reentrant, spoke about the hardships she faces with mental health issues. Katherine explained the internal battle she experiences every day to remain as an engaged member of society. She talked about knowing and facing personal triggers and checking herself into an area psychiatric hospital when she became concerned for the well-being of herself and others. Her message to the inmate population was that, while everyone's struggle is different, everyone has the ability to return and remain an active participant in their community if they are motivated, disciplined and vigilant.

SCI Pine Grove was honored and elated to have each of these organizations help to kick off the program. The prison's employees look forward to a long working relationship with all of them.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Seven Seals Award

The State Correctional Institution at Huntingdon was recently honored by the Department of Defense and the Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

The Seven Seals Award is presented in recognition of significant organizational achievement, initiative, and support that promotes and supports the ESGR mission.



Supt. Eric Tice and William Burkhard, North Central Area Representative, ESGR

"It is quite an honor to receive this award for the institution," said Superintendent Eric Tice. "We are proud to support the men and women who are members of the Guard and Reserves."

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Graterford's Pretzel Day



On July 14th, SCI Graterford's Empowerment Committee held a soft pretzel sale. A pre-sale was held and tables were set up in the main corridor for cash and carry. Approximately 900 soft pretzels were sold in total. Proceeds will benefit the SECA campaign.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

(The rest of this page is intentionally blank.)

Week of July 11...



**It is with great sadness that officials at the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections announce the passing of one of its Drug Interdiction Dogs.**

**Totti, a two-year-old yellow lab, was left unattended for about two hours in a trainer's car on July 7, 2016. When the trainer realized the situation, he and other unit staff worked to cool the dog by hosing him down with water and by carefully cooling him with ice. He was taken to a veterinarian clinic and was conscious at that time. Unfortunately he passed away that same evening.**

**DOC employees are extremely saddened by this tragic event.**

**The agency is conducting a full investigation into this matter.**



pennsylvania  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Lamas Appointed Superintendent of SCI Chester**

Department of Corrections Secretary John Wetzel has appointed Marirosa Lamas as superintendent of the State Correctional Institution at Chester, Delaware County. Lamas replaces John Thomas, who was appointed deputy superintendent for centralized services at SCI Huntingdon. The personnel changes are effective July 17, 2016

"Marirosa is a respected corrections veteran who has many skills, talents and expertise to offer this agency and specifically to SCI Chester," Secretary Wetzel said. "She has become a national leader in the area of Crisis Intervention Team training and is perfectly situated to take SCI Chester in the right direction."

Lamas has served the agency as a counselor and unit manager at SCI Camp Hill, staff assistant to the deputy secretary at the department's headquarters and deputy superintendent for centralized services at SCIs Frackville and Rockview. She was then promoted to superintendent at SCIs Muncy, Rockview/Benner

Township. Following her departure from Rockview/Benner Township, she played an integral role in providing training to DOC employees in the area of Crisis Intervention Team training and advancing the DOC in its efforts to improve and enhance its delivery of services to mentally ill inmates.

A native of Puerto Rico, Lamas is a professionally certified and trained hostage negotiator. She earned a bachelor's degree in administration of justice from The Pennsylvania State University. She also holds a master's degree in administration of justice from Shippensburg University.

Lamas is a member of the Pennsylvania Prison Warden's Association, the American Correctional Association and the Association of Women Executives in Corrections.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Week of July 4...

## **Christopher Oppman Named Department of Corrections Deputy Secretary for Administration**

After serving in an acting capacity for nearly one year, Christopher H. Oppman has been named Deputy Secretary for Administration for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections.

"Chris is a dedicated, educated and highly-innovative individual," Secretary of Corrections John E. Wetzel said. "He continues to bring new concepts and ideas to the table, and that, coupled with his institutional experience makes him a well-rounded administrator."

Wetzel highlighted some of Oppman's work saying, "Chris has been involved in a number of important projects and committees working toward improving efficiencies and decreasing spending, such as the consolidation of radiation treatment cases at one prison to save transportation costs and the reduction in medication costs for individuals with co-occurring cases of HIV and Hepatitis C. He continues to be my right hand man where all things fiscal are concerned."



As deputy secretary, Oppman is responsible for directing the administrative operations of the DOC and oversees the DOC's Bureaus of Administration, Correctional Industries, Health Care Services, Operations, Office of Equal Opportunity and Correctional Industries.

Oppman began his DOC career as a corrections health care administrator at SCI Pittsburgh in 2010. In 2013, he was named director of the DOC's Bureau of Health Care Services. In April 2015, he was named acting deputy secretary for administration.

Prior to his employment with the DOC, Oppman worked as an HR specialist, contracts manager and controller at Laurel Highlands Foundation, Inc. He also served as a center administrator for Concentra Medical Centers and as practice manager for Ohio Valley General Hospital.

Oppman earned a bachelor of science degree in biology with a minor in business administration from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. He earned a master of health administration and a master of business administration from Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business in Pittsburgh.

A native of Connellsville, Oppman lives in Mechanicsburg, Pa.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Lessening Anxiety through Virtual Reality**

By Susan McNaughton

Imagine living in prison for nearly 40 years. You entered the prison system at the age of 17. Now you are in your 50's.

Imagine all of the items and gadgets that have been created during this time period that you've never had a chance to use, such as cell phones, laptop computers, debit cards, DVDs, paying for gas at the pump, digital cameras, disposable contacts, the internet and even all of the gadgets that come in an automobile.

Now imagine, after seeking and being granted clemency by the governor, you can go home.

This is exactly what happened to a DOC inmate recently.

In May, the inmate's life sentence was commuted by Gov. Tom Wolf to a term of 35 years to life on parole. The Commutation Warrant stipulated that the reentrant not be released on parole until after he has served at least one year in a community corrections center (CCC).

To help the reentrant have a successful and less-anxious release to the center, Department of Corrections and PA Board of Probation and Parole officials coordinated the production of a first-of-its-kind, 360 degree virtual reality video of the CCC in which the reentrant will be residing. The video's purpose was to provide

the reentrant, and reentrants who may find themselves in a similar situation, with a real-life view of their future accommodations.



On June 22, the reentrant was given the opportunity to use the virtual reality device to familiarize himself with the center BEFORE leaving the prison.

The goggle system uses a set of goggles that attach to a Galaxy 6 cell phone. While the unit has no phone capabilities, it does have videos loaded onto it. Once the individual is wearing the device, a video is played allowing the viewer to see things as if he was actually there.

The reentrant was able to see the CCC, and he also heard from the center's director, Jacqueline Rupert, who narrated the video. The video showed the reentrant the outside of the building, its entrance and then took him on a virtual tour of the entire center.

Officials believe the use of this device will help to reduce the stress and anxiety associated with relocation after spending a long period of time in an institution.

"The stress of not knowing what to expect -- what their room will be like or where they will be cooking or washing clothes -- can cause a lot of anxiety," said Bureau of Community Corrections Regional Director Dan McIntyre. "This device brings a familiarity to the reentrant so they know what to expect when they get to the

center, including something as simple as how to gain entry to the building and even signing in. It immerses them into their new environment."

The video was produced at no cost to the DOC or Parole Board, while the goggles, phone and earphones cost \$470.

Officials are hoping to produce videos of every CCC in the future, although no deadline date has been set nor has any funding been set aside at this point. It is believed that this technology can be used in a variety of other ways that benefits DOC employees and inmates.

On June 24, the reentrant left SCI Graterford for the community corrections center where he will live for the next year as he transitions home. He's a little more prepared thanks to the forward thinking of DOC and PBPP staff, and his relocation was easier on him.

About his virtual reality experience, he wrote:

*"I would like to thank those involved from both the Department of Corrections and the Virtual Reality Program for allowing me the opportunity to participate in such an extraordinary event. Though I still have many questions and concerns, the anxiety I've been feeling since learning that I would be going to a halfway house has lessened considerably. The Virtual Reality Program allowed me to experience a real life situation from inside prison."*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## **Coal Township Names Second Quarter EOQ**

Kelley Green, clerk typist 2, was recognized as SCI Coal Township's Employee of the Quarter for the Second Quarter of 2016. Kelley works in Security Services, assigned to the Majors' offices. She was nominated by her supervisors.

Green's supervisors stated that she has proven herself to be a valued member of SCI Coal Township. She continuously seeks out additional responsibilities while managing her existing workload. Due to the nature of Kelley's position, she is entrusted with sensitive information and can be counted on to always conduct herself appropriately. Kelley was a key contributor in preparing for this facility's ACA. She epitomizes the "team philosophy." Kelley's hard work speaks for itself and is much appreciated.



Superintendent Thomas McGinley commended Kelley on her hard work and dedication and for her willingness to help all staff members at all times.

Congratulations Kelley!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## Professional Boundaries Training

The DOC partnered with The Moss Group (TMG) -- through a Bureau of Justice Assistance Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) Demonstration Grant – to further the goal of understanding and developing strategies to address the challenges employees face in providing cross-gender supervision in a prison setting.

This past week, TMG provided intense training, titled “Professional Boundaries: Safety Awareness and Expectation,” to 17 select individuals from 13 DOC facilities. The training is “*facilitated*-based” and is intended to be **co-facilitated** with another trainer. It requires six hours to complete when done properly with all the included activities. Training objectives are: providing information on professional boundaries in correctional settings, understanding agency expectations for individual professional boundaries, recognizing inappropriate behavior and the consequences of safety and culture, and developing skills and personal strategies to maintain healthy professional boundaries.

To be effectively executed, TMG suggested a swift and deliberate roll-out approach that included:

- Providing initial instruction to SCl administrators if interested.
- Having trainers initially co-present at SCIs other than their home institutions. This will enable facilitators to build confidence and develop “professional courage” for anticipated sensitive conversations with coworkers who may be more experienced or less receptive to the notion of culture change and sexual safety.
- Limiting attendees to no more than 30 employees because of the activities involved in the training.

The Training Academy agreed to conduct the initial training session in July to 30 staff attending basic training. The co-facilitators will include one individual from the Training Academy and one from Central Office. Following completion of the training and evaluation reviews, the co-facilitators will report their findings to Carole Mattis who will forward this feedback, as well as a proposed training schedule, to the other co-presenters and superintendents so that accommodations can be made accordingly.

The overall impression of TMG instructors was that participants did a great job during the teach-back coaching sessions and understood the concepts quickly.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~