

THE PROBATION REPORTER

May 2004

Volume 2, Edition 4

Message from the Chief

by Bill Burke

As we complete our second full year of publication of *The Probation Reporter*, I would like to acknowledge and thank the staff who volunteer their talent, energy, and time to produce our newsletter. Among those have been Kevin Bayless, Barbara Boerger, Liz Anker, Vikki Bernstein, Jody Green and Donna Humphrey. We are saddened by the recent loss of Kevin Bayless and Donna Humphrey as they take their careers to other counties but we are heartened by the addition of Debbie Damiano to the committee, replacing Kevin on layout. Please remember that there is always room for staff involvement (hint!).

The County and State budget dilemma remains foremost on our minds, both as it affects the services that we provide to the Court and community and as it impacts our staff. The County is on an accelerated budget adoption process this year with a goal of approving the 2004-2005 budget on June 1. Per budget instructions we have submitted General Fund budgets (Juvenile Hall, Probation, and Regional Facility) calling for a 20% reduction. In a bad situation we have positioned ourselves well by increasing revenues (e.g., Medi-CAL reimbursement for Probation System of Care and Targeted Case Management), reduced expenditures (e.g., cutting laundry contract and contracting with the Sheriff/Jail for laundry services), and reduced salary costs (leaving General Fund positions vacant as staff retire or leave county employment). These efforts have enabled us to manage workload and develop budgets without additional layoffs or demotions. We remain committed to placing a priority on protecting our community and employees during these difficult times. Additionally, we must continue to think of this budget crisis as a multi-year issue and continue to build strategies and plan beyond FY 2004-2005.

I am quick to emphasize that the budget situation is far from over and we will need to remain vigilant as other threats arise and we must remain open to recognizing opportunities when they present themselves. On May 14, the Governor published the May Budget Revision. As we go to press the Revision is being analyzed in relation to direct and indirect impacts to Probation services and Humboldt County in general.

On the positive side the Governor continues to propose continuation of JJCPA/COPS funding. Additionally, we see movement relating to evaluation and planning around Juvenile Justice Reform. This has the potential for more immediate, positive impacts as well. Also at the forefront of opportunity category is potential around expanding claiming from Medi-CAL and contracting for bed space at the Regional Facility. On the other side of the ledger, Probation TANF restoration is not included in the May Revision. This is our most immediate single threat and could have significant impacts on our General Fund budgets. We will continue to advocate, along with others, for inclusion of this vital source of funding in the State budget.

Key dates and events to be aware of (some of which will be passed by publication date) include:

- May 20 Board Budget Study Session (department presentations)
- May 25 Public hearings on County budget
- June 1 Board budget approval
- June 15 State budget adoption (we hope!)

As we continue through these challenging times it is important to recognize that the department continues to move forward in a variety of areas as represented in many of the articles in this edition of *The Probation Reporter*.

Beyond these organizational developments it is also appropriate to recognize individual activity by staff that often go unrecognized such as:

- Recognition from schools for Ken Evans' efforts at SARB and Truancy Court
- Workshop presentations on safety by Ryan Schlesiger and Vikki Bernstein for the Child Care Council
- Shaun Brenneman's recognition from a college instructor for his efforts to support an adult probationer's educational efforts
- Mardi Bessellieu's efforts aimed at receiving donations for kids in Juvenile Hall
- Our American Cancer Society Relay for Life team, *Cuffing Cancer*, including Kim Sousa, Megan Gotcher, Dolores Cano, Ryan Schlesiger, Jan Macpherson, Will Nalty, Beverly Ford, Kermit Owen (on loan from another Department), and consultant/guru Mike Tully.

These are only a few examples of Probation employees' individual and collective efforts that illustrate our staff's ongoing commitment to building safer, healthier communities. Keep up the good work!!!

Humboldt County Probation Department

The Probation Reporter

Newsletter Committee Members

Bill Burke, Chief Probation Officer

Barbara Boerger, Editor

Liz Anker

Vikki Bernstein

Jody Green

Donna Humphrey

The Probation Reporter is published by the Humboldt County Probation Department. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a forum for communication and the sharing of information. The Probation Reporter does not publish anonymous, politically oriented, or critical articles. Opinions expressed are those of the individual writer and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Humboldt County Probation Department. Articles submitted may be edited to meet space requirements. Submit stories or story ideas to the editor or Committee members.

From the Desk of the Persistent Assistant

by Doug Rasines
Assistant Chief Probation Officer

In spite of the continuing news regarding budget shortfalls, elimination of programs, exhausting financial reserves and laying off or furloughing of employees, I prefer to remain optimistic and turn what appears to be a “financial meltdown” into a “window of opportunity” for Probation to move forward with a focus on building our organizational capacity.

In the coming months, as part of our agency’s strategic plan for building and sustaining the organizational knowledge, skills, fiscal mechanisms and infrastructure necessary to respond to the changing needs of the department and community, I will be working with supervisors and other interested staff with a plan for (1) sustaining and enhancing available funding streams; (2) developing organizational procedural handbooks for respective Probation division units; and (3) improved reliance on evidence based practices (EBPs) within Probation services.

With these three goals in mind, while we continue to monitor compliance plans to maintain our current funding streams, we will explore the potential for expanding claiming/billing of Title IV-E, Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (MAA), and Title XIX (Targeted Case Management and Speciality Mental Health) services across other appropriate Probation program activities. We will pursue legislation for the reimbursement of unfunded mandates. We will continue work toward developing contracts with other counties for bed space at the Regional Facility, and we will strive to build our continuing partnerships with tribal entities and the Department of Health and Human Services as a means for enhancing our service delivery systems. The development of written individual unit operational handbooks will allow for a well trained and resourceful staff available to ensure the consistent delivery of service to the court, clients and community. Over the course of the next year a fostered reliance on performance-based initiatives such as Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC), Aggression Replacement Training (ART), Functional Family Therapy (FFT), and Family to Family will allow the department to focus its efforts and service on practices that are proven effective and supported by research, while discarding activities of dubious merit.

Maintaining a “glass is half full, not empty” approach will be challenging. It will provide an opportunity, however, to refocus our organizational philosophy, reorganize/restructure the agency and assign duties in a way that may allow for improved efficiencies and a more rational allocation of resources. To be sure it will not be easy, but with a commitment to our mission and values we must move forward with a blueprint for success even in times of fiscal difficulties.

Post It Note

by Shaun Brenneman

“As an agent of the Court we reduce the impact of crime in our communities through investigation, prevention, supervision, collaboration, detention, and victim restoration.”

-Mission Statement
Humboldt County Probation Department

In the early part of this year the Strategic Planning Team crafted a new Mission Statement to better reflect the role of the Department in the community. Along with core organizational values and operating principles, the Mission Statement was intended to be displayed throughout the Department.

Over the last two months several of our fellow employees have been holding meetings to determine how to effectively post the information. After spirited debate and a thorough review of the options, the committee settled on the following:

An engraved plaque with the Mission Statement in the front lobby.

Mission Statement will be matted, framed, and placed in conference room.

Core Values will be matted, framed, and placed in conference room.

Operating Principles will be matted framed, and placed in conference room.

Additionally, all outstations will have a framed and matted copy of the three documents. The team plans to mat and frame the items in the upcoming weeks. The committee’s target for completion of the posting is the end of the fiscal year.

A special thanks to all the people who participated in the committee: Vikki Bernstein, Barbara Boerger, Betty Bowles, Shaun Brenneman, Joe Eldridge, Cate Halliday, Jeanne Kirke, John Stopkowicz, and Diane Williams.



Community Service Work Program

by Pam Johnson

The Humboldt County Adult Community Service Work program (CSW) provides a sentencing alternative for the court. Clients may perform community service work instead of paying a fine, going to jail, or as part of their overall sentence.

Deputy Probation Officer Diana Cavinta, Community Service Coordinator, has overseen and administered the CSW program since 1996, when it consisted of only 50 cases. During the year 2003, 875 new referrals were opened, an average of 73 new cases per month. Diana currently oversees 400 community service workers.

Since 1996, the CSW program has succeeded in placing over 10,000 adult clients throughout Northern California. With the help of over 250 local non-profit organizations, the CSW program has provided more than 60,000 hours of service to the community annually. Staff and services are partially self-funded by the administrative fees paid by community service workers.

The CSW staff, consisting of Diana Cavinta and Legal Office Assistant Pam Johnson, is committed to monitoring clients throughout the duration of their placement. In addition to providing essential services, such as landscaping, custodial, janitorial, food service, office work and other skilled trades, clients are encouraged to work in collaboration with community members and organizations, a small step in the process of restorative justice. Many clients find their experience participating in community service rewarding and valuable, and decide to continue their involvement after the CSW obligation is completed. Whenever possible, we encourage agencies to consider CSW clients as potential employees.

The CSW program recently held a workshop at the Humboldt County Office of Education to promote the CSW program, coordinated by Intern, Charmaine Stance. The information speaker panel included Judge Timothy Cissna, Chief Probation Officer Bill Burke, Community Service Work Coordinator Diana Cavinta and Vickie Manson of St. Vincent DePaul. The workshop was well attended by approximately thirty placement supervisors.

In this day of budget cuts, increased caseloads and discontinuance of programs, the CSW program continues to thrive, benefitting the community and courts alike.

Serving the Court (lunch that is)

by Barbara Boerger

On March 25th, members of the Juvenile Units hosted a potluck welcoming the Honorable Judge Dale A. Reinholtsen to our world. Supervising Probation Officer Barbara Benich thought of the lunch hour gathering as an opportunity for Judge Reinholtsen to connect faces to the names of the juvenile officers submitting reports to court, as well as providing a forum for an off the record discussion of Court procedures and practices. Chief Bill Burke and Assistant Chief Doug Rasines were on hand, as well as the Juvenile Units Supervisors, and nearly all juvenile officers.

Our staff members, being the good cooks (or at least good shoppers) that they are, provided a yummy array of goodies, and interesting small talk flourished. Important issues and various details of Court reports were touched upon, as well. We look forward to our continued work with Judge Reinholtsen.

Adult P.O.s Meet with Judges

by Liz Anker

On April 6th, the Adult Intake and Field Supervision Units met with all our Superior Court Judges who preside over adult criminal and civil cases. The meeting was coordinated by Presiding Judge Marilyn Miles and was attended by virtually the entire contingent of Officers who work adult caseloads, as well as by Chief Probation Officer Bill Burke, Division Director Bill Damiano and Legal Office Services Manager Debbie Damiano.

The judges conveyed that they were pleased with the quality of our presentence investigation reports and the supplemental reports from the field units in connection with probation violation cases. Possible ramifications of certain appellate decisions were discussed, as were the applicability and wording of several conditions of probation. Over all, the meeting was positive and helpful and we appreciated the opportunity our staff had to interact over issues which are of mutual concern to us. Thanks to Judge Miles and her colleagues for taking time from their very busy schedules (actually, their lunch hours) to meet with our staff!



Our Soldier Sends His Regards

by Sandy Jordan

I send a BIG HELLO to everyone (per his request) on behalf of Andy Mc Laughlin, who is currently stationed near Baghdad. So many of you have asked me about him on a regular basis, and I wanted to bring you up to date. Andy arrived in Kuwait on March 18, 2004, after spending time at Fort Irwin for training here in California. He spent about two weeks at Camp Udairi in Kuwait, where he was staged about 7 miles south of "the big berm" that runs along the entire Kuwait/Iraq border. The weather was mild----70-80 degrees during the day, but the wind, dust, and sand blow constantly, causing eye, ear, throat and nose irritation. The soldiers wear as much protective gear as possible, but short of putting themselves in vacuum sealed containers, the elements present an ongoing problem. (Andy said he constantly wears sunglasses, and he jokingly said he may become a model/spokesperson for a major manufacturer of sunglasses when he comes home, as he is constantly having his photo taken with the glasses on.) The terrain is flat as far as the eye can see and there is not a single blade of vegetation to be found. Andy said it was like he went from earth to Mars.

In early April, Andy wrote stating he was moved to Baghdad (about 6 miles South). The days are calm, and the nights are long. As you might imagine, tension is high, and everyone is prepared for the unexpected 24 hours a day. He described what he has been going through as being "like the wild west". Water is a luxury. Bathing once every 3 days (whether you need to or not) is the norm, and there are no laundry facilities. When Andy washes his clothing, he uses shampoo, because he does not have access to laundry detergent (we have sent him some). He dries his clothing by air drying them, and said when he wears that piece of clothing again, it is stiff and almost crystalized. (That must be delightful).

Access to a telephone is pretty much a luxury, but is available for his use. Andy is able to frequently talk with his wife Lael and children via Segovia Satellite, which lights up his life. Andy's support system here at home has been tremendous. I hope all of you know how much your contributions to the care packages, especially the cards and letters mean to Andy. The care packages we have sent thus far have included letters, prayers, and gifts. Andy is ever so appreciative and wanted me to let all of you know that. Two more care packages will be sent to Andy in May thanks to your contributions. The next one will be sent the second week of June. For those of you not knowing what to get for the care packages, here are some suggestions: dried fruits; nutritional power bars; white socks(10); stationary; envelopes; postage stamps; jerky; baby wipes (small packages); disposable cameras; murine (eye drops); sun block (spf 45); tinactin foot spray or powder; travel size bottles of shampoo; and assistance with postage is always appreciated. I am unable to send candy due to the heat.

Update: On May 10, 2004, early in the morning while sitting at my desk, my telephone rang. Much to my surprise, and delight, when I answered it, Andy was on the other end. WOW! What a shock. Due to the type of transmission of the telephone call (Segovia Satellite), there was a time delay in the conversation of about 2 seconds. You end up stepping all over each others words, but as the conversation went on, it became easier.

Andy is now located about 75 miles South of Baghdad, where he said things are "quiet now". The monsoons are over, and it is currently 100 degrees, with 85% humidity. By early July, it will be 140 degrees, and will only cool off to 110 at night. He is stationed at Camp Scania which services the major supply routes to all points North and South. His job is base security, clearing convoy routes, and patrols in the sector about 15000 meters around his camp. He stated he drives a Humvee, which is armor plated, with 3" glass windows, and no air conditioning. The temperature inside his vehicle often is 160-180 degrees. The soldiers work 12 hours on, and 24 off, with every 8th day off. The hours not working is bothering Andy, as boredom sets in. As many of you know, Andy is a workaholic, so his preference would be to work every day. He does read a lot though, which helps. Andy said he is thriving on putting smiles on the faces of the small children in the local townships and villages. The kids call him "meester candy". That must put a smile on Andy's face too. Andy has a real bed now with a mattress, and it sounds like he gets to shower much more frequently. Good thing!!! On a humorous note, it is a good thing Andy is really fit and trim. He told me they have "Camel Spiders" there and they run 10 miles an hour. How fast do you think Andy can run?

Good News. Andy will get to come home for his mid-tour leave on September 26, and will return to his base on October 13. He plans to come to Eureka to see his children for a couple of days, and then will be going to South Florida for a long overdue honeymoon with his beautiful bride, Lael. They have only been together for two weeks out of six months, so it is about time!

I have many photo's to share with all of you soon. Thank you again for your support and prayers for Andy. We all miss him very much.

For more information, please contact me.



Conservatorship Investigations

by Kevin Samsel

In January the duties of Conservatorship Court Investigator, previously shared by Supervising Probation Officer, Sandra Jordan and Deputy Probation Officer, Stephanie Smithson, were assigned to Senior Probation Officer, Kevin Samsel. During the first quarter of the calendar year, the Court Investigator assignment was transferred into the Adult Intake Unit, adding duties of Guardianship and Step-Parent Adoption Investigations, (also known as Special Reports) to the assignment, to complete the FTE Senior position in the Adult Intake Unit. The burden of these Special Reports have been the responsibility Senior Probation Officer, Mike Saul, who is delighted with the relief. He may now fully dedicate his expertise and professionalism to Pre-Sentence Investigations (PSI's).

Many staff members of the Probation Department may not be aware of our responsibilities for Conservatorship and Special Reports Investigations. This entry for the news letter is intended to inform our members of our role in Conservatorship Investigations. A future entry will address Guardianship and Step-Parent Adoption Investigations.

Conservatorship cases are heard in Probate Court and are civil proceedings. The role of the investigator is outlined in Section 1826 of the Probate Code. Historically, these investigations have been distributed to line staff in various units as somewhat of an "and other duties as assigned," venture. Over the past couple years, with the leadership of SPO, Sandra Jordan, we have raised the bar on the quality of our investigations, resulting in a higher quality work product for the Court. In recent months, Sandra worked tirelessly in the development of a Conservatorship Investigation Manual, which will serve as a to guide to current and future officers who are charged the with duty of conservatorship investigations. She has also been instrumental in enhancing our relationship with the California Association of Superior Court Investigators (CASCI), a state-wide group of professionals which hosts annual and regional trainings. The work of the Court Investigator demands the ability to explain the nature, purpose and effect of a conservatorship, the ability to effectively communicate with individuals with limited verbal and mental capacity, evaluate complex medical, financial, and familial issues, while maintaining an unbiased perspective throughout the investigation process.

Conservatees (the person in need of help with medical and financial issues) can be described generally in one of two ways. The majority of conservatees are the elderly members of our community, who are facing difficulties associated with late-stage life issues, which often includes those diagnosed dementia and Alzheimers disease. The other group is defined according to Probate Code Section 1420 as developmentally disabled, meaning "a disability which originates before an individual attains age 18, continues, or can be expected to

continue, indefinitely, and constitutes a substantial handicap for such individual". According to Probate Code Section 811 (and following), the Court must make a finding of the proposed conservatee based on what is known as a Capacity Declaration, which is an evaluation prepared by a qualified, licensed physician. These individuals are often the most vulnerable of our community. Therefore, the role of the investigator is critical in gathering facts and information for the Court which will serve the Court in determining decisions in the best interests of the Conservatee.

With the transition complete and responsibilities for Conservatorships and Special Reports now contained within the Adult Intake Unit, we will to continue to learn more about Probate law and procedures and cross train intake officers in an effort to maintain high standards in the quality of our investigations and reports.

Detention Mentions

by Tim Toste

Due to recent events, the corrections profession has taken a bit of a beating lately. I am proud to say that our staff do an admirable job taking care of other people's children. There are many things that go into ensuring staff are doing what is necessary to care for the health and welfare of all minors in our charge. The first of which are annual and biannual inspections from a variety of sources in many areas. The one that comes to mind initially is the Institute for Medical Quality biannual inspection. The Humboldt County Correctional Facility, Regional Facility, and Juvenile Hall are three of the twenty-two county-operated facilities in California to meet the IMQ standards. We will be receiving our two year accreditation at the Board of Supervisors meeting on May 25, 2004.

Other inspections that come to mind are health/environmental, menu/nutritional, Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission, Board of Corrections, local and state fire inspections, county building inspections, and Grand Jury inspections to name a few. The inspection that has significant impact is the biannual Board of Corrections inspection. They ensure local facilities such as our County Correctional Facility, Juvenile Hall, and Regional Facility follow Titles 15 and 24 of the California Code of Regulations. With a non-adversarial style, the Board does an excellent job of ensuring that local facilities **assist** us with staying in compliance to not only protect the department and County from potential liability, but to also ensure the health and safety of those in need of incarceration.

The Board of Corrections also administers the Standards and Training for Corrections program (STC).

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Detention Mentions

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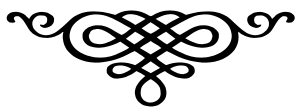
Though STC funding assistance to Probation Departments was eliminated in 2003-2004, we continue to have a strong training program thanks to our training officer, Tim Clohessy. Our department continues to meet and often exceed STC minimum standards for annual hours for peace officers while maintaining the quality and relevance of the training. The work we do with the BOC keeps our standards high and greatly mitigates the potential for the erosion of best practices in our profession. We hope funding to STC is restored in the future.

Detention Services currently has five vacancies, one of which should be filled very soon. The others are waiting for approval to fill with new hires pending the dust settling on the County and State budgets. Once we feel we are on a more solid foundation in terms of the budget situation I believe we will be able to fill the remaining three vacancies in the Detention Division.

The lighting upgrade in Juvenile Hall is ongoing. The hallways and multipurpose rooms are completed and the sleeping rooms are underway. The additional illumination is quite obvious when witnessed in person. The before and after photos (at right), though helpful, don't really do it justice.

On the recreation front, the department employees' Bowling Extravaganza was held on February 20, 2004 and it was another big success. Supervising Juvenile Corrections Officer Dave Demyan took home the battered bowling pin trophy for having the high score of the night. He bowled a respectable 202 game out of the three games he bowled. Congratulations Dave, and no, I won't just add your name to the trophy for next year already.

One last note, a hearty congratulations goes out to Dan Keagy and his wife as they are going to have another baby in the coming months! Congratulations also to Stephani Mayr, a four year extra help JCO, whose due date for her child is September 15, 2004. Two other extra help JCO's graduated from HSU recently, they are Jessica Velcoff and John Roby. Congratulations to you both! Kyle Collins has resigned as extra help to afford him more time at the Arcata Fire Department and his full time job as an Emergency Medical Technician. Good luck Kyle.



Juvenile Hall - before new lights installed



Juvenile Hall - after new lights installed



Dave Demyan and his battered bowling pin trophy

Training Trivia by Tim Clohessy

This training year is almost over, and has been successful from both an educational and financial perspective. All of our sworn staff either have met or are scheduled for more than what is required by the state. We have managed significant budget savings, and many of the courses offered this past year have been informative and contributed to staff development. Classes left to complete include:

- Adult Sex Offender Assessment - June 8 for 8 hours.
- Ethics for Law Enforcement - June 15 or June 16 for 8 hours, offered by College of the Redwoods, Advanced Officer Training series.

Now is the time to plan for a fiscally lean training year in Fiscal Year 04/05. We have a number of new Deputy Probation Officer, 2 new Supervising Juvenile Corrections Officers, and several new Juvenile Corrections Officers. They will all have to be provided basic core training within one calendar year of their hire date. This will be the first time in a number of years that we will have to send Deputy Probation Officers away for their core training. It is five weeks in duration and very expensive.

Those who will participate in "annual training" hours have been invited to plan for next year's training "Training Needs Assessment" session to be conducted on May 10, 2004 at the main Probation Department. Representatives from many units have volunteered to participate. We will be brainstorming what information is needed and available locally for our sworn staff during the coming year. We will also be identifying local experts, including some of our own staff, as providers of training. Already in the works are courses in "Domestic Violence," "Juvenile Sex Offenders," and "Understanding 12-Step Programs." Also, thanks to Toni Martin, in collaboration with David Johnston of County Mental Health, and others of the Juvenile Justice Commission, we are about to certify our first computer-based training for Juvenile Corrections Officers. The first course will provide introductory information about mental illness and its impact on behavior. There will be more similar courses certified by the National Institute of Corrections during the year. These types of courses can provide valuable information both conveniently and inexpensively.

Anniversaries by Donna Humphrey

Please join us in honoring the following Probation Department staff members who celebrated a Years of Service anniversary during the months of February, March and April 2004.

Doug Rasines	22 years
Tim Clohessy	17 years
Mike Saul	16 years
Tammy Robison	14 years
Sherri McKenna	12 years
Vickie Webb	9 years
Doris Echeveria	9 years
Wendy Rebik	8 years
Angie Circe	7 years
Shaun Brenneman	7 years
Jenifer Farley	6 years
Christian Petersen	6 years
Stacy Reyes	5 years
Kim Sousa	5 years
Donna Humphrey	5 years
Fel Barlow	5 years
John Sampson	4 years
Teresa Haeg	3 years
Alan Borchardt	3 years
Megan Gotcher	2 years
Andy McLaughlin	2 years
Joe Eldridge	2 years
Bobby Caruthers	2 years
Margi Williams	2 years

WELCOME

Join us in welcoming the newest members of the Humboldt County Probation Department:

Tabitha Kuehne, Deputy Probation Officer I
Beverly Ford, Deputy Probation Officer I
Rebecca Breksa, Juvenile Corrections Officer

PROBATION EMPLOYEES:

Please help support the sunshine fund by
donating \$1.00 a month

Also, committee volunteers are always
welcome!!!

The next committee meeting is scheduled
for June 8 at noon - main department
conference room