



THE PROBATION REPORTER

Volume 4, Edition 2

November 2005

Message from the Chief

By Doug Rasines

Holiday Greetings!

Once again it is that time of year for personal and professional reflection, appreciating what we have accomplished individually and collectively, and thinking ahead toward the future. On an individual basis, we have seen many new staff come aboard and others leave for personal and professional reasons. For some staff, we have observed significant life changes such as marriages, births, and/or other major events. I want to extend congratulations and best wishes for those entering a new phase in their personal and career paths, and a message of prayer and support to those experiencing life's difficulties. Together we have made great strides related to organizational efforts in developing methods to improve services in the communities that we serve. While managing with several unfilled staff vacancies in critical positions, most have been asked to work even harder to maintain the high professional standards expected of this Department. It is understood that one cannot do everything that needs to be done in the moment, yet our own personal and ethical standards often create a bind. We feel an obligation to complete the myriad of tasks before us, and we become frustrated as more piles up behind us. It has been inspiring to see the level of

ownership, enthusiasm, teamwork, perseverance, and professionalism staff have demonstrated in continuing to do an extremely demanding job to the best of their ability.

As we move toward the New Year, we continue to be a Department in transition:

- We are continuing with the hiring process to fill vacant positions at all levels in the Department (Supervising Probation Officer, Legal Office Assistant, Fiscal Services Supervisor, Deputy Probation Officer and Juvenile Corrections Officer). Vikki Bernstein was recently promoted to Division Director and will oversee juvenile services.
- Elements of our Strategic Plan related to our Information Technology (IT) Plan continue to take shape. In the coming months, we will continue to work with County Information Technology staff in completing departmental IT hardware/software and operating systems upgrades, installing a document imaging system, consolidating existing case management data bases, and the provision of additional departmental IT system tech support and training. In acquiring a more innovative approach to the use of technology, we hope to ultimately make all of our jobs more efficient.
- Implementation of The California Endowment Healthy Returns Initiative (HRI) now provides for an evidence-based screening/assessment of all youth admitted to the juvenile hall. Integrated health/mental health treatment plans are developed, and on-going case management services are delivered to link clients with community care providers in order to ensure the continuity of care upon a minor's release from custody.
- Consultants contracted through the Healthy Returns Initiative will soon begin providing technical assistance to help the Department improve our organizational capacity to achieve

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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better community outcomes, strengthen collaborative relationships, and enhance our staff development learning network.

- We continue to explore the potential to participate in a pilot program that will focus on the introduction of Evidence-Based Practices in adult probation services.
- We are maintaining dialogue with the Annie E. Casey Foundation regarding the potential for future participation in juvenile justice reform initiatives regarding detention practices and the issues surrounding disproportionate minority contact.
- And lastly, lobbying efforts remain in full swing to ensure continuation of funding in both juvenile and adult probation service arenas. While encouraged by statements of legislative intent for sustainable funding, we remain vigilant and responsive to threats impacting probation services.

As the holiday season approaches, it brings with it an opportunity to set aside our day-to-day complaints and annoyances and focus on that which we value and hold dear. Please join me in celebrating and sharing a note of appreciation for the efforts of all of our staff at this special time of year. Best Wishes to you and yours!

What is the Healthy Returns Initiative?

By Jeannie Patterson

The Healthy Returns Initiative will focus on providing coordinated health/mental health care assessment, case plan development, and case management services for adolescents who are admitted to juvenile hall and, who by the nature of their involvement in the juvenile justice system, are at risk of removal from their homes.

The Humboldt County Healthy Returns Initiative (HRI) is a comprehensive system of care model designed to enhance capacity building in the community, and provide coordinated health care programs and services for the high-risk youth who have been detained and/or released in the community. The focus will be on maintaining youth in their homes and communities to the extent possible through the provision of interagency services and effective collaboration with community-based organizations and service providers.

NUTS AND BOLTS

1. Each morning the Family Resource Specialist (FRS) will obtain the Juvenile Hall daily roster for review. The

FRS will meet with each new detainee and administer the MAYSI-2 (Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument). Once complete, the FRS will give the MAYSI-2 to the Clinical Services Coordinator for scoring.

2. Three times per week, if needed, the Clinical Services Coordinator will meet with the Family Resource Specialist, the Juvenile Hall Nurse, and the Mental Health Branch Clinician to discuss new detainees and the results of the MAYSI-2. The minor's need for specialty mental health services and the minor's physical health concerns will be discussed, a client plan will be developed, and a list of potential referrals identified.
3. The FRS will meet with the minor/family and explain voluntary participation, discuss referrals, and obtain consents and necessary releases of information. The FRS will discuss Medi-Cal eligibility and the Probation System of Care, and, if needed, will link family to a Medi-Cal/Healthy Families eligibility worker (Department of Social Services) if not currently on Medi-Cal, but potentially is Medi-Cal eligible. (If the minor already has a probation officer, the FRS and the probation officer will meet to coordinate these steps.
4. If the minor/family agrees to participate in services, the minor will be given a full assessment by the Clinical Coordinator and a Client Plan will be developed, including goals and interventions.
5. The FRS will provide case management services, including assistance with transportation and referrals, to facilitate minor/family in achieving goals in the Client Plan, and to assist minor in his/her successful completion of probation.
6. Every thirty days, each case will be reviewed by the Clinical Services Coordinator and the Family Resource Specialist to assess progress and participation of the minor with his/her Client Plan, and to discuss possible revisions to the client goals as needed.

So far, over 60 assessments have been administered to youth in the Juvenile Hall and a variety of interventions and case management services have been offered to juveniles and their families.

If you have any questions regarding HRI services, please don't hesitate to contact Michelle Gonzales or Jeannie Patterson.



That's My Dog

By Michael Zwiker



Well, we took the drive this weekend...it was little James' 4th Birthday! Off we went to the small ranch out Hwy 36 between the Coastal hills, the giant Redwoods, with the Pacific Ocean in back of us.



Out through the mid-September countryside, with just a hint of nip in the air. James was sitting in his "command" seat in the back, looking out the window, making sure we didn't miss that herd of cows on our left, or those horses to our right, behind the fence lining the winding road we are on.



Before we know it, the entrance to the mini-ranch is just ahead, to the left. We turned in, and pulling into the driveway that passed the house and continued on toward the barn, there are several very nice horses on one side of the rolling pasture opposite us, and on the side to the right, another fenced area, but with several "breed" dogs, Golden Labs and Siberian Huskies, in pairs, anxiously observing our approach.



We got lucky, the breeders didn't. It was their own fault; they should have separated the breeds. Seems just when they were thinking it was getting time to have the Siberian Huskies do their "thing" to produce a litter for sale, the dogs had ideas of their own, and apparently there was a midnight 'rendezvous' between the female Siberian and the male Golden Lab... ooppppsssss...



So we got the word, "Puppies for FREEEEEEEEEEEE." Waaahooooooooooooo...off we went...



James was wide-eyed before we even entered the barn. From the outside, we got to see the "mom" and the "pop"...both beautiful animals. The mom, with a wild look in her eyes that spoke of midnight in the far Canadian North, singing to the light of the moon and a hundred thousand twinkling stars in the frozen air. And the father, who looked like he was smugly musing about swift runs along the leaf fallen bank of a marsh, where hunters waited behind camouflage blinds as flocks of wild geese approached.



We entered the barn, and our noses filled with the aromatic smells of hay, grain, warm horses, the inevitable manure (but not overwhelming). From inside, it looks like we stepped into a picture book, with the classic equestrian tack and hardware that comes with the insides of a country barn. To the left, we step up to a Dutch door where there is a handsome horse nodding his expectation that we will come and pay our admiration by scratching his long nose and stroking his neck. He wasn't disappointed.



Then we went over to the other side where there were large feed stall lids in place. When the lid to the one with the puppies was lifted, the sound of many little fur balls speaking "puppy-ease" filtered into the air, triggering the instinct to lean over and peek inside.

There they were, black and tan, black and grey, black and black, black and gold, black and brown, and white. Wait. How did that happen? There in the middle, one, larger than the others, somehow more self assured in his posture, one WHITE puppy stood on his own, looking about with an air of authority, as if pondering an important decision needing to be made.

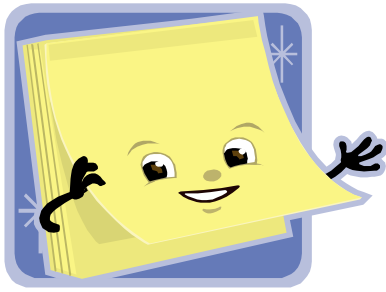
James. You could sense his heart rate building with the expansion of his eyes (which at this point were extraordinarily huge.) A smile seemed permanently imbedded on our little guy's face. I looked at his eyes and followed the path of his adoring gaze. It led straight and true to the white puppy. The softness in his voice was so gentle, but like an angel whispering in the middle of a storm with the miraculous ability of being completely audible to all who stood near by, he said, "that's my dog."

I felt a sudden lump of emotion welling in my throat, and shyly looked over to see if my vulnerable heart was obvious to my wife, who might be smiling at my (little boy) side coming out...but she seemed to be fighting back a tear of her own at the moment and suddenly we were giving each other the secret squeeze in our holding hands that says, 'this moment is special.'

Times will change our outlooks on many things. Experiences will build relationships between our newest 'family' member and ourselves. We will protest loudly when he nips at the Christmas tree or knocks down a bulb here and there in play. We will admonish him when he is learning the 'rules' of 'where to go' which will NOT include 'in the house!' We will question our wisdom in getting him when we find him in the closet looking up innocently from the freshly chewed pair of shoes he has discovered and made short work of...

But we also know, there will be a countless number of times when a boy and his dog will find ways of being together that our adult minds have long forgotten the magical pathways to. And it is for this, that we will endure the trials and tribulations of puppyhood, in the crazy, topsy-turvy existence we call our family, with a little boy named James, his white puppy, and a whisper in a country barn that will forever be etched in the memories of our hearts, "That's MY Dog"....





Notes from the Field

By Vikki Bernstein

Gang Task Force

Humboldt County Gang Task Force (GTF) members recently had the opportunity to visit Pelican Bay State Prison. Probation Department representatives Tamara Hansen (Adult Field) and Joe Eldridge (Juvenile Field/Juvenile Drug Court) and I (Dept. GTF Coordinator) went with the hope of learning more about officer safety and trends in gang development. We were given the tour, including the SHU (Security Housing Unit) and met with five inmates, all who had been gang members. Some were gang members prior to entering prison and some joined a gang while in prison. When a gang member decides to leave a gang, a debriefing process occurs. The inmates are then housed separately from all other inmates. Tamara and Joe will provide training to Probation staff regarding officer safety issues some time next year.

Acknowledgments

Eight year old Carlie Cooper donated numerous large sacks filled with "like new" stuffed animals to the Probation Department for officers to give to their probationers during the holiday season, or for other occasions as needed. Senior Probation Officer Cate Halliday has these toys for distribution. Please see Cate to arrange for getting stuffed animals for your clients or for their children. Thank you Carlie, your toys will go to appreciative homes.

Probation's volunteer Lou Lau and his wife Billie were recognized for their outstanding efforts and dedication to the community in the November/December issue of Volunteer Voices. Lou has volunteered many hours (I am sure he can provide the exact number) to the Adult Field Unit, assisting with files, restitution, and anything else needed. Billie volunteers with the American Cancer Society's Discovery Shop and the Jazz Festival office, and approves the number of hours Lou spends with us. Thank you both for your dedicated service.

Detention Mentions

By Tim Toste

We have our first Regional Facility commitment from Del Norte County Probation. The process was a long and arduous one as there was a third party involved in this referral. The boy happens to be Native American and a long time consumer of services from United Indian Health Services (UIHS). As such, Del Norte worked out an arrangement whereby UIHS and Indian Health Services (IHS), a branch of the Federal Department of Human Services, agreed to pay for the boy's treatment and detention costs. Sheri Whitt, clinician and supervisor with United Indian Health Services, was more than instrumental in arranging for all the details between Del Norte, UIHS, IHS, Humboldt County Mental Health Branch, and our department in order to ensure the young man receives the treatment he needs. The young man seems to be adjusting well as Del Norte County Chief Probation Officer Connie Merrill's e-mail excerpt below indicates:

"Thanks for the info and my visit with Charles was the absolutely best conversation I have had with him. I was so surprised to see his improvement in such a short time. He really enjoys the program and states he is learning a lot. So it was a good choice for him and hats off to all your staff coupled with their professionalism when I was there."

We also currently have one minor from Mendocino County who has been with us for about a month. After his "honeymoon period" ended he hit a bit of a rough patch, but he appears to be progressing quite nicely now.

Detention Services has added some staff recently. We would like to welcome Sarah Surber to Juvenile Hall. She was recently hired as a regular part-time Juvenile Corrections Officer to replace Stephanie Duxbury, who moved to Oregon. We would also like to welcome several extra help JCOs into the fold. We've recently added Jennifer Wilbur, Chris Andrews, Chris Cuffee, and Colin Moxon to our ranks. We said goodbye recently to extra help JCO Glenn Provost, who took a job with a police department in the Bay Area.

I would like to commend all staff on keeping the facilities well maintained and clean throughout the year, and especially recently when we had annual inspections. We did very well and it can be attributed to the staff in each facility. I would also like to point out commendations from the Chief given to Ray Watson, Dayna Wilcox, Ryan Blanchard, Robert Falk, and Briana Grappo for responding to recent crises in facilities. The department appreciates their skill and professionalism in the face of near tragedy.

Years of Service for Probation and Facilities Staff

The following employees had, or will have had, an anniversary for the time period of September 1, 2005 through November 30, 2005.

Congratulations!

3 Years

Jan Macpherson

4 Years

Cheryl Kaska
David Demyan
Justin Decarolis
Ray Watson

5 Years

Barbara Benich
John Stopkowitz
Eric Wheeler

6 Years

Paula Sargent
Rich Scoville
Greg Werroren

7 Years

Keith Wallace

8 Years

Tamara Hansen
Pam Johnson
Verna McGaughey

9 Years

Betty Bowles

11 Years

Paula Dolf

12 Years

Diana Cavinta
Jim Conroy

13 Years

Delores Cano
Steve D'Agati

14 Years

Tim Clohessy
Paula Swihart

17 Years

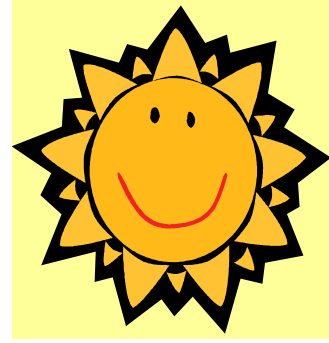
Bill Damiano

19 Years

Moe Pratton
Tim Toste

20 Years

Mardi Bessellieu



HERE COMES THE SUN

SALUTATIONS FROM THE SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

By Cate Halliday

First of all I would like to thank everyone for their participation at the Halloween Harvest Potluck. Highlights included Michelle Gonzalez's Jack O' Lantern, Barbara Boerger's mood music, and many scrumptious harvest-themed dishes.

Awards went to Kay Lamb and Jan Macpherson for the most festive dishes. Honorable mentions to Tamara Hansen for her Harvest Pumpkin Dip and to Vicki Webb for her Black Bean Stew.

Additionally, the child/Halloween picture contest was also quite fun. Thanks to all who submitted pictures. Awards went to Doris Echeveria and Barbara Boerger for matching the most pictures to the names.



Moving on.....as most of you know the Sunshine Committee was planning on sponsoring a Holiday Potluck during a lunch hour at the Main Department. Lo and behold, Mr. Shawn Burger offered his home for the event. Ballots were distributed via email asking staff to vote on their choice of location and time of the Holiday Potluck. Discarding ballots that were neutral, Mr. Burger's home squeaked by as the winner, 18 to 14. The Holiday Potluck will begin immediately following work. Years of Service pins will be presented at this event. The date and address T.B.A.



Please remember to make your fifty-cent a paycheck donation to the Sunshine Committee so we have the resources to continue sponsoring fun and morale-lifting events.

New Juvenile

Deputy Public Defender

By Jody Green

Recently, long-time 602 Deputy Public Defender, Christina Allbright, was reassigned to dependency court, and Deputy Public Defender Jennifer Dixon has been assigned to replace Christina. Jennifer is a native of Fresno and has lived in Humboldt County for approximately 2 years. She attended law school in the Bay Area and interned for the San Francisco Juvenile Public Defenders Office. We plan to reschedule Jennifer's attendance at a juvenile unit meeting soon. In the meantime, please welcome her and try not to torture her quite yet!

Jazz Cooking

By Barbara Boerger

Jazz is all about improvisation. A musician takes the chord structure of a piece, and using the original melody as a starting place, takes off and explores the possibilities.

I tend to be an impulsive cook. I start with a craving or a recipe, and search my pantry, often finding that I don't have on hand quite what it takes for what I want. Since I generally want instant gratification as well, I've learned to be a Jazz Cook. I take what I've got, look at the basic structure, and go from there.

This happened at the last office potluck. I wanted to make this terrific dish that my sister made for a recent family gathering, *Budin De Calabacita* (Zucchini Pudding), but I failed to reread the recipe before I went shopping. (DOH!) Yet my improvisation was quite well received.

***Budin De Calabacita* (Zucchini Pudding)**

Preheat oven to 350° F

- (4) cups chopped zucchini
- (1) cup + 2 Tbl. grated mild or sharp white cheddar
- (1) egg beaten
- (1) cup crushed soda crackers
- (½) cup melted butter
- (¼) tsp. ground nutmeg
- salt & pepper

In a covered saucepan cook zucchini in boiling water until tender. Drain, then mash in a large bowl. Add the cup of cheese, egg, crackers, and butter. Mix well, add nutmeg, and salt and pepper to taste. Transfer to an ovenproof dish, sprinkle w/remaining cheese, bake until pudding thickens, 15-20 minutes.

So, not having reread the recipe, but remembering it was green, I bought the big bag of broccoli florets at Costco. I used a mix of orange cheddar, and white jack cheeses, and, in defense of my cholesterol, used half the butter. I steamed the broccoli, then tossed it while still hot, with the butter before adding the other ingredients. It got rave reviews.

Future improvs are planned, including substituting brown rice for the crackers, which would give a nutritional boost, by adding complex carbs and fiber. Look for it at future potlucks.

Remember, a recipe is just an outline. You can - and should - make changes to make it your own.





4

Christmas Word Search

U Z F H R U D O L P H P U H U
N U V A Y E L L E B A R W N T
L O S I G T I L S C U P I D E
T E R A X L S N A M W O N S M
S S P T N E J O D B R H R E O
T T R S H T N I R E H S A D C
N O E L U P A A K F E K T Y H
Y C S E W G O C C Z X R S E T
B K E D R R A L L Y Y O T N A
G I N G E R B R E A D W I M E
S N T N C W M G P E U N B I R
M G N T N E Z T I L B S A H W
K O U D A N C E R F U S A C K
D N P R R C H R I S T M A S A
L A A G P E A C E A Z V S V K

BALL
BELL
BLITZEN
CANDYCANE
CHIMNEY
CHRISTMAS
COMET
CUPID
DANCER
DASHER
DONNER
ELF

FROSTY
GIFT
GINGERBREAD
NOEL
NORTHPOLE
NUTCRACKER
PEACE
PRANCER
PRESENT
REINDEER
RUDOLPH
SACK

SANTA CLAUS
SLED
SNOWMAN
STAR
STOCKING
SUGARPLUMS
TOY
TREE
VIXEN
WORKSHOP
WREATH