

Correctional Forum

WINTER 2007

A PUBLICATION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA PRISON SOCIETY

Promoting a humane, just and restorative correctional system and a rational approach to criminal justice since 1787



2007 ANNUAL APPEAL

(See page 5)

SAVE THE DATE!

The Pennsylvania
Prison Society's
Conveners Conference
Coming in
April 2008!

More details on page 4

IN THIS ISSUE

From the Executive Director	2
<i>A View in Review</i>	
Prison Society News	4
<i>New Staff, Employee of the Quarter</i>	
Annual Appeal	5
PPS Program Update	6
<i>Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative</i>	
JOBS Project	6
Faces of JOBS	7
<i>Philadelphia Photographer's Work on Exhibit</i>	
Legislative Update	8-9
To A Fault	10
<i>Pennsylvania death penalty too flawed</i>	
Death Penalty Stats and Facts	11
Third Circuit Update	12
<i>Hold on! The battle's not over</i>	

A CONVERSATION WITH JEFFREY BEARD, PH.D., SECRETARY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

By Catherine Wise

CF: In a recent Pennsylvania Department of Corrections newsletter, you raised the question, "What are prisons really for?" What is your answer to that question?

I think prisons are primarily to protect the public safety, to confine violent individuals, people who hurt other people, people that scare society. I made that statement because when we look at the prison population which has been growing steadily

since 1995, we really have to take a very serious look at what is driving that prison growth.

If prisons are for what I said they should be — for those more serious offenders — then you would think the growth is being driven by those more serious offenders. But when we look at the more serious offenders, the Part I [violent] offenders, there has only been a 2 percent increase in
continued on page 14

IF IT'S BROKE, FIX IT!

By Dee Johnson

Pennsylvania's mandatory sentencing structure may get overhaul

||||| Pennsylvania may actually join the ranks of other states that have stepped up to the plate to rethink and revise drug laws. That's because mandatory sentencing for drug-related crimes appears to have created more problems than solutions for the criminal justice system — problems ranging from unfair practices in the courtrooms to a surge in the prison population.

And that's not all.

According to state Rep. Gregory Vitali (D-Delaware), mandatory minimum sentencing could be driving up prison operating costs because it imposes "longer prison terms on more offenders, in many cases non-violent offenders."

PCS Study

In response to these concerns, Rep. Vitali introduced House Resolution 12, which requires the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing (PCS) to complete a study within two years to determine its effectiveness — or ineffectiveness. The House unanimously approved the Resolution.

According to PCS Executive Director Mark Bergstrom, work on the study has already begun; an advisory committee has been established to help guide it.

"Clearly, one of the reasons for the advisory committee is to define the scope of the project," Bergstrom said. He explained that the committee will

continued on page 13

THE PENNSYLVANIA
PRISON SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William G. Babcock, Esquire
President

Ann Satterthwaite
First Vice President

Ellen Greenlee, Esq.
Second Vice President

Michele Box
Treasurer

Stephen A. Whinston, Esquire
Solicitor

Alan Appel

Russell H. Bishop, Jr, M.Div.

J. Shane Creamer, Esq.

Ronald Cuie

Honorable Isaac Garb

Rosemary L. Gido, Ph.D.

Theodore E. Glackman, M.Ed.

William Griffin

Julia G. Hall, Ph.D.

Vicki W. Kramer, Ph.D.

David Kresge, Ph.D.

Angus R. Love, Esq.

Duncan P. McCallum

Michael J. McCaney, Jr., Esq.

Acel Moore

Sandra K. Mosten

Thomas L. Newman

Lori Pompa

Joan Porter

Grahame P. Richards, Jr.

David Richman, Esq.

Barbara Rittenhouse

Judith Stang, D.P.A.

William K. Stewart Jr., Esq.

Donald Vaughn

Norman Johnston, Ph.D.

Emeritus

Correctional Forum

Editor: William DiMascio

Executive Editor: Catherine Wise

Managing Editor: E. Dee Johnson

Correctional Forum is published quarterly by the Pennsylvania Prison Society, 245 N. Broad St., Suite 300, Philadelphia, PA 19107. For more information, contact Dee Johnson at 215-564-6005, ext. 112, or djohnson@prisonsociety.org

Design and production: Steve Smith Design



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A VIEW IN REVIEW

By William DiMascio

And you who would understand justice, how shall you unless you look upon all deeds in the fullness of light?

Only then shall you know that the erect and the fallen are but one man standing in twilight between the night of his pigmy-self and the day of his god-self,

And that the corner-stone of the temple is not higher than the lowest stone in its foundation.

—from *The Prophet on Crime and Punishment*, Kahlil Gibran

Crime and the punishment that follows are serious social issues: one because of the damage and harm it causes, and the other because of the costs it imposes and, possibly, the broader coarsening effect it has. Nevertheless, we throw around these terms rather simplistically as if there is a natural and beneficial connection between them, as if one is a remedy for the other. Yet there are lenses through which crime might be approached and current recidivism rates seem to indicate the time is at hand for such a re-examination.

In fact, in the latest Department of Corrections newsletter, Secretary Beard calls for a re-evaluation of whom we are sending to prison, why we are sending them and for how long. "We cannot continue to send people to prison just for the sake of punishment," he writes. "We need to address their criminal ways of thinking and their substance abuse issues."

There may be many of different perspectives for addressing the crime

issue, but here is a couple:

- **Crime and corrections** —this is a rehabilitative model based on a goal of fixing the problem that causes the crime to improve the circumstances for the public at large.
- **Crime and prevention** — this approach would put emphasis on building healthy communities where the culture of violence and lawlessness is shunned.

Each of these approaches contains areas of overlap. Certainly some element of punishment would be involved in each, just as rehabilitative programming and community policing have been part of the overall approach in the past. But what needs to change is the way we apportion our resources. Right now, for instance, the bulk of our funds are devoted to building, staffing and maintaining prisons with a relatively small percentage earmarked for corrective programming.

Under the crime and correction model the biggest chunk of spending

would go into treatment. Nonviolent drug offenders would be removed from prison and enrolled in community based treatment programs and monitored under intensive parole supervision; the same would be true for people convicted of DUIs. Similar sanctions would apply to other non-violent offenders who make up about half of the current prison population.

Prison space would be reserved for the violent offenders, but their time would be used differently. Everyone who is able would have to work. Jobs would be created that sustain the facilities (farming the immense acreage under DOC control, for instance). Prisoners would be paid "living" wages and, in exchange, be required to pay for their room, board, clothing, etc. The idea would be to teach prisoners how to be responsible wage earners and bill payers. They would also be able to pay for education: college and post graduate studies, as well vocational training. Life in this kind of prison would be spare but decent; there would be a constant emphasis on self-improvement, responsibility and leadership.

The last approach would require huge, upfront, government investment in our communities. The trade-off for this spending, however, is in the future generations of safer streets and reduced spending for prisons.

Under the prevention model, blighted neighborhoods would be cleaned and lighted. Abandoned buildings would be converted to affordable housing. Community activities would stress safety and healthy living, and government would provide assistance for families

in need of childcare and education in parenting, family health and nutrition. Strategies would attempt to build pride in local surroundings and foster attitudes of nonviolence.

At a glance some might say let's do all three approaches but this is impractical. We could not afford it. Besides, philosophy is important: sharp differences exist between efforts to punish, to correct and to prevent. This is not to imply that one approach should be adopted and the

"Crime and the punishment... we throw around these terms rather simplistically as if there is a natural and beneficial connection between them, as if one is a remedy for the other."

others excluded, but it is to say that one approach must be dominant and the others relegated to lesser roles.

Although it may not be apparent to everyone, we have already started down this path of reassessment. We are using strategies that help reduce the time of confinement for first-time, nonviolent drug offenders who participate in treatment programs. We are seeing significant expansion in re-entry programming designed to help reduce recidivism. These are considerable advancements in a system that has gotten increasingly punitive for three decades. This movement appears to be driven primarily by money — the prospect of

committing hundreds of millions of dollars for prison expansion. Nevertheless, the outcome is likely to benefit everyone. But before that happens, the public will have to come to grips with a few knotty questions, such as these:

Is state retaliation for crime necessary? Why and how much?

Is the rehabilitative approach too soft? How would this affect the rate of recidivism on released prisoners? How would private vendors who provide services to the prisons react if the prisons became more self-reliant?

Can a strong crime prevention program show results quickly enough to win public acceptance? Is it realistic to think this approach can end all crime? If not, what happens to the truly predatory offenders?

There is a need in our society for prisons that help protect citizens from predatory criminals, but the monstrous system that has evolved from our quest for punishment has been of dubious value. In fact, it could be argued that the punitive nature of the carceral state we have built keeps feeding a cycle of violence, especially among the socially and economically disadvantaged segments of our populations. ■■■

PRISON SOCIETY NEWS

NEW STAFF



Dee Johnson

Communications Manager

A published writer and poet, Dee hails from upstate New York. She worked for the New York State legislature in Albany for nearly 20 years as a government affairs liaison and communications officer. She is an adjunct English professor, and earned both her BA and MA in Communications from the University at Albany.

"Working with constituencies throughout New York State, I've witnessed first-hand the causes and effects of society's many injustices. I enjoyed serving the people of New York and diligently laboring to help make a positive difference in their lives. I hope my work here at the Pennsylvania Prison Society is also as instrumental in creating positive change for those I serve!" Dee says. As the new communications manag-

er, she will produce *Correctional Forum* and *Graterfriends* and manage the organization's internal and external communications.

FALL INTERNS



Jaclyn Fleming

Senior, Class of 2008

Bryn Mawr College

Bryn Mawr, PA

Jackie is a part-time intern studying

Sociology with a minor in Education. Earlier this year, she participated in the Inside-Out Prison Exchange — a nationwide program designed by Temple University professor Lori Pompa, that brings college students and inmates together in the same classroom where they collectively explore criminal justice issues. Each week for 12 weeks, she studied alongside a group of women at the Riverside Correctional Facility in Philadelphia. "The class opened

my eyes to issues I had never been exposed to before. Since then, I have felt passionate about working on issues of criminal justice and incarceration," says Jackie. "I am hoping to gain a better understanding of the process of doing advocacy and activism work on prison issues while at the Prison Society."



Anne Renaud

Sophomore, Class of 2010

Kalamazoo College

Kalamazoo, MI

A Human Development and Social Relations

major, Anne is currently our full-time intern assisting with policy and communications. She handles research, develops fact sheets, responds to inmate correspondence, and helps with *Graterfriends* production and manages its subscriptions.

She also provides support to the Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Initiative. The coalition is working to establish basic standards to ensure that children are fairly treated by the agencies they come in contact with at the time of their parents' arrest and during their incarceration.

"I'm interested in expanding the 'justice' aspect of social justice," Anne says. "Working at the Prison Society has shown me the importance of behind-the-scenes advocacy." Anne plans to study abroad in Germany next year.

EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER



Donna Shreve

Donna was nominated by her colleagues and selected by the Executive Director as Employee of the

Quarter. She has been on staff for almost 10 years and is dependable, committed, and caring. She represents the best of the best! Donna gets things done thoroughly and

professionally, always has time to help staff with computer problems, efficiently deals with building contractors or maintenance staff and, most importantly, keeps Bill DiMascio organized.

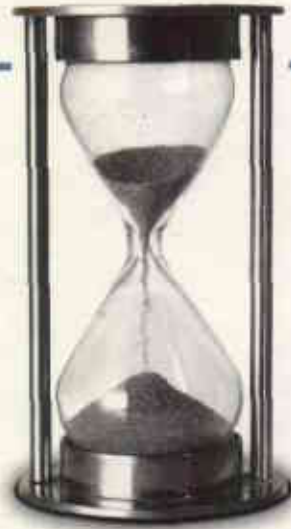
"I can always count on Donna," said Bill. "She is bright, energetic and always ready to help. Donna truly cares about the people we serve. She's a gem!"

Annual Conveners Conference

Friday and Saturday, April 4-5, 2008
Penn Harris Hotel
Camp Hill, PA

All Conveners are invited.
Registration information will be mailed in early February.

Official Visitors who would like to attend or receive information should contact Catherine Wise at 215-564-6005, Extension 106, or cwise@prisonsociety.org



2007-08 Annual Appeal

COMPASSION.

Everyday the Prison Society opens its doors, justice meets compassion.

HOPE.

Everyday the Prison Society opens its doors, compassion kindles hope.

CHANGE.

Hope makes change possible.

"I received a letter from J. today—he seems much better. Thank you for visiting him! The Prison Society is something that only those of us in this situation can appreciate."

— Marlene, mother of a prisoner

"Sometimes it's simple things like making sure inmates have blankets when there is no heat in the cells or making sure meals are served hot instead of cold. What we do—it does make a difference."

— A Prison Society Official Visitor

"It was the Prison Society that embraced me through their open hearts, open minds, and their open doors. I'm ok now—working, staying clean, and thinking about going back to school. Thank you!"

— A Re-Entry Services client

GIVE. Please help the Prison Society reach its goal of \$40,000. What we do - it makes a difference.

YES. I want to support the work and mission of the Prison Society. Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____.

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please mail to: The Prison Society, 245 N. Broad Street, Suite 300, Philadelphia, PA 19107

PRISONER RE-ENTRY INITIATIVE

By Dee Johnson

More than a program, it's a new way of life

There's no place like home ...
be it ever so humble.

But for newly released prisoners, no matter how sweet the prospect of returning home can be, the challenges they face on the outside can make it a bittersweet experience.

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections reported that in 2004, of nearly 15,000 inmates who were released, 26 percent reoffended within one year. To help improve these odds, Pennsylvania DOC established a new pilot program that was recently implemented by the Prison Society.

The Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative (PRI) is the first state program of its kind.

"What's unique about [the PRI] is it starts behind the walls and continues when the prisoner is released," explains Betty-Ann Izenman, the Prison Society's Program Director.

The pilot program is currently working with inmates at SCIs Graterford and Muncy who will return to the Philadelphia area within the next nine months. Participants cannot have a history of sexual or

violent offenses and must be at-risk of reoffending. To determine the latter, case managers administer tests.

While still in the system, participants attend 44 hours of Criminal Attitude Program (CAP) training. These sessions help inmates get to the root causes of their behavior and aid them in changing current ideologies.

CAP is designed "to get them to open up about their thinking and discuss their crimes," said Charles Fleming, CAP Facilitator and Case Manager at SCI Graterford, where 11 inmates are participating. He believes that "what you feed the mind, you feed the man."

At SCI Muncy, nine women are currently enrolled under the direction of CAP Facilitator Lisa Baird and CAP Case Manager Darlene Little.

Explaining that the CAP Program is helping women understand just how attitude is linked to moral reasoning, Lisa Baird said: "These are areas that most in the class have never gained insight into and, so, this cathartic exercise for most is eye opening."

Darlene Little, a Presbyterian minister, believes one of the things "the world needs to focus more on is hope"—and this program is giving women just that. She added that women at SCI Muncy are excited about the program and eager to apply the training.

"What they are learning is helping them build greater self-esteem and become more assertive in managing their own lives," Little said.

Once they return home, the PRI program will offer them much-needed resources to ensure they land on their feet — and hit the ground running.

For instance, it will assist them with transportation, clothing, and home plans. It will also help them find employment, offer them workshops about the best ways to manage their money, and link them with support groups that help keep them focused.

Case managers also work closely with family members to ensure they help reinforce program goals when participants return home.

"We hope to help them make a smooth transition with whatever barriers they face so they are able to stay in the community," Izenman says.

Ultimately, PRI plans to serve 150 men and 50 women over two years.

THE JOBS PROJECT

By Dee Johnson

The JOBS Project was the first re-entry effort of the Philadelphia Prison System. Established in 2003, it offered inmates vocational and life skills training while they were on the inside, and assisted them in securing jobs once they returned home.

How was JOBS funded?

The JOBS Project was subsidized by

the class action *Jackson v. Hendrick* lawsuit settlement that netted nearly \$2.2 million. In 1971, civil rights attorney David Rudovsky filed the lawsuit on behalf of Philadelphia Prison System inmates.

Rudovsky spent more than three decades on the case, which was finally settled in 2002.

Under the direction of Dr. Irv

Rosenstein — a labor educator with 40 years of experience, the money was used to help improve prison conditions and develop a re-entry program for inmates.

To Rosenstein, "David [Rudovsky] is the Willie Mays of the criminal justice system."

How did JOBS work?

The program integrated therapeutic living environments to promote personal growth and behavioral change, and life skills workshops to prepare

continued on page 7