STRONGER TOGETHER
GOMM & PARISE HONORED NATIONWIDE
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Gomm and Parise Honored in Washington, D.C. and St. Paul

On May 13, the names of Corrections Officers Joseph Gomm and Joseph Parise were read in Washington, D.C. at the candlelight vigil for the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial.

Minnesota First Lady Gwen Walz, Corrections Officers from Oak Park Heights and Stillwater, and many more, honored Officers Gomm and Parise and their family members—who made the ultimate sacrifice for our state. We will never forget.


On May 15 in St. Paul, Officers and staff from the DOC joined other members of law enforcement to honor officers killed or injured in the line of duty as part of Peace Officers Memorial Day. The ceremony honored DOC Officers Gomm, Parise, and others who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

Thank you to everyone who attended these memorial events, and to all of our staff and families who will forever hold the memories of Officers Gomm and Parise in our hearts.

Ceremony in Washington, D.C.
Ceremony in Washington, DC
St. Paul Ceremony
Agent Ypma Retiring After 45 Years in Corrections

By Cindy Ernhart

After 45-plus years in corrections, Probation Agent Andy Ypma is retiring on July 9.

Andy was appointed as a probation officer for McLeod County Court Services by the Honorable L. W. Yost on March 15, 1974 BC (before computers and cell phones).

On Oct. 19, 1983, the county moved to a contract with the Department of Corrections to continue to provide probation services. For more than 25 years, Andy served as Department Head of Court Services. Through his tenure, he served with five Chambered Judges, 27 County Commissioners, 3 County Attorneys, 4 McLeod County Sheriffs, 4 Social Service Directors, and 10 Probation Agents. He was involved with the startup of 3 group homes, was a member of the McLeod County Fair Board for 10 years and supervised hundreds of individuals placed on probation supervision.

Andy had a humanitarian approach in his work with juveniles and adults. His passion was treating offenders with kindness, yet holding them accountable, while promoting positive changes in their lives.

Anyone that has fun memories of Andy to share can send them to cindy.ernhart@state.mn.us. An open house is being held on July 9th, from 2 - 4 p.m. at the McLeod County Courthouse Jury Assembly room.

Thank you Agent Ypma for your years of service!

Koetke Presents at U.S. Department of Education Event

The U.S. Department of Education hosted a special convening titled, “Rethinking Correctional and Reentry Education: A Second Chance at Learning,” on April 22.

The event highlighted and furthered the conversation around the administration-wide goal of rethinking education for incarcerated individuals. Experts shared best practices and promising federal, state and local initiatives to help those reentering society receive the education they need to be successful.

DOC Education Director Marcie Koetke was asked by the Director of Correctional Education for the U.S. Department of Education to share the Minnesota DOC funding model and the success Minnesota has had with WIOA funding. She was also asked to share how well the Minnesota state cooperating colleges work to bring the Pell funded programs into the DOC.

Pictured: Sean Addie, Director of Correctional Education U.S. Department of Education and Marcie Koetke, Director of Education at the Minnesota DOC.
Jupic Receives Probation Officer of the Year Award from MADD

DOC Agent Almir Jupic recently received the Probation Officer of the Year Award, along with Megan K. Daly from Hennepin County Community Corrections, at the MADD Statewide Recognition Awards Ceremony.

Almir has been very active in supporting and enhancing the MADD Victim Impact Panel offered in Clay County by including a Restorative Justice approach, as well as Evidence-Based Programming tools.

Congratulations, Almir, on receiving this award!

Pictured: Megan Daily from Hennepin County Community Corrections, and DOC Agent Almir Jupic.

Officer Gondeck Saves a Life

MCF-St. Cloud Corrections Officer Craig Gondeck, saved the life of a Watab Township employee following a medical emergency during a township meeting on Feb. 5.

Gondeck, the township supervisor, owed his quick reaction to the training he received at the DOC. He cleared the scene, had someone dial 911, and used an AED to assess the victim. Gondeck then updated the EMS responders who took over care of the victim. The township recognized Gondeck for his quick thinking and professional response.

Gondeck has worked for the MCF-St. Cloud since November 2002. He retired from the Foley Fire Department in 1998 after 23 years of service. Gondeck said the training department “deserves credit for the training I received.” Without it, Gondeck said, “She wouldn’t be here.”

Corrections Representative from Uruguay Visits Red Wing

Ana Pizzolli, Project Manager for the Institute Nacional de Inclusion Social Adolescent (INISA) in Uruguay, visited MCF-Red Wing on May 2nd as part of a continued learning partnership between Hennepin County and INISA.

INISA oversees the country’s juvenile corrections system. The exchange between Hennepin County and Uruguay has been happening for several years and Pizzolli’s visit focused on learning and engagement surrounding juvenile facilities. Pizzolli enjoyed seeing MCF-Red Wing as they have been using Red Wing’s juvenile treatment program delivery model for the past 5 years. The ultimate goal of her visit to juvenile facilities is to help support the design and development of a training center for INISA’s juvenile facility staff. Her visit was invaluable to help INISA frame priorities for the development of the staff training center in Uruguay.

(L – R) Angela Cousins (Hennepin County), Acting Associate Warden of Administration Jim Schaffer, Ana Pizzolli (Project Manager for INISA), Warden Shon Thieren, and Dana Nelson (interpreter)
DOC Accessible Ramp Building Partnership Celebrated

On May 30 at Access North in Hibbing, a 25th anniversary event was held to celebrate a collaboration between DOC staff, Challenge Incarceration Program/Sentencing to Service participants, and Arrowhead Community Corrections. Those who are serving sentences build accessible ramps at MCF-Togo and Willow River. Then, work crews in the community install them at the houses of those in need, so they can live independently! In total, 1,441 ramps have been created so far.

(L – R) MCF-Togo Lieutenant Nick Porter, Captain R.J. Kruse, Sergeant Chad Scofield, Warden Gino Anselmo, and CIP participants Cameron Line and Emanuel Roberts.

Duluth and Hibbing media interviewed the DOC’s Vic Moen.

The DOC’s Vic Moen was recognized for his efforts in support of the ramp program. Bob Brown was the first ramp coordinator in 1994. He is joined by CIP participants Cameron Line and Emanuel Roberts, and Don Brunette, Executive Director of Access North.
Eleven Corrections Offices graduated from the Firearms Instructor - Basic Course on May 31.

Curriculum included policy & procedure, program review, coaching techniques, firearms range management, firearms competency demonstrations, and judgement shooting. In addition, the Office of Special Investigations presented on the Use of Force investigative process and Hennepin County EMS Education provided training on ballistic wound management. A portion of the training was conducted at Central Office, including use of the Simulator Lab, with the final two days being conducted at the MCF-St. Cloud Firearms Range.

“The curriculum is designed to ensure that our facility firearms instructors have the techniques for safe and effective coaching of both weapon systems,” said Jay Olson, Training & Development Specialist-Security. “Our Master and Lead Instructors assigned to this course did an amazing job. They are the reason that the MN DOC is second to none.”

Students were required to satisfy both a pre and post written examination, a student teach-back, design of a course of fire, and a qualifying score with both the shotgun and rifle. At the conclusion of the program, instructors held a high-score competition. Shotgun shooting was won by John Cowle, the rifle shooting was tied between Hunter Hubner and John Kelly.

Graduates included: Eric Anderson (MCF-Lino Lakes), Nicholas Cline (MCF-Faribault), John Cowle (MCF-Lino Lakes), Hunter Hubner (MCF-Faribault), John Kelly (MCF-St. Cloud), Andrew Lohrmann (MCF-Faribault), Nathaniel Mink (Employee Development), Timothy Paul (MCF-Moose Lake), Mike Pavlich (MCF-Stillwater), Joseph Stanley (MCF-Moose Lake), and Jacob Wilkemeyer (MCF-Faribault).

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**Basta Promoted to Sergeant at Rush City**

On May 15, Cami Basta promoted to Sergeant at MCF-Rush City.

Cami started her DOC career as an Office & Administrative Specialist-Intermediate on April 20, 2005. Cami transitioned to a Corrections Officer Trainee and graduated to a Corrections Officer January 10, 2007, before her recent promotion to Sergeant. Congratulations, Cami!

(L – R) Program Director Ashlee Berts, Sgt. Cami Basta, and Lt. Tracee Scherer

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**Firearms Instructor - Basic Course**

Tactical Paramedics from Hennepin County Medical Center provided instruction on ballistic wound care management.

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By Captain Byron Matthews

Sgt. Jessica Nelson was selected to fill the 3rd Shift Watch Commander vacancy at Oak Park Heights. Sgt. Nelson was working in a WOOC Lieutenant position at MCF-St. Cloud. She graduated from Minnesota State, Mankato with a B.A. in Psychology and a minor in Criminal Justice. She started her corrections career at MCF-St. Cloud in 2004. She has worked as A-Team Sgt. FTO Coordinator, 1st Aid/CPR Instructor, Mentor, ICMS facilitator, CIT and also completed the 40-hour Lieutenant practicum. Jessica’s promotion was effective May 15.

By Lt. Brian Bradley

It is my pleasure to announce the promotion of Officer Justin Steinberg as the new 3rd Watch Complex 4 Sergeant. Sgt. Steinberg has worked in just about every possible post in the facility on every watch. I for one, know that he is going to be a great addition to the Complex 4 team. Please congratulate Sgt. Steinberg when you see him. He was pinned at the 3rd Watch briefing on May 15.

Oak Park Heights Promotions

Shakopee CIP Participants Give Back to Community

By Natalya Kandakova

Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) participants at Shakopee continue to give back to the community through volunteering and donating to many organizations.

The Maple Grove Hospital collaborated with The Knitting Grandmas of Maple Grove group by meeting on a regular basis to knit hats for the newborn babies at the Maple Grove Hospital. Due to certain newborn allergy reactions, some of the yarn is not able to be used, therefore the Maple Grove Hospital has decided to donate the yarn to CIP offenders at MCF-Shakopee.

The women at Shakopee were able to utilize the yarn to knit hats, blankets, and dog/cat beds. They donated these items to shelters, and victim service organizations, where these items are in need. When the Knitting Grandmas of Maple Grove Group heard about the work the women in CIP were doing, they wanted to have a get-together to express their gratitude for their hard work and share stories in a circle process.

The Charlie senior squad of the CIP program was escorted by Sgt. Troy Hedtke for the event on April 29th where the CIP participants shared their specific stories while the Knitting Grandmas of Maple Grove Group listened, encouraged and provided stories of hope to the women who are currently incarcerated. Some of the ladies from the Knitting Grandmas Club purchased new yarn, as they wanted the crafters to have new yarn. The Knitting Grandmas club donated 145 lbs of yarn to the women of CIP. The story has touched the hearts of many grandmas in our community and they wanted to help the women out by providing them hope, and having something valuable to look forward to and to have more of a purpose in the community.
VA/RJ Staff Attend OJP Conference

By Lori Korts

The annual Minnesota Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Conference on Crime and Victimization was held May 21 – 23.

Victim Assistance and Restorative Justice (VARJ) Program staff worked with OJP in various capacities to deliver a quality training experience for participants. Lori Korts participated on the planning committee and provided support for attendees and presenters throughout the conference. VARJ staff presented to approximately 75 attendees about the continuation of victimization from within the correctional facilities. This presentation included a case example in which the offender continuously violated no contact directives, as well as court ordered no contact orders. These continued behaviors introduced a collaboration opportunity with several counties, which continues to be developed and enhanced today.

Nearly half of the staff working within the Victim Assistance and Restorative Justice Program (VARJ) are funded through grants awarded and managed by OJP. The DOC and OJP work closely together to identify and build processes and support for victims of crime. The Safety Wrap Around meetings that are offered through the VARJ were developed under one of these grants. Since these meetings were formalized, we have coordinated and facilitated 100 meetings. The victim input processes and the newly formulated agent summary reports are just a few more of the outcomes developed under the Crime Victim Services Grant.

The Crime Prevention Grant awarded to VARJ has supported the programming for Domestic Violence within MCF-Stillwater, and in the initial year, MCF-Faribault. This grant has also allowed for a large number of staff to be educated on the unique dynamics of domestic violence which impacts a large portion of the incarcerated population.

From a panel about missing and murdered Indigenous women, to a session about the collaboration between legal and social service providers striving to serve victims of labor trafficking, there were a wide variety of topics for the staff to learn about. The conference ended with an inspirational presentation by Chief Lee Sjolander titled, “Who is your Susan Boyle? Finding the Hidden Talent in Your Organization.” As the more than three hundred conference attendees returned to their individual area of work, there was a collective hum of rejuvenation present as we reflected on the passion and good work being done to help repair harm and provide services to people who have experienced the pain of victimization. The VARJ Staff in attendance made invaluable connections with victim services workers throughout the state, which will strengthen the future collaboration with all stakeholders.
DOC and Hazelden Launch New Curriculum

DOC staff recently gathered with our partners at Hazelden Betty Ford in Center City to celebrate the launch of a new treatment curriculum. Our own MN DOC experts played a key role in the development of the new curriculum.

Instructor Profile: Lt. Adam Blaschko, MCF-Red Wing

Lt. Adam Blaschko started his DOC career in 2008 at MCF-Red Wing. In 2013, he promoted to Sergeant, and in 2017 promoted to Lieutenant. During his time with the DOC, he has been a Field Training Officer, Mentor, Instructor, and Lead Instructor.

In 2010, he began instructing in several areas to include: A-Team, Control Tactics/Self-Defense, Signs of Aggression, and De-Escalation Techniques. Adam has served in several assignments on the Special Operations Response Team, to include: FN303 Instructor, Chemical/Riot Munitions Instructor, as well as being a member of the group for S.O.R.T. Academy.

“Lt. Blaschko has been instructing for years, he has an ability to teach and challenge staff to do better at the same time,” said Red Wing Training Director Laurel Skoglund. “Lt. Blaschko has a sense of humor that brings fun into training and MCF-Red Wing appreciates all he has done for the training department.”

Captain Tom Pasch stated that Lt. Blaschko “is an effective leader who is always looking for ways to better himself, others and the facility. Lt. Blaschko values the opinion of staff and does not recommend change until he recognizes the impact it has on others.”

Adam describes his training philosophy as “competency and confidence comes from training. When I instruct, I strive to build competency in hopes to instill confidence with my students. By doing so, it gives them the ability to do their jobs safely and effectively.”
National Corrections Employee Appreciation Week was held the week of May 6. The Social Events Committee at MCF-Lino Lakes planned a fun filled week!

On May 6, the Safety Committee gave information about “Safe Fish” Food Safety, Emergency Preparedness and had a Fire Extinguisher Simulator for staff to practice extinguishing a fire.

On May 7, service awards were presented to staff followed by a Friends and Family Tour. Staff were able to invite up to 5 guests for a guided tour of the facility. The Special Operations Response Team (SORT) from Lino Lakes was available to educate our guests on their responsibilities, the resources and equipment they use, and how they maintain security within our facility when needed. The Department’s transport bus was available on-site for guests to tour as well.

On May 8, the facility conducted area open-houses and a scavenger hunt to help staff learn about 20 different living units and work areas. All staff were encouraged to move about the facility to get their “clue sheet” completed and signed by at least 8 work areas to be entered into a drawing for prizes. Many of the areas had themes and/or goodies at their site.

On May 9, a Staff Appreciation Lunch was held with the Lucky Brisket BBQ Food Truck providing the food. The food truck was available on each shift and staff were relieved to go to the community room to eat and chat with others.

On May 10, the Yellow Ribbon and Law Enforcement Torch Run Committees came together to grill burgers and hot dogs for staff on all shifts.

The week was a great success and MCF-Lino Lakes staff had a great time with all of the events. A huge thank you to all the staff that participated and to the committees that planned these events!
Celebrating Success – Shakopee Hosts Discipline Free Banquet

By Jeff Spies

On May 2nd, the Positive Peer Culture Group at Shakopee hosted the 3rd Annual Discipline Free Banquet.

As a recognition for having received no formal discipline in the previous year, over 75 women were recognized and celebrated for their contributions to creating a more positive environment at Shakopee. The theme for the evening was “I Am Becoming.” The gym was decorated with depictions of flowers (particularly the water lily), dragonflies, butterflies, frogs and more as a visual representation of the power of change. The night was also a recognition that many of the women at Shakopee use their incarceration time to grow and make needed lifetime changes. The water lily, was a specially poignant reminder of growth in hard times. It was pointed out that the water lily starts out in the darkness and muck of muddy ponds and fight their way to the surface. While on their way to the surface, they are washed clean as they break through into beautiful light.

The night was highlighted by motivational speaker Annie Meehan, who shared her story of overcoming hardship and challenges. Her use of stories and life lessons inspired attendees and pointed to the hope that change is possible. Meehan is the author of four books “Be the Exception”, “Paths, Detours & Possibilities,” and the upcoming “The Pineapple Principle.”

Music for the evening was provided by the Voices of Hope choir, directed by Amanda Weber, who has been previously featured in the Hotline.

Hosfield Promoted to Sergeant at Stillwater

On May 15, Justin Hosfield promoted to Sergeant at MCF-Stillwater.

Prior to coming to the DOC, Justin earned a degree in Criminal Justice from St. Cloud State University. Justin began his career at MCF-Stillwater in March 2003. During his career, he has been involved in many facility and DOC activities and committees. He has voluntarily taken on many additional duties and has taken pride in his work. Justin has assisted in training new and veteran staff on duties in the facility.

Congratulations, Justin!

Follow DOC on Social Media

The department’s social media accounts recognize the excellent work of our staff and help us recruit new employees. The DOC has over 6,600 likes on Facebook! Also, follow the department on Twitter: @MinnCorrections, LinkedIn, Instagram, or YouTube.
Statewide Restorative Justice Meeting

The MCF-Moose Lake Restorative Justice Council hosted the Statewide Restorative Justice Quarterly Meeting in May.

We are happy with the turnout from the Facility RJ Councils and the Moose Lake Offender Council. Members of each sub-committee facilitated presentations to guests on opportunities available for our staff, offenders and community.

We are proud of the relationships built with area schools and local organizations who serve victims of crime.

(L – R) Eric Lindmeier (St. Cloud), Crystal Hansen (Moose Lake), Sarah Gibbison (St. Cloud), Chrissy Gamst (Moose Lake), Ruth Harleen (Stillwater), Jarah Mitchell (Lino Lakes), Theresa Wohlhaefer (Rush City), Amanda Tuthill (Faribault), Margo McKenzie (Moose Lake), Kel Matteen (Moose Lake), Ben Murphy (St. Cloud) and Lori Korts (Central Office). Not pictured: Shirley Swenson (Moose Lake), Cortney Gay (Rush City), Rachel Culver (Oak Park Heights), and Troy Hedtke (Shakopee).

By Chrissy Gamst, Corrections Security Caseworker & RJ/RP Practitioner

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Olson Earns Force Science Certification

Jay Olson, Training and Development Specialist-Security, has obtained the “Force Science Certification” through the Force Science Institute from Chicago.

The 40-hour course explores the complex mix of human dynamics associated with the Use of Force, and the complicated and often controversial aspects of force application. The course will better prepare Jay to help design and develop evidence based security-related training programs.

Jay was among 98 graduates from law enforcement and corrections agencies from around the United States. Those receiving the certification were required to satisfy both the case evaluation and written examination.

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Hotline is produced by the DOC Communications Office: Sarah J. Fitzgerald (Communications Director), Aaron Swanum (Information Officer), and Michael Ojibway (Principal Marketing & Multimedia Strategist)
Tilford Back from Military Duty

MCF-Shakopee recently welcomed back Officer Erin Tilford who has been deployed with her Minnesota National Guard unit to various locations in the Middle East supporting ongoing military operations in the region.

Officer Tilford is pictured with Shakopee Warden Tracy Beltz and Captain Mike Hennen.

Thank you for your service and welcome home, Officer Tilford.

Moose Lake Area Ministerial Group Honors WR/ML Staff

Following the tragedy of officer deaths at both Stillwater and Oak Park Heights, Chaplain Edward Stone (MCF-Willow River/Moose Lake) was approached by the local area pastors with the question, “How can we show our support and appreciation for the staff at the prison?” As a group, they went through a variety of iterations of ways and means of demonstrating staff support. Topics raised included bringing a food truck to the facility and offering gift cards to local area businesses. It was decided that a simple expression of thanks would best be communicated with home-made cookies. Home baking and then packing the cookies into small baggies seemed to offer a personal touch that would be appreciated while showing support for the staff.

The Northwoods Pastors’ Group thought it would be a great idea to tie the community support effort to the existing program of Corrections Employee Appreciation week. The area churches sent out the word to bake cookies and then met on May 13 to assemble all the cookies into baggies for distribution. On May 14, preparations began early, setting out the bottles of water and baggies of cookies. From 5:30 - 7:30 a.m. and then again from 1 to 3 p.m., cookies and water were made available to staff entering and exiting the facility. Following the distribution of cookies and water at MCF-Moose Lake, cookies and water were distributed to the staff at MCF-Willow River.

By Edward Stone, Chaplain at MCF-Willow River/Moose Lake
Seven Oak Park Heights Members Graduate SORT Academy

Last Fall, Oak Park Heights opened up the application process for new SORT members. We were overwhelmed with the interest received and in early May, we sent seven members to the SORT academy at Camp Ripley. After a week of intense physical training, and beginning to learn the basics of SORT and tactical considerations, all seven of our members graduated.

Thank you to Acting AWO Sherlinda Wheeler and Captain Byron Matthews for making the drive and showing your support! Congrats and welcome to our newest operators.

By Lt. Graham Besonen

New Master Instructor: Sgt. Kyle Prall

Control Tactics /Self-Defense

Sgt. Kyle Prall (MCF-Red Wing) was recently appointed as a Master Instructor - Control Tactics/ Self-Defense. In this capacity, he will help oversee a specialized area of training to include standardization of curriculum, qualifications, certifications, and measurement of training.

Kyle began his DOC career in 2004 at MCF-Red Wing. He has held positions as a Recreation Therapist, Security Caseworker and WOCC Lieutenant. In 2006, Kyle became interested in teaching. Over the years, he has held the positions of Field Training Officer, mentor, instructor and lead instructor. Kyle has a broad spectrum of training knowledge and interests, including; controlled tactics, self-defense, incident command, signs of aggression, and de-escalation techniques.

Kyle is a member of SORT, where he serves as a Master Instructor-Chemical and FN303 instructor/armorier.
Training in the Trees at Togo

During the week of May 7 - 10, new MCF-Togo Recreation Therapist, David Kurth and six Corrections Officers: Heather Hanson, Brendon Johnson, Mitchell Kuhne, Scott Hanson, Lindsey Foss, and Jay Woodman, were trained to instruct on the High Ropes Course and Climbing Wall.

Alex Doliantis from ABEE, Inc. conducted the 40-hour training with all seven individuals. The instruction included both ground school for the fundamentals and actual use of all the equipment to include rescue components.

At MCF-Togo, each CIP squad is assigned one Sgt. and one Corrections Officer. Warden Anselmo and Captain RJ Kruse decided to have each of the squad officers trained to assist David Kurth when he has their squad on the high ropes course and climbing wall. This allows the officers to not only assist with the events but also to help process the offender’s experiences. The officers gained a great deal of knowledge and additional respect for Kurth.

Annual Transitions Fair a Success at Shakopee

By Greta Henderson, Transitions Coordinator

MCF-Shakopee recently held its annual transitions fair. Once again, the event was extremely successful. It was led by Transition Coordinators Katelyn Lambrecht and Greta Henderson, and staff from multiple areas assisted. This year’s fair provided more than 335 women an opportunity to meet with 65 vendors to discuss the myriad of resources available through these organizations. From housing, recovery, and employment services, to a host of culturally relevant programming and other community resources, the Transitions Fair allowed the women of Shakopee to connect with service providers, all in an effort toward putting together meaningful release plans that will assist women with being successful when they return to their communities.

The event is truly a team effort, with security staff, food service staff, maintenance staff, and other staff from education, case management, and behavioral health, all working together to ensure a successful event. The event included a luncheon for the vendors, during which Warden Tracy Beltz and Assistant Commissioner Nate Knutson greeted everyone and thanked them for their participation in such an important annual event.
The incarcerated men at MCF-Faribault are learning from the University of Minnesota, in collaboration with the Department of Natural Resources, all about honeybees.

Bees of all varieties live on nectar and pollen. Without bees, pollination would be difficult and time consuming - it is estimated that one-third of the human food supply depends on insect pollination. Honeybees are social insects that live in colonies. The hive population consists of a single queen, a few hundred drones, and thousands of worker bees.

The honeybees at MCF-Faribault forage for nectar and pollen from flowering plants. They use the nectar collected to create honey. When carrying the nectar back to the hive, their bodies break down the complex sucrose of the nectar into two simple sugars, fructose and glucose. Tucking it neatly into a honeycomb cell, the bees will then beat their wings furiously over top of this syrupy sweet liquid to fan out the moisture and thicken the substance. When it is complete, the bees will cap that cell with beeswax, sealing the perfected honey for consumption later on.

The information above was shared with seven eager participants at Faribault who are being trained in beekeeping. This hive maintenance, supervision, and honey extraction is supporting the Executive Order 16-07 directing steps to reverse pollinator health in Minnesota. The University of Minnesota Bee Squad began this process on May 17 at MCF-Faribault to instruct the men on the responsibility of beekeeping. The staff and incarcerated men were very excited when the bees were delivered to MCF-Faribault.
The Foundations for Leadership program was offered May 1 - 2 with 30 lead workers in attendance.

The program is for lead workers within their first one to three years as a lead worker. Topics include:

- Building and maintaining relationships
- Code of conduct
- Reputation and credibility
- Conflict management
- Informational and Q & A panel consisting of Lieutenants and Corrections Food Service Supervisor

Facilitators for the session included veteran DOC facilitators:

- Sgt. Steve Skorczewski (MCF-Shakopee)
- Sgt. Shawn Dahlen (MCF-St. Cloud)

And new facilitators:

- Sgt. Danielle Jance (MCF-Togo)
- Accounting Officer Sr. Blair Bjerkeset (MCF-Shakopee)
- Sgt. Kevin Vande Stouwe (MCF-Red Wing)

New and veteran instructors worked tirelessly to present a phenomenal program. This included piloting the program as a two-day versus three-day program, increasing class size, and included non-Sergeant lead workers for the first time! The training was well-received and was a meaningful and enjoyable two days of training.

The group was also fortunate to have Commissioner Paul Schnell sit in on a session and speak with them. The two days ended with Deputy Commissioner Michelle Smith speaking with the group and leading a certificate presentation for the participants.
Shakopee Launches Program Aimed at Improving Behavior

By Karley Jorgensen, Program Director

As we continue to focus on promoting safety within our facility and reducing problematic behavior, we launched a new program in March at Shakopee. The Proactive Response and Engagement Program (PREP), includes a group of staff who met with every individual admitted to Higbee for discipline during the 60-day pilot period. During the meetings, these staff, who have been trained in Core Correctional Practices (CCP), focused on the behavior the individual engaged in with the goal of motivating positive change and identifying alternative, healthier behaviors the individual could use in the future.

If you aren’t familiar, CCP includes a collection of skills and interventions that have been in use since the 1980s and are very well researched and supported. CCP is a win-win, as it is proven to reduce misconduct in facilities and reduce recidivism, and when done well, it is beneficial for staff and the individuals we work with.

This program was piloted for a period of 60 days to focus on the process and obtain feedback from staff and the women on the program and outcomes. After receiving feedback from staff in Higbee, squad, the PREP team, as well as feedback from the individuals who were offered or participated in an intervention, the decision has been made to fully implement this program. The program resumed on May 27th.

Employee Appreciation Week Highlights from Shakopee

Corrections Employee Appreciation Week was recognized the first week of May.

Events were scheduled at each facility for this week-long recognition of staff working in tough environments. At Shakopee, the events were supported by the Employee Events Committee. A number of work areas stepped up to host individual days and plan those events. Shakopee’s schedule included:

• Mad Dog Monday – hosted by the Lieutenants Group
• All Staff Meal on Tuesday – hosted by Employee Events
• Waffle Wednesday – hosted by the Operations Team
• Tailgate Thursday – hosted by the Admin Team
• Root Beer Float Friday – hosted by the ICMS Committee


The highlight for many this week was Friends and Family night. This annual event at Shakopee coincides with Employee Appreciation Week. Staff can sign up their friends and family to tour the facility and meet many of our staff who remain on-site for the event. This year, Shakopee was thrilled to have hosted 118 family and friends of staff.
Appreciation Certificate: Sgt. Duane Franklin, Master Instructor

MCF-Rush City Sgt. Duane Franklin received an appreciation certificate from Employee Development for his “dedication and commitment” as a Master Instructor - Chemical.

The presentation was made during the Chemical Instructor-Basic Course, held at MCF-Lino Lakes in late April.

Duane started his DOC career in 2002. He became an Instructor in 2003, and was designated a Master Instructor in 2013.

Training Director Charles Dively stated “the contributions of our Master Instructor’s make our training programs second to none.”

Duane is stepping down as a Master Instructor on July 1 to allow others an opportunity to advance within the training program.

Field Services Years of Service Awards

Trisha Hansen, Bemidji 1 Office
15 Years of Service

Sarah Eischens, Mankato
20 Years of Service

Rena Patterson, Winona
20 Years of Service

MINNCOR Industries to Celebrate 25 Years

MINNCOR will celebrate its 25th Anniversary on Tuesday, October 1. More information on anniversary events will be made available throughout the summer.

Join MINNCOR staff as they take a look back at the beginning days, customers, products and staff, and celebrate the accomplishments throughout the years, including the EMPLOY and Bridge Programs.
MCF-Faribault recently celebrated staff with a week full of activities. Staff received words of gratitude and were provided treats from a variety of committees. Integrated Conflict Management System members provided water to staff starting their shifts. Safety and Wellness Committee members provided fruit and the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Committee provided nachos and the Work Force Development Committee created root beer floats.

Staff were served burgers and brats for lunch and dinner was provided by the Care Club, which ordered pizza for first watch. Warden Kathy Halvorson and Captain Bob Mallery assisted with getting them to staff.

Corrections Recognition Week Events at Faribault

(L – R) Program Director Melissa Paquette, Records Supervisor Maria Hruska, Case Manager Ann Braulik, Warden Kathy Halvorson, Transitions Coordinator Quenilla Pettigrew. Back row (L – R) Case Manager Jason Starkson and Captain Bob Mallery

(L – R) Sgt. Brad Connelly, Captain Bob Mallery, and Warden Kathy Halvorson

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Committee (L – R) Corrections Officers Michael Schlick, Michael McGoon, and Andrew Gengler, and Sgt. Jason Anderson

Work Force Development Committee (L – R) Corrections Officer Rava Radinkovic, Case Manager Amanda Tuthill, Corrections Officer Daniel Carlson, and RN Michelle Albers

ICMS team (L – R): Case Manager Dan Besser, Heidi Anderson, and Account Clerk Senior Amber Brown
MCF-Faribault held a volunteer appreciation event on May 16, with 61 volunteers in attendance.

The yearly event honors the 200-plus active volunteers and the services they provide. The theme for this year was Transitions: A Time for Change. The event included a meal, speeches by incarcerated men, Transition Facility Staff speaker, music provided by the Joyful Noise Choir and Band.

Special thanks to Program Coordinator Maria Hruska for all the work to make this event happen.

PIctured left: Warden Kathy Halvorson addressing volunteers.
OPH Selects K9 Decoys

By Captain Byron Matthews

MCF-Oak Park Heights recently held trials to select two facility K9 decoy/agitators. Officers John Morrissey and Todd Bestgen were selected.

Five contestants spent six hours of intense physical testing through multiple training scenarios. These tests included cardio, sprints/reps, push-ups, sit-ups, down field drills and taking K9 bites on the bite sleeve.

The decoy has to use proper timing and mechanics of catching the dog to avoid jams. They must have the ability to push the dog in defense and then relieve the pressure to improve the dog’s ability to channel drives.

All staff acting as canine decoy/agitators must be members of the United States Police Canine Association.
Sex Offender Supervision

By Mark Bliven, Director of Risk Assessment/Community Notification

Bruce Western is a former professor of Criminal Justice Policy at Harvard University and is currently a professor of Sociology and Social Justice and Co-director of the Justice Lab at Columbia University. He visited the Robina Institute of Criminal Law and Criminal Justice at the University of Minnesota in April of this year. His research has centered on the causes, scope, and consequences of the historic growth in U.S. prison populations. He is the author of Homeward: Life in the Year After Prison (Russell Sage Foundation, 2018).

Professor Western’s book looks at many cases with just a few having a sex offense history. Primary focus of addressing effective use of transition from prison-to-community though is even more important for those with a sex offense history than probably any other group within our criminal justice system.

In May, we had a four-day training for Minnesota agents to focus on and introduce the myriad of issues involving supervision of those who have sexually offended. Minnesota Statutes 241.67, Subd. 6 requires this training prior to any agent supervising adults or juveniles in the community. While the training was heavy in the background of sex offending it also addressed the growing theme of effective general community supervision and specifically the purpose of conditions for those with a sex offense history.

In Bruce Western’s book he addressed the “classic” purpose of incarceration particularly in regard to “supervision failure”. Incapacitation, deterrence, or rehabilitation are not being advanced when someone is sent back to prison for a short time. Often no treatment programs are available and the resulting removal from street life is short-lived. When only a short time remains in possible supervision time, incarceration simply puts off the inevitable issues that will return upon release. Then though, there is even less time for the supervising agent to work with the person on advancing pro-social adaptations to life in the community.

The idea of probation and supervised release (community supervision) was noted by Western to have been a product of Progressive-era innovations just about a century ago. Community supervision was to be part oversight and part social work. Since that time it has become more common to emphasize monitoring of compliance. Rigorous focus on drug-testing, curfews, and monitoring of interactions ends up giving agents the common remedy of incarceration alone as a response to lack of cooperation in these enforcement issues.

We have had some revival of the innovations from 100 years ago. Best practices clearly indicates that in most cases, incarceration simply warehouses or delays dealing with the issues involved with those with a sexual offense history. One of my favorites statements from the previous DOC Commissioner, Tom Roy, when he addressed students in the four-day training a number of years ago was in response to the frustration of an agent who noted that a client had “failed” out of sex offender treatment a number of times. Commissioner Roy suggested that the option to give treatment another try is reasonable and responsive as long as there wasn’t a true public safety concern that needed to be addressed by incarceration/incapacitation. Frustration with continued treatment failure does not indicate a need for an unresponsive incarceration non-solution.

Stepping back and taking a look at what will truly advance public safety as we reduce mass incarceration especially needs to be the focus of dealing with those who have sexually offended. Understanding treatment options and true risk factors will be an agent’s best tools for dealing with this population. Does this person need to be incarcerated? Is the proposed response going to deter or rehabilitate? We have plenty of agents and DOC Administration who understand the effectiveness of responsive treatment and supervision/assistance to those returning to the community. The necessary full cultural change to responsive-reaction rather than frustrated reaction is going to be difficult but necessary from both a public safety and a financial perspective. Excluding those with a sex offense history from inevitable criminal justice reform and rational policy changes will not serve the public good.
In the summer of 1988, about 14 incarcerated men from Alaska being held at MCF-St. Cloud jumped into the 100 feet deep water-filled quarry for a swim at the facility. This occurred the day before they were going to be sent back to the Alaska Department of Corrections. An act of defiance or farewell declaration? Whichever it was, it was certainly one of the more memorably events veteran staff recall and a frequently narrated event for tour guides to tell visitors touring the facility.

In the early to mid-1980s, the Minnesota DOC population was under 2,500 and the department had a significant amount of available bed space. Several other states, however, were either experiencing overcrowding in their facilities, or were in the midst of prison construction, and needed to temporarily house some of their incarcerated population to other states. Minnesota contracted with Wisconsin and Alaska Departments of Corrections and, also, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to temporarily house some of their incarcerated individuals. The latter were Cubans being detained under INS after their criminal sentences were completed.

In 1986, the Alaska DOC sent 100 individuals, all felons with lengthy prison sentences, to be housed at MN DOC facilities until the construction of their first maximum security prison was completed in Seward, Alaska. They were housed at the Stillwater, St. Cloud and the Oak Park Heights facilities. Minnesota received $66 per day per inmate from Alaska. The transferees included Eskimos and Aleuts, indigenous to the Alaskan Peninsulas.

By 1988, the incarcerated men from Alaska were being sent back incrementally. In the summer of that year, a day before a group were to be transported back to Alaska, about 14 inmates jumped into one of the two large water-filled quarries in the prison yard for a swim. The quarrying of granite to construct the prison, including its iconic wall, resulted in two large holes that are now water filled with a total of about 2,000 feet of shoreline.

Perhaps, the men from Alaska wanted to experience the land of 10,000 lakes by jumping into the quarry for a swim. Lt. David Quayle (now retired), who was the Watch Commander on that day, said the men eventually got out of the quarry by themselves after a half-hour swim, dried off, and returned to their cells. The very next day, they were on a plane to the Alaska DOC.

Needless to say, none of men received discipline due to their imminent departure. If there is any good that came of this is the fact that this incident has provided material for many tours for visitors to the St. Cloud Facility over the years.
**Bennett’s Dedication to ERT, K-9 Agitation and Instructor Duties**

Lt. Carl Bennett, from MCF-Willow River/Moose Lake, has been a staple for over 19 years on SORT, most recently as the Assistant SORT Team Commander.

Carl will be stepping down from this position but will remain an active member of the DOC’s Marksman Observer Team. Throughout the years, Carl has been involved as a K-9 agitator and instructor of various fields including control tactics/self-defense, ASP/ Baton and shotgun. He’s also assisted in the Armory as the Lieutenant of that area and also as a certified armorer, both inspecting and repairing weapons.

Thank you, Carl for your selfless commitment to the SORT team and the many sacrifices that you have made to help make the MCF-Willow River/Moose Lake SORT Team what it is today!

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**Theater Group Visits Togo**

Theater Company Ten Thousand Things came to MCF-Togo on May 7.

They came complete with costumes, instruments and sets to perform the play “The Sins of Sor Juana” by Karen Zacarias. As the incarcerated men filed in, many did not look like they planned to enjoy the play. Marcela Lorca, Play Director, set the stage for the play as 17th Century “New Spain” or as we know it today Mexico. By the conclusion of the play, no one wanted it to end!

In CIP, we are all about changing lives and reducing recidivism. This production provided a look into a world of Art that many have never had the opportunity to see or experience. It made quite an impression on the incarcerated men and will hopefully influence them in their futures.

The company of actors/actresses all commented that the audience was very responsive to them that it made them, and enhance their own performances.

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**Chief of Staff Visits FS Offices**

DOC Chief of Staff Josh Syrjamaki recently engaged with Field Services staff in southern Minnesota getting their input about the strategic direction of our agency. He made stops in Albert Lea and Mankato that day, and has been visiting field offices and facilities around the state.

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**MACCAC Meeting**

First Lady Gwen Walz, Policy Advisor Emily Lefholz, and DOC Deputy Commissioner Sarah Walker, recently met with Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties representatives Midge Christianson, Brian Kopperud, and Carli Stark.