CELEBRATING NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

DOC EMPLOYEES REPRESENT IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE STATE

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Bergeson Retires After 25 Years at St. Cloud

By Roger Baburam

An officer, an athlete and a gentleman!
All words used to describe the recently retired Correctional Officer “Pete” Bergeson of Minnesota Correctional Facility (MCF)-St. Cloud.

When several retired professional Major League baseball players visited MCF-St. Cloud in 2015, including Boston Red Sox’s Dana Kiecker and Twins’ Jim Eisenreich, several of them hugged Pete Bergeson and reminisced about the past. Pete, a former stand-out athlete in high school and college, played with many of these players “back in the day.” After 25 years at MCF-St. Cloud, Pete recently joined these players in the land of retirement.

After working several years as a substitute teacher, Pete joined the ranks of Correctional Officers at MCF-St. Cloud in 1994, looking for a more permanent employment to support his growing family. Remarkably, he worked in the School Hall of the facility continuously since 2003, developing considerable rapport and camaraderie with the Teachers, Behavioral Health staff, Transition Coordinators and Case Managers over a 15 year span. He chose not to bid out of the School Hall due to the relationships he cultivated and valued with these professionals over the years.

A relationship builder and an excellent conversationalist, Pete was genuinely interested in everyone he talked to and everyone was genuinely interested in what he had to say. Case Manager Jason Skwira remembered: “The first floor school hall podium, where Pete was stationed, became a common place you just had to stop for a quick joke or an update on how a local sports team or professional team had performed the night before.” Teacher Ben Murphy reflected: “After many years in corrections he always had a good attitude, was pleasant to be around and he cared.”

Pete’s athletic prowess is legendary in the St. Cloud area. He has been involved in athletics for over 30 years, either as a player or an official umpiring baseball games. He was a star athlete at Sauk Rapids High School, where he excelled in baseball, basketball and football. He still holds the record of 4 rushing touchdowns in one game and, in 2018, he was inducted in the school’s Athletic Hall of Fame. In college, he played baseball at the University of Minnesota and later at St. Cloud State University, where he graduated with a BA in Education. For the last 25 years, he was also a Referee for several Umpire Official Associations, officiating amateur, high school and college baseball games in the greater St. Cloud area.

Pete plans to spend more time with his family and continue officiating games in the area.

Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement, Pete!
Kaminski Retires After Nearly 30 Years with OPH

By Kurt Heideman, Physical Plant Director

On July 9th, Sid Kaminski retired after nearly 30 years of service with the Minnesota DOC.

Sid started his corrections career as a Correctional Officer at Wisconsin’s Oakhill Correctional Institution near Madison. Sid began working at MCF-Oak Park Heights in 1989 as a Groundskeeper Senior and has been in that position ever since with a few WOOC exceptions. We will miss Sid’s tenacious work ethic and can-do attitude.

Congratulations on your retirement, Sid, and good luck in your future endeavors.

Lexcen Retires After 24 Years of State Service

By John R. Williams, Jr.

On July 9th, Accounting Technician JeAnne Lexcen retired after 7 years at MCF-Lino Lakes and 24 years of State Service.

JeAnne says that now she will have plenty of time to do some antiquing and spend more time with her family.

We appreciate all of the wonderful years you have dedicated to the great State of Minnesota and in particular the DOC.

(L – R) Kari Carlson, Natalie Melhourne, JeAnne Lexcen, Karen Domino, and Dawn Hoschette

Collins Named AWO of CIP

Brian Collins is the new Associate Warden of Operations for the Challenge Incarceration Program. He is responsible for CIP operations at Shakopee, Togo, and Willow River.

Brian’s prior experience with the DOC includes Associate Warden of Administration at MCF-St. Cloud, Field Services District Supervisor, Program Director, and Probation and Parole Agent. Brian is a member of the DOC’s Incident Management Team (IMT), a graduate of the Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP), and he chairs the Minnesota Corrections Association’s (MCA) Adult Justice and Legislative Committee. Brian also has prior experience at the Minnesota Sex Offender Program as a Security Counselor, and later as a Special Investigator.

Brian graduated from Colorado Technical University with a Master’s Degree in Management and a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice. Brian is also a combat veteran of the United States Marine Corps, having served honorably as a UH-1N “Huey” door gunner in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Brian is grateful for the opportunity to lead CIP. He’s eager to serve CIP’s staff and clientele, partner with the Wardens overseeing CIP facilities, and to advance the program’s important mission.
On July 18th, hundreds gathered at MCF-Stillwater to honor our fallen brother Officer Joseph Gomm with a service of remembrance and celebration of life. Among those gathered were Gomm’s family, local law enforcement, members of the legislature, and DOC staff from around the state. The ceremony provided an opportunity for those in attendance to reflect on the events of the past year.

Stillwater Chaplain Rev. Martin Shanahan led the ceremony, which included the DOC Honor Guard, a moment of silence in Gomm’s memory, and the unveiling of a memorial bench and rock monument. The memorial rock and bench were installed as permanent additions under the flag pole in the front of the facility. Gomm will forever be in our hearts and we will never forget!
MCA Helps Honor Gomm

By Connie Hartwig

I am honored to announce that the Minnesota Corrections Association (MCA) sponsored part of the luncheon for Joe Gomm’s Memorial Service on July 28th.

MCA Board and Committee members also served the meal to Stillwater staff, guests and Joe Gomm’s family. We were all very humbled to be part of the event and to be able to support Stillwater staff during this time of healing. I would like to thank Missy McCann, Kari Boser, Kayla Perkins and Laura Anderson from MCF-Red Wing, Jarah Mitchell and Beth Kirk from MCF-Lino Lakes and Ryan Busch from Wright County for all of their hard work and efforts. You all helped to make things go very smoothly while serving lunch to over 400 people.

Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Leadership Tours OPH

On June 21st, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) Commissioner Jennifer Ho and Assistant Commissioner of Policy and Community Development Ryan Baumtrog toured MCF-Oak Park Heights.

The purpose of the tour was to try to connect MHFA and MCF-Oak Park Heights together to determine if MHFA could assist the DOC with housing opportunities for individuals when transitioning back to the community upon release.

(L – R) Oak Park Heights’ AWA Sherlinda Wheeler, DOC Deputy Commissioner Michelle Smith, MHFA Assistant Commissioner Policy and Community Development Ryan Baumtrog, and MHFA Commissioner Jennifer Ho
Parise Honored at Golf Event

By Sherry Bohn

On July 19th, MCF-Oak Park Heights held the Joseph Parise Open/6th Annual Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Golf Tournament.

In total, 108 golfers took part in the event, and a lot of others attended in support. During the event, veterans and military attendees were recognized for their service.

Nearly every facility and Central Office was represented. We had several local businesses golfing: Rapala, Galowitz Olson Law Firm, The Next Stop Bar and Grill, Morcon, Caribbean Smokehouse and Dick’s Bar and Grill. Staff from Washington County also attended the event.

Andrea Parise, both children, and several members of her family were in attendance.

Officer Joseph Michael Parise was our friend, colleague, brother, husband, a Navy veteran and was just a great guy. The past year has been difficult, but we came together to celebrate him.

Proceeds from the tournament will be donated to Andrea Parise.

A huge thank you to everyone for participating. Remember to be kind to one another as tomorrow is never promised.
“Boozhoo!” Participants of the June 17 - 18 “Government-to-Government Tribal-State Relations Training” in Grand Portage were greeted with this Ojibwe word meaning “hello!”

Five DOC staff attended the conference, along with employees from multiple state agencies, including Departments of Human Services, Revenue, Natural Resources, and Transportation. Hosted by the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Tribe, participants were welcomed with a drum ceremony and impressive Presentation of the Colors by the Grand Portage Honor Guard. The training covered the concept of tribal sovereignty, historical periods of Federal Indian Policy and American Indian history and cultures and concluded with discussions on the State of Minnesota building partnerships with American Indian nations.

While the above topics appear generic and customary for a training conference of this nature, conference participants were treated to an impressively enlightening understanding of the topics and acquired an increased awareness in these areas.

Two faculty members of the American Indian Studies Department at the University of Minnesota Duluth made scholarly but easily understood presentations on American Indian History. Professor Tadd Johnson, who is also an attorney and a member of the Bois Forte Chippewa Tribal Band, expertly presented on the unique jurisprudential history of American Indian Tribes and the Federal Government, including seminal court decisions and civil right acts relating to the tribes. An elaborate exhibit of “Why Treaties Matter” was on display, along with break-out discussions on relevant contemporary topics.

Governor Walz’s Executive Order 19-24 and DOC policies promote collaboration and consultation with Minnesota Tribal Nations. The DOC employees who attended the training, Bronson Austreng (Oak Park Heights), Roger Baburam (St. Cloud), Lisa Connors (Lino Lakes/Stillwater), Crystal Hansen (Moose Lake) and Tammy Wherley (Red Wing), are all members of the recently created American Indian Work Group, chaired by Warden Gino Anselmo (Togo). The Work Group was established to access “current practices, researching ways to address needs directly related to the American Indian offenders in our correctional system.” The Government-to-Government Tribal-State Relations Training in Grand Portage provided valuable insights in building and consolidating relationships with tribal nations and the DOC. If education, information, camaraderie and relationship-building are key accomplishments of a successful training-conference, then the Government-to-Government Tribal-State Relations Training in Grand Portage was a remarkable success!

Thank you to Warden Anselmo for facilitating DOC staff to attend this valuable conference.
Shakopee Women Donate $1,450 to Sexual Violence Center

On July 22nd, three staff from the Sexual Violence Center/Scott County (Kenosha, Ashley and Grace) came to MCF-Shakopee to receive a $1,450 donation and to meet with 18 incarcerated women and six staff from the MCF-Shakopee - Restorative Justice Council.

The incarcerated women chose to donate $1,450 to the Sexual Violence Center, money earned from the facility’s past two Restorative Justice fundraisers.

Kenosha, Ashley and Grace also provided information about their programs and answered many insightful questions from the incarcerated women.

Westphal Completes Faribault Futures Program

MCF-Faribault Corrections Program Director Laura Westphal recently participated in the Faribault Futures program.

The Faribault Area Chamber of Commerce selects applicants from the community businesses to participate in the 10-month program that focuses on the developing of emerging leaders and to develop and broaden their knowledge of the community. Participants attend monthly meetings, complete a service project, and engage in assignments used to help improve the health of the community.

Commencement of the 2019 Faribault Futures class was held at The Inn at Shattuck on June 13th, with 21 graduates. The service project completed by the class had two components. The class assisted in the major remodeling of the Faribault Diversity Coalition, making the existing office space a modern co-working space for future entrepreneurs. The second phase was the creation of a mural for the Faribault Diversity Coalition that showcased the faces of Faribault in order to highlight the diversity that exists in the community.

“The assignments and meetings made participants evaluate their skills and traits as leaders in their organizations and the community in which they work and/or live,” said Westphal. “They made me understand more about my leadership strengths, how these strengths fit in with my supervisory and management style, and how this affects my interaction with others. This program gave me the opportunity to understand how Faribault as a community relates and interacts with the prison, and how the prison affects the community. It allowed me to network with area business and program leaders to further grow that relationship.”
Recently, MCF-Moose Lake was recognized with the Honored Institution Award by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for 75 years of continuous weather observation.

On August 11th, 1938, Moose Lake’s Power House staff started recording the daily weather conditions, including temperature highs and lows, rainfall, and sky conditions. This began in the Moose Lake State Hospital time period and continues on today. Although the monitoring equipment and recording methods have changed over the years, the value of collecting accurate weather information for this area has remained constant for the past 75 years. Thank you to the staff involved with this daily observation!

Instructor Profile: Officer Lonny Lewis, MCF-St. Cloud

Officer Lonny Lewis has been with the DOC for 19 years. He has worked in all units at St. Cloud, including being a member of the A-Team, and a WOCC Sergeant. In addition, he served as a Field Training Officer and mentor.

For the past 15 years, Lonny has been a member of the academy cadre, teaching “Surviving a Hostage Situation.” He is currently a CISM team member, CIT member, a member of the Hostage Negotiations Team, and a base radio instructor.

Lonny said he enjoys teaching because he “wanted to help new staff like those that had helped me. I feel that it is important to mentor staff as they begin their career in this field and answer questions that they have to build their confidence.”

According to Academy Director Mary Oberstar, “Officer Lonny Lewis consistently steps up to the plate to review and revise materials for the Surviving a Hostage Situation class to ensure information provided to the new employees is the most current and relevant. He also provides balance to the serious subject with appropriate humor and anecdotes.”
Minnesota Haven Victim Notification System Launched

By Lori Korts

The DOC is required by statute to provide specific notifications to victims of offenders committed to the Commissioner of Corrections. However, victims are not automatically registered for notification, which is considered an opt-in right. In order for a victim, or any other community member to receive notification, they have to submit a request to the DOC. These notification requests are processed by Victim Assistance and Restorative Justice Program (VARJP) staff. Once the request is received, an account is created in the victim notification system, which then triggers notifications.

On July 9, 2019, after several years in development, the DOC launched the Minnesota Haven victim notification system. The previous notification system, MnCHOICE, was developed under contract with Appriss, the same company that developed and manages the VINE notification system. MnCHOICE was available for victims to register for notifications directly through the system. After a potential data breach in 2015, access to the system was limited, and victims were no longer able to access the system on their own. Subsequently, the Minnesota Department of Corrections, in collaboration with the Office of Justice Programs at the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS), secured funding to replace the MnCHOICE system with one that is built internally, and will have the potential to interface with Minnesota specific offender databases.

Under the project management of Jennifer Gabrielli, the first phase of the development of Haven was successfully launched, without service interruption for the victims. VARJP has worked with stakeholders to ensure there was a smooth transition between the systems.

The Victim Assistance and Restorative Justice Program entered COOP status when MnCHOICE was “turned off” on Friday, June 21. Intensive testing of the new Haven system functionality took place during this time to identify any concerns with the launch and operational capacity. This was a large team effort, which will pay dividends in the long run.

Currently, Haven is only accessible by VARJP staff. As the system continues to be developed, the access will be expanded to additional work groups, with the hope of an eventual open system, which would be directly accessible to victims. The MN.IT Haven development team worked tirelessly to ensure the newly launched system was designed thoughtfully, with the needs of victims as the core consideration. This is one of the first internally developed notification systems in the nation and is celebrated by all users today!

If you, or someone you know would like to register for notification about status changes for an offender under the authority of the DOC, please contact the VARJP at 651-361-7250 or victimassistance.doc@state.mn.us.
New Master Instructors: Sgt. Scott Huckell and Sgt. Benjamin Sutlief

Sgt. Scott Huckell (MCF-LL) and Sgt. Benjamin Sutlief (MCF-FRB) were recently appointed as Master Instructors - Chemical. In this capacity, they will help oversee a specialized area of training to include standardization of curriculum, qualifications, certifications, and measurement of training.

Sgt. Huckell has worked at MCF-LL since 2007. He has been assigned to Utility, Recreation, and the A-Team. He became a Chemical Instructor in 2009, a Control Tactics/Self Defense Instructor in 2010, and a Lead Instructor in 2015. Sgt. Huckell is a member of MCF-LL SORT, and a member of the Emergency Response Team.

Sgt. Sutlief has worked at MCF-FRB since 2010. He has been assigned in various areas of the institution, including; Visiting, Living Units, Utility, and A-Team. He became a Control Tactics/Self-Defense Instructor in 2012, and since that time has added SORT FN Instructor, SORT armorer, Chemical Instructor, A-Team Training Coordinator, and a Mentor to his list of credentials.

Both were selected from a competitive application process which included both an oral interview and a practicum.

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 7,000 likes on Facebook! Also, follow the department on Twitter: @MinnCorrections, LinkedIn, Instagram, or YouTube.
Red Wing staff join law enforcement on annual Torch Run

On June 19th, during a recent sunny afternoon in Red Wing, staff biked, jogged and speed walked with law enforcement in support of Special Olympics Minnesota. The event provides awareness in the community as staff travel from the facility to the Red Wing City Hall. Law enforcement personnel provided vehicle escort and traffic control along the way.

Several Torch Run events are held throughout Minnesota. MCF-Red Wing staff participate in the Torch Run leg that runs from Rochester to Hastings. Bicyclists pedal the open sections connecting communities, and everyone joins in as the small parade moves through towns along the route.

Staff participation numbers and an abundance of smiles made it an enjoyable experience we were all proud to be a part of. We look forward to continuing our partnership with law enforcement during next year’s Torch Run.

Johnson Promoted to Lieutenant at Lino Lakes

By John R. Williams, Jr.

Jessica Johnson promoted to Lieutenant at MCF-Lino Lakes in June.

Jessica started her DOC career as a Correctional Officer in October of 2005. As an officer, she was very active with AFSCME throughout the DOC. She also spent 8 months in Kentucky assisting them with their organizing efforts and helping them establish their first State Workers Union. In May of 2006, Jessica began her first WOOC as an OAS Sr. with the Lino Lakes Employee Development.

In June of 2013, Jessica accepted a position as a Training Development Specialist 1 at Lino Lakes. During part of that tenure, Jessica served as the MAPE President and really encouraged members to become active and take part in the union processes. In addition, Jessica completed nine WOOC assignments as the Training Director and three WOOC Lieutenant assignments from March of 2016 until June 2019 when she was promoted.
Cosmetology Students Visited by Community Professionals

By Jeff Spies

Shakopee Cosmetology Instructor Becky Tweed recently welcomed three stylist professionals to speak to the women in the Cosmetology Program.

Mary Fleming, Adriane Sevelin, and Melissa Bauernfeind, all professionals working at salons in the Twin Cities, shared stories of encouragement and the job prospects upon transitioning from prison. There is a demand for quality stylists and MCF-Shakopee is fortunate to have an outstanding instructor in Becky Tweed. Many of her students move on to successful careers working for top name salons.

The Cosmetology Program is an 18-month long process at the end of which students are able to take the exam for their licensure. Visits from community professionals is one way to connect the students in the program with potential employers upon release. These professional connections are a vital part of our mission to offer hopeful opportunities for those getting ready to transition back into the community.

Thank you to Fleming, Sevelin and Bauernfeind for donating your time, energy, knowledge and support to the women in the Cosmetology Program. Thank you, Tweed, for the vision you inspire in those you instruct and finding ways to make important connections.

Kruger Assists Togo with Special Projects

Bruce Kruger worked at MCF-Togo as a Corrections Officer and Corrections Sergeant from 1992 through his retirement in 2011. Bruce began his DOC career working with juveniles, eventually working as a Sergeant in the Challenge Incarceration Program. Upon retirement in 2011, he remained with MCF-Togo as an intermittent officer. He can be called in for special projects and work crews, and helps fill in behind staff training or shortages.

Bruce enjoys taking crews out on assignment to various non-profit agencies. “The CIP offenders love giving back to the surrounding communities,” he said. “It’s not just ‘keeping them busy’. They take great pride in the work they do. I’ve seen an offender cry after hearing how the work his crew completed was so appreciated. To watch an offender’s self-esteem and worth build before my eyes is very rewarding.”

Lt. Brandon McComas stated, “We are very fortunate to have Officer Kruger’s experience and work ethic still available to us. He has been an invaluable resource to MCF-Togo for years.”
Applications Being Accepted for ALDP

By Charles Dively, Director of Employee Development

The Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP) is the most comprehensive cohort-based model of leadership development DOC has to offer. The program is comprised of workshops, career assessment surveys, leadership skills assessments, mentoring, readings, special projects, individual presentations, group presentations, site visits, and much more. More than 120 employees have attended the program over the years.

Program Design and Development:
This model was developed specifically for our future leaders within the DOC. When we looked at the projected turnover—largely due to retirement—we saw a great need to prepare our staff in a strategic manner. The program was designed and developed for supervisors to become managers.

Sample of ALDP topics:

- Zenger Folkman: Assessment of Leadership Skills and the Development of Action Plans to Grow and Develop
- Mental Health First Aid: How to Deal with the New Reality that we Face Since the Deaths of our Fellow Officers
- Mentor Training for the Mentor and the Mentee: This very Unique Model has been Specifically Designed to Allow a Better Match
- How tos: How to Interview More Effectively/How to Present Professionally and Persuasively
- Leading Innovation to Master the Change Curve
- The Fundamentals of Finance for Budget Managers
- Transformational Change through Authentic Leadership
- Emotional Intelligence to Increase Your Personal Effectiveness

Mentoring: Each participant is paired with a mentor based on career aspirations, location, personality, areas needed for personal development, and strengths.

Here’s what past participants are saying:

ALDP did help with my promotion…it opens your eyes and prepares participants for understanding the broad scope necessary to be a good leader. It also focused on key areas and skills necessary for success: presenting, project planning, and team dynamics among peers, politics, and budgets. Gino Anselmo, Warden of MCF-Togo

What gets you to the level of supervisor won’t get you to the level of manager, and what gets you to manager won’t necessarily make you a good leader. Tracy Beltz, Warden of MCF-Shakopee

ALDP not only reflects where you have been, but also reveals future options you may never have considered. Carol Krippner, AWO St. Cloud

Criteria Requirements: If you are not a supervisor, we have created other opportunities such as Everyday Leaders training. This program has many of the same elements as ALDP. Designed for employees on work committees, cross-functional teams, FTO instructors, officers, field agents, administrative staff and so many more. Everyday Leaders will be available in the spring of 2020.

Like most programs, there is no guarantee that participating in the ALDP will lead to a promotion. However, over 95 percent of the former attendees have been promoted! This statistic speaks for itself.

Application process for the program: If you meet the criteria and you want to make a difference in the DOC, apply by September 30. Visit the Employee Development page on the iShare site for more information on this program as well as other training programs.
Faribault ALDP Graduates

Last December, Lt. Tom Wagner and Employee Development Supervisor Alyssa Schmidtke of MCF-Faribault, began participating in the Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP). The course is an intense seven month leadership program that is designed to prepare leaders to better engage with employees, gain knowledge, and strive to set an example to others. The course encompasses multiple facets including a combination of workshops, tabletop exercises, mentoring, special projects, readings, group presentations, a 360-degree leadership strength assessment, committee assignments, site visits, and a final project presentation to senior management.

Tom and Alyssa were involved in the Access Control project and were tasked with addressing key areas which lack consistency in Access Control throughout the department. ALDP graduation was held at Central Office on July 10th. Tom and Alyssa are looking forward to applying their newly gained knowledge and skills as they continue to strive for excellence while working at MCF-Faribault.

Oak Park Heights CIT Members

Meet MCF-Oak Park Heights’ newest Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) members! On June 21st, Officers Jeanine Jansen and Scott Roemer graduated from the CIT Academy at MCF-Rush City.

Congratulations and welcome to the team!

Education Ceremony at Faribault

Faribault Warden Kathy Halvorson (now warden at Shakopee) addressed 145 graduates of the Minnesota Career Education Center at MCF-Faribault on August 2nd.

Following Halvorson’s address, students and staff presented her with a plaque recognizing her sustained support for and leadership of educational programing at Faribault. During Halvorson’s tenure at Faribault, 1,163 men received secondary, post-secondary and career and technical degrees.

(L – R) Education Director Ray Ades, Warden Kathy Halvorson, and Education Director Nancy Rosman
Rush City Holds Transitions Fair

By Deneen Clemons


For this event, we modified facility programming to focus on successfully hosting 80-plus outside guests and providing reentry resources and information to 300-plus incarcerated men. We received extremely positive feedback regarding this event and were pleased to host media representatives to market the positive work happening at MCF-Rush City.

About Amicus: Amicus is a Minnesota not-for-profit organization with over 44 years of experience in improving public safety by helping inmates and ex-offenders through positive relationship-building, restorative justice practices and individualized transition services. Amicus partners with inmates, ex-offenders, juvenile offenders, at-risk youth and communities to build successful lives and stronger communities.

Through innovative programming, Amicus helps inmates and ex-offenders reshape their lives, reach their goals, and make successful transitions from prison into the community. All of the Amicus programs are relationship-based, community-driven, and culturally specific.

FCI Waseca and MCF-Faribault Picnic

On July 13th, FCI Waseca and MCF-Faribault staff gathered at Manthey Park in Owatonna for a joint picnic.

The event was planned by FCI Waseca to thank MCF-Faribault for their efforts and support during the federal government shutdown. During the shutdown, Faribault staff collected donations and the union provided pizza to support FCI Waseca. This event was a joint effort to bring employees and their families together to meet, socialize, and enjoy a picnic lunch.
MINNCOR-Bridge Participants Succeeding on the Outside

Recently, MINNCOR-EMPLOY staff had a meeting with a local company, Quality Ingredients Corporation (QIC) located out of Burnsville, to discuss their hiring needs. An invitation to speak with Bridge program participants was extended and on June 27, QIC CEO Isabelle Day met with 30-plus Bridge participants. The information was well received and generated interest in some of the men; with several applying on the spot.

Recently, MINNCOR staff received the following from QIC: Next week, we have 6 gentlemen from Bridge slated to start working with us at QIC!

That is more than we have ever started in one week and represents a 10% increase in our workforce.

This morning, I met with all of them at the Red Wing shoe store in Roseville to buy their steel toe shoes. There are a lot of hoops in the hiring process, but we are getting through them one hoop at a time. I am so proud of them and so grateful that they are sticking with the process and will soon be QIC employees.

I am writing to thank both of you. None of this would have been possible without you. This whole process has exceeded my expectations and I am so grateful to have met you and to have been welcomed into the Bridge environment. You are making a wonderful difference for these men. I have very high hopes for them. If they stick with me, they will have fine jobs, a comfortable lifestyle, supportive teammates, and a lot of pride.

Congratulations to the six Bridge participants who received job offers from QIC. Stories such as this reminds us all why we put in the hard work each and every day – to see an individual succeed on the outside.

STS Crews Work in Communities Across Minnesota

Many Sentencing to Service (STS) crews work diligently preparing for, cleaning up during and tearing down county fairs across the state. Pictured is the Freeborn County STS crew painting railings and removing stucco at the fairgrounds grandstand.
MINNCOR-EMPLOY along with MCF-Shakopee and Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) organized and hosted a job fair for the women of Shakopee on July 23rd. Approximately 75 incarcerated individuals were in attendance—all of whom were within 90 days or less of their release. Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) women were invited as well and had a designated time slot to attend. Prior to the job fair, three workshops were held to help prepare the attendees for connecting with employers that were willing to hire. The workshops included resume building, mock interviews, filling out job applications, and pointers on how to effectively explain their background to employers.

Employers from various industries such as construction, landscaping, textiles, manufacturing, and customer service were present to speak with potential candidates and offered information about their companies. DEED CareerForce Center regional representatives and a DOC Career Navigator were there to answer questions about resources and services available throughout the state. The employers expressed an overall satisfaction with the event and how well it was organized. They enjoyed meeting the candidates and felt that great participation, questions and strong interests were shown and they look forward to participating in future job fairs.

The attendees expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this event. They found value in networking with employers, which provided hope for the opportunity to gain employment upon release. The women stated they experienced confidence to advocate for themselves when speaking to the employers. They were thrilled that some of the employers interviewed on the spot, and made conditional job offers.

The collaboration that was demonstrated between MINNCOR-EMPLOY, MCF-Shakopee, and DEED staff made this event a tremendous success. Extra accommodations were required with security, volunteers and changing facility operations. The opportunity to participate in events like this remind DOC staff the importance of fulfilling the mission, vision and values that contribute to a safer Minnesota.
MPWW Partners with We Are All Criminals

By Jeff Spies

Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop (MPWW) has been invited to work on a project with We Are All Criminals (WAAC), a non-profit founded by Emily Baxter, whose mission, in part, is to challenge “…society’s perceptions of what it means to be a criminal.” WAAC aims to open doors to how incarcerated persons are viewed in greater society. Through dialogue and the sharing of art, Baxter takes her message to a wide audience.

In June, MPWW and WAAC began their work at MCF-Shakopee by meeting with the women involved in MPWW and sharing their vision of how the two groups can partner. WAAC would like to use the forum they have established to highlight the art and artists they see daily represented by their participation in MPWW. Baxter attended the MPWW group and took photos which she will include in her presentations, which she does all over the country. Baxter will also take art work, be it poetry, painting, or other forms of work, and introduce those pieces to a broader audience. She has presented to the Department of Employment and Economic Development, Hennepin County Bar Association, University of St. Thomas Forum on Workplace Inclusion, countless colleges and universities, conferences on Juvenile Justice, Google Headquarters, and more.

Faribault Recognizes Lt. Mitchell

On July 11th Lt. Christopher Mitchell was nominated for employee recognition in Leadership.

Chris has a unique communication style. When addressing others he does so in a manner that encourages thoughtful consideration, exploration of alternatives and makes them feel heard. Chris is a student of corrections, he has a dedicated history as a Field Training Officer, SORT Member, and Master Instructor for Control Tactics and Self Defense.

Chris challenges individuals to think of outcomes, possibilities, to bring forward the best possible outcome. Chris has demonstrated his effectiveness dealing with the public and other facilities through the multiple scenario-based training he has assisted in for the Incident Command System. He revamped the command posts in MCF-Faribault, and this system restructure is shared and developed in other facilities.

Shakopee MPWW participants are pictured with Emily Baxter (WAAC) and Michael L.Kleber Diggs (MPWW).

Program Director Martin Dahlen and Lt. Christopher Mitchell
Orange is the New Black Comes to Shakopee

By Jeff Spies

Many of us have seen at least an episode or two of the popular Netflix series “Orange is the New Black.” Those of us who have, know that the fictionalized show is not an accurate representation of life in a women’s correctional facility. Those who have worked in Shakopee know it isn’t even close. Yet it is shows like this that both create and foster misconceptions about corrections, our business, staff professionalism, and what life is like behind the fence.

Bridging the gap between fiction and reality was the goal of Leila Day, producer for Pineapple Street Media (PSM), a podcast company based out of New York. PSM partnered with producers of “Orange is the New Black” to produce a podcast highlighting perspectives of the actors in the series and those of real life women who are incarcerated. PSM will interview the actors from the TV series about what it is like to portray incarcerated women. Actual incarcerated women will also be interviewed for the series.

Day visited three correctional facilities, including MCF-Shakopee, to talk with incarcerated women on their experiences related to life in prison. Day spent a total of two and a half days at Shakopee speaking with pregnant incarcerated women about what it is like being an expectant mother, working with the doulas, and what opportunities are offered here related to parenting.

Day also interviewed women in the Cosmetology Program and “listened in” on conversations with women as they got their hair braided.

The production of this podcast is being timed with the release of the final season of the series and will be available online this fall.

CIP Presentation

On June 26, Paul Peterson from Challenge Incarceration Program presented an overview of the program to justice partners, agents, supervisors & directors from the 5th Judicial District in Blue Earth, Nicollet & Brown Counties; DOC agents, supervisors & support staff and local law enforcement.

The presentation, which was very informative and sparked lively discussion, was a joint collaboration between Nicollet/Brown Drug Court and DOC.
**Corrections Agent, Career Application Process**

Applications for promotion to the Corrections Agent, Career class will be accepted September 3 – September 30, 2019.

Please submit a completed application, which includes your work email address and a signed and dated Notice of Intent and Consent to Collect Private Information form to your direct supervisor.

For more information on the requirements and application process, [click here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact Rena Patterson (507-457-6470) in Field Services, or Teresa Moen (651-361-7592) in Human Resources.

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**Rush City Academy Class**

The DOC welcomes MCF-Rush City Academy graduates Corrections Program Therapist 4 Michelle Paige, Information Technology Specialist Pheing Vang, Corrections Officers Amanda Mills and Samantha Delles.

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**WR/ML Staff Event Fundraiser**

On July 17th, MCF-Willow River/Moose Lake’s Employee Events Committee (EEC) hosted a Philly cheesesteak sandwich fundraiser, with proceeds supporting the annual staff meal in December.

EEC members worked the grill. Thank you for your continued dedication, MCF-Willow River/Moose Lake EEC!

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**DOC Study: Gendered Pathways into Co-offending**

Susan McNeeley recently completed a study on gender and co-offending in burglary and robbery offenses.

The results showed that neither the presence of co-offenders nor the number of co-offenders varied by gender. However, women were more likely than men to act as accomplices and to co-offend with romantic partners or family members. In addition, there was limited evidence that abuse and victimization, substance abuse, mental health problems, and parenthood were related to co-offending, and that these relationships varied by gender.

To read the study, visit: [https://mn.gov/doc/data-publications/research/publications/](https://mn.gov/doc/data-publications/research/publications/)

The study will be published in *Crime & Delinquency*.

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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)
DOC Staff Celebrate National Night Out Across MN Communities

Staff represented the DOC at National Night Out activities in communities across Minnesota on Tuesday, August 6th. Events included a Rainbow Run in Moose Lake and community picnics in Mahnomen, Bayport, Stillwater, and more!

Participants celebrate at Moose Lake’s annual National Night Out Rainbow Run (2019)

Asst. Cmr. Nate Knutson, MCF-WR/ML Warden Bill Bolin, and MCF-ML AWA Darryl Goebel

DOC employees represented the department across Minnesota Communities as part of National Night Out (pictured: Mahnomen, Faribault, and Stillwater)