



INSIGHT

PUBLISHED BY THE PROBATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

OFFICE ADDRESS: UNITED PROFESSIONAL CENTER, BLDG. 2,

617 UNION AVE., BRIELLE, NJ 08730

WEBSITE: panj.org

PUBLISHED BY THE PROBATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

OFFICE ADDRESS: UNITED PROFESSIONAL CENTER, BLDG. 2,

617 UNION AVE., BRIELLE, NJ 08730

WEBSITE: panj.org

April, 2002
1065-7800

ISSN

Call to Service

By Michael Morton Cumberland County PANJ President Local 100

How do we know when we are serving our union? Is this a hypothetical question? Of course not. Every day that we perform our duties as Probation Officers, we are also serving our communities as members of our union. But this is not merely rhetoric! Whether we truly serve our union well is determined by how we serve.

Therefore the true question is not whether we serve. Rather, how well we serve. Some of us console our fellow union members in their time of distress. Some of us are eager to work hand in hand with management to resolve labor-management issues. And some of us work even harder to defend the values that our union holds true. We strive for excellence, don't we?

We should never fall short of our goals! But what are our goals? What is our mission? When the world accesses our web page they see that our mission is "to defend and improve the rights and privileges of Probation Officers and other Judicial employees in this state, and maintain an organizational structure capable of doing so." Our organization is not self-serving! We serve the community. We serve the Judiciary. We serve the organization. Individual gain is only attained after we are united as a union; simultaneous to our service, yet consecutive to achieving our mission.

As each vicinage maintains its own liberties to interpret administrative policy, each county Local struggles to assert its ability to protect the union's mission. And the struggle is different for each of us; in perspective and in reality. Some locals have only a single shop steward, while others have an entire executive board comprised of as many members as the management team. However our effectiveness as a union does not hinge merely on our numbers, but also on our determination, and the support of our leaders. The democratic process demands that we elect officials that the majority supports. And we, as individuals have an obligation to either lead, follow, or get out of the way.

We must be unyielding! Each victory will be replaced by yet another dilemma that needs our attention. When we serve as Probation Officers, there will always be another client, victim, or probationer to serve in the community. As we serve our union, we will be faced with ever-challenging goals to achieve. No matter what the challenge,

we will be relentless. And unlike some of those who challenge us, we must always be professional.

How do we know when we are serving our union? We know that each time we help our clients, our communities, and our fellow employees, we serve our union!

[Editor's Note: Mike's words make the perfect lead article for this issue. Almost every story is one of Probation Officers helping others. The means often vary, but the goal is consistent. John Morton]

PANJ President Meets With Director

By John Morton, Editor

PANJ President George P. Christie met with Richard J. Williams, Administrative Director of the Courts, on March 20, 2002. Counsel for both individuals were in attendance, as well. PANJ is the only union which has continued formal discussions with the Administrative Office of the Courts relating to the Performance Appraisal Process. PANJ has also participated in Unification Committee meetings where the Performance Appraisal has been a hot topic, and flaws in the present system were exposed. Perhaps as a result, Director Williams presented President Christie with a draft of a streamlined Annual Performance Advisory (APA) document designed to replace the cumbersome Performance Appraisal Process. The APA is primarily a coaching tool. PANJ members will be have a chance to view this form and review any agreement associated with it. All members of the bargaining unit who complete the APA should receive the increment once referred to as a Performance-Based Pay Increase. There is no rating system associated with the APA. The pecuniary effects of the Exceptional rating and the Needs Improvement rating are to be eliminated. Also, there are plans to modify the Career Progression section of this document. PANJ continues to review the evolution of this section, providing input as appropriate.

The Director also advised PANJ that he is currently reviewing the Law Enforcement legislation which passed last January. He stated that there would be a response in approximately one week.

PANJ-EF 2002 GOLF OUTING

By Ann Rizzi

The golf outing will take place on June 5, 2002 at the **Miry Run Country Club**, 106 Sharon Road, Robbinsville, NJ; tee times start 10:00 a.m.

The cost is \$85, which includes golf, cart, food, prizes, and a souvenir shirt valued at \$24.99. All proceeds to benefit the PANJ-EF Scholarship Program and Educational Fund. As noted in a previous *INSIGHT*, donations to this fund are now tax-deductible.

Please return registrations no later than May 15, 2002 to PANJ, United Professional Center, Building 2, 617 Union Avenue, Brielle, NJ 08730.



Probation Officers Assist Salvation Army

By: Peter A. Tortoreto, 1st Vice President

During the past holiday season three Camden County Senior Probation Officers and a Judiciary Mail Specialist volunteered to assist the Salvation Army,

Officers Newton Murphy, Eric Schwartz, Peter Tortoreto and Specialist Mark Wilson assisted the needy by bagging over 250 bags of groceries for distribution to underprivileged families living in Camden City and the surrounding area.

Instead of attending office parties and celebrating with co-workers or families these four Judiciary Employees and proud members of the Probation Association of New Jersey (PANJ) donated an afternoon to help impoverished citizens obtain a Christmas meal.

Newton Murphy, his wife Ella and their daughter Theresa, who on their own have distributed frozen turkey dinners to the needy at their own time and expense, deserve special mention.

Murphy was quoted as saying that “This holiday season is special considering the trauma and heartache associated with 9/11. We the fortunate are gratified to be in a position to help those less fortunate. May God Bless America”.

Pictured from left to right: Newton Murphy, Mark Wilson and Eric Schwartz.

SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL SUPERVISORS DISCUSS CRITICAL ISSUES

By Brad Fairchild, President, Cumberland County PANJ Local 200

On Thursday, March 7, 2002 more than 25 supervisors from the southern and central counties met at Mastoris Diner in Bordentown, Burlington County to plan and discuss strategy for the future. This meeting is a continuation of an effort to involve and inform staff at the grassroots level of the Professional Supervisors Unit.

First Vice President for the Supervisors Sam Richter and Supervisor Legal Counsel John Marinan led a discussion on a wide range of issues and concerns. Sam indicated that a formal signing of the supervisor's contract is scheduled for late March, 2002. Supervisors voted overwhelmingly to approve the contract last summer and the last of details over non-monetary issues have finally been resolved.

Many supervisors voiced strong opposition to the method of awarding exceptional or "3" ratings. Several members suggested that the money utilized for "exceptional" grades could be more objectively distributed through small increases for all Supervisors or raising the maximum for all ranges so the entire unit would eventually benefit.

Some supervisors indicated concern over the implementation of the Law Enforcement Bill. Members believe that supervisors should be included in the law enforcement training mandated for Officers in the Legislation and included in the group of Officers authorized to carry firearms.

Sam announced the formation of a Supervisors Advisory Committee that will provide the negotiations team with proposals and suggestions. Appointed to the Committee is Roberta Sandrow-Scull - Atlantic Vicinage, Glen Moton -Camden Vicinage, Dawn Brevard-Waters -Camden Vicinage, Carmelo Velazquez-Essex Vicinage, Nancy Mooney - Hudson Vicinage, and Brad Fairchild (Chairman), Cumberland Gloucester/ Salem Vicinage.

John Marinan provided valuable advice and guidance in the processing of grievances and representing fellow members in disciplinary matters. Mr. Marinan discussed negative trends in several vicinages and urged supervisors to call Sam Richter or Neil Elsasser when faced with problems or concerns. If these matters require John's counsel, he will provide immediate assistance. John also strongly recommended that supervisors seek advice and guidance when faced with EEO complaints filed against them by staff. Any matter that could eventually subject a supervisor to discipline requires union representation.

A regional meeting may be held in North Jersey in the coming months. All members from the northern region will be encouraged to attend. These sessions provide the opportunity for members to discuss the issues facing supervisors throughout the state and to suggest or propose policy solutions.



Probation Officers Help Ground Zero Workers

By Anne Dutton, Regional Representative

Approximately 30 Probation Officers from Morris County volunteered at Nino's Restaurant in New York City covering 3 nights from 10:00 p.m.-6:00 a.m. The group included line staff, supervisors and even an Assistant Chief. They spent time preparing and serving food to the workers at Ground Zero. They volunteered their time after working a full day and went into the city in 5-person shifts, working either 10:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m. or 2:00 a.m.-6:00 a.m., Monday - Wednesday nights. Nino's has been serving food around the clock to the workers since September 12th. They became a non-profit organization and are not open to the public. They are funded strictly by donations and are staffed mainly by volunteers. You can volunteer as an individual or can set up blocks of time to be covered by your group. (The slots most needed are the overnight shifts.) Anyone interested in volunteering should call Nino's at (212) 431-5625. Monetary donations can be sent to: **Nino's Restaurant 9/11 Fund, 145 East 57th Street, 8th floor, New York, NY 10022.**



THE RYAN STROEMEL

EDUCATION TRUST FUND

GOLF TOURNAMENT

SPONSORED BY PANJ LOCAL 107

By Deneen Hohman, Treasurer

The event will be held at the Avalon Country Club, Route 9 South in Cape May County on Thursday, May 23, 2002 at 12:00 noon.

The golf tournament will consist of 18 holes of golf, golf cart, shotgun start/scramble (best ball), Prizes for closest to the pin & longest drive will be awarded after hot/cold appetizers. This event is for a very good cause and will be lots of fun!

RSVP with entry fee of \$75 per player by April 29, 2002: Deneen Hohman, 66 Evergreen Drive, Seaville, NJ 08230. 609-390-7439/phone; 609-390-1965/fax. Sponsor fee is \$50 per hole. Checks payable to Atlantic County Probation Local 107.



How Times Have Changed

Out of the PANJ archives comes a section of the *Civil Service News* from 1941 reproduced above. This article solicits applications for a Probation Officer in Monmouth County. The only requirements listed are that one must be a male and a resident of the county for at least 12 months. Fortunately the requirements have become more open in connection with gender and residency, yet more restrictive in the area of education. PANJ has fought hard to defend the present requirements, which have an indisputable nexus to compensation and benefits. (By John Morton)

Legislative Committee Update

By Stuart Martinsen, Chairman and John Morton

PANJ is closely monitoring the Buyout Legislation, S 451, introduced by Senator Shirley Turner of Mercer County. Governor McGreevey is expected to report about his money saving proposals on March 26, so more details of this early retirement plan may be available after that date.

The proposed changes in the way **post-retirement medical (PRM) benefits** are funded are of great concern. Instead of paying for PRM benefits out of an appropriation from the state budget, the Governor intends to utilize reserve funds for these benefits. He would also discontinue any pre-funding of the PRM liabilities. While this bill does not immediately threaten our members' post-retirement medical benefits and acknowledges the state's obligation to fund them, it does diminish the long term security of this

important benefit. Two bills have been introduced to effectuate this proposal. They are A-2008 (Sires/Roberts) and S-11 (Lesniak). These identical bills would suspend any pre-funding of post-retirement medical benefits and reduce the PRM reserve account to pay the current costs of retirees' health benefits. Possible amendments are as follows:

- Restore the PRM reserve account and resume pre-funding on a fixed schedule as soon as the economy and the state's fiscal situation allows.

- Guarantee the post-retirement medical benefits by incorporating language in the legislation making this benefit a non-forfeitable right just as is the case with pension benefits under Chapter 62, P.L. 1994.

- Make the draw down of PRM reserves and suspension of pre-funding of PRM liabilities for one year only.

TO DO: Contact your legislators. Let them know that we support the proposed amendments to S-11/A-2008, as does the New Jersey Education Association.

Field Work is Changing

By John, Morton, Editor

If you analyze statistics published in a large New Jersey newspaper, field work for Probation Officers is becoming more dangerous. The individuals that we are calling upon are living in communities where high numbers of felons who have been released from state prison also reside. Many of these former prisoners have been turned out to the public without any form of community-based supervision.

The March 11, 2002 edition of *The Star Ledger* reported on the front page that the number of murders in Newark increased dramatically during 2001, and a possible cause is indicated in statistics on the release of state prisoners. Many more inmates were released in 2001 than in 1990. When these figures are compared, a 79% increase is revealed. Even more surprising is the number of inmates released without parole. According to the article, which cites the Department of Corrections as its source, 1,376 prisoners were released without parole supervision in 1990. In 2001, that number burgeoned to 5,340, which represents almost a 400% rise. Better than 14 unsupervised criminals are released each day, on average.

This article by William Kleinknecht also states that educational programs in prisons and family visits have been cut back, producing former inmates who are “less skilled, less educated, more isolated from their families and filled with anger...” when they walk out the door of a state correctional facility.

The implications for Probation Officers are obvious. Every day, there are more dangerous former clients on the street. The importance of implementing the law enforcement legislation that passed on January 7, 2002 is growing, as well. Probation

Officers have been empowered to respond to the full range of threats against them under S 950, an Act that took effect immediately.

Probation Locals in Cape May Sponsor Education Seminar

By: Ed Peckiconis, Local Secretary PANJ 105

PANJ Locals 105 and 205 sponsored an educational event on Friday, January 18th, 2002 at the Superior Court House Complex in Cape May Court House. The instructor was Detective Mark Smith from the Prosecutor's Office of Morris County. The course that he taught is called "101 Ways to Spot a Liar." He has taught at several PANJ Conferences and since this was the first year our Vicinage did not pay 100% of education/ conference fee for the conference we decided as a local to offer it at the county level and in our Court House for the convenience and benefit of the employees who could otherwise not afford it or have the time to attend in Atlantic City.

Local Presidents, A. Francis Nunan, 105 rank unit, and Joann Starzman, 205 supervisors' unit co-sponsored the event and no state money was expended on this very educational and informative seminar. We encourage other locals to follow suit, as Detective Smith is an excellent instructor and worthwhile educator.



Probation Officer volunteers from Morris County serve food at Ground Zero.

(Click photo to enlarge)

[Back to Top](#)

Copyright © 2001 by PANJ.

Revised: .