



**July, 2000 ISSN 1065-7800**

# **INSIGHT**

## **Probation Officers Honored Across Nation**

by Stuart Martinsen

On November 3, 1999, Governor Whitman signed a Proclamation Act honoring and recognizing New Jersey's Probation Officers and Parole Officers for their work in society. According to an article appearing in the American Probation and Parole Association magazine, Summer of 2000 issue, July 23<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> of 2000 has been declared National Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Officers' Week throughout the United States. New Jersey's proclamation is viewable at the PANJ Website. Members may wish to visit the APPA's website ([appa-net.org](http://appa-net.org)) to review other proclamations. PANJ would like to thank Governor Whitman for participating in this nationwide effort.

### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:**

Assembly Bill 1448 would empower Probation Officers to act as officers of detection, apprehension and arrest of offenders in the State of New Jersey. It would also authorize a Probation Officer to carry a firearm. This bill is currently in review by the Assembly Judiciary Committee. Its counterpart, Senate Bill 950, was passed unanimously on May 11, 2000 by the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee. It is currently pending review by the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.

Assembly Bill 2330 amends an existing law that makes it an aggravated assault if bodily fluids are thrown at a Probation Officer. Other officials are covered by the current law. This bill is pending review by the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee.

On May 30, 2000, a release by the Associated Press covered the debate surrounding Senate Bill 950 and Assembly Bill 1448. This story was published in many newspapers under different headlines. It was also reported on by both television and radio newscasts and debated on a radio program by phone callers to the station.

PANJ believes that this debate concerning this issue is important to both the public and PANJ members. However, PANJ is not always in agreement with how the subject is reported on by the media and this should be carefully weighed by our members when reading or viewing reports on this subject.

PANJ President, George Christie, has authorized our Public Affairs Counsel, Robert Nixon, of the Princeton Public Affairs Group to review and support all retirement legislation that is advantageous to our membership who are now state employees. At the present time, there are approximately 50 or more bills in the legislature concerning PFRS benefits according to the Government News Network Legislative Index published for the month of May, 2000. If members have specific retirement concerns or are seeking to have certain bills given specific attention by the PANJ Public Affairs Counsel, please write to the PANJ office with the bill information and your specific concerns. This also applies to any other legislative issues which our members may be interested in.

PANJ welcomes the interest and support of anyone who would wish to become more involved in the Legislative Committee. Please contact the PANJ office if you would like to volunteer your time and become more active with PANJ.

### **Inequity Addressed**

by Jim Symons, Ocean County

Should all veterans in New Jersey be treated equally? There is no doubt they should.

I am proud to say that New Jersey is a leader concerning veterans' rights. It is unfortunate that an inequity exists in the way public employees are treated by the Public Employees Retirement System. Teachers and employees of boards of education can retire with veterans' status at 60 or older with 20 or more years of service and at 55 or older with 25 or more years of service. They are entitled to 50 percent of their highest 12 consecutive months' salary on which contributions were made. Public Employees Retirement System members must wait until age 62, and there is no provision for age 55. There is no difference between veterans who are teachers and veterans who are government employees.

Assemblymen Melvin Cottrell and Joseph Malone, both R-Ocean, have introduced A-2004 to deal with this inequity. It has been cosponsored by Assemblymen Christopher Connors, James Holzapfel, Jeffrey Moran and David Wolfe, all R-Ocean. I would like to compliment these legislators and urge public support to ensure quick passage of this long-overdue bill.

### **SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS SOUGHT**

by Robert Smith, President, Cumberland Co.

It's that time of year again. Summer is approaching, the older kids are returning home from college and many of us have children who are graduating from high school and making plans to head off to college next fall. For those of us with children in college or trade schools, this is also a good time of year to encourage them to apply for PANJ Scholarships.

PANJ presents the two scholarships at the annual training conference in Atlantic City, each November. Each \$500 award is available to all active or retired PANJ members and their children.

The Dwight Watson Leadership- Scholarship Award is available to a candidate, enrolled in a 2 or 4 year college in pursuit of a career in criminal justice or probation. The Ethan Janowitz Training-Educational Scholarship Award is available to any candidate enrolled in a 2 or 4 year college or vocational / technical school.

Candidates must have completed high school and maintained a "B" average for college students or a "C" average for vocational/technical students. Each candidate will be required to complete an application including financial data and copy of high school transcripts. Consideration will be given to the following characteristics: professionalism, personality, dedication, leader-ship, participation in school and community affairs and financial need. Applications are available at the PANJ office. Deadline for applications is November 10, 2000.

**PANJ Office**- 617 Union Ave. United Professional Center, Building 2, Brielle, N.J. 08730 Telephone (732) 223-1799

## **Working Conditions**

by Karen Morse, Middlesex County

We are all entitled to a safe, clean working environment which is the immediate space around you and the entire facility where you work. This is whether you are in a county administration building or in a branch office.

George, Peter and I had the occasion to visit the Asbury Park branch office in Monmouth County Vicinage. This came about as a result of complaints from officers from that building. They had observed mouse droppings and termites throughout the office, and on the furniture, desks and chairs. These officers also experienced severe over-crowding, poor indoor air quality and exposed computer wires. These infractions constituted violations of the Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Act, NJSA 34:6A-25. As a result of our visit, George filed five grievances for these officers. He also asked PEOSHA to investigate the deplorable office conditions.

There is no doubt in my mind that many offices we occupy have not been brought up to code. I urge every local president to file grievances and to file a complaint with PEOSHA so that we can all work in a safe, clean environment. PANJ and I will gladly assist every local official in this process. Please contact me at 732-987-2114 or call the PANJ office at 732-223-1799 and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

## **Annual Conference Planning 2000**

by Stephanie Hennessey, Program Chairperson

The PANJ Conference Committee is once again hard at work preparing for the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Training Institute. This year's Institute will be held at Trump Plaza Hotel & Casino, Atlantic City, New Jersey with event dates set for November 19, 20 and 21, 2000. Room rates have held steady at \$78.00 per night, single or double occupancy. Reservations must be made with the hotel at (800) 677-7378 PRIOR TO 11-01-00. Room rates cannot be guaranteed after 11-01-00.

Vice President Susan Ormsby-Cuozzo from Morris County is chairing the Conference Committee and also coordinates registration. Sergeant-at-Arms Anne Dutton, John Smack, and Vice President Stephanie Hennessey round out the Chairs for Exhibits, Arrangements, and Program, respectively. Also assisting the Chairs are Kay Kiernan, Thea Fitzpatrick, Vice President Deneen Hohman, and Vice President Karen Morse.

This year's theme, "Strengthening Community Connections," spotlights partnerships occurring statewide. The Committee is also pleased to announce that NJN Anchor Kent Manahan has accepted our invitation to make the Keynote Address during the Awards Luncheon on Monday, November 20, 2000. Nominees are needed for the all the awards including the prestigious Line Officer of the Year and Supervisor of the Year Awards, as well as for the Dwight Watson and Ethan Janowitz Memorial Scholarships.

At press time, the full program was unavailable. Upon completion, registration materials and workshop briefs will be distributed to local line presidents for both line and supervisory groups. Workshop topics include the following:

JUVENILE RECIDIVISM,

STRESS MANAGEMENT,

GANGS,

MEGAN'S LAW,

DIVERSITY,

THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC ON TODAY'S YOUTH,

DRUG RECOGNITION AND SIGNS OF BEING UNDER THE INFLUENCE,

SCHOOL VIOLENCE,

PRESSURE POINT CONTROL TECHNIQUES,

HANDCUFFING TECHNIQUES,

STATEMENT ANALYSIS,

and WHAT'S NEW IN CHILD SUPPORT.

There will be at least two new workshops for supervisors: – MAKING THE TRANSITION FROM LINE OFFICER TO SUPERVISOR and CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE STAFF MEETINGS just to name a few.

Exhibits Chair Anne Dutton has asked for your help to secure varied and increased program and service information for our Vendor Area. If a regional program or service expresses an interest in attendance at the Conference, please contact Ms. Dutton at (973) 285-6568 with their information.

## **RYAN STROEMEL TRUST FUND GOLF TOURNAMENT**

By Deneen Hohman

About 1½ years ago, Probation lost a dear friend and colleague, Greg Stroemel, in an auto accident. Shortly after, a Trust Fund was established for Greg's son Ryan. The Fund was established to assist with any medical and educational needs Ryan may have.

Friends and colleagues have been very generous and have made pledges for monetary contribution to the Fund for the next several years.

On May 17, 2000, the Trustees of the Fund and Atlantic County PANJ Local 107 sponsored a Golf Tournament at Brigantine Golf Links. About 45 friends, family members and colleagues participated in the tournament. The weather was in our favor and everyone had a great time. After the round of golf was completed, everyone gathered for food and prizes.

The tournament raised over \$1,200 for the Trust Fund. We would like to thank all the Locals who sent golfers and contributions to the tournament. We would also like to thank all the friends, family members and colleagues who contributed to this tournament's success.

We have already secured the same date for next year's tournament at Brigantine Golf Links. We hope to see even more participate next year.



George Christie, David Fox, and Stuart Martinsen discuss legislative strategy at a recent meeting.

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