



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

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INCIDENTS

By George P. Christie

Periodically we tell all of our members to report incidents to management and to PANJ when they occur. You should not forget about them or become complacent because this is an important issue. These reports are submitted to management by the officer and a separate Incident Report is filed with PANJ. When they come to PANJ we compile an independent record of the dangers that Probation Officers encounter. Our goal is to obtain a clear picture of these hazards so we can advocate for appropriate safeguards to protect the officers.

In late July 2001, two Probation Officers making a home visit in Asbury Park were confronted by a man with a large knife. They were placed in enough fear to have to flee the area and call the police. They also filed an incident report which went to management. As of August 28, 2001 very little has been done to resolve this problem. The local police apparently did nothing, and management merely signed off on the incident and sent it to Trenton. It wasn't until PANJ contacted the Assignment Judge that the prosecutors office was brought in to review the event and how it was handled. In the meantime these and perhaps other officers are deeply concerned for their safety as they work in the field where this perpetrator is still on the loose.

In late August 2001, a Union County Probation Officer was doing a violation on a domestic violence offender. When he saw her in the street he threatened her, which placed her in fear for her safety. She filed an incident report, which caused her Chief to tell her to file a complaint against the defendant in municipal court. After filing the complaint however, the officer still does not feel any safer. Complaints are useless if they are not followed by action.

I have discussed these incidents with Dick Talty from the AOC, and he agrees that we need more protocols and standard procedures when officers are threatened and assaulted in the field. For example, someone at the vicinage level should follow the workplace violence policy and conduct a complete investigation. If the incident is a matter for the police or other law enforcement agencies, then the designated management person is responsible to contact that agency. If it is determined that a municipal complaint should be filed, it becomes the designated management persons' responsibility to file the complaint on behalf of the officer, in my opinion.

Right now most of our legislators believe that you all have a dangerous job and you are appreciated. Until you have the law enforcement powers, which include the training and tools to perform your jobs properly, we must keep applying pressure on management to find better ways to protect you.

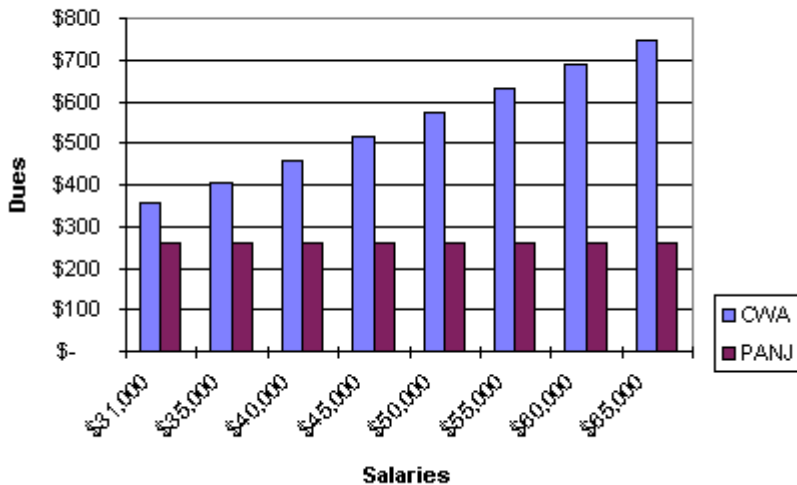
Thanks to the Members

by John Morton, Editor

Thanks to all the Probation Officers, their supervisors, and others performing similar duties. Because of your support you have an independent organization that focuses on your needs and provides services at a very reasonable cost. PANJ is a professional association that goes beyond the role of a union to bring you the best possible improvements.

PANJ started out as a group of county-based locals, some of whom had been represented by AFL-CIO unions. Probation Officers desired a higher level of service than that which was available from the AFL's, who had made many promises but left

Dues Comparison



them all unfulfilled. Probation Officers chose to organize around their statewide association, as the State Police, Teachers, and Firemen had already done. We recognized that no one could represent us better than ourselves, because we all do the same work and understand our priorities like no outsider can. Being independent gives us the freedom to act on those priorities. We don't have to get permission from strangers to help a

fellow member with a grievance, or grovel before a national organization to gain support for legislation.

PANJ leads the way in containing the costs associated with running a union. That's because the people who you elect to make financial decisions pay the same dues you do. PANJ has a flat dues structure as opposed to a percentage system which is favored by other unions. PANJ members maintain their independence because they believe that you should pay the same amount of dues for the same level of service. Some unions like CWA have a different assumption. Theirs could be "With CWA, the more you make, the more you pay."

The chart shows that PANJ dues are a flat \$258.00 per year (any amount paid above that is refunded to your local association). If a member makes \$45,000 per year, they would pay twice as much to CWA and the dues only go up from there.

PANJ members work very hard helping each other to improve and defend our rights and privileges. We make sure that our discipline cases receive fair treatment, and this often mitigates the result. We file hundreds of grievances and we are never shy of litigating to defend our job duties, which are covered by statute. Many members work on our annual conference to provide the best focused training for our profession available in a single location. Each year, more Probation Officers attend. We have arranged with Seton Hall University to provide the Probation and Community Justice Graduate Studies Program around the state, and we are working on financial support through a separate organization, PANJ Education Fund, Inc. (PANJ EF) Our members have advocated for law enforcement legislation which recently passed a vote on the floor of the State Assembly. It's interesting to note that CWA opposes this bill, which should be up for a vote in the State Senate soon. Opposition to this bill can be perceived as advocating against safety measures for Probation Officers.

So Thanks to the Members! Thank you for your ideas, effort, and financial support. You have made PANJ an association that people can be very proud of.

PANJ AWARDS

By Stuart Martinsen, Recording Secretary

Once again, PANJ seeks nominations for the awards that our professional association administers. Probation Officers are among the most dedicated judicial employees. In client services they strive to rehabilitate, counsel, monitor, mediate, and lend support to the courts, in spite of the limited resources and difficulties inherent in the task set out for us. Only PANJ recognizes fellow professionals with the following awards:

Probation Officer of the year (An individual who has made significant contributions in the performance of his or her assignments).

Outstanding Supervisor of the year (One who demonstrates leadership, understanding, compassion, and exemplary character).

John Augustus Award (One who has brought credit and honor to the profession).

Submit nominations in writing to Stuart Martinsen, Awards Committee Chairman, at the PANJ office address by October 31, 2001. The awards will be presented at the Conference luncheon in Atlantic City on November 19, 2001.

Legislative Update

By Stuart Martinsen, Legislative Chairman

PANJ's companion bills are S 950 and A 1448. These bills grant law enforcement powers to Probation Officers and allow them to carry firearms. The bills also allocated resources for the appropriate training.

A1448 Passed a vote of the General Assembly:

Public Affairs Counsel Rob Nixon, Dale Florio, and several PANJ members were in the Assembly Gallery when the bill was called for a vote. There was no debate on the bill, which passed 52 to 18 with 4 abstentions. I believe mostly Democrats voted against it but not all Democrats. The following Assembly people voted no: Bateman, Biondi, Buono, Carabello, Charles, Cohen, Cruz-Perez, Doria, Friscia, Gill, Lance, Roberts, Stanley, Tucker, Watson-Coleman, Payne, Pou, and Gusciora. The abstentions were Garcia, Green, B.Smith, and Weinberg. Please contact your assembly people if you recognize them and thank them or admonish them! The bill now goes to the Senate. We

believe this vote sends a message to the Courts that PANJ has become a strong voice in the legislature.

On July 3, 2001, the Star Ledger reported that the State Pension bill was signed into law by Acting Governor DiFrancesco, late on the previous Friday. This has the effect of increasing our pensions by 9%. PANJ advocated strongly for this bill, and President Christie testified in favor of same. We are proud of our work on this bill and we congratulate the other unions on this success for many public employees.

Rob Nixon of Princeton Public Affairs reported at the last Executive Board Meeting that two other bills of interest to PANJ were signed by the acting governor. They are S 1758 which requires negotiation with an employee majority representative for a change in a State employee compensation plan. Under this bill, the Commissioner of Personnel's role is reduced to administration of the compensation plan, rather than to establish and amend such plan. Also signed according to Rob, was S 1757, which requires a public employer to negotiate with unions regarding title changes.

Hunterdon County Conducts Oath of Office Ceremony

By Christine Reilly, President of Local 110

Dear Mr. Christie: August 1, 2001

I wanted to inform you that for the first time in several years Hunterdon County swore in most of its Probation Officers on July 31, 2001. Many of the officers had worked here for several years without ever having taken the oath. I personally have twelve years experience without having been sworn until yesterday. The only officers remaining to be sworn are the two newest officers who have been employed less than one month. Human Resources advised they must be employed for 90 days before they can be sworn in. Since this was big news in Hunterdon County, I thought I would share it with the union.

Michael F. Bischoff

April 11, 1965 – July 12, 2001

Submitted by Mary Ann Bischoff, (Mike's Mom)

We wish to extend to all of you our heartfelt thanks for all that you did for Michael; the fundraisers, cards, flowers and monetary gifts, but most of all for the prayers said and the love shown during a very difficult time.

Your wonderful team spirit has truly been an inspiration to us all.

We will always remember all that you did and be forever grateful.

Our love to you all,

The Bischoff and Katz families.

Watson & Janowitz Scholarship Awards

Submitted by the Scholarship Committee

PANJ will once again be presenting two scholarships at the annual conference in Atlantic City this November. Each \$1,000 award will be 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 school. Each candidate will be required to complete an application including financial data and a copy of high school transcripts. Consideration will be given to the following characteristics: professionalism, personality, dedication, leadership, participation in school and community affairs and financial need.

Applications are available from the PANJ office. The deadline for the application's return is November 12, 2001.



– **Benefits Section:**

Labor Union Benefit Systems offers universal life products and extended disability insurance through Transamerica and AFLAC of New York, respectively.

Agents will come to the counties to offer these services to PANJ members. Watch for announcements of places, times, and dates. Their Toll-Free number is 877-367-5827.

Fox and Fox, LLP will provide various legal services to PANJ members at a 20% discount off their regular hourly fees.

Liberty Mutual Auto and Homeowner's Insurance is available to PANJ members. Call 800-524-9400 for a competitive quote. Have your existing policies ready in order to provide information for comparison. Our Group Number is 7057.

Magic Kingdom Club: Sign up with PANJ to receive reduced rates at Disney World, including entrance and lodging. Discounts at Disney Stores are also possible. Discounts have recently been increased, but there is now a \$29.95 registration fee. This is a \$10.00 discount off what is offered to the public. See your PANJ representative for forms to fill out and mail in, or contact Anne Dutton at 973-989-6028.

PANJ members receive discounts on men's clothing at stores of **Jos. A. Bank**. Our Group Number is 6328.

Supervisors Ratify Contract

By Samuel Richter, First VP, Supervisory Unit

On August 24, 2001 members of the supervisory unit of PANJ overwhelmingly ratified a new contract by a vote of 482 to 57. The agreement features an across-the-board raise; 4.15% performance increase (plus exceptional pay); and, pending expected approval by the Department of Personnel, an additional \$1,000 in January 2002 and \$500 (added to the base) in January, 2004 for most members at maximum. Further, we expect supervisors who were not given a 5% increase when they were promoted to Senior Probation Officer to receive that 5% payment. (If this applies to you, please contact me).

As with the case-related unit, the supervisors will be negotiating through December with the AOC the Performance Assessment Review and Appeal Performance Review articles of the contract. I'm sure all supervisors join me in extending thanks to attorney Dave Fox, Second Vice-President (Supervisory Unit) Neil Elsasser, and all members of the negotiating team.

On the first full day of the PANJ conference in Atlantic City, attorney John Marinan will be leading a workshop/discussion from 4:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Mr. Marinan handles most of the disciplinary matters, and many of the grievances, for the supervisory unit and his advice and guidance prove invaluable. If you are a member of the supervisory unit, an official or otherwise, please join us when you come down for the conference.

In Memory of Jon Wineland

By George P. Christie

Jon Wineland, Staff Representative of CWA Local 1034 passed away on Wednesday, August 29, 2001. He was a hard working union man who meant a great deal to his colleagues at CWA and to his members. On behalf of PANJ we have expressed our deepest sympathy to Jon's family and especially his many friends at Local 1034.

Donations on behalf of Jon can be made to the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen located at 72 ½ Escher Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08611.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By George P. Christie, President

As the years go by and PANJ continues to be successful, it seems that we have a tendency to forget all the things that have been accomplished by our small independent union. I thought that it is good to review our track record so that you can feel a sense of pride.

First, our dues rate is fixed by the Executive Board at \$258.00 yearly for full members. The Executive Board is a group of local leaders in all twenty-one counties who feel very strongly that we should all pay the same. The big AFL unions laughed at us, believing that a real union needs a 1.15% of your yearly salary to survive and that a percentage dues deduction would always give the union an automatic increase when the members receive their raises. However, PANJ proved them wrong by charging much less and providing a much greater service to it's members. Our finance committee led by Stephanie Hennessey 2nd VP (Mercer), Ann Rizzi Treasurer (Middlesex), and Susan Ormsby-Cuozzo, Financial Secretary (Morris) are relentless in their quest to safeguard your valuable dues.

Second, in terms of services, PANJ has always defended and improved the rights of it's members by enlisting the services of the best labor law firm in the state headed by David I. Fox, Esq. Mr. Fox and his staff of lawyers have come to the aid of PANJ and the members on numerous occasions. He has been successful in hearings at the Public Employment Relations Commission, at the Department of Personnel, in Superior Court, and in Arbitration hearings. Our state legal committee under the guidance of Peter Tortoreto (Chair) has also responded to the needs of all of our members. Peter Tortoreto may be one of the toughest fighters who has ever worked in a union, and he and our other colleagues on the legal committee have become just as tough when it comes to defending your rights. PANJ has represented the members at hundreds of grievances, and numerous disciplinary actions. David I. Fox, Esq. succeeded in protecting the title of Probation Officer so that it would not be obliterated in a broad band called Court Services Officer. Mr. Fox, also defended the PANJ position on protecting the educational requirements for Probation Officer, and did not allow the state to lower the standards as they did with other state professionals.

Third, in the area of financial accountability, PANJ has had the benefit of Harris Olen, CPA for over 10 years. Mr. Olen has provided PANJ with financial advice and reviewed the yearly financial records. His services provided the necessary proof that the PANJ financial process is beyond reproach. Our financial records are reviewed and approved every month by the statewide Executive Board.

Fourth, with the aid of Princeton Public Affairs, the most influential lobbying firm in New Jersey, PANJ has become a major force in New Jersey politics. Our legislative committee under the supervision of Stuart Martinsen (Ocean) has accomplished much. PANJ is unique, in that our interest often times is more narrowly focused on the issues surrounding Probation Officers, case related professionals, and professional supervisors within the judiciary. Our law enforcement legislation, A1448, which would make probation officers law enforcement officers has passed the New Jersey Assembly on June 28, 2001. Senate Bill S949 which made Probation Officers eligible for grants under the "Body Armor Replacement Fund" was signed into law last year. Bill A2330 which is pending before the legislature would make it an aggravated assault to throw bodily fluids at a Probation Officer. We lobbied for and succeeded along with the NJEA and the AFL to increase the benefits under the public employee retirement system (PERS). We lobbied for and put a stop to the transfer of Probation Officers in child support to the Department of Human Services where they would have completely lost their identity. Lobbying does come at a price. Where we are permitted by law to use up to 15% of the union dues for this endeavor, we have decided not to. We would like each and every member in the future to donate a nominal sum of money once a year to our PAC (political action committee) to be used for lobbying for our special needs.

Fifth, as to training, your leaders throughout the 21 counties believed that we must continue our annual training conference which is traditionally held in Atlantic City. We are one of the only unions that I know of that organizes and presents such a conference within our own executive board without outside interference. The training has become so substantive that the conference is supported by the administration and we have contractual agreements to allow our members to attend on judiciary time. Last year over 600 people attended the training.

PANJ continues to be an information center maintaining an office and staff under the supervision of John Morton (Monmouth County). We publish the *Presidential Newsletters*, the *Insight*, and other printed material. We have increased our media coverage in newspapers and on television. We have a large offering on the worldwide web, to share information with anyone interested in our organization.

PANJ, as a labor organization, was created and designed to be the most democratic body in the union arena. PANJ was created and designed to be completely under the control of probation officers and professional supervisors so that people should not run the union who have no understanding of what we do. We obtain better contracts than our counterparts, and we are more aggressive in our representation and protection of members. We are completely run by committees with the Executive Board as the governing body.

I hope that you can see PANJ is the sum total of all of us and I carry out your orders. PANJ is truly your union and you have total accessibility to me or to the Executive Board in any number of ways including through your local president, your regional representative, or your regional vice president. I ask you all to step up and volunteer anywhere we need you to help this union get stronger.

PANJ FOREVER

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