

INSIGHT

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“Dottie’s Corner”

By, Dorothy Robinson
 PANJEF Conference Committee
 Health and Safety Officer
 President Local 102

Hi everyone, this article will act as a clearing house for a number of things drifting around in my cranium. I believe with all the problems we face as Brothers and Sisters in the Union sometimes we need to keep some levity. As most of you know I represent the Scholarships and Awards at the conference, well maybe you didn't know but you do now.

Let me just say it is like pulling teeth to get you guys to nominate fellow Officers or Supervisors for the P.O. and Supervisor of the year. You can't tell me that no one out there qualifies, yet every year I am begging for nominations. Now the scholarships are another matter, they start slow and John Koerber and I shake our heads and wonder if any will come in and then boom we are hit, I guess where money is concerned my fellow Officers are more inclined to write lol.

Also as you are all aware, somewhat painfully so, we are in the midst of negotiations for our contract. This has been a very arduous, slow, torturous mission. This is the third contract I have been on and I can say never have I seen my fellow Officers of PANJ work so hard in the face of such unrelenting antagonism. Of course it is veiled in polite behavior to a great extent but make no mistake it has been a battle and it is not over yet. The negotiation team led this time around by our 1st Vice President Dwight Covaleskie has conducted itself with grace and honor. I wish the same could be said for the opposition and believe me there is no other way to view them but as the opposition.

I just want all my Brothers and Sisters to know that we are working very hard to get the fairest contract we possibly can for all of us. I drive home sometimes disheartened, and with a pounding headache, but I know it is worth the effort because we are a strong Union and we represent so many great people doing such good and needed work. I guess I want you all to know how much I appreciate representing all of you.

Now I hope I can continue to be happy representing you when we all meet at the PANJEF Conference in November in Atlantic City. If you haven't sent in your registration, do it now, I want to see old and new faces. I need new people to harass at the doors of the events when I am checking I.D.'s and tickets. I am getting older I only have a few more years to torture you guys at this event, don't take away my joy. Wait a minute, on second thought, please do not look at this as an invitation to anarchy, where you all collectively forget your identification and tickets in your rooms. I never mean to invite that sort of behavior, but I do hope you will all look at the theme “Sock Hop to Hip Hop “ and dress in an appropriate way for the Monday night festivities. Think about the possibilities, musical genres from the Fifties right on up through Saturday Night Fever and Grunge. The outfit ideas are boundless and the fun is always endless.

We all need a little fun, but the Conference also provides that exceptional opportunity for training that we all need and here it is brought to us under one roof and thanks to the hard work of Deneen Hohman made available in as many variants as possible. Remember this year as some of you have already noticed the training will be put right onto Pathlore. You have only to attend the classes and sign in VERY legibly (I think that is spelled right) oh well. I am sure some of you have received the notifications on Lotus that your classes from last year's conference were entered. They are working on this as we speak.

So where was I, I touched on Awards, Scholarships, Negotiations, and behavior in general, I think I am done. I really am appreciative of the friends I have made in PANJ and the opportunities that my association has provided me and I hope to continue for at least a little longer, and then you newer, younger snappier Officers have to move in. Get involved , start at your Local level, make your mark, work for the progress we need and then you too could be standing at the doors of our Conference , manning the Registration desk and most importantly striving to make a difference for your selves and your fellow brethren. We must always remember, UNITED we can weather anything and come out stronger but we must stay united. So with this rambling ode I conclude and I will write again after the Conference to let you know how it went (in my opinion)

PASSAIC LOCAL 116



Pictured from left to right are: Passaic local President Dustin M. Antonio, PANJ Northern Regional Vice President Daniel M. Bergin, retired Passaic Vicinage Chief John V. Krieger, NJ Assemblyman Richard A. Merkt, Passaic local Vice President Albert McDowell IV and PANJ President George P. Christie.

On October 10th the Passaic County Probation Officers' Association held a beefsteak dinner to honor former Passaic local President Daniel M. Bergin, who was elected as PANJ Northern Regional Vice President in November 2007. The Passaic local also presented former Passaic Vicinage Chief John V. Krieger with a life-time Honorary Membership to the local. Before joining management as chief, Krieger was a former president of the Passaic local when he was a probation officer. New Jersey Assemblyman Richard A. Merkt of Morris County was the keynote speaker at the event, which was held at the Albion VFW Post #7165 in Clifton, NJ.

ON THE LEGISLATIVE PATH

By: Elizabeth A. Meyers, Government Affairs Agent for PANJ

On September 15, 2008, the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee held a hearing on the main focus of our legislative initiatives – the passage of Assembly Concurrent Resolution 147 (ACR 147). To recap the legislation: this bill would create a ballot questions asking the public to give the Legislature the authority to transfer the Division of Probation to the State Parole Board. Once the ballot question is approved by the public, the Legislature would need to enact a separate piece of legislation that would effectuate the department transfer.

This committee hearing was the first step along the legislative path that the bill must take to get the question put before the public. Because this measure is a constitutional amendment resolution, we must receive support from two-thirds of the Legislature. However, the Governor's signature on the bill is not required. This hearing,

and the ones likely to follow, is critical to PANJ in seeking to discuss these issues before members of the Legislature.

The committee chaired by Assemblyman Gordon Johnson (D-Bergen), who also is the sponsor of the legislation, heard extensive testimony from PANJ President George Christie, Brad Fairchild, Dwight Covaleski and Dan Bergin. PANJ's goal was to educate the committee on the issues currently affecting probation officers such as a lack of training, safety conditions, caseload volumes, and a general disconnect with the Judiciary. Our testimony was well received and captured the attention of the committee members. Similarly, support voiced by the State Troopers Fraternal Association (STFA), the Policeman's Benevolent Association (PBA), and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) bolstered our position.

Representatives from the Judiciary and the Department of Personnel also were in attendance to convince the committee that "all's well" in the Judiciary's Division of Probation. Members of the committee questioned the Judiciary about the training schedule for probation officers as well as the state of morale within the division. PANJ believes that many of the assertions are not an accurate depiction of the state of our state's probation system. The Judiciary stated that there were far fewer numbers of probation officers and that officers are not supervising dangerous offenders.

In speaking with the Department of Personnel representatives after the hearing, it appears that the Department's concerns are centered on the potential cost of equalizing salaries between probation and parole officers should the transfer occur. Further, there are fears that probation officers would either seek to be – or required to be – placed in the PERS system once in the State Parole Board. Determining these costs are going to be difficult for PANJ. The Legislature will likely need to work with the Department to determine a cost. We continue to remind legislators that this measure simply authorizes the transfer; therefore such a cost would not be incurred until the subsequent transfer bill itself is passed.

While this hearing was a positive first step wherein PANJ was able to open the public discussion of the transfer effort. We are working to have a similar legislative hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee where the bill is currently referenced. If we are able to show each house of the Legislature – the Senate and Assembly – that their counterpart is interested in this legislation, then we will be able to move farther along the legislative path. It is beneficial that Senator Girgenti (D-Passaic) and Senate Majority Leader Sweeney (D-Gloucester) are the sponsors of this legislation in the Senate and have committed to working toward a hearing.

What can you do to help as a member of PANJ? Since passage of this legislation hinges upon a two-thirds majority vote, talk to your legislators and ask them to support these bills. Talk to your representatives about how this bill will affect you in your daily work and is critical in keeping

probation officers safe. The more "buzz" we can generate among members of the Legislature the greater are our chances to obtain success in the State House. To learn more about this hearing video shot by Stuart Martinsen of the hearing can be found on the PANJ website at www.panj.org/videos.

A View of Safety
"Expectation and Perception"
 By Donald E. DeHart, CSSII
 PANJ Safety Representative

Like a ray of sunshine through a prism this shall be one view of safety. Work expectations in regards to field/home inspections has changed throughout the years. Probation Officers (we presently still have the title of officers) through the Peace Officer legislation have many powers, yet through administrative directive(s) our abilities as officers have been restricted and redirected. Probation Officers want to do their jobs and our management's' desire to have their officers complete the task placed before them is genuine. Even though the probationer in the community should be assisted by their Probation Officer in the terms of hands on supervision, rehabilitative assistance, etc, the community at large may not be so obliging.

The community needs to see our presence, yet do the people placed on probation welcome us willingly into their residences and lives? The probationers have everything available at reach whether on the street or in their houses. The Probation Officer brings enthusiasm, training, experience and to a degree some specialized training. Presently, if we enter a residence and see, smell, hear or feel that there is something amiss we are to depart the premises. Even though this may be the proper action, when the police arrive, if summoned, all evidence formerly present is no where to be found. Street respect is earned and not given lightly. What is the word on the street in regards to probation? Why is it that the majority of law enforcement agencies which conduct field home visits/inspections mandate extensive safety training. I almost forgot.

We do not possess the law enforcement status as per directive which would allow us the access to information badly needed for street and personal safety. A person can infer that the streets are not bad, yet the argument itself can be arrested by local newspaper articles alone wherein the person receiving their 15 minutes of fame are on probation supervision while incurring another offense. There needs to be an acknowledgement of thanks to all Probation Officers doing office supervision and field/home inspections. We will not even discuss infectious diseases in this article.

There can be a balance between expectations and perceptions on the part of all parties involved, yet it has taken more than a decade and a half to obtain relevant Probation Association of New Jersey both state and local

need a written foundation to work from. That foundation can be based on incident reports.

Incident reports can and will be reviewed differently. Some incidents possess little credibility. Other more credible reports are never submitted, yet discussed throughout New Jersey. Fellow officers, if you cannot submit an incident report then why say spit about what happened. It always has been and always shall be your decision.

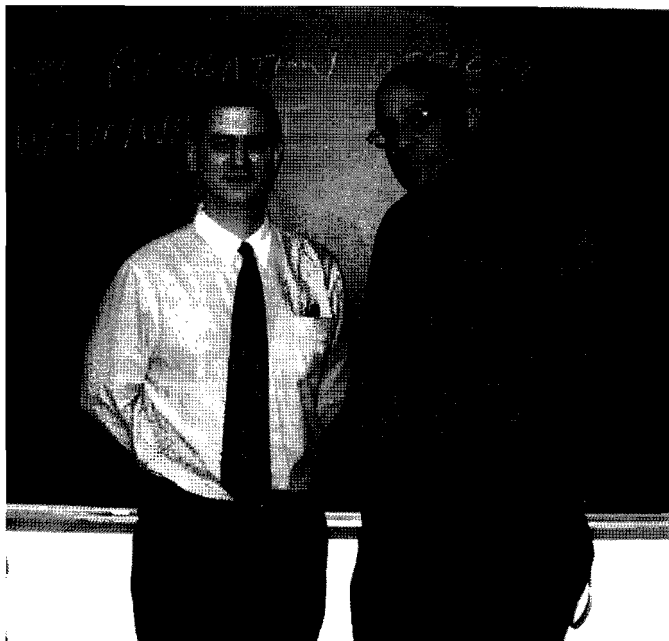
M.P.O. STEPHEN WAINWRIGHT
GIVES CLASS DISCUSSION ON
CRIMINAL GANGS IN N.J.
AT OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE
 By Stuart Martinsen, Recording Secretary

On Oct. 10, 2008 at Ocean County College in Toms River N.J., MPO Stephen Wainwright spoke to a college class I am teaching at O.C.C. in Sociology. His discussion was on gang activity in N.J. and the types of crime gang members commit, how they organize, and how to identify their sub-culture and gang symbols including tattoos and clothing.

Since I started teaching, I have found that Probation Officers as guest speakers in class make excellent lecturers on many topics and I encourage my fellow adjuncts at local colleges and university's to look to our colleagues to speak to our classes when the occasion arises.

It seems that there is a tendency when those of us obtain other part-time or full-time occupations, such as becoming parole officers, college instructors, police officers, and other titles to downplay or even demean our previous or present probation roles. Also, it would appear that there is almost an animosity in this area as if we are ashamed to admit to or take pride in being or having been probation officers and judicial employees. In reality, it is because of our experience as probation officers, supervisors and related titles that we are even able to advance on to these other opportunities which are offered us due to the accomplishments we merited in our probation function roles.

On a personal note, I would like to encourage PANJ members if interested in obtaining a graduate degree, to attend Seton Hall's M.A. Program which was created primarily by PANJ President George Christie along with the support of the AOC under former Acting Probation Chief Richard Talty. S.H.U. is the only University we are aware of that has actually named a program in recognition of our title. Also, S.H.U. is an active supporter of PANJ and its members and offers a significant discount to our attendance in recognition of our service to the community. Please refer to this site for more information- **New Jersey State Police Graduate Studies /Probation Community Justice Graduate Studies Program (see PANJ.ORG under links).**



Pictured from left to right are: PANJ Recording Secretary Stuart Martinsen, Steve Wainwright, PANJ Regional

**PANJ REPRESENTATIVES ATTEND
THE 33 RD AMERICAN PROBATION
AND PAROLE CONFERENCE
AUGUST 3 - 6, 2008
By Stuart Martinsen,
PANJ Legislative Chairman**

APPA every year holds two training conferences throughout the US for training and organizational purposes. These conferences offer excellent training opportunities for Probation, Parole line staff and administrative- managerial employees as well (www.appa-net.org).

This organization has about 1200 members nationally and if you go to the PANJ.ORG (www.panj.org) website, you will find under the scroller section a link to join APPA which PANJ strongly encourages as it has become a voice for our vocation and careers on both the state and national level.

Each year, the PANJ executive board requests of primarily State and Local PANJ officials to indicate their interests in attending these APPA conferences. The purpose of our attendance as representatives of PANJ is to foster continued relations with APPA, obtain sponsors for our annual PANJ conference, attend and participate in various APPA committee meetings and obtain information to benefit PANJ members.

Several PANJ members last attended the recent APPA conference held in Las Vegas, Nevada from Aug. 3-6, 2008. Specifically, PANJ President George Christie attended the APPA Health and Safety meeting in which he discussed health and safety concerns of PANJ members in NJ.

APPA Chair of the Health and Safety Committee, Robert Thornton, advised that APPA has been working to establish a national process and central repository for collecting hazardous duty information regarding incidents that occur against probation, parole and community corrections personnel. APPA in conjunction with Chief William Sabol of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and FBI Unit Chief Timothy S. Reid of the National Data Exchange (N-Dex) have begun the process of creating this collection process.

PANJ President George Christie and other PANJ executive board officials have also been involved in assisting APPA in this important safety collection goal. PANJ has been giving them information regarding the safety incident statistics we collect amongst our members which we receive from our PANJ website and also through written reports submitted by you, our members to the PANJ office.

The APPA Health and Safety Committee along with PANJ will continue to work towards establishing this national database of safety statistics. PANJ also continues to encourage its members to submit a report of any health and safety incident to both PANJ and also to the Judiciary on their incident report forms which are obtainable on the judiciary infonet. As previously stated, the PANJ incident forms are on the Panj.Org website under the incident forms menu link on the left hand side. PANJ will continue to update our members as this process develops.



Pictured from left to right are: Stuart Martinsen, FBI Chief Timothy Reid and PANJ President George P. Christie.

**"The Most Dangerous Woman
in America in 1902"
Ellen Cribbin - Business Manager**

This phrase was coined by West Virginia District Attorney Reese Blizzard in 1902 in reference to Mother Jones while she was on trial for ignoring an injunction banning meetings by striking miner workers. We often reference great union phrases such as "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living," from this prominent labor and community organizer, but what do we really know about this trailblazer? Born Mary Harris in Ireland in either 1837 or 1830 (records indicate that she claimed her birthday was in 1830 to appeal to a grandmotherly image although some records indicate that her birthday was really 1837).

Mother Jones emigrated to the United States during the late 1840's, and married a member of the iron workers union. Unfortunately tragedy struck her family, and she lost her husband and their 4 children to yellow fever. As an active union organizer and a public outcrier for inhumane treatment she gained a fierce reputation for organizing the wives and children of striking workers.

Mother Jones organized children during that time who worked in mills and mines to march from Kensington Pennsylvania to Oyster Bay New York to the home of then President Teddy Roosevelt. That march was named the "Children's Crusade", and the kids held signs that demanded play time and education. The "Children's Crusade" brought the issue of child labor to light. At one point she met with John D. Rockefeller Jr., who owned Standard Oil.

The meeting prompted him to introduce long sought reforms for miners. Several times during her lifetime she was arrested and held in prisons or placed on house arrest while fearlessly fighting for union workers rights. With each arrest shedding more light onto the horrible conditions that not only grown men faced at work but children too. Mother Jones passed away in 1930, and had fought for union rights up until her death. She is buried in the Union Miners Cemetery in Mount Olive Illinois alongside miners.

As brothers and sisters within PANJ this prominent union leader and organizer should give us all the inspiration and determination to speak out for what is right and beneficial for not only ourselves, but our family within our union. As Mother Jones once said, "My friends, it is solidarity of labor we want. We do not want to find fault with each other, but to solidify our forces and say to each other: We must be together, our masters are joined together and we must do the same thing."

**Supervisor Update
By Brad Fairchild - First Vice President/
Supervisory Unit**

Early this year the Supervisor negotiating team began discussing and drafting contract articles. Throughout the spring and summer months the group presented numerous proposals to Judiciary management that covered a wide array of concerns that supervisors have been expressing for several years.

The number one concern of supervisors in the Judiciary has been the infamous 9.8 provision which gives management the "non reviewable" right to remove supervisors. This rule allows management to remove individuals for no reason and as a result promotes a environment of intimidation and coercion. PANJ has advised management on numerous occasions that the non reviewable authority to remove supervisors is a serious deterrent to recruiting talented Master Probation Officers and Senior Probation Officers.

Supervisors on the committee are also presenting various salary proposals and articles that address training concerns, hours of work, union rights, and provisions that impact supervisors who are court reporters and court interpreters.

Members of the Supervisors negotiating committee have logged many late night hours and driven many miles to fight for the best contract possible. The recent economic crisis has made this task extremely difficult and at times, extremely discouraging. The committee is determined, however, to fight for a contract that protects members from unfair and unrealistic expectations. The financial security and future of our families are at stake and this fact has always remained the focal point of our deliberations.

**PANJ would like thank the following
committee members:**

*Roberta SandroScull - Atlantic,
Gavin Cummings - Monmouth,
John Korber - Sussex,
Carmelo Velazquez - Essex,
Roy Friedman - Bergen,
Robert Hutchinson - Burlington,
Linda Clark - AOC,
Sue Ormsby-Cuozzo - Morris,
Sharon Alphonse - Appellate,
Janet Sbarro - Appellate.*