

INSIGHT



PUBLISHED BY THE PROBATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY
OFFICE ADDRESS: UNITED PROFESSIONAL CENTER, BLDG. 2, 617 UNION AVE • BRIELLE, NJ 08730

ISSN 1065-7800

DECEMBER 2013

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“A VICTORY FOR ALL!” MONMOUTH PILOT PROGRAM

By Dwight Covaleskie, President Elect

On December 9, 2010, a Grievance was filed by then Monmouth Local President, Ellen Cribbin. The statement of the Grievance was that, “A Pilot Program was implemented on 11-8-10, making Probation Officers responsible for Team Leader functions in CCM.”

The Grievance was initially denied by the Vicinage as non-grievable. An Additional grievance was filed on July 20, 2011 when additional PO titles were assigned to Courtroom duties that were typically performed by PANJ Supervisors. PANJ strongly viewed these actions, as a way to circumvent a prior Arbitration Award.

Eventually, this matter was assigned to a Judiciary Hearing Officer. Without holding a hearing in the matter, the Hearing Officer granted the Vicinage’s claims dismissing all alleged violations except for Article 7.6 E. The fact that a hearing was not held is the subject of a separate Arbitration, as our contract clearly calls for a hearing in these matters.

In addition, PANJ members were told to complete a Job Information Questionnaire or face disciplinary action. The Arbitrator found in this instant matter, “the Vicinages emphasis on the JIQ process in denying the grievance is not legitimate given the many flaws in the process.” The Arbitrator further states that, there is nothing in Article 26 that gives the Vicinage the Authority to direct employees to submit to a Classification Review and certainly not under the threat of Discipline.”

More importantly to both units, the Arbitrator ruled that the contract was violated by having PCR staff perform the duties of a Team Leader.

The grievance was sustained. It was found that the Vicinage violated Article 7.6 (E) of the PCR contract.

This is a substantial award for members of the unit that performed these duties. The Arbitrator directs the Vicinage to compensate all SPO’s who were assigned to the since November 8, 2010 as well as all SPO’s that are currently assigned to the position.

Either party has the right to appeal the arbitration decision, which will have to play out in the timeframe allotted for an appeal of an Arbitration Award.

The testimony in this matter confirmed that SPO’s were performing functions that had been performed by team Leaders as a supervisory function.

Both units face many challenges moving forward in the current climate, whereby both units face reductions in their membership through decisions that are made under ‘Management Prerogatives’.

However, the backbone of both units in PANJ is our contract and we were able to successfully defend the assault on the basic principles of our contract. This was accomplished by the hard work of those members in the Monmouth Local.

Thank you to those individuals who had the courage to stand up for the defense of our contract.

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Greg Wolf, Salem
Susan Lively, Cumberland

A Message From The Editor

Brothers and Sisters,

The snow is falling as I write this, and the Holidays are upon us again. This will be my last edition of the Insight as your Business Manager. I know that under our new leadership the next Business Manager will be a great addition to our team. It has been such a humbling experience for me to work for so many wonderful members of our union and to hear the great things our members do in each of their Local's. I have learned so much from each of you, and can't wait to continue to work for you in the legal side of PANJ. In this issue you'll read about our current Legislative events, holiday happenings, and our very successful EF conference along with great pictures from our Southern Regional Representative Sue Lively. The next edition of the Insight will be out in March, please feel free to submit articles about current union issues to the PANJ office at PANJ1@optimum.net.



I hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season with your loved ones.

In Solidarity,

Ellen Cribbin

Editor

BOSS'S DAY in Cumberland County

By Susan Lively, SPO

A day has been set aside to honor our Supervisors and to recognize all of the hard work they have put in to keep our Judiciary running efficiently. It is not an easy task to keep up with the stats, the case reviews, the court work, the VOP's/summaries and the team meetings. They take those unwanted phone calls and still manage to keep their team motivated day after day. We the Officers in the Adult Unit honored our Supervisors with a breakfast for Boss's Day this year and I would like to take out a moment to tell you about our Supervisors.

Susan Cobb, a well-rounded, outgoing, energetic young woman who graduated from Bridgeton High School in 1985. Following her graduation, she attended Rowen University and obtained her BS degree in Criminal Justice in 1989. Susan began her career at the Cumberland County Court House in December, 1991 as an investigator in Child Support. January 1993, she came to the Adult Supervision Unit as a Probation Officer and was promoted to a Senior Officer with a regular caseload. During this time, she served as Secretary to PANJ Local #100. In 2006 she received her Master PO Title and supervised the mental health caseload, CD's and transfers in and out. In November, 2007 Susan became Supervisor in the Adult Supervision Unit of Cumberland County who now is team leader of seven Officers. Her outside enjoyment includes traveling, shopping, riding on the Harley and spending time with her family and friends.

When asked how she feels about being a Supervisor of a team of seven she replied: "it's an easy job because of the wonderful people that work with me. I grew up with the Officers that I supervise because my whole career was in this unit, and they have watched me mature. We are more like a family than co-workers because Cumberland County's Adult Supervision Unit could actually run without a Supervisor, that's how great they are." Susan believes in team building and team progression which equals "team power." On Boss's Day, her team surprised her by wearing tee-shirts of her favorite colors that stated "TEAM COBB" and due to the fact that she can only eat certain foods, they made her a special breakfast. Susan's reaction to this was... "I was floored, speechless, I never expected this. I could not ask for a more considerate group of people to work with!"



(L-R) Mark Lau, Michael Markert, Susan Cobb, Susan Lively, Glenn Corbett, Rochelle Bernardini, Lisa Biddle, Vicky Downs



(L-R) Tami Mowers, Sharon Maxwell, Richele Kristovich, Tommy Rodriguez, Suzanne Burdsall, Lizbeth Baez, LaTonya Dunham

Suzanne Burdsall is a hardworking, dedicated, family oriented individual with twenty-six years of a career in Cumberland County. She started working here in Community Service on December 1987, and then became clerical in Criminal Case Management. Following, she became an investigator in Child Support while going to Cumberland County College and on to Richard Stockton State College which she graduated with a BA degree in Criminal Justice. Suzanne became a Probation Officer in the Adult Supervision Unit in 1991 then transferred to the CSAC Unit where she progressed to Senior PO, Master PO and Supervisor. She was a Supervisor in the Juvenile Supervision Unit for seven years then transferred to the Adult Supervision Unit where she presently supervises a team of seven PO's and three clerical.

Suzanne is a Supervisor who is always thinking of ways to get things done more effectively and efficiently. She is someone who is very helpful and has an open door policy to all. When asked, what the most important thing to you is, she replies "My kids are the most important to me, they're my world!" Suzanne also enjoyed a breakfast from the Officers on Boss's Day. When you see Suzanne, you always see a smile.

Probation's Dangerous Neglect - What's Changed?

By George Christie

I was sitting at my desk recently contemplating the future of probation in New Jersey and the struggles PANJ has had in an attempt to make our legislators, the Governor, and the Judiciary understand its problems. Just then, I noticed an investigatory article written by the Star Ledger in December of 2000. That was thirteen years ago and then our legislators and Chief Justice said that they were working on the problem. The article starts by showing saddened New Jersey State Troopers attending the funeral of fellow trooper Scott Gonzalez who was murdered by probationer Samuel Shipps in Warren County.

Shipps was being supervised by a fairly new probation officer who received very little training and was responsible for a very high and often dangerous caseload. Shipps was not so unusual a case where the judge knew he was violent and drank and used drugs. He also suffered from mental health issues. His own father said he was afraid of his son especially when he drank. Knowing all these facts the judge sentenced him to probation with a condition that he take his medications, attend counseling, stay away from drugs and alcohol and that probation should keep a close watch on him. The end result was that Shipps did none of those things and the probation officer was overwhelmed with over one hundred other convicted felons. Shipps then led the trooper down a deserted road crashed his truck into the troopers car and assassinated Trooper Gonzalez with a shotgun.

I thought about it for a while and asked myself, what has changed in thirteen years? Are probation officers supervising lower more manageable caseloads? Are probation officers given tools and training enabling them to perform their duties properly? Are probation officers and more importantly are the citizens of New Jersey safer? The answer is that very little has changed in thirteen years and neither probation officers, police officers or the public are safer today.

In January 2002 the New Jersey Senate and the Governor signed into law, PL 2001, Chapter 362, the Probation Officer Community Safety Act which would have trained and armed 200 probation officers. These highly trained officers would have provided backup to other probation officers in the dangerous areas and would have been able to find and arrest absconders from probation. However, the New Jersey Judiciary said the legislators and the Governor cannot tell them what to do with probation officers who are assigned to the judiciary. The judiciary filed a law suit in their own court and over turned the law as a separation of powers issue. The public safety did not seem to be an important concern for the judiciary in this case.

So the change after thirteen years is that there are over 19,000 absconders on the books and approximately 9,500 probationers are arrested yearly for new offenses at a great cost to the public. And yes there have been many more police officer funerals in New Jersey. Police Officers killed at the hands of probationers.

I salute all of our probation officers who still struggle with high caseloads dealing with dangerous violent offenders who have substance abuse issues and who suffer with mental health. I say to these dedicated officers that maybe this time the legislators will get it right and pass laws that empower probation officers and train them so that the citizens of New Jersey will be safer as well as our police officers and probation officers.

Gloucester County Local 108 Holiday Festivities

By Titessa D. Smith, Sr. Probation Officer, PANJ Local 108 Vice President

Gloucester County Local 108 will be hosting its 3rd Annual Holiday Luncheon for all Probation Officers and TASC Evaluators in the county. The luncheon will be held at the Justice Complex in the old jury assembly room on 12/11/13 during the lunch hours of 12pm-2pm. This is our time to meet new officers, network, enjoy each other's company, and spread a little holiday cheer. There will be lots food, music, games, and fun! The local executive board will be providing all local PANJ members with a holiday gift that will be able to be used on the job. This is a great time to come together and fellowship with our fellow members. If you are in the area, please feel free to stop by!

Happy Holidays from Gloucester County Local 108!!!!

PANJ Awards Luncheon 2013

By Stuart Martinsen, PANJ Awards Chair

The Probation Association of NJ held our annual Education Foundation Awards Luncheon on Monday, November 25th, 2013 at Bally's hotel in Atlantic City, NJ. The PANJ Legislator of the Year award was given to Assemblyman Job Bramnick from Morris, Union and Somerset Counties. He was acknowledged by PANJ for his strong support for the corrections community and as an influential advocate in the legislature for PANJ members.

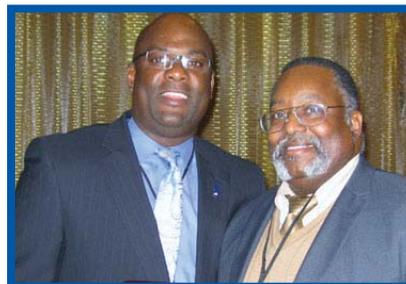
PANJ also recognized the NJ State Police Survivors of the Triangle, a NJ Chapter of the Concerns of Police Survivor's (COPS) which provides resources to assist in the rebuilding of the lives of surviving families of the law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty. COPS also provide training to public safety agencies on survivor victimization issues and educate the public on the need to support law enforcement. The representatives from the Survivors received the PANJ award were Peggy Mallen, whose husband Trooper Albert Mallen, age 36, was gunned down in 1985 during a drug raid in Westville, Gloucester County. Also, Mazie Staas, whose husband Trooper Staas, age 34, died as a result of an automobile accident while in the line of duty in 1961. They had 4 children. Michelle Carroll whose husband Trooper William Carroll was killed in the line of duty, was also in attendance. Trooper Carroll, age 29, was killed by a tractor trailer while on duty on the NJ turnpike in 1984.

The PANJ Probation Officer of the Year award recipient was Middlesex Vicinage MPO, Stephen Wainwright. MPO Wainwright was given the award in recognition of his years of service in the Juvenile Supervision Unit. He is a gang specialist in his field and serves on the state AOC Probation staff safety committee.

The Supervisor of the Year award was given to Monmouth Vicinage Court Services Supervisor 2, Stacey Coder. Supervisor Coder was recognized by PANJ based on her team of officer for her leadership, insight and expertise in the Monmouth Court system.

The prestigious PANJ John Augustus award was presented to Passaic Vicinage Court Services Supervisor 2, Donald DeHart. Supervisor and PANJ Northern Region Supervisor's VP DeHart was recognized by PANJ for this high honor for his active leadership in uniting Line and Supervisor units to improve safety and for his role on the state AOC Probation staff safety committee. This award is named after the father of Probation, John Augustus and is the highest recognition we give.

PANJ congratulates all of the above award recipients. We also recognized the following PANJ members, and they all received a Presidential Award. Our fellow honorees are; Tracy Adamkiewicz, CSS2, Middlesex; Daniel Bergin, SPO, Passaic; Terence Foley, CSS2, Ocean; Helibert Hernandez, SPO, Union; George Podolak, SPO, Hudson; Lynne Taylor, SPO, Somerset; Ronald Warren, CSS1, Essex; and Angela Williams, CSS2, Passaic.



Partnerships

By George Christie

I am sure that you all have heard of the phrase “No man is an island”, a poem by John Donne.

It tells a story about people who are all part of the universe and are connected to each other, whether by towns, countries, continents, or any other common entity.

In PANJ we are all of those things and presently under the leadership of Dwight Covaleskie (PANJ President), Ellen Cribbin (PANJ 1st VP Line Staff), and Gavin Cummings (1st VP Supervisory Staff) we have expanded the PANJ network to include other fellow unions and associations. Our leaders know that PANJ cannot fight all of its battles alone. So they maintain a close relationship with groups who have similar interests like the New Jersey State FMBA(Fire Fighters), The New Jersey State Police Associations, and The New Jersey State PBA. Together they all join to work with our elected officials with the hope of obtaining beneficial legislation for all of the PANJ members.

Our President and his entire team of PANJ officials have many years of leadership experience and will take PANJ successfully into the future. They need to be supported and assisted with their difficult tasks ahead. We are all in this association together.

Legislative Update

By Jeanette Hoffman, Vice President, Capital Impact Group

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE PASSES BILL TO GIVE VOTERS A VOICE ON NJ'S COMMUNITY SUPERVISION SYSTEM

Acknowledging the need for greater public dialogue regarding the state's fragmented community supervision system, the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee this month approved legislation that asks voters, via a ballot question, to authorize the state Legislature to transfer probation services from the Judiciary to the State Parole Board.

The measure, Assembly Concurrent Resolution 116 (ACR-116), sponsored by Assemblyman Gordon Johnson (D-37), Assemblywoman Allison McHose (R-24), Assemblyman Craig Coughlin (D-19), and Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly (D-35), would authorize a ballot question asking voters to allow for the Legislature to consider the transfer of probation functions to the State Parole Board.

Because probation functions are currently under the supervision of the Judiciary, and the State Parole Board is located within the Executive Branch, voter approval would be required in order for the Legislature to consider changes to the system.

New Jersey's probation system is currently the 10th largest in the nation with approximately 120,000 adult and 15,000 juvenile offenders. There are currently 33 states wherein adult probation and parole services are located within the same executive or legislative branch department.

"Probation officers want and need more training, yet because we are housed within the Judiciary, the New Jersey State Legislature is not legally allowed to change the standards for protection of probation officers and cannot even debate whether or not a change should be even considered," said PANJ Vice President Dwight Covaleskie.

"With the passage of ACR 116, it is our hope that the citizens of New Jersey will at least have a voice in the discussion about how to better ensure their safety," concluded Covaleskie.

The New Jersey Policeman's Benevolent Association, the New Jersey State Troopers Fraternal Association, and the New Jersey FMBA have also expressed their strong support for this legislation.

The bill now heads to the full Assembly and the Senate Judiciary Committee for consideration.

Legislative Update...cont'd

ELECTION UPDATE

Governor Christie Re-elected by Overwhelming Margins, Democrats Retain Control of the Legislature

Republican Governor Chris Christie handily defeated Democrat challenger Senator Barbara Buono by a margin of 22 points, at 60 to 38 percent. Winning the majority of women and Hispanic voters and receiving strong support from African Americans and young voters, Christie's ground-breaking victory makes him a leading contender for President in 2016.

Despite losing at the top of the ticket, Democrats retained their comfortable control of the state Legislature, losing only one seat in the state Assembly in District 1 where Republican Cumberland County Freeholder Sam Fiocchi was elected to replace Assemblyman Nelson Albano.

In the Senate, both parties successfully held their seats, which means the Democrats will keep their 24-16 margin in the new legislative session.

With several incumbents choosing not to seek re-election, there will be a number of new faces in the 2014 legislative session:

LD 1 Assembly: Sam Fiocchi (D)
LD 2 Assembly: Vince Mazzeo (D)
LD 8 Assembly: Maria Rodriguez-Gregg (R)
LD 18 Assembly: Nancy Pinkin (D)
LD 29 Assembly: Eliana Pintor Marin (D)
LD 33 Assembly: Raj Mukherji and Carmelo Garcia (D)
LD 38 Assembly: Joe Lagana (D)
LD 39: Robert Auth (R)

LEGISLATORS RETURN TO TRENTON FOR "LAME DUCK" SESSION

New Jersey legislators have returned to Trenton to consider pending legislation during the "lame duck" session and to announce new leadership changes for next year. Democrats in the Assembly elected Assemblyman Vincent Prieto as the Speaker for the 2014th session, while Senate President Steve Sweeney will continue his leadership in the Senate Democrat caucus. On the Republican side of the aisle, Senator Tom Kean, Jr. was re-elected as Republican Leader by his peers in the Senate, despite a challenge mounted by Senator Kevin O'Toole. Assembly Republican Leader Jon Bramnick will continue to lead the Assembly Republican caucus.

As the year comes to a close, the Legislature is expected to tackle several significant issues including the DREAM Act, which provides in-state tuition benefits for undocumented New Jersey students, and a mandate requiring all employers offer workers paid sick leave benefits.





WE WISH YOU A SAFE AND
HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!



In Solidarity,



Dwight Covalleskie, President Elect
Ellen Cribbin, 1st VP Elect, Line Staff
Gavin Cummings, 1st VP Supervisors

