

INSIGHT



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Chrissy Buteas, Capital Impact Group

As the scorching heat of summer subsides in Trenton, our political climate is on the rise. Governor Christie's Administration, along with Senator Lesniak and Assemblywoman Watson-Coleman and others, heralded in a new era for drug rehabilitation in the state by passing the drug court bill and signing it into law on July 19th. The bill discusses the benefits of recovery and aid through its use of phase-in programs, which help past and present offenders. Now instead of ignoring the dependency problems of the convicted, they will be able to rehabilitate and earn a chance to contribute back to their communities. This newly passed law recognizes that substance abuse is often what perpetuates recurring offenses and remedies this issue by offering treatment. We will work closely with PANJ to ensure that they have a seat at the table as the implementation of this law goes into effect.

Earlier this summer, the Governor's office recognized the importance of probation by signing a proclamation declaring July 15th through the 21st as Probation and Parole Officer Week. This essential proclamation dedicated a week to recognizing the importance and necessity of the parole and probation professionals that protect our communities and homes by aiding offenders in making decisions that will benefit themselves as well as benefit society as a whole.

With the summer behind us, the New Jersey Legislature will be back in full swing starting mid-September through December. Aside from discussing the implementation of President Obama's Affordable Care Act, another topic of discussion that may be brought back up for debate is sick leave payout for public employees. With the Christie Administration and the Democratic Legislature conflicted on what the legislation should look like, there is no doubt public employees will once again be the focus of public discussion. With the election for President just a couple months away, both sides of the legislative aisle will be working to ensure the election of their candidate. We don't expect the election to have a slowdown effect on the upcoming legislative session and a pretty full calendar has been released by both houses of the State Legislature.

Additionally, PANJ is pursuing the passage of the transfer legislation which will move probation to the executive branch of government. PANJ recently hired David Rousseau, former New Jersey State Treasurer with more than twenty years of experience working on the state budget, to assist with the analysis of and more importantly the potential fiscal impact of a transfer of probation to the executive branch. PANJ, the Capital Impact Group and David Rousseau recently met with the bill sponsor and members of the Legislature and the Treasurer's Office to discuss the legislation, the potential fiscal impacts and the merits of the bill for the citizens of New Jersey. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Greg Wolf, Salem
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A Message From The President

Brothers and Sisters,

Fresh on the heels of a day of remembrance for the people who lost their lives on the anniversary of September 11th, it is with much sadness that I inform you of the passing of several of our Probation Officers. In this edition of our Insight we have three obituaries, two Officers from Middlesex County and one Officer from Burlington County. Whenever I hear of our Officers passing away it makes me stop and think about all the people who touch our lives. Whether they are our family members, friends or colleagues, the loss has a deep impact. To my brothers, sisters, friend and colleagues of our fallen members my thoughts and prayers are with you in this time of grief.



In Solidarity,

George Christie

President

A Message From The Editor

Brothers and Sisters,

As we quickly approach the cooler months of Fall, PANJ once again has a lot of things cooking! There are several arbitrations pending for both the Line Staff and the Supervisor Staff, and both units are currently in negotiations for our successor contracts. Both units have also filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge against the Judiciary for a multitude of reasons. PANJ-EF hosted a boat cruise out of Brielle to fundraise for our scholarship funds. The annual PANJ-EF conference is right around the corner, and the conference committee is hard at work to make it a successful one! Each quarter we have some new authors from various vicinages writing about Local events. If your Local's are as busy as mine we should have no shortage of new authors. You can either contact your Local Rep for the quarter's deadline, or contact the PANJ office.

In Solidarity,

Ellen Cribbin

Editor

Gloucester County CCMO Celebrates Probation and Parole Week

By Titessa D. Smith, Local 108 Vice President

Probation and Parole week was celebrated from July 15th through July 21st. Gloucester County CCMO Sr. Probation Officer, Titessa D. Smith, posted the letter and proclamation received from PANJ President, George Christie. With the help of others, fliers were also made to thank all the probation officers in the unit for doing an outstanding job as their work does not go unrecognized. On July 18th, CCMO held a BBQ style party to celebrate their probation officers and those celebrating birthdays. The menu included hamburgers, hot dogs, pasta salad, potato salad, baked beans, numerous chips and dips, soda, and a variety of desserts. Although this week is given to celebrate Probation and Parole, the fliers recognizing all of our probation officers were hung high for the rest of the month. Always remember to encourage and motivate your fellow officers.

Civil Service Pilot Program

By George P. Christie, President

Many of you already know that the Judiciary has begun a pilot project to hire probation officers without a civil service exam. We call this process a non-competitive hiring process and many new probation officers are being hired around the state as a result.

On or about October 2011 the AOC applied to the Civil Service Commission to have a one year program. The reason for their request was due to the cost and difficulties in having active lists in all the vicinages. Of course a pilot project of this nature would be on going despite the fact that it is being registered as a one year program.

We in the leadership of your union filed an appeal with the Civil Service Commission and provided huge amounts of documentation justifying the continuation of the existing testing process and for having Civil Service continue to make the selections. However, the Civil Service Commission decided on June 21, 2012 to permit the pilot project and allow the AOC to hire probation officers without an exam. The new pilot program became effective on July 1, 2012 and will continue to June 30, 2013 at which time the AOC will ask that the program be a permanent one.

Your union (PANJ) has filed an appeal with the Appellate Court to return to the Civil Service model of testing and selection. The matter is awaiting hearings on the issue.

It is important to note that we believe that this non-competitive hiring has produced many excellent officers. We are not seeking to undo the existing pilot project hiring and in no way are looking to eliminate the permanency of our new officers.

We are looking to protect all of our officers and continue their Civil Service rights.

PANJ Fights For Its Members

By Dwight Covaleskie, First Vice President, Line Staff

The question is often asked, "What does PANJ do for me"?

I feel that it is important that I answer that question and let you know how hard PANJ works on your behalf. Public Sector Bargaining Units are sustaining unprecedented attacks not only here in New Jersey, but also across the United States. These attacks are sweeping across the country like a tsunami. Not a day goes by without a story concerning public sector unions in the national or local media.

First and foremost PANJ is a strong voice for all of its 2900 members, throughout the 15 vicinages in the state. There are 2000 line staff members and 900 Supervisors, respectively.

PANJ is that voice in negotiations which negotiates the contracts in the respective units, Line and Supervisors, which make provisions for rates of pay, hours, working conditions, and other terms and conditions of employment. This also includes provisions for grievances and disciplines. Each unit bargains on behalf of their members. PANJ line is currently engaged in collective bargaining for a successor contract with the judiciary and has had one session with the Judiciary and others scheduled in the near future.

Collective bargaining allows us to secure fair wages, job protections and grievance resolution through arbitration.

PANJ Line currently has Arbitrations pending regarding, field safety at off-site reporting facilities, hours of work, dress code and numerous other issues that affect each and every member in some way.

Also PANJ has filed a 70 count unfair labor practice with the Public Employees Relation Committee, based on the fact that the Judiciary is repudiating (ignoring) our contract. Some of the issues included in the ULP are investigators performing PO work; PO's doing supervisor work in some vicinages and the fairness and impartiality of the hearing officers in discipline and grievance matters. The latter is of particular importance especially, since there has been a significant increase in disciplines, including terminations. Our membership deserves due process and a fair hearing.

In light of the unprecedented attacks here in New Jersey, PANJ is also fighting against the recent legislation that changes health care and pension contributions that PANJ filed in behalf of all members. These changes will affect all members in some way. Contributions for health care and pensions will rise dramatically and those looking to retire or that have retired will have no COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment), unless the pension is funded at a certain level, which may take many decades to reach. Despite all of the negative perceptions, if the state budget was balanced and contributions made as you and I have made, we would not be faced with these problems. PANJ strongly believes that this should have been negotiated, not legislated. More to come on this as we await a ruling from the courts.

PANJ continues to endeavor to enable due process in the work place, be a voice in the community and work to enable legislation that is beneficial to all of its members.

The best member that we can have is an informed member. Please reach out to your PANJ Representatives or myself with any thoughts, concerns or questions that you may have.

Supervisor Update

By Brad Fairchild, First Vice President, Professional Supervisors

The Professional Supervisors began contract negotiations with the Judiciary in June. Over the summer the negotiating committee met many times to discuss and draft contract proposals on many topics.

It will come as no surprise that the committee spent many hours developing language to dramatically change Article 9.8 which gives the Judiciary the "non reviewable" right to remove Supervisors for no cause. This Article has been progressively abused in recent years to the point that Supervisors have become fearful that any opinion expressed that is contrary to what management deems to be acceptable may result in a career being destroyed by immediate termination or a demotion that destroys a supervisor economically.

Other Articles that have been under examination includes changes to the Hearing Officer process. The Judiciary Hearing Officers have become so biased in recent years that PANJ has no confidence in receiving fair hearings when members have disciplinary hearings.

Other areas that are being discussed include Union Leave and the annual Training Conference. It is expected that Negotiations will be very difficult and will last far into the fall and probably next year. Due to the wide divide between management and labor it is possible that this contract will take many months to complete but the Negotiations Committee will be in constant contact with its members and will be forceful in expressing the many concerns of Supervisors to the Judiciary.



Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Update

By Stuart Martinsen, PANJ Legislative Assistant

Our second meeting with the Chief Justice's Probation Ad Hoc Committee was held at AOC on July 17, 2012. Present from PANJ were George, Brad, Dwight, Dave Fox Esq. and myself. Committee members included the Chair; Judge Yolanda Ciccone, A.J.S.C., Assignment Judge in Passaic; Donald J. Volkert Jr, Kevin Brown-AOC Chief, Mike O'Brien-Camden TCA, Janet Zatz-AOC Manager of Employees Relations and Erin Catalfamo, Judicial Assistant II of the AOC.

Judge Ciccone conveyed the priority of the committee was to address how the Judiciary can assist PANJ in with health and safety issues. Dave Fox, PANJ legal counselor, responded by saying that PANJ is seeking the coordination of state-wide officer safety in every vicinage. Judge Ciccone wished to know where we felt the deficits were in each vicinage.

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Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Update Cont'd

Chief Kevin Brown expressed that his office has been trying to improve networking with local police agencies and vicinages. However, he indicated that ultimately it is up to the individual officer to always be safe and report any concerns to their respective vicinages.

PANJ President Christie advised that his concern for Officer's is being able to protect themselves in the field and in the office from harm. George stated that in many cities and towns, police officers are not available to go out in the field with officers into dangerous areas. He said that on any given day, there are shooting and violent crimes occurring which often involve our cases either as offenders or victims of crimes, thus putting Probation Officer's in harm's way of a stray bullet or being in the wrong location at the wrong time.

Committee member Judge Volkert asked PANJ what can be done to address and improve training. PANJ 1st VP for line staff, Dwight Covaleskie, advised that more safety training modules need to be offered to other Officer's in CCMO, Child support and Family units.

Also, 1st VP for the supervisors unit, Brad Fairchild, advised that PANJ is also concerned about violent re-offending by offenders under supervision and those we interact with across all divisions. He recommended to the committee that there is a need to add other tools to assist PANJ members both in the field and in the office.

Judge Ciccone asked for a list of items from PANJ that the committee can review for consideration. PANJ advised the list include the need for better training in safety; the issuance of handcuffs, pepper spray and vests as needed; gang awareness training and the formation of a state-wide gang committee of probation officers to discuss concerns and to monitor the cross- jurisdictional criminal activities of probationers. To this end, PANJ recommended that all vicinages have access to the critical alerts issued by law enforcement agencies and NJSP reports concerning daily shootings and homicides.

It should be noted that since this meeting, Chief Kevin Brown took immediate action on the last recommendation by PANJ, and has since contacted and given access to all Chief's and their designees of these important reports to share same with their respective supervisors and line staff officers.

Brad pointed out that field itinerary's must be used more and encouraged and there is a need for radio communication equipment in the field to be used by officers. Chief Brown advised he was looking into this and the radio equipment and also he had no objections to officers also being issued hand-cuffs only for emergency purposes to subdue and restrain to protect the officer's safety, not to effect arrests.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Judge Ciccone made a list of key items for further review. It was mentioned by Dwight the issue of hearing officer's not being objective. George advised there is a need to employ independent and neutral third parties to rule on grievance and disciplinary matters filed by PANJ. Also, the need for better employee relations by human resources at AOC towards PANJ labor officials in each vicinage and at the state level. Brad and Dwight asked that our concerns over the removal of supervisor's by vicinages without just cause be addressed as well and the need for uniform disposition of disciplinary cases state-wide. This was agreed to and a third meeting is to be scheduled.

PANJ is looking forward to continue meeting's with the Ad Hoc committee in the hopes of perhaps achieving some better understanding of our issues and concerns. PANJ will continue to update the membership here on the progress of this committee.

Labor Day

By Ellen Cribbin, Business Manager

I know Labor Day has since passed, marking the return to school, shorter cooler days, and the return of our favorite TV shows and football, but I thought it was important for us to all remember why and how Labor Day came to be.

There are arguments about who actually came up with the idea of Labor Day. In 1882 Matthew Maguire and Peter McGuire, both Union activists in separate unions, proposed the idea. Canada already had a similar holiday recognizing the accomplishments both economically and socially that workers contribute to society.

In 1894 President Grover Cleveland signed into law the federal holiday less than a week after the Pullman Strike ended in an effort to overcome the distrust that workers felt over wage reductions and layoffs. George Pullman who owned the Pullman Palace Car Company also owned and controlled a planned worker community. When factory workers were either laid off or had their wages cut during a depression, George Pullman did not reduce rents, or the price of goods and services in the worker's community. The factory workers, who were not unionized like their counterparts in the American Railway Union, began a wildcat strike, a strike that was not authorized by their trade union, and a massive boycott. Within days thousands of workers walked off the job instead of handling Pullman Cars, workers obstructed railroad tracks, threatened and did attack workers who crossed picket lines. During peaceful rallies groups of workers set fires to buildings and derailed trains. Due to the complete disruption to rail lines the federal government stepped in, with an order from President Cleveland to the U.S. Marshal's and Army to intervene. The federal government's efforts to stop the strike succeeded. The total cost for the Pullman Strike was about a dozen lives, and almost 80 injuries in addition to over \$80 million dollars in damages. Six days after the strikes ended the U.S. Congress unanimously voted to approve rush legislation making Labor Day a National Holiday, and President Cleveland signed off.

By the time that President Cleveland signed the holiday into Federal Law, thirty states in our country were already celebrating the accomplishments and contributions of workers. All fifty states, plus the District of Columbia and all U.S. territories still celebrate Labor on the first Monday of every September.

PANJ-EF Conference

By Dotty Robinson, Recording Secretary, President Local 102

The party is over; at least some of you may think that. As school opens, pools close and a chill enters the air, we say good-bye to summer. However in saying good-bye to summer we move closer to yes the PROBATION ASSOCIATION EDUCATIONAL FUND TRAINING CONFERENCE. November is coming fast and with it the Annual conference at Bally's in Atlantic City.

By now you should have all sent in your reservations for the conference and your rooms. If not what are you waiting for? Remember the Early Bird gets the worm and the lower rates. The classes are set and available for perusal on our website. Once again our Committee has outdone themselves.

We are looking for applicants for the scholarships to be sent to the State PANJ office. I am looking for nominations for Officer of the Year and Supervisor of the Year. The deadline is October 10, 2012 for both.

A gentle reminder to all the locals; please do not forget your Raffle items and contributions to the hospitality suite. When all the Locals participate we have so many more goodies to give away and increase everyone's chances of winning something. Please be aware that attendance at classes is required and you must sign in at each class to get credit. These records are tracked at the AOC and that is how you get credit for the training.

Please please everyone try and attend this years conference, we want to make this the best one ever. The Committee led by Sue Cuozzo works so hard all year long; let's show them we appreciate all the hard work. Remember to check in on Sunday afternoon or have someone check in for you. Identification tags and admission tickets are needed for all events, and yes we will be checking at the doors again. On a personal note I am getting older and don't want to argue with anyone at the door, but I will, lol.

So let's get those reservations in and we will see you November 18th, 19th and 20th!

In Memoriam: Joseph Stryjewski

By Evelyn Cruz Carofilis, VCPO

The probation division lost a friend and colleague when Joseph "Joe" Stryjewski passed away on April 25, 2012.

Joe began working for the Middlesex Vicinage in June 1988. As a senior probation officer, he spent most of his career supervising adults on probation. For the last eight years, Joe worked in the probation division's community serviceunit in Perth Amboy. He also worked in the family division in its intake unit.

His friend and colleague, Senior Probation Officer Jessica Cannon, fondly remembers Joe as being knowledgeable on almost any topic. If she had a question, she said, he had the answer.



Joe loved to travel to the Amish country in Pennsylvania or to his yearly trek to his timeshare in Mexico. He often returned to the office with stories of his adventures. Joe always had a friendly greeting for his co-workers, and he will be best remembered for his stories, quirky sense of humor and his willingness to help his colleagues.

Joe truly believed in the role of probation as an agent of change that could produce positive outcomes for others. He strived to achieve the goals set for him as a probation officer and was proud of the work he did for the vicinage. He will be missed by all who were touched by him.

In Memoriam: John Lisi

By Susan Campbell, SPO



Middlesex Probation lost a friend and colleague when Senior Probation Officer, John Lisi passed away on August 27, 2012.

John began working for Middlesex Vicinage in April of 2004. He spent most of his career injuvenile supervision.

His friends and colleagues remember him for the love he had for his family. He took great pride in his two sons and coaching their sports teams. He enjoyed watching the NY Yankees and cooking.

John was always so laid back and easy to talk to. He was a joy to work with.

His family says John always wanted to be a Probation Officer, to follow in his father's footsteps. They stated it wasn't until he began working in Probation that he truly enjoyed what he was doing. They were so proud of the man he was and the job he did.

John had a passion for the job and helping the juveniles. He believed he could make positive changes in their lives. Not only will John be missed by all his friends and colleagues but also by his juveniles whose lives he made a difference in.

In Memoriam: Sylvia Burgos, 44

Chatsworth NJ –Sylvia Burgos passed away suddenly on August 21, 2012, as the result of a Motor Vehicle Accident. Sylvia was born and raised in Egg Harbor City. She was a 1985 graduate with honors of Oakcrest High School and graduated with honors with a degree in Criminal Justice from Stockton College. She was a Probation officer in Camden County for 13 years and most recently in Burlington County and served as a Master Probation Officer in the Criminal Division. Sylvia will be sadly missed but never forgotten by her husband of 25 years Ivan, her two children, Cassandra (Neal Trivedi) and Ivan J., her mother Carmen Cruz, her Father Gabriel Delgado (Judy), her sister Jeanette Zayas (Jose), her two brothers, Gabriel and Michael Delgado, and her two nieces, Jennifer and Jillian Zayas, her aunt Migdalia Leon, her two cousins Tony and Nick Leon, her brother-in-law Harry Burgos (Abigail) and their daughter Gladymar. Burial took place at Egg Harbor Cemetery. The family received much support from the Judiciary, PANJ members, and PANJ Executive Board members. Sylvia will be sorely missed by all.