

*Chief's Report to the Community Advisory Board*  
*September 27, 2007 – December 6, 2007*

**Highlights**

- **Recidivism Proposal Funded:** The Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention has awarded Justice & Security Strategies \$80,000 to conduct a study of jail recidivism in Montgomery County in partnership with the DOCR. The study will report on recidivism rates from samples of released sentenced inmates released from the DOCR over the past 15 years and will use the DOCR-developed methodology. The research will prove helpful in better understanding the flow of offenders in the county's criminal justice system, and it will address important research questions about when and why do individuals re-offend. The research will prove helpful in developing new programs to reduce future re-offending.
- **PRC Kitchen Expansion Proposal:** DOCR and the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation will present a finalized a Capital Improvement Program Request for \$6.4 million to the County Executive on 12/10 to expand and modernize the kitchen and cafeteria area of the Pre-Release Center. The kitchen dates to when the center opened in 1978, and much of the equipment is obsolete. The project will add over 2,300 square feet for the dining and kitchen areas to accommodate the program growth that has occurred over the years.
- **Improved Access to County's Mental Health Services:** The County's Health and Human Services Department has agreed to consider PRRS residents with documented psychiatric disorders eligible for county-coordinated mental health services upon entry into the program. This collaboration will allow PRRS to match residents with psychiatric community providers immediately which should lead to much improved retention rates of continued mental health services post-release. Although Medicaid rules bar federal funds from supporting psychiatric services for incarcerated individuals until they are within 6-weeks of release, HHS has generously agreed to redeploy its county-funded resources to provide support for residents until the program participants meet the Medicaid threshold. In meetings held on 9/27 and 11/30, DOCR and HHS staff have discussed other ways to improve services and collaborate.
- **Federal Bureau of Prison Monitoring Audit:** Contract Specialist William Cimino and FBOP staff member Ken Johnson conducted a routine monitoring visit of PRRS on October 30 and found no deficiencies. They raised a small concern about the employment status of one Federal resident and the pass procedures that affected another resident, and both issues were both remedied prior to the close of the monitoring visit. Bill was complimentary of the professionalism of the staff and the program.
- **National Jail Reentry Training:** On October 22 -24, PRRS hosted a national training on jail reentry sponsored by the American Jail Association. Unit Manager James Shannon coordinated and co-taught the training that involved twenty-two line staff and administrators from local correctional agencies from around the country (Massachusetts, Michigan, Florida,

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Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Jersey and New Mexico). During the three-day event, participants toured PRRS and MCCF and attended presentations by DOCR staff. The participants' evaluations of the training were superlative.

- **Grand Jury Report:** In August of 2007, the Grand Jury – which was convened in June 2007 -- released its report titled “Inspection of Montgomery County Correctional Facilities.” The Grand Jury members had visited DOCRs facilities on June 19, 2007, and the report provides a favorable assessment of the staff, the conditions, and the programs and services they found at MCDC, MCCF, and PRRS. The report does recognize the significant challenges that PRRS resident face in securing employment, and provides sensible suggestions for program improvements at PRRS.
- **Abolish PRRS Pre-Recorded Telephone Greeting:** Beginning November 1, all incoming calls to PRRS have been answered by PRRS staff directly, and the Division discontinued its use of a pre-recorded greeting with a menu tree. Various program stakeholders complained that it took too long and was too complicated to reach staff by following the recorded menu. In the future, a more acceptable hybrid answering system may be adopted where staff answers the call directly but callers may be directed to pre-recorded information that answers their questions. This change was made in the spirit of complying with the County Executive's directive that government agencies need to be customer friendly and responsive.

### **Programmatic Changes**

- **New Programming for All Residents:** Program Coordinator Patricia Braun and Case Managers Pernell Shaw and Dan Keener launched the next iteration of the newly developed Cognitive Skill-Based program called Tools for Change which was introduced at PRRS in the spring of 2007. The new program schedule is now integrated in the first week of programming for all residents along with job readiness training and wellness. Based on assessments data, higher-risk participants will continue to participate in additional course modules for five weeks meeting one evening per week for two hours. The curriculum incorporates concepts including pro-social behavior, pro-social communication skills, stages of change, reentry plans and thinking reports. Pedagogy includes role plays, group discussion, homework assignments, and self assessments.
- **Female Programming:** PRRS Case Managers Kendra Jochum, Shaunda Legg, and Jean Arp attended the 12<sup>th</sup> National Workshop on Adult and Juvenile Female Offenders which was sponsored by the Association on Programs for Female Offenders (APFO) on October 24-26. The theme for this year's conference, “Transforming Lives...Soaring to New Horizons”, aimed to provide professionals with information and strategies to transform the lives of female offenders “from being criminal justice-involved women to empowered women that want to make a better life for themselves and their children.” In a follow-up report, the case managers described the conference workshops and provided three broad conceptual recommendations that would improve programming at PRRS: increasing “behavior motivation and management of male and female offenders,” improving “gender responsiveness of programming”; and introducing services that aim to promote “understanding and addressing of trauma.”

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- **Fatherhood Conference (September 24-26):** Resident Supervisors Kenny Sterling and Ivan Downing represented PRRS at the inaugural Philadelphia Fatherhood & Families Conference, "Unifying Fathers & Communities -Fatherhood Conference 07, held in Philadelphia. In their follow-up report, they brought back ideas of fatherhood and parenting programs offered in other jurisdictions. In addition to their interest, two PRRS social work interns -- Nicole Hatch and Holly Simmons of the University of Maryland Baltimore County/Shady Grove -- developed a proposed 6-week parenting program, and Pat Braun and Stefan LoBuglio met with all four individuals to develop a strategy and timeline to introduce this type of programming at PRRS. A staff wide meeting will be held in the coming weeks.
- **Workforce Development:** Work Release Coordinator Hillel Raskas has begun training as an Offender Workforce Development Specialist, a program offered by the National Institute of Correction. This 185-hour training over seven months is designed for mid-career professionals working with offenders preparing for and retaining employment.
- **Welcome Home Program:** Since the last CAB meeting, three additional recruitment presentations have been held at parishes in Montgomery County, bringing the total to 14 parishes for this calendar year. Two separate trainings for new volunteers were held and eight additional volunteers were given an orientation about how they would like to best participate in the program. A community meeting for all active volunteers was held in November which included the presentation on reentry efforts in Singapore by the division chief and an overview of a program offered to all residents by Patricia Braun called Tools for Change, a cognitive behavioral approach to criminal thinking. In both October and November, Welcome Home volunteers have contributed 450 additional volunteer hours, bringing the total since April, 2007 to over 900 hours. The number of mentors matched with residents continues to grow and the residents have expressed gratitude for the volunteer's support, encouragement, and help.
- **Case Manager's Roundtable:** Every other week, the Community Release Coordinators and the Case Managers come together to discuss a reentry topic of interest and to hear presentations from outside providers of services. In the last quarter, the Roundtable topics included:
  - 10/10 presentation from staff from Montgomery County Public Defenders Office who provided information on social work services available for their clients and client's families. They noted that once an offender is considered a client of the Public Defender's Office, the Social Work Department will continue to work with the offenders and their families after adjudication.
  - 11/21 presentation from the director of the Abused Persons Program to discuss current programs and to discuss future collaboration to improve services to victims that are referred to the program by PRRS and to fast track certain offenders who have perpetrated domestic violence in the past.
  - 10/24 presentation from DOCR's consultant psychiatrist, Dr. Mokhtari on bi-polar and personality disorders and case reviews.
  - 11/7 internal PRRS discussion around shopping passes, level movement, and leisure passes (also discussion about Women's program presented by conference attendees).

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The discussion helped clarify issues and was a move towards greater consistency in terms of guidelines for approving passes that allow individuals to leave the pre-release center and travel within the community.

- **Sober Housing:** Representatives from Oxford House come to PRRS one time per month to provide a presentation on the Oxford House program to residents and staff. Family members are always invited and are welcome to join the presentations.
- **Consumer Credit:** On November 27, 2007, Consumer Credit Counseling Services provided a basic financial management class for residents and their family members.
- **GED Services:** In the past quarter, one of the residents successfully earned their GED. GED classes are held twice a week, and volunteer tutors are also assigned to some residents.
- **Family/Sponsor Support Group:** Sponsor Groups continue to be well attended. Groups are now available on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings.
- **Life on the Outside with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder:** Interns Dan Kimes and Kathleen Nardella, University of Maryland at Baltimore have proposed to offer a several week class to 6-8 residents who have been diagnosed with ADHD to assist them develop strategies and identify resources to help them manage their conditions.
- **Restricted Donation Special Revenue Fund (\$25,750.21):** A committee of staff with input from residents is currently researching costs for some of the ideas received for using PRRS's Special Revenue Fund which consists of the accumulated donations from community members over the course of the program's operating history and must be used to benefit residents. Some of the ideas are:
  - Outdoor recreational equipment – cluster stations;
  - New Unit Computers for Resident Use (no internet/programs only);
  - Recreational/Sports Items (such as basketballs, footballs, board games, etc.);
  - Stationery Bikes for Units;
  - Increase the Amount of Money Used for the Revolving "Trust in Agency" Fund that assists resident purchase tools and clothing needed for work (currently the fund amount used is approximately \$3,300.

**Security/Safety**

- **Disciplinary Review Meeting:** Assessment and Accreditation Standards Teresa Still chaired a committee that met bi-weekly to review the implementation of PRRS' new disciplinary policy. Since September, the committee completed a thorough review and refinement of the policy's infractions codes, developed a sanctioning matrix that considers prior infractions, and developed many forms, protocols and related policies. In addition, the committee has reviewed statistical graphs and reports concerning the frequency, severity, and specific types of disciplinary infractions at PRRS by unit and center wide. The committee will continue to meet on a monthly basis to review statistical reports.

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- **Security Committee:** Unit Manager Jane Sachs led a Division-wide effort to review handcuffing and transport procedures at PRRS to ensure that they represented the latest and best practices for safety. In conducting research, Jane and other staff members researched restraint practices of other agencies including the police, sheriff's department, and other correctional departments. The Sheriff's Department kindly dispatched two Deputy Sheriffs who demonstrated handcuffing techniques at PRRS, and based on all the research, PRRS handcuffing procedures were changed. PRRS has adopted a new policy of handcuffing individuals with their hands behind their backs without using a supplementary security belt. Previously, PRRS had cuffed in the front and used such a belt. The new policy is safer and quicker, and a new official policy will come out within the next two weeks.
- **De-escalation Training Sub-Committee:** Unit Manager Stephanie Hall has convened a committee of PRRS staff to develop training and education opportunities to improve the ability of staff and the program to de-escalate potentially volatile situations. The committee has met multiple times and is looking to implement a formal training curriculum that would be developed in-house but taught by an outside facilitator. Additionally, the committee is looking at ways to market and communicate to all staff and program residents improved ways to manage conflict.

**PRRS Event/Activity Chronology**

- **Detoxifying Anger with W. Doyle Gentry, PhD (12/2):** Case Manager Pernel Shaw attended a training presented by PESI titled "Detoxifying Anger" with W. Doyle Gentry, PhD at Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City, Maryland. This training included how family relationships can cause anger in an individual(s), managing personalities, dealing with medications, how to deal with anger today, tomorrow, and yesterday, and how anger differs between males and females. Case Manager Shaw plans to present the information on this training before the Case Managers' roundtable within a few weeks.
- **Petition for Early Release (12/3):** The court, in response to a petition filed by the Division Chief under Section 13-21 of the County Code, released a terminally ill resident from custody. This individual had served almost a year on an eighteen month sentence and was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer while in custody. Case Manager Dan Keener managed this case with sensitivity and great competence and recommended this course of action.
- **Adult Drug Court Graduation (11/28):** Several PRRS staff members attended the County Drug Court's largest graduation to date (13 participants). PRRS plays a very significant role to support this program and houses some participants at PRC. PRRS Community Release Coordinator Debbie Lyons-Prince serves as the liaison for the Division to the court and has significantly improved the collaboration and coordination between the programs.
- **CSAFE Meeting (11/27):** The Division Chief attended CSAFE meeting in Silver Spring for the International Corridor Area that borders three jurisdictions – Prince George and Montgomery Counties and the District of Columbia. At these meetings, police, probation, juvenile services, social service providers, and citizens discuss ways to better coordinate efforts to improve safety and the quality of life in these areas.

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- **National Center on Community Corrections (11/9):** Stefan Lobuglio and Work Release Coordinators Angela Talley, Chris Johnson, and Hillel Raskas attended a meeting of the National Center on Community Corrections. The focus of the meeting, held at the National Association of Counties, was on a Reentry Employment Model that involves businesses, community and criminal justice agencies in the St. Louis, Missouri, area.
- **PREA Meeting (11/8):** Unit Manager Stephanie Hall attended a Community Corrections Roundtable sponsored by the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission. The goal of the meeting was to discuss the applicability of PREA and the requisite training for community corrections programs. As one of the only practitioners at the meeting and one who is not only involved with both implementing PREA standards locally and also researching the implementation of PREA nationwide for her doctorate, Stephanie was able to contribute much to the meeting.
- **Leadership Montgomery (11/7):** Unit Manager Stephanie Hall coordinated efforts to have four PRRS program participants participate in an event sponsored by Leadership Montgomery, a public/private partnership that promote leaders and networking in and between the public and private spheres of the County. The topic of the meeting was public safety, and the four residents provided real examples of the challenges that individuals face in reintegrating back into society. The members of Leadership Montgomery expressed great appreciation to the residents for participating and sharing their personal stories.
- **Workforce & Economic Development Awards Breakfast (10/30):** The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Workforce and Economic Development Awards Breakfast was held at the North Bethesda Conference Center. DOCR hosted a table and Work Release Coordinators Christine Johnson and Hillel Raskas along with volunteer Robert Tenney and MCCF Work Force staff represented the agency. This event allows the County, through the Department of Economic Development, to recognize individuals and businesses that make Montgomery County a desirable location to start and run a business.
- **Council of State Government (10/31):** The division Chief hosted a lunch at PRRS with a new member of the CSG staff in the Bethesda office. Blake Norton is a specialist in policing and has extensive experience in law enforcement programs that support prisoner/jail reentry practices. CSG is a leader in national prisoner/jail reentry efforts.
- **NAMI Dinner (10/24):** Case Managers Tyrone Alexander and Cindy Boyd represented PRRS at the 8th annual Heroes Dinner to honor outstanding individuals for their time and efforts in helping people with mental illness and their family members
- **Disability Mentoring Day - October 17, 2007:** Community Release Coordinator Debbie Lyons-Prince, Unit Manager James Shannon, and Division Chief Stefan LoBuglio served as mentors in Montgomery County's Disability Mentoring Day. This efforts aims to introduce individuals of various abilities to the variety of County workplaces, and the three mentees at PRRS were given a tour of DOCR's facilities and a chance to interact with staff.

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- **Senate Hearing on Incarceration (10/4):** Case Manager Nicole Davis, Intern Dan Kimes, Intern Kathleen Nardella (Dan and Kathleen are graduate students in the School of Social Work with the University of Maryland at Baltimore), and Division Chief Stefan LoBuglio attended a hearing of the Joint Economic Committee at the Hart Senate Office building on the topic of "Mass Incarceration in the United States: At What Cost?" Chaired by Senator Webb from Virginia, the combined committee of the Senate and House representatives spent two-hours probing the economic and social costs of the nation's high incarceration rates and heard from five experts in the fields of academia and corrections.
- **Fire Safety Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio (10/07):** Resident Supervisor Mark Myrick along with correctional officers from MCDC and MCCF attended a fire safety conference in October. Mark has been the lead PRRS person on fire safety issues, and this training provided him with the latest information on correctional fire safety policies. The conference gave him the opportunity to network with correctional professionals from different parts of the country such as Indiana, Indianapolis, St Louis, New Jersey and Washington, D.C.
- **White Flint Sector Planning Board Planning Efforts:** attended/attended by Division Chief Stefan LoBuglio. The Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission Planning Board has held a number of public meetings and hosted numerous presentations about proposed development in the White Flint Sector. An article in the Montgomery County Gazette dated December 5 provides an excellent overview of some of the significant plans for redeveloping the White Flint area into a more urban core (copies provided at mtg.)

**Upcoming Events**

- **NIC Workforce Meeting (12/10-13):** The NIC workforce meeting will be hosted by PRRS on December 10<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> and approximately ten or more individuals will be attending. This meeting is being arranged by Patricia Taylor, PRRS Work Release Coordinator on loan to the Department of Justice.
- **Recognizing Successful Former PRRS participants (December 12 @ 3:00pm) – CAB** Community Education and Outreach Chair Cherise Burdeen is leading a planning effort of CAB members and PRRS staff to plan for a breakfast meeting in early February that will recognize the success of former residents of the program and the community providers that have played a role in supporting their achievements.
- **"Crime Victim Rights and Compliance: Agency Responsibility – It's the Law" (1/8-9/08):** GOCCP has invited DOCR staff to participate in a two day conference that is to be held at the Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City. Unit Manager Stephanie Hall and Division Chief Stefan LoBuglio are planning to attend.

**Escapes/Court Dispositions**

**Escapes:** PRRS maintains one of the strictest criteria for designating an escape of community correction programs nationwide. The program has a zero-tolerance policy regarding individuals who are unaccountable in the community, and will file escape charges against individuals who

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leave the Pre-Release Center without authorization and those that fail to arrive at their approved location within two hours of the designated time (the time is given to allow for varying traffic conditions). When an escape occurs, both the County's Police and the Sheriff's Department are notified, and the Sheriff's fugitive squad takes the lead in apprehending the escapees.

- **Escapes since January 1, 2007 -- Nine and one escapee at-large**
- **Escape at-large:** Horacio Silva escaped on October 27, 2007 after he left the Center to attend an AA meeting and did not return. He is serving a ten year sentence, suspend all but 18 month, for Robbery plus has many priors. Mr. Silva is still at-large.
- **Escape Dispositions- Pending Cases**
  - **Gerrardo Torres** escaped from the Pre-Release Center in December of 2005. He was apprehended in September 2007 in Tennessee and returned to Montgomery County. He has been indicted by the Grand Jury for escape and awaiting a court date.
  - **Ismail Meredith** escaped on May 5<sup>th</sup> after two female minors were found in his room. Mr. Meredith's sentencing hearing for escape has been rescheduled for December 6, 2007 and the Department is asking for a sentence of five years.
  - **Carter Hester** escaped on July 4, 2007 and was apprehended one week later in Washington D.C. On October 29<sup>th</sup>, an agreement has been between Mr. Hester and the State's Attorneys office. He will be officially sentenced to two years for Escape in April 2008. However, as part of his plea agreement, the time he serves from November 15, 2007 through April 2008 will be deducted from this two year sentence.
  - **Jose Benitez** escaped on August 14, 2007 and was apprehended eight days later (August 22<sup>nd</sup>) at the home of the victim of the governing charge. Mr. Benitez left for work, failed to arrive at his jobsite, and never returned to PRC. Mr. Benitez is a registered sex offender. He has been indicted for escape by the Grand Jury and is awaiting a Court date.
  - **Joanne Lee** escaped on August 11, 2007 and turned herself in the following day. While on an approved home pass, she got into an argument with her father and left her approved location. She later admitted to staying at a friend's home and using cocaine while on Escape status. Ms. Lee has been indicted on escape by the Grand Jury and awaiting a Court date.
  - **Christopher Streams** was indicated by the Grand Jury for Escape on November 15<sup>th</sup>. He escaped from PRC on October 7<sup>th</sup> after failing to return from an AA meeting. He was apprehended by the Rockville City Police on October 16<sup>th</sup>.
- **Sentenced Escape Cases:**
  - **Jose Encarnacion** escaped from the PRC on April 1, 2007. He was convicted for escape and received an additional five month sentence.
  - **Jermaine Terry** escaped on June 29, 2007 and was apprehended 40 minutes later by PRRS staff and the Montgomery County Police at the White Flint Metro Station. Mr. Terry appeared before Judge Eric Johnson on October 29<sup>th</sup> and after his plea agreement, he received a six month sentence for Second Degree Escape.
  - **Karen Steelman** pleaded guilty to Escape on November 30<sup>th</sup> and received a nine month consecutive sentence by Judge Katherine D. Savage.