A report by COMMISSIONER JOE SCHMIDT
Alaska Department of Corrections
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WELCOME TO THE COMMISSIONER’S CORNER:
Thanks for continuing to check in with this column. If you have ideas, issues or suggestions from institutions or field offices for the Commissioner’s Corner, please submit them to richard.schmitz@alaska.gov

Summer Roundup

FRESH FARM PRODUCE FEATURED AT POINT MAC OPEN HOUSE:

Despite an occasional rain shower, close to 300 area residents and DOC staff turned out July 22 for the annual Point Mackenzie Correctional Farm Open House picnic and barbeque. In addition to some great food, visitors signed up for tours of the minimum security facility.
There was an outstanding table display (see photo, above) with a full arrangement of the summer’s produce such as: lettuce, broccoli, yellow and green squash, cabbage, tomatoes, radishes, celery and strawberries. The BBQ grill was full of farm grown BBQ pulled pork, hamburgers, farm produced bratwurst, and all the side dishes plates could hold.

**COMMISSIONER SERVES UP HOT DOGS AT GOVERNOR’S PICNICS:**

Commissioner Joe Schmidt was a volunteer server at the Governor’s picnics this summer in Anchorage, Palmer, Fairbanks and Juneau. (photo, left) The commissioner and his wife, Sandra, serve up hot dogs, chips and watermelon to the estimated 5,000 Alaskans and visitors at the Fairbanks picnic, which preceded the inauguration of Gov. Sean Parnell at Fairbanks Pioneer Park.
DOC PRESENT AT STATE FAIR WITH BOOTH AT RAVEN HALL:
The department will have a booth inside at Raven Hall at the State Fair in Palmer Aug. 12th through Sept. 7, according to Academy Director Doug Lloyd. “As normal we will have passes for the volunteers on the day or days that they work. For those who volunteer we will give parking information later,” Lloyd said. If you are interested, contact Lloyd at the Academy.

**Community Work Service**

PCC, POINT MAC INMATE VOLUNTEERS SERVE MAT-SU BOROUGH:
At PCC, work crews of six inmates and two COs has picked up well over 35,000 pounds of trash from Valley roadsides this summer. In addition:

- Four inmate volunteers and one CO go to the Mat Su Animal Shelter every Friday to assist in cleanup, feeding, training, repairs and adoptions.
- Volunteer inmates assisted the Department of Natural Resources in cutting and planting willows for the Slipper Lake trail.
- One or two inmates volunteer to speak with a “minor consuming” group of young individuals at Wasilla Police Dept. The inmates talk frankly about the poor choices they’ve made and the consequences of those choices, what led them to come to jail and how it has affected them and their families. These inmates also go to the high schools and the Mat Su community college and talk to student assemblies and criminal justice classes.

**BEFORE AND AFTER:** Inmate volunteers at Point Mackenzie Correctional Farm recently rebuilt the sign for the Palmer Little League. Director Garland Armstrong noticed the old sign was in disrepair and contacted the work crew at Point Mac about building a replacement. The original sign for Harley Busbey Memorial Field is on the left, the replacement sign made by inmates is on the right.
HMCC STORAGE BUILDINGS HOLD ON TO HISTORIC SIGNS:
When construction of the Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline wrapped up in the late 1970s, many of the construction camp buildings were sold as surplus. According to facilities manager Charlie Finch, a building from Chandalar Camp was moved to Hiland Mountain Correctional Center, where it’s used for storage. The original camp signs made the move with the building, and can still be seen if you know where to look.

In the news:

SGT. TOMI ANDERSON PROMOTES TO LIEUTENANT AT PCC:
Palmer Correctional Center has announced the promotion of Sgt. Tomi Anderson to Lieutenant. Lt. Anderson began her career with the department in 1999 at Mat Su Pretrial where she worked for six years as a Correctional Officer. She promoted to Sergeant in 2005 and has been the Unit Manager at the medium facility. Lt Anderson was placed in an Acting Assistant Superintendent role at PCC in 2008, obtained her Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration and is working on her Masters degree.

-- Superintendent Cindy Betts

QUICK WORK BY KETCHIKAN PO REVEALS INMATE’S IDENTITY:
Quick action by KCC Probation Officer Nora Dale led to discovery of the true identity of an inmate, booked on felony assault, as being an illegal immigrant previously deported in 2005. KCC contacted U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Officer Dale said she became suspicious when
she began to check into information the inmate had given her. This research led to multiple social security numbers and other aliases. The inmate will be deported upon completion of his sentence.

-- Superintendent Diane Gregory

NEW ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER NAMED AT ANVIL MOUNTAIN:
Joseph Jennetten has been named Administrative Officer at Anvil Mountain Correctional Center. Jennetten, originally from Illinois, has been an Alaska resident since 2002 and a resident of Nome since 2004, when he began his state service as a Juvenile Justice Officer at the Nome Youth Facility. Later he continued his state service as a Children’s Services Specialist at the Office of Children’s Services. Before joining the department, Jennetten was Director of Kawerak Children and Family Services Program (KCFS) with Kawerak Incorporated, where he supervised as many as 17 staff members, both local and in remote village locations. As Director, Jennetten had overall financial management of a $1.4 million budget for the KCFS program, created grant applications and drafted changes to policy and procedure as it related to his program. Jennetten attended St. Ambrose University where he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology.

-- Superintendent Mike Dunham

PARRA NAMED CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNER FOR EDUCATION:
Robyn Parra, a department veteran and retired U.S. Navy Cryptologic Chief Warrant Officer, has been named CJP for Education. Parra will provide oversight to all educational, vocational and apprenticeship programs within the department and will work to develop additional evidence-based programs for the offender population. She will assist with the development of the department’s offender management system, transition and re-entry programming.

Parra has a broad range of experience in the correctional field. She has worked at Spring Creek Correctional Center and the Palmer State Office Building. She began her career with the Department of Corrections as an administrative clerk in July 1996, went on to be a Correctional Officer I and II, then progressed as an Adult Probation Officer II and then promoted to Correctional Officer III and IV. She possesses an immense understanding of the challenges and concerns that exist from the many different viewpoints and perspectives in corrections and looks forward to the challenges associated with this position.
During her tenure in the military, she served as Administrative Department Manager, Legal Officer, Recruiter and Master Training Instructor. Parra holds a Master of Arts degree in Organizational Management; and, Bachelor of Arts degree in Behavioral Science.

-- Deputy Director Bryan Brandenburg
PO II FALLICO DEDICATED TO FIND CURE FOR BLOOD CANCERS:
Anchorage Field PO Ann Fallico is honoring the memory of her father – who passed away last year after battling blood cancer – by participating in a fund-raising event for the Leukemia/Lymphoma Society. The Team in Training Program is a marathon training program designed to 1. raise money for a cure for blood cancer, and 2. properly train participants to run a marathon.

“I decided to sign up for this program because my father died from a blood cancer last summer, and I wanted to raise money for a cure along with actually completing a marathon,” PO Fallico said. “The marathon will take place in Phoenix, Arizona on January 17. We train three times a week as a group, and our long runs are up to 75 minutes, so far.”

For more information, PO Fallico has posted an information page online HERE.

SHARE CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF SEP. 14; KEYWORKERS NAMED:
The 2009 SHARE CAMPAIGN officially begins on Sept. 14, and will run through Oct. 23. The goal is participation by 20 percent of all state employees. Statewide coordinator is Beth Leschper with the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

For information and details, please contact the campaign website: www.alaskashare.org. A revamped “e-pledging” system has been set up for easy, online pledging. There are also links to lists of participating agencies and training schedules for keyworkers.

Ten DOC employees have volunteered to be “keyworkers.” They are: Katie Lauruhn-Berg, Mat-Su Pretrial; Amy Ellis, Ketchikan Correctional Center; Michael Ward, Fairbanks Correctional Center; Richard Schmitz, Juneau Central Office; Kelly Marre, Palmer Correctional Center; Sandra Simons, Spring Creek; Candace Wely and Kris Weixelman, Lemon Creek; Wendy Tremper, Point Mackenize farm; and Patricia Schulpius, Hiland Mountain.

COLLEGE PRESIDENT TO ADDRESS HMCC GRADUATES:
Beverly Patkotak Grinage, president of Ilisagvik College in Barrow, will be the keynote speaker at the Hiland Mountain C.C. Building Trades Carpentry 1 certification graduation ceremony Sept. 16. Eight female inmates successfully completed the program and will receive their certificates. In addition, the graduates received their credentials from the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER). The ceremony will also recognize GED, UAA College Prep and UAA Computer Information and Office Systems students.

-- Joyce Oswald, HMCC Education Coordinator