



A report by COMMISSIONER JOE SCHMIDT
Alaska Department of Corrections
May 8, 2009

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



Ground preparation is underway for construction of the Goose Creek Correctional Center at Point Mackenzie. The department's newest facility is scheduled to open in 2012. (photo courtesy RISE Alaska)

NATIONAL CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES WEEK:

The week of May 3-9 is National Correctional Officers and Employees Week, by presidential proclamation. The proclamation reads, in part: "The corrections profession is one of the most challenging professions one can pursue. It is also one of the most noble. Corrections staff help keep our citizens and our communities safe Correctional Officers and employees serve admirably in facilities across the country as counselors, teachers, chaplains, health care professionals, support staff, custody officers, supervisors, wardens and directors. They are among the most capable, committed, patient, and persistent public servants in our nations." Full text of the proclamation can be found [HERE](#). The Governor's Office proclamation is [HERE](#).

DEPARTMENT ISSUES RFP FOR OUT-OF-STATE INMATE HOUSING:

The Department of Corrections has issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to house inmates outside Alaska. At present approximately 870 Alaska inmates are housed at the Corrections Corp. of America (CCA)-owned Red Rock Correctional Center in Eloy, Arizona. The department's contract with CCA expires on June 30 and will be extended for three months. The contract will be for three years. The RFP can be viewed in full on the state's online public notice system <http://notes4.state.ak.us/pn> and searching by department.

DEPARTMENT SAYS FAREWELL TO LONG-TIME STAFF MEMBERS:

The Department of Corrections has marked the retirement of Special Assistant Alan Bailey and Procurement chief Al Szepanski (picture, right). Szepanski has led the procurement team at the Juneau Central Office since Sept. 1985. Szepanski said his most unusual procurement was "buying four or five drug-sniffing dogs for Spring Creek Correctional Center and sending people off, with the dogs, for training. We paid \$20,000 per dog, and each one had a state of Alaska property tag."



COMMUNITY WORK SERVICE GIVES TROOPS A HAND:

A Community Work Service crew from Palmer Correctional Center lent support to soldiers at Fort Richardson by accepting Glenn Highway clean-up duties May 2-3. "The soldiers really need a hand," said Steve Kracke a veteran and civilian with close ties to military personnel. "Soldiers have always had the detail to pick up trash along the Glenn Highway where it passes through the Fort Richardson and Elmendorf AFB. It is always important to show the community that the soldiers take pride in keeping the post clean." With many troops deployed to overseas missions, however, the post has been short handed, Kracke explained. With the inmate work crew on the job, soldiers can focus on training, education, and supporting their families and community. The Department of Corrections crew will include 12 inmates and two officers. The goal is to clean the Glenn Highway between the weigh station and Muldoon intersection. "We have a long list of volunteers," said Superintendent Cindy Betts. "The inmates on the crew are anxious to go out and lend a hand. They recognize the sacrifice made by our troops, and they are glad to help out." The CWS clean-up crews began work April 18-19 cleaning a stretch of the Glenn Highway from Mile 58 to the intersection with the Palmer-Wasilla Highway. In 2008 the CWS crews removed in excess of 200,000 pounds of trash from Mat-Su Valley roadways.

TWO DOC EMPLOYEES HONORED BY VICTIMS FOR JUSTICE:

Anchorage Probation Officer Ron Dempsey (right, in photo) and Victim Coordinator Jimmie Wallace (left) received honors from Victims For Justice at their Awards Banquet



on April 25. Dempsey received the James Gay Award for Professionalism in the Line of Duty while Wallace was given the Media Award. Commissioner Joe Schmidt and CJT Gail Brimmer presented the awards. On April 27 the Commissioner was main speaker at the Victims For Justice Annual Tree Ceremony at the Tree of Life on the Park Strip at 9th & G. The banquet and the tree ceremony marked the 28th Annual National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Wallace has worked for the Division of Probation and Parole

since April, 1994. Wallace was selected to head up the Victim Services Unit in 2007. Wallace has worked to promote the VINE system as the department enters its 10 year of providing the victim notification service.

The Annual Tree Ceremony dates to 1987 when VFJ donated a choke cherry tree in honor of crime victims. Since that time the tree has stood as a symbol of hope and remembrance. At the ceremony, guests are invited to tie colored ribbons, representing ten types of

violent crime, on the branches to represent themselves or others.



(Pictured, l-r: Public Safety commissioner Joe Masters, APD Chief Rob Huen, Commissioner Joe Schmidt, crime victim Theresa Shappard.)

CORRECTIONS TEAM COMPETES IN 911 FITNESS CHALLENGE:

'Alaska Big Game,' a team of three Correctional Officers, competed in the 2009 911 Fitness Challenge. While the team didn't win the overall challenge, team members COII Cindy Roediger, COII Jason Brown and Training Sgt. John Conant each made gains in health, fitness and nutrition, Roediger said. The 911 Fitness Challenge is an annual event which raises



money for Shriners Childrens Hospitals. The Challenge is open to active or retired police, firefighters, corrections, military, EMTs – any occupation that is a 911 responder. Roediger, a Prison Transportation Officer, works from Palmer Correctional Center and has competed as a bodybuilder. Switching gears to cycling, Roediger (center in the photo) will compete in 2-day 300K Fireweed Cycling in July. Brown (left in the photo), who also works at PCC, has competed in Highland Games and works out as a power lifter. Conant (right in the photo), who also works at PCC, is a former powerlifter and body builder with a number of competitions to his credit.

DEPARTMENT MEETS GOALS SET FOR LEGISLATIVE SESSION:

The 1,536-bed Goose Creek Correctional Center will receive \$6 million in the Capital budget for utilities and energy infrastructure. The department will also receive \$1 million for facilities maintenance and repairs. In the operating budget, the Department will build on its commitment to reduce recidivism with in excess of \$1 million to increase substance abuse and mental health treatment. The Department also received funds to increase the number of half-way house beds which can be used to better integrate offenders into the community. The department did not sponsor new legislation this session.

ACC STAFFER HONORED WITH PEAK PERFORMANCE AWARD:

Tamika Anderson has been named 'honorable mention' for outstanding customer service in the Denali Peak Performance Awards. "She and her staff are the public's first greeters when visitors come to the institution," said Superintendent Debbie Miller. "She is keenly aware she and her staff set the tone of perception of customer service provided. She does so with pride and dedication and demands the same of the staff she oversees."

SPOTLIGHT ON GOOSE CREEK:

RISE ALASKA KEEPS TABS ON PROJECT PROGRESS, BUDGET

In 2008, RISE was selected to serve as the Mat-Su Borough's Owner's Representative for the \$240 million, 430,000 square foot, 1,536-bed Goose Creek Correctional Center. The RISE project management team – led by President Roe Sturgulewski – advises and guides the borough (the facility owner) and the Department of Corrections (the facility's operator) through all phases of the project. Specifically, RISE managed the Design-Build RFP solicitation process, which led to the selection of the [Neeser Construction](#) Construction, Inc. team. RISE is also responsible for coordination and administration



of the design and construction elements, maintenance of schedules and project activities, production of monthly project status reports, and oversight of quality control, project budget and document control. RISE also facilitates communication between the borough, the department and the Design-Build team in order to make sure design and construction progress is maintained and on schedule. Construction for the project began in March, with occupancy scheduled for early in 2012.



Ground preparation has begun on the \$240 million Goose Creek Correctional Center at Point Mackenzie. The official groundbreaking will be in June. (photo courtesy RISE Alaska)

FROM AROUND THE DEPARTMENT ...

At Spring Creek Correctional Center, Officers Brian Hutchinson and Joseph Beaudreault have been promoted to Correctional Officer III. Sgt. Hutchinson has been with DOC since October 2001, and has completed Training for Trainers, served as an FTO, RO and PTO. Sgt. Beaudreault has been with the Department since October 2003. He also has completed Training for Trainers and served as an FTO, RO and PTO. “Both Sergeants have demonstrated the leadership skills, understanding of security and the need for rehabilitative programs for offenders in preparing themselves for their new responsibilities,” said Superintendent Craig Turnbull, who acknowledged the nine other candidates who interviewed for the promotion. “It was a very close competition. SCCC is fortunate to have so many outstanding officers. Our future as an Institution and Department is secure knowing that we have a strong bench to go to for future promotions,” Turnbull added.

At the Anchorage Correctional Complex, Sgt. Suluia Augafa, who was promoted on March 23rd, took over the compliance position from Lt. Wilkerson. Sgt. Augafa was hired at the complex in January 2005. Sgt. Sean Moriarty, who was also promoted on March 23, took over the records position from Sgt. Sharkey. Sgt. Moriarty was hired at the complex in May 2006. Sgt. Jon Ellingwood, who started at the Complex in August 2006, will be taking over disciplinary and commissary position from Sgt. Chandler. “The Complex would like to congratulate all three of these individuals for there promotions as well as thank all of those that applied,” said Assistant Superintendent Robert Maccagno.