



**A report by COMMISSIONER JOE SCHMIDT
Alaska Department of Corrections
October 19, 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

DOC LEADERSHIP TEAM VISITS HUDSON CORRECTIONAL CENTER:

Commissioner Joe Schmidt and Deputy Commissioner Sam Edwards completed a tour of the department's new out of state contract facility in Hudson, Colorado on Oct. 6.

While they saw [Hudson Correctional Center](#), they were looking at Goose Creek. "At Hudson our recreation, property limits, hobby crafts, reformatory programs and education, for example, will all be fundamentally the same as what we are planning for Goose Creek," the Commissioner said. "It is important that inmates follow a similar activity schedule to what we are anticipating for Goose Creek. So our goal is a seamless transition to our new facility in 2012."

The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner met with the top management of Cornell Companies and with Hudson Warden Rick Veach. About 850 Alaska inmates will move from Red Rock Correctional Center in Eloy, Arizona to the new facility in Colorado sometime between Thanksgiving and the New Year. The Hudson facility is in the final weeks of construction, and when open it will house only Alaska inmates.

The \$80 million facility will have a total capacity of 1,250 with up to 225 employees. It is located about 30 miles northeast of Denver International Airport.

Classroom Opportunities



INMATE GRADUATION AT HMCC FEATURES COLLEGE PRESIDENT:

Beverly Patkotak Grinage, President of Ilisagvik College in Barrow was keynote speaker at the recent semi-annual graduation ceremony at Hiland Mountain Correctional Center in Eagle River.

In the past year Hiland has partnered with Ilisagvik to articulate its Building Trades program with Ilisagvik's Carpentry 1 occupational endorsement certificate. Eight students completed the 10 credit college certificate. Hiland's Building Trades programs are certified by the National Center for Construction Education and Research.

In addition to Ilisagvik, Hiland has partnered with the University of Alaska Anchorage's Chugiak-Eagle River Campus to provide college preparatory courses. "To become a successful college student, most first year college students need some preparatory courses in English and math to succeed in completing the college's general education requirements. We've provided those courses at Hiland to ensure that our students are ready for college level work upon release from prison," said Education Coordinator Joyce Oswald, M.Ed. The goal of the WCT grant is to increase educational opportunities while incarcerated, assisting releasing offenders with a successful transition to the community. Oswald said she hopes these efforts will lead to a reduction in recidivism for female offenders. Hiland had two students recently complete all of the college preparatory courses in English and has 10 students currently enrolled in a math course.

HMCC also offers a full complement of the University of Alaska Anchorage's Computer Information and Office Systems courses. One student completed the full series of five courses and 15 students at a

time are enrolled in the program in an ongoing effort to provide inmates with computer skills to ready them for the workforce upon release.

DOC PROBATION OFFICER STUDIES 'FIELD SEARCH' TECHNIQUES:

--By PO II Michael Reed

The Certified Field Search Instructor Course (CFSI) was put on by the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center – Rocky Mountain region. The course was designed to make the officers who completed it Instructors (subject matter experts) in the use of a program called “Field Search” which is used by police and probation in searches of offenders’ computers.



Adult Probation has been using the Field Search program for a few years now with excellent results. With this certification I will now be able to instruct other POs and law enforcement officers in the use of this program as a way to more closely monitor sex offenders in the community. I was lucky enough to be selected and the only officer from Alaska

as it was very competitive to get into this course. I was also fortunate that the local branch of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task force funded my attendance at the training.

Editor’s Note: PO II Reed is a certified corrections instructor and has been an adjunct instructor at the DOC Academy.

CORRECTIONS PROGRAM SET AT KENAI PENINSULA COLLEGE:

A corrections program at Kenai Peninsula College was approved by the UA Board of Regents on Sept. 25 and will be offered beginning in the spring 2010 semester. This program offers students the option of earning a 16-credit occupational endorsement certificate or a 31-credit undergraduate certificate, leading to careers as correctional officers, probation and parole officers, and criminal justice technicians.

Ruben Foster, KRC’s criminal justice adjunct instructor, who is also the Kenai District Supervisor and Parole/Probation Officer III for Alaska’s Department of Corrections, helped put the program together. “Those entering the program will leave with a good sense of the criminal justice system and corrections, verbal and written skills, and the capability of entering the workforce with a solid educational background,” Foster said. The program’s classes will be taught face to face at the Kenai River and Kachemak Bay campuses, and online anywhere in the state through KPC.

The program aims to help the Alaska Department of Corrections to meet its recruitment goals by providing students with the skills, knowledge and abilities they would need to enter the corrections field. The program will benefit not only students pursuing a career in corrections, but also those already working in the corrections field who want to refine their academic skills. According to Foster, there is already a continual need to fill positions in the corrections field, and when the Goose Creek Correctional Center opens in the Mat-Su area in 2012, the need will only increase. "There are institutions and facilities throughout the State of Alaska and likely there is one or two right in your own backyard," Foster said. "If a student dedicates themselves to learning about the corrections in Alaska and meets requirements for hire, they will have opportunity regardless of demand. Students who complete the certification or endorsement program will have a solid foundation with which to build their personal and professional lives on," Foster said. "I look forward to meeting the needs of students in this new and exciting program!"

In the news:

PIANKO PROMOTED TO 1ST STAFF POSITION AT GOOSE CREEK:

Lt. Cory Pianko has been promoted to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Goose Creek Correctional Center. He is the first person hired for the department's new facility which will open in 2012. "Cory has graciously accepted the enormous workload that lies ahead as we continue our preparations to bring this facility online," said Director of Institutions Garland Armstrong.

Mr. Pianko has extensive experience in law enforcement and corrections. He is retired from the California Highway Patrol, served with the Nevada Highway Patrol Training Academy and was a sergeant and probation/parole officer with Idaho Department of Corrections for (4) years. He was hired with Alaska DOC in January 2004 as a PO II and promoted to COIV in June 2006. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Criminal Justice and a Masters Degree in Organizational Management.



VIEW FROM THE AIR: Goose Creek construction site from the air courtesy Spring Creek Sgt. Joseph Beaudreault.

LEGISLATORS, STAFF TOUR GOOSE CREEK CONSTRUCTION SITE:



Members of the Alaska Legislature and a small group of staff persons took advantage of a sunny, pleasant day to tour the Goose Creek

Correctional Center construction site on Alsoop Road at Point Mackenzie. Jerry Neeser of Neeser Construction is at the center, Senator Linda Menard is to his right. Other legislators who participated include Reps. Bill Stoltze, Bob Lynn, Carl Gatto, Lindsey Holmes and Bob Herron.

NEW HIRES, TRANSFERS BOOST JCO ADMIN SERVICES SECTION:

Administrative Services Director Leslie Houston announced new hires and transfers at the Juneau Central Office. “We are very excited about our new team,” Houston said. “Thanks to everyone for their patience while we were short-staffed. We still have two positions to fill; we’re in the interview stage and should have these positions filled by the end of this month.”

Houston extended a thank-you to April Wilkerson “for serving as the Accountant V, OTA Tech, and Budget Manager. She did an amazing job at closing out FY2009, not an easy task under the circumstances. All the while, she continued to coordinate flurry of budget activity.”

New to the section are:

- **Devra Hayes, Accounting Technician III:** Devra handles OTA and Revenue collections. Most recently, Devra was an Accounting Tech II with the Dept of Environmental Conservation.
- **Marylyn Peralta, Accounting Technician III:** Marylyn is serving as the lead-Tech in Accounts Payable. Marylyn recently served as an Accounting Tech II for the Dept of Commerce.
- **Lilia Jaenicke, Budget Analyst II:** Lilia is expanding her horizons by transferring to the Budget Section, a position that was never filled previously. Lilia will be learning the budget system and will be handling RSAs.
- **Kevin Worley, Internal Auditor IV:** Most recently Kevin was the Chief Financial Officer for Retirement & Benefits. Kevin has been a State of Alaska Accountant for over 19 years; he holds an accounting degree from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.
- **Marilyn San Miguel, Accountant V:** Marilyn joins us from the Permanent Fund Corporation where she served as the Alternative Investments Accountant. Marilyn has a business degree with an emphasis in accounting and has over 7 years of state accountant experience.

OCTOBER 23rd LAST DAY TO PARTICIPATE IN SHARE CAMPAIGN:

The 2009 SHARE CAMPAIGN began on Sept. 14, and will run through Oct. 23. The goal is participation by 20 percent of all state employees, said statewide coordinator 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, on-line pledging.



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 Weldy and Kris Weixelman, Lemon Creek; Wendy Tremper, Point Mackenzie farm; and Patricia Schulpius, Hiland Mountain.



ALASKA STATE FAIR GRAND CHAMPION: A number of craft items made by inmates at Palmer Minimum hobby craft shop were entered in competition at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer. ‘The Pledge of Allegiance’ on a wooden flag stand was named Grand Champion for Wood Working/Scroll Work. L-R: Officer Moore, Sgt. Steinriede, inmate Ed Huntington, Superintendent Betts.

POINT MAC FARM RECORDS ANOTHER MILLION-POUND HARVEST:

Pt. Mackenzie Correctional Farm had another record-breaking year in agriculture with a total harvest of just over 1.070 million pounds. The farm produced just under 300,000 pounds of potatoes, 60,000 pounds of cabbage all the way through 115 pounds of apples and 9 pounds of dill. “The beautiful sunny days contributed to an extra large harvest,” said acting



superintendent Amy Rabeau. “We would like to thank all of the facilities for assisting us in developing an organized distribution system that expedited the transportation of fresh produce.” The farm distributed

produce to PCC, SCCC, Anchorage Correctional Complex, MSPT, FCC, Bethel, and Wildwood. (photo, above: Lt. Bernie Kohut, left, and farm manager Adam Boyd.)



COMMISSIONER SERVES AT GOVERNOR'S PICNIC IN JUNEAU: Commissioner Joe Schmidt joined other members of the Governor's cabinet in serving Juneau residents at the first Governor's Picnic on August 21. The picnic was held at Sandy Beach and drew a large crowd. Governor's Picnics are held each year in Anchorage, the Mat-Su, Fairbanks, and now, Juneau.