

Let's Talk

VOLUME 25, NO. 2

Public Perceptions and Corrections



Senior Years...
Golden Years?

With a Little Help
from Their Friends

Literacy 2000



Correctional Service
Canada

Service correctionnel
Canada

Canada

Let's Talk

Let's Talk is published by the Communications and Consultation Sector of the Correctional Service of Canada.

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ISSN 0715-285X

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Printed in Canada on Recycled Paper

Let's Talk

2000 VOL. 25, NO. 2

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Reaching Out To Help One Another

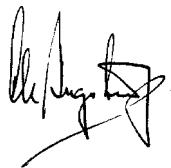
Just as Canada's population is growing older, so too is CSC's inmate population. Older offenders currently make up 17 percent of the total offender population, and that number continues to grow.

CSC is responding to this issue, with the establishment of an Older Offender Division in the Correctional Operations and Programs Sector, under the leadership of Marie-Andrée Drouin. This group will become a focal point in our efforts to provide adequate care for people who are growing old in our institutions. But what is most encouraging is that inmates themselves are getting organized to help themselves, and have shown that they too are willing and able to help take care of their aging comrades.

Earlier in June, Joey Ellis, a Correctional Supervisor at Mountain Institution, was honoured with the Public Service's Award of Excellence 2000, for her outstanding contribution to CSC and her exceptional performance as a federal public servant. Joey has been the Champion of the Palliative Caregivers Program over the past three years, which has graduated more than 45 offenders who are trained to provide support and comfort to those in need. This program recognizes that our institutions are like small communities, and it is inmates themselves who are the families and support system for each other.

In this edition of Let's Talk, you will have an opportunity to read about this innovative program, through the first "Duo Web" article to be published. This means that the story on older offenders is complemented by much more information posted on CSC's Internet site, so that you can pursue your interest through the magic of electronic publishing. Duo Web articles will become a regular edition of future editions of the magazine, so your comments and feedback are welcome.

I believe that the way in which CSC's deals with older offenders will help to foster greater understanding among Canadians for our work. The image of an elderly inmate does not correspond to the public stereotype of inmates, nor does the compassionate offender who has been trained as a care-giver. If in the future, some of these offenders return to the community and use their skills to help others who are ill, I have no doubt that it will further break down barriers to safe and successful reintegration.



Ole Ingstrup
Commissioner
Correctional Service Canada





Public Perceptions and Corrections

*By Graham Chartier, Communications Officer,
Communications and Consultation Sector*

One of the greatest sources of frustration for corrections professionals is how little Canadians know about our business. Public opinion research has demonstrated again and again that most Canadians have little or no knowledge of corrections and conditional release. Instead, public attitudes are based on myths and misperceptions. And these perceptions can often be attributed to the media.

The electronic and print media, whether news or entertainment, provide Canadians with most of the information they receive on corrections. Often, the old newsroom adage “If it bleeds, it leads” governs what Canadians see. The popular perceptions created by the daily blizzard of this type of information make it harder for the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) to gain public understanding of its work and threaten many of the policies and practices which contribute to good corrections. In addition, media coverage has served to increase Canadians’ fear of crime and has contributed to a decline of confidence in the criminal justice system.

LEVELS OF CREDIBILITY

According to a 1998 Environics survey, the police and victims’ groups enjoy the highest credibility (67 per cent and 61 per cent respectively) among Canadians, followed by academics (57 per cent) and the media (43 per cent). Government officials – whether federal or provincial – are only

trusted by approximately one out of three Canadians and only 12 per cent believe that the judiciary is a credible source of information.

Despite the media’s credibility problems, however, its various forms constitute one of the most powerful institutions in society. The constant bombardment of sensational media reports on crime and violence has clearly had an impact on Canadian opinion. Unfortunately, there is little public suspicion that media coverage exaggerates the extent of these problems.

SEEING IS BELIEVING

In the book *Visualizing Deviance: A Study of News Organizations*, Richard Ericson and others examine how the media, and in particular the news media, play an important role in defining and shaping the public’s notion of behaviour that has strayed from the normal or, as they term it, deviance. In their examination of the role of news organizations, the authors claim that knowledge created by the media “is a social and public mechanism for ordering the world, and thus is an instrument for social control and a condition for social order.”

“The primary goal of knowledge production is control of the environment and those who people it. It is to render them knowable, to make them more predictable.”

Each night on television, documentary-styled shows, such as “Cops,” not only straddle the line between news reporting and entertainment but also help create the impression that crime is rampant in our society. These shows are typically broadcast in time slots similar to game shows and news from the entertainment industry, and they contain video footage of police chasing and apprehending people suspected of a crime. Disclaimers carried on these shows



High-profile offenders are always a magnet for the media. But those who are more typical of our population, and who represent the majority of those we deal with, do not attract similar media attention.

stating that no one is guilty until so found in a court of law seem incongruous when suspects are depicted doing all they can to avoid police officers.

Ericson et al. report that an examination of print news reports revealed that, when compared to crime statistics, crimes of sex and violence were 14 to 20 times over-represented. While such serious crimes deserve the media's and thereby the public's attention, their over-representation helps perpetuate the perception that these kinds of crimes are more prevalent than they actually are.

In examining television content other than news, the authors note that shows featuring crime and law enforcement have historically averaged between one quarter and one third of all dramatic programming.

These images also show the public that crime is rampant in our society. The popularity of all these programs may be part of the explanation as to why 77 per cent of Canadians view crime as increasing even though crime rates have been decreasing since 1991.

MEDIA ATTENTION PAID TO CORRECTIONS

Despite all the attention paid to crime and the sentences offenders receive, there is comparatively little attention paid to the correctional process that begins after sentencing and certainly even less coverage that is accurate.

Since the early part of the 20th century, the entertainment media have produced many films with a prison setting such as "The Birdman of Alcatraz," "Le Party," "Cool Hand Luke," "The Shawshank Redemption," "Con Air" and many more. In general, these have used prisons and penitentiary settings as a metaphor of unjust and cruel punishment rather than as a platform to provoke discussions of actual correctional issues. It is extremely difficult to identify films which have offered a balanced perspective about the correctional system, similar to what "Dead Man Walking" tried to achieve in its exploration of the death penalty.

In most instances, these films portray correctional officers and wardens as corrupt and sadistic, prison populations as constantly preying on each other and correctional programs as either non-existent or totally ineffective. Rare indeed are films that show correctional institutions as places of justice or personal reform.

While television has seldom portrayed life in a penitentiary, the current American series "Oz," while awash in violence, has at least portrayed staff as committed professionals trying to get offenders into effective programs. It also shows the inmates as being motivated by human feelings, including caring for one's family.



The news media do not inform the public how every day some 13,000 offenders in federal penitentiaries and another 9,000 in the community are safely managed by CSC with little if any risk to the general public. If the police apprehend a high-profile murder suspect, it attracts a great deal of attention and results in much praise for law enforcement officials. However, CSC's efforts to safely manage thousands of offenders in institutions or under supervision in the community attract virtually no attention because those on their way to becoming law-abiding members of the community are not considered newsworthy. Instead, the media focus is on disturbances at institutions, an assault on another inmate or staff, or a sensational crime committed by an offender while on conditional release. High-profile offenders are always magnets for the media. But those who are more typical of our population, and who represent the majority of those we deal with, do not attract similar media attention.

WHAT KIND OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM DO CANADIANS WANT?

While polls may show that Canadians rank crime and justice issues well down the list of national priorities, these issues are very important at the community level. But sur-

prisingly, Canadians are much more tolerant than either politicians or the media would have us believe.

For example, there is strong public support for governments to deal with the root causes of crime through social development programs. Ekos reported that Canadians prefer investing in crime prevention over law enforcement by a margin of more than two to one. A 1998 survey found that 58 per cent of Canadians believe that the primary purpose of corrections should be rehabilitation as opposed to punishment. And 85 per cent of Canadians – according to Angus Reid – favour alternatives to incarceration for low-risk, non-violent offenders.

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO CORRECT MISPERCEPTIONS?

Plainly, the images presented in the entertainment and news media present a strong challenge if CSC is going to change some of the public perceptions of the criminal justice system in general and the Canadian correctional system in particular.

Given the public's lack of knowledge and the myths and misinformation which shape its attitudes, there is a critical need to provide Canadians with straightforward, factual information. Not only can it serve to raise public awareness about these issues, but it will allow Canadians to participate in a more informed public debate. However, it is not easy to change public attitudes without a sustained, long-term commitment. Similarly, changing public attitudes does not come cheaply, so the criminal justice system must be prepared to invest sufficient resources to make inroads in Canadian public opinion.

CSC is now devoting more effort to reach Canadians without having to rely on the news and entertainment media. Products like "Inside Out – A Teacher's Guide to Corrections and Conditional Release" (now available in 2,300 Canadian high schools) will never warrant any media attention, but they are having a positive impact on perceptions and attitudes. CSC's challenge is to continue to find ways to deliver information directly to the "grass-roots."

Every CSC employee can play a role in this effort because, in the final analysis, we are the best ambassadors of the correctional system. Anyone wishing to play a greater role should visit the Public Education section of CSC's new Internet site, to obtain communications tools and ideas. ♦

New Feature!

The “Duo-Web” article

A “**Duo-Web**” article is a condensed version in *Let’s Talk* of an article about a topic, problem or initiative that appears in its full electronic version on the CSC’s website. Publishing the article in digest form in the magazine saves us printing costs while giving you the benefit of more details and illustrations on the Web.



“**Duo-Web**” is a flexible service that lets you showcase your work for your fellow CSC members and for the international community as well.

Of course, we are counting on you, our readers, to share your comments with us after you’ve read the first Duo-Web article.

Are the Senior Years Really the Golden Years for Older Offenders?



By Pierre Simard, Editor-in-Chief, Let’s Talk and Director, Multimedia Services

It’s not easy to grow old in prison. While many people refer to old age as “the golden years,” older inmates must have thought of it more as the Stone Age until recently. Thanks to the work of pioneers such as Pacific Region’s Joey Ellis and Jack Stewart, the system is changing. It’s a long way from British Columbia to Ottawa, yet these two people have made their voices heard while starting a process of change that gives older offenders their own voice.

Until recently, the aging of the inmate population was considered a minor concern. However, it is a reality that is increasingly difficult to ignore. Statistics tell us that the population in general is aging, and our institutional population has not escaped the trend. These older offenders are seeking supportive care in the areas of health and nutrition, exercise, recreational activities and the quality of their living environment.

INNOVATION AT MOUNTAIN INSTITUTION

With the help of her colleagues, management and volunteers, Joey Ellis, a Correctional Supervisor at Mountain Institution, has trained fifty-two peer caregivers to take care of other, older inmates in poor health.

Today, a handful of peer caregivers proudly display their graduation certificates on their cell walls and deliver physical and emotional support to aging inmates under the supervision of the institution’s medical staff.

Jack Stewart, Senior Parole Officer in the Fraser Valley, has used the caregivers’ services to help seniors residing at the Sumas Community Correctional Centre (CCC). The experiment was a success. The caregivers like working in a CCC because it gets them out into the community and gives them hope. The program also contributes to the reintegration of offenders who have the capacity to contribute to society. Furthermore, elderly offenders receive extra care and comfort.



Joey Ellis, Correctional Supervisor, Mountain Institution

Photo: Pierre Simard



Randy Simpson, Caregiver

Photo: Pierre Simard

IMPROVING CONDITIONS FOR OLDER OFFENDERS EVERYWHERE

The CSC recently created an Older Offenders Division under the directorship of Marie-Andrée Drouin. The Division is mandated to develop a correctional strategy that will improve conditions for our aging clientele. Marie-Andrée set out on a tour of the regions to gather information from elderly offenders, staff members and volunteers.

YOU CAN HELP

Visit the CSC site (<http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca>) to learn more about how the CSC, younger and older offenders, and our community partners are joining together to improve the quality of life for all long-term offenders. Read what inmates themselves have to say – both those who will probably serve the remainder of their lives in prison, and others who are learning to give back to the community by caring for their aging peers.

Share the experience of the Correctional Service of Canada pioneers who are determined to support older offenders who want to improve the quality of their lives. We hope these “Duo-Web” articles will promote and support new, similar initiatives elsewhere in Canada.

Happy surfing! ♦



Left to right: Brenda Lamm, A/Area Director, Fraser Valley District Parole Office; Susan Larson, Community Parole Officer; David Shacter, Caregiver, Sumas CCC; Jack Stewart, Senior Parole Officer, Fraser Valley; Marie-Andrée Drouin; Nancy Janzen, Chief, Health Services, Mountain Institution

Photo: Pierre Simard

Elderly Offenders

Getting By With a Little Help from Their Friends

By Dennis Finlay, Regional Communications Manager, Pacific Region

In Abbotsford, B.C., a Handi-Dart bus pulls up to the front entrance of a building. An elderly man emerges in his wheelchair and the driver gingerly helps him board the small bus adapted to provide transportation for people who are physically challenged.

It is a typical, commonplace scene in the community, but one now being enacted daily in an unusual place – the Sumas Community Correctional Centre (SCCC).

The number of elderly offenders in Canada’s correctional institutions is growing and the Pacific Region has initiated a project to address the problem of providing a humane system of caring for the senior citizens among its inmate population.

The Handi-Dart bus is now a regular sight at the facility. It’s cheaper than a taxi and easier on the offenders’ tight budgets.

Three housing units at the Sumas CCC have been dedicated to accommodate elderly and infirm offenders. Many of them have serious difficulty in properly caring for themselves. They are weak and often suffer

from a variety of debilitating illnesses. Most of them are serving long sentences. Some will die here.

FACTS ABOUT AGING OFFENDERS

The number of older offenders held in custody by the Correctional Service of Canada is growing at a much faster rate than that of younger offenders.

Inmates who are 50 years of age and older now comprise 12 per cent (1,600) of the institutional population. Thirty-eight per cent of the lifers group will be 55 or older before they become eligible for parole.

The older inmate category includes people incarcerated for long periods of time who have grown old in prison; repeat offenders (chronic recidivists) who have been incarcerated numerous times; and others serving their first sentence. The number of older offenders has increased by 500 over the past four years.

Interestingly, this greying of inmates is not confined to Canada. The number of

elderly inmates in the United States has ballooned by 750 per cent over the past 20 years. Nearly 50,000 prisoners in U.S. state and federal prisons are 55 years of age or older.

Geriatric offenders are estimated to cost up to three times more to maintain in a regular institution and their health costs cannot be shared with, or offset by, provincial government health plans.

THE RELIEF PROGRAM

The Sumas CCC project is called the RELIEF program. RELIEF stands for *Reintegration Effort for Long-term Infirm and Elderly Federal Offenders*.

“This is something we had to do,” said Jack Stewart, Senior Parole Officer at the CCC and the person responsible for operating the RELIEF program.

The program is unique in Canada not only because of the concentration of elderly offenders at one facility, but also because the infirm offenders are being cared for by

other, younger offenders who received caregiver training at the medium security Mountain Institution.

There are four infirm offenders, one caregiver and a caregiver's aide in each of the dedicated units.

The caregivers were trained initially at the medium security Mountain Institution to provide basic assistance such as wheelchair pushing, helping inmates remember to come for their treatments at the institution's Health Clinic, housekeeping and hygiene.

The caregivers who were involved with the program soon recognized the requirement for further training in order to meet the needs of their peers.

Mountain Institution implemented a program of care for long-term offenders. This program consisted of training peer counsellors in basic living skills, as well as chronic and infectious diseases. The caregivers have been trained to provide housekeeping services to the disabled and assist the more vulnerable inmates in maintaining a healthy lifestyle while incarcerated.

The offenders' training consists of CPR, St. John's Ambulance, AIDS-101, Healing Your Spirit and Dealing with Grief and Bereavement. This program has been highly successful among Aboriginal groups and ethnic groups, and spiritual leaders of all denominations have provided sessions on grief, bereavement and dying.



Caregiver Randy, left, goes over the day's schedule with wheelchair-bound offender/patient Les, at the Sumas CCC.

All offenders in the program demonstrate and use the knowledge and skills they gained from core programs, i.e., Cognitive Living Skills and Anger Management. The caregiver group meets weekly with Health Services and Security to discuss any issues concerning client care.

Caregivers are taught to look after offenders with AIDS. They are supportive and encourage the offenders not to isolate themselves. They strive to help them find meaningful employment and stay motivated in life. Offenders who have taken the caregiver program are well respected within the population and always in demand. They have been carefully screened and recommended by their Case Management Team as suitable program participants.

Through this program, offenders learn to care about others and be a friend to persons in need. They are part of the caring community and provide a valuable service to the prison population. Mountain Institution currently has ten inmate caregivers.

Mr. Stewart mentioned proposals to expand the project to include 14 infirm offenders and 10 caregivers. However, getting the caregivers released from the medium security Mountain Institution is an obstacle to the RELIEF program, he says, and caregivers must be trained at other facilities.

"We know there are enough guys at Mountain Institution who have been trained to participate in the program," Mr. Stewart

said, "but they are having trouble for a number of reasons getting released to the CCC."

Developing more caregivers is essential because "this is the future of Sumas," Mr. Stewart added. He said the plan is to turn the CCC into "a village" for infirm and elderly offenders. "The concept of a village...is still evolving," he added.

The first group in the program was introduced at Sumas on January 16, 1999. It consisted of five elderly offenders and two caregivers.

The facility's capacity is 80, with double-bunking. Today, its count stands around 55.

Sumas Director Ken Mattinson said CSC needs this type of facility, considering the growing needs of its greying population. "This hasn't been done anywhere in Canada before...with federal offenders," he added.

The program has led to increased links with medical doctors, hospitals and a wide variety of agencies and organizations that can assist the work.

THE CAREGIVER'S TASK

Caregivers currently take a three-month course on all aspects of providing comfort and care for the infirm and elderly.

Randy is a serious man who looks as if he would fit very well in a lumber camp. His gruff appearance belies the compassion and tenderness he displays in caring for one of his elderly charges at the CCC.

"We don't consider them our patients, they're our friends," he pointed out. "We just try to give these guys a comfortable day. We make sure they're warm, well fed and rested."

His chores include ensuring that his friends take their medication, helping them shower, making their beds, getting them in and out of their wheelchairs and moving around, and lending a hand to keep their rooms clean.

He said he enjoys his work with these offenders, but felt shaken up when one of the patients died of cancer. He said it was his task to help the man die with dignity. "That's what we do - we help each other."

Randy was busy helping an offender named Les who has been at Sumas CCC since the caregiver program began. He is confined to a wheelchair.

Les was playing hockey 30 months ago, Randy said. But today his body is weakening, as he suffers from cerebral atrophy with progressive deterioration.

Still, Les is able to groom the cats in the ARK Program, a joint Sumas CCC/SPCA venture to care for and house cats. Les said

"We don't consider them our patients, they're our friends. We just try to give these guys a comfortable day. We make sure they're warm, well fed and rested."

Caregiver Randy

this work is excellent therapy for him. He added that there was nothing for him to do at his previous institution.

He also described the Sumas CCC as much “more accommodating” to him as a challenged person than his previous institution.

He related how helpful Randy is to him, and mentioned that Randy even helped him plan his garden.

He added that he is “honoured to be here.”

Another caregiver, James, explained that the three units for the elderly and infirm differ by the level of care required by the offenders in each house.

One house has offenders with high needs and is equipped primarily to accommodate seriously challenged or handicapped people. “This is an intensive care home,” said James

who has an impressive array of health care certificates. “Other houses are for guys who are semi-independent.”

Randy and James keep detailed logs on each patient/friend.

“If they can’t speak, we speak for them.”

The log keeps track of the patients’ likes and dislikes, their allergies and other relevant information.

Randy and James often provide more than physical nurturing. As Les pointed out, “I can take Randy and James aside. I can talk with them one on one.”

The program has been judged a success to date.

PLANS FOR EXPANSION

A proposal has been submitted to expand the RELIEF program “to assume a larger

and more structured role in the reintegration of elderly and infirm offenders in the Pacific Region.” It will entail four self-contained, six-bedroom houses.

One house would accommodate up to six high needs residents who require 24-hour caregiver availability due to the severity of their medical conditions, disabilities and mobility problems.

Six caregivers would provide constant care to this house on a rotating basis. The other houses would be for low and medium needs offenders, with one for the caregivers working in the intensive care house.

The Sumas CCC is also proposing to expand the partnership with the SPCA under the ARK Program which now shelters up to 50 cats and includes kennels for up to 50 dogs. ♦

A Career at Prison for Women A Personal View

By Louisa Coates, Communications Officer, Communications and Consultation Sector



Photo: Louisa Coates

Jeannine Petit retired this year, after 27 years as a correctional officer at Prison for Women.

Kingston’s Prison for Women closed its doors forever to inmates this past July. Moving the offenders closer to families and friends is in line with the Mission of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), which believes in helping find support for the women, in order to assist their safe reintegration into society. Although the closure of Prison for Women was planned for some time, one long-time staff member would have been willing to keep working at the 66 year-old institution.

Jeannine Petit is the Correctional Service of Canada’s longest-serving female correctional officer and retired when the facility closed. She worked at Prison for Women for 27 years. Last year, staff organized a party for her birthday, but also to celebrate her long service at Canada’s first all-female prison.

To talk to Madame Petit, as she was known by staff and offenders alike, was to learn about the history of one of the system’s most interesting institutions and to understand the satisfaction derived from working with offenders. “I liked them all, there was never an offender I didn’t like,” she told the *Let’s Talk* reporter one afternoon this past

spring. “I loved my job and only wish I had discovered this kind of work earlier in my life.”

Tall and slender, with immaculately styled white hair, gold-rimmed glasses and a no-nonsense and dignified manner, Jeannine Petit grew up near Quebec City. Her mother died when she was young and her father enrolled her in a Catholic girls’ school in Ottawa. She says those years at

Jeannine Petit is the Correctional Service of Canada’s longest-serving female Correctional Officer and retired when the facility closed. She worked at Prison for Women for 27 years.

Les Soeurs de la Sagesse Convent were happy ones. She married at 21 and had five children.

In 1973, when her children were mostly grown, Madame Petit decided to find a job “doing something useful.” She was living in Kingston and applied to be a steward in the kitchen of one of CSC’s facilities, but missed out to another CSC employee. “But you could begin tomorrow if you would like to become a correctional officer,” said the recruiting officer. Today, she says she owes her career direction to the persistence of this man. The next week, she walked up the steps of Prison for Women and began her new work as a correctional officer.

Located downtown, a half-block away from Kingston Penitentiary, the recently closed maximum security Prison for Women looks like many other heritage buildings in Kingston: its thick grey limestone walls reach three stories, its windows, now covered in wire mesh, have decorative lintels and a wall encloses the large property to the rear. A stone footpath leads to the front door.

Madame Petit cared deeply for the offenders. “I like the feeling I am making a difference in their lives.”

Inside, visitors faced a large metal door, guarded round-the-clock by security staff. Beyond the door, in the main foyer, the walls are pale yellow and there is a musty smell of radiator-heated air, giving the impression of an old building that has seen many people pass through its hallways.

This past spring, a variety of staff were on hand to care for the few offenders still remaining in the prison. Warden Thérèse LeBlanc and Deputy Warden Lori MacDonald agreed there was a lot involved in maintaining the manually-operated facility, which often requires staff to use Folger Adams keys – oversized, metal keys that cannot be duplicated – to open doors. “There was no electronic system here, everything was a big deal to operate,” says MacDonald.

The remaining offenders at Prison for Women were classified as maximum security or required intensive mental health treatment services.

At present, new units are being completed within the five regional facilities for women to provide accommodation for these maximum security women offenders and those with mental health and other special needs.

It comes as no surprise that Jeannine Petit would remain at Prison for Women until it closed. Some offenders lived at the facility for their entire sentence and called it home. Madame Petit provided stability for the women, as well as the discipline and order that have become her trademark, in addition to her charm. She was committed to staying with them until they left.

“Some of these women told me, ‘Madame Petit, this is my home, I don’t want to go.’ They were nervous when they were admitted and then they are jittery when they left. I tried to help them gain a little confidence in themselves.

“I was accepted by the offenders, even though I am very strict. But they knew that when I said no, I meant no, and they didn’t ask me a second time. I raised my children that way, too. Eventually, the staff accepted me and now I guess they respect me because I have been around for so long.”

“She is like the matriarch of the family and she is so gracious, so genuine,” said Deputy Warden Lori MacDonald.

Madame Petit worked for most of her career directly with the inmates, but after an illness three years ago, she returned to a new position as Admissions and Discharge Officer. While other officers wear uniforms, she wore her own clothes in her last few years at work. “I liked wearing a uniform, it was less expensive. But I always wore a skirt, I never wore slacks,” she said.

Although she has dedicated herself completely to her work, at the end of the day, she went home and never mentioned what went on. “I have been very happy here. Sometimes you have bad situations and you have to work very hard during the crisis, but when it is over, you must maintain your balance and be able to get over it,” she said.

In conversation, Madame Petit finds something positive to say about each of the offenders for whom she has cared. One inmate was known for her temper and fits of rage, but Madame Petit says she is one of the few who admitted her crime and expressed remorse. Madame Petit’s sense of fairness and a firm hand have earned her

respect among the inmates. A few years ago, she accompanied a woman being transferred from Kingston to the Pacific Region. As she walked across the prison yard in Vancouver, kilometres from home, she heard her name called out, “Madame Petit! How are you?” and turned to see an offender she had looked after years ago in Kingston. “Yes, it feels good to have been remembered, after all those years,” she said.

Jeannine Petit has many stories about the 150 offenders for whom she has cared. There were the seven inmates who refused all food except hot water with honey and garlic and yet one still had the strength and rage of a lion when they tried to pick her up. Then there were the two women who were too strong for her to control, or the ones who have kept in touch by sending her cards.

How does a woman who has devoted her life to assisting often confused and violent women view the changes that have taken place within the system? Madame Petit speaks from the heart. “I think the biggest change was with unit management,” she says. Until the early 1980s, the warden and “guards” had traditionally run the prison, but that changed and offenders are now managed in groups or “units” by correctional officers who have direct, daily contact with them and try to help them change. Madame Petit cares deeply for the offenders. “I like the feeling I am making a difference in their lives.” But she also believes in a more traditional approach to dealing with them. “They broke society’s rules, so I don’t think they should expect special treatment.” ♦

“She is like the matriarch of the family and she is so gracious, so genuine.”

*Lori MacDonald
Deputy Warden*

CSC's International Literacy Conference Literacy 2000 Towards Reintegration

By Louisa Coates, Communications Officer, Communications and Consultation Sector

Photos: Ron Devries

Literacy is a key issue for offenders in Canada and elsewhere in the world. Research by the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) shows that 62 per cent of offenders entering penitentiaries test at a level lower than Grade 8, and 82 per cent lower than Grade 10. Offenders released into society with poor reading or writing skills stand a greater chance of re-offending and returning to prison. The reverse is also true: offenders with at least Grade 8 literacy skills show a marked reduction in recidivism.

This past May, the Correctional Service of Canada hosted "Literacy 2000 – Towards Reintegration," an international conference held in Ottawa to give international educators a forum for discussing what works, what's new and current issues in the field of correctional education. Sponsored by the Correctional Service of Canada, with assistance from the American Federal Bureau of Prisons, the conference attracted more than 750 delegates, most of them from Canada and the U.S., but also from Europe, Africa and Asia.

"This conference represented an excellent opportunity for our own staff to learn from people around the world who are immersed in prison education, and who have a tremendous body of knowledge, experience and insight into the area of literacy," said Marc Brideau, Director of Reintegration Programs at CSC.

The conference was the first ever of its kind in correctional education, and attracted 175 presenters from 21 countries. "This was a really unique event. Correctional staff from around the world came to share ideas that will, I believe, play a strong role in helping offenders reintegrate safely back into society," said Gilles Lacasse, Conference Manager and Assistant Warden of Correctional Programs at Cowansville Institution.

The conference aimed to publicly recognize correctional teachers, emphasize the role of correctional education in reintegrat-



Reverend Pierre Allard and Commissioner Ole Ingstrup present Correctional Education Recognition Award to CSC educator Margaret Meyer



Dr. Kathleen Sawyer, Federal Bureau of Prisons



Bea Fisher, Senior Education Project Manager, Prairie Region, CSC

ing offenders into society, create an international network of experts and share successful educational practices.

"Literacy skills are considered a fundamental part of Canadian federal offenders' correctional plans," Denis Barbe, Manager of CSC's Correctional Education and Employment Programs, told the group in his welcoming remarks on the first day.

CONFERENCE PLENARY SESSIONS

High-profile guests at the conference included CSC Commissioner Ole Ingstrup, Dr. Kathleen Sawyer of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Judith Heumann of the United States Department of Education and J. Duprey of the European Prison Education Association.

The conference featured plenary sessions over the three days. They focused on the four cornerstones of correctional education: literacy, special learning needs, technology and career development and teaching for independent learning.

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM BEFORE CONFERENCE

Bea Fisher, a Senior Education Project Manager at Saskatchewan Penitentiary, and Randall Wright, an educator at Edmonton Institution, told delegates about the international symposium think-tank she co-chaired prior to the conference. Forty international participants met in small focus groups to create an international framework for education in prisons based on UNESCO's four pillars of education: developing learning skills to use throughout life, acquiring productive skills to earn a living, developing the capacity to work with others and developing the human mind and body.

CANADIAN WORKSHOP PRESENTERS

During workshops, several unique programs for offender students were described by the Canadian educators who developed them.

Gary Sears, an educator at Edmonton Institution, described the "Values-Based Program" he developed for use in a maximum-security facility. Sears and his colleagues create an educational plan together with each offender. Once the plan begins,

Education Programs

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) offers educational programs at each of its minimum, medium and maximum security institutions.

Offenders are tested when they arrive at an institution, and if their results are below Grade 12, they are encouraged to attend education programs. Each institution has a school, and there are a total of 90 staff teachers and 190 contract teachers across CSC.

Education programs include Adult Basic Education (Grades 1 to 8), secondary education (to Grade 12) and vocational trades. Education programs account for 40 per cent of CSC's program budget; other programs address sex offenders, violence prevention and substance abuse.

"We believe that a Grade 12 education and math and computer skills are basic requirements to finding a job today."

*Gilles Lacasse
Assisant Warden, Correctional
Programs, Cowansville Institution*



Julie Ostiguy, Remedial Teacher, Quebec Region, CSC



Randall Wright, Senior Vice-President, Excalibur Educator, Prairie Region, CSC



Stacey Shields, Gary Sears, Phyllis Fleck, Educators, Prairie Region, CSC

they teach grades 1 to 12 Adult Basic Education material using a number of well-researched approaches that assist the learning process.

"If there is success at school, a feeling of competence spills over into other areas of the offender's life," said Mr. Sears.

"Seamless education" is built into the teaching methods used at CSC. Studying fractions can be linked "seamlessly" to social studies, for example, by studying the number of emigrants leaving 19th century Ireland (math) while learning about the Irish famine (social studies).

"Correctional educators incorporate content, thinking skills and values throughout the education program," said Edmonton Institution's Phyllis Fleck, who presented her "best practices" English-as-a-Second Language teaching strategy and lesson plans handbook at the conference. "I have been an educator for most of my career, but working with offenders has been the most rewarding experience of all," she said.

Other approaches used by CSC educators include Cognet, a thinking skills program which was adapted for the Service by Bea Fisher. It encourages offenders to stop and think throughout the learning process

(instead of simply reacting to situations). Offenders are encouraged to ask rational questions during the process: Why would this occur? What would I do? How does that person feel?

Randall Wright, whose doctoral thesis focuses on the knowledge of correctional educators, said learning disabilities are a major issue for offenders. "We deal with alcohol syndrome and attention deficit disorder; learning disabilities can range from 20 to 80 per cent of offenders," he said. He and staff from Excalibur, which supplies contract educators to CSC, use non-traditional teaching methods, such as focusing on one area of learning at a time, reading scripted plays in small groups to encourage pro-social behaviour and analyze characters, peer tutoring and so on.

Julie Ostiguy of Cowansville Institution in Quebec described a program she uses with offenders with learning disabilities. Research shows many of these students have a higher than average intelligence. The Learning Strategies program she teaches focuses on how a student thinks and learns; the offender is seen as the key player in his own learning. "This course is the first of its

"One of the major challenges faced by teachers is preparing offenders for a world that offers fewer jobs in manual labour and more jobs that demand knowledge-based and computer skills."

Bea Fisher



Mary Stephenson, Writers in Prison Network, England receives an Offender Literacy Poster Contest Award from Dr. Lena Green, Educational Psychologist, University of Cape Town, South Africa

kind for adult offenders in Quebec and results have been positive: many offenders with learning disorders are now enrolled in other correctional programs, and feel more positive about learning,” she said.

Robert Aitken, a curriculum consultant in Vancouver, B.C., presented provocative information about emotional intelligence. Howard Gardner of Harvard University said, “The question is not, ‘How smart are you, but how are you smart,’” in other words, students have many kinds of intelligence and teachers can help them learn literacy skills by capitalizing on their particular strengths. “We need to help students develop their emotional intelligence – understanding others’ feelings – as well as their literacy and vocational skills, if they are going to be employable and successful at work and in relationships,” he said.

Mark Walker, a trainer and educator with CSC’s CORCAN – which employs offenders in industry-related jobs – described the data entry program for offenders which develops computer skills as well as cooperation with others. “We put effort over ability every time,” he said, referring to the importance of attitude to the offenders’ eventual reintegration.

INTERNATIONAL PRESENTERS

Jewel Kesler and Steve Steurer of the Maryland Correctional Education Peer Tutoring Program presented a simulated activity to give the audience a sense of what it is like to be illiterate. Their peer tutoring relies on traditional language learning, phonetics, phonics and comprehension activities based on everyday life.



From left to right: Monique Bérubé, *Marty Maltby, Doreen Sterling, Suzanne St-Jacques, *Diane Charron, Christine Charron, Winn Lambert-Meek, Lise Charron, Chin Yeung, Valerie Racine, *Heather Lockwood, *Gilles Lacasse, Mike Charron, Brian Ham and Marlène Roy. Missing Louisa Coates (* conference organizers)



Denis Barbe, Manager, Correctional Education and Employment Programs, CSC



Roger Williams, Associate Director, Bendigo Regional Office, Australian Department of Training and Further Education



Mark Walker, Educator, CORCAN, CSC

“Although the purpose of the program is to assist poor readers, the peer tutoring program also creates a sense of community service within the institution. We use hundreds of inmate tutors on a daily basis, which contributes to educational advances among students and responsibility among tutors. It is has grown to be highly respected by staff and inmates,” said Mr. Steurer.

Roger Williams, Associate Director of the Bendigo Regional Office in the Australian Department of Training and Further Education, told the group there is no national system of prisons in his country. He discussed the needs and challenges of Aboriginal offenders. “Australia is a modern and wealthy country with some best practice corrections education and training achievements, such as using an integrated approach that links vocational education and training practices, planning and research,” he told delegates.

Mary Stephenson, an artist employed by the Writers in Prison Network in England,

told the group about how she uses radio, music and poetry to motivate offenders into expressing their emotions and ideas without the fear of spelling mistakes or reading difficulties. She brought examples of their work on CD, audio cassette and in magazine format, and brainstormed with the audience on ways in which to address literacy through the arts.

Dr. Carol Comolli of the Community Correctional Centre in Juneau, Alaska talked about the two-year old pilot program she oversees that was developed for socially and culturally diverse offenders. She applies the theory of how people learn their first language to other areas of learning. She said that, for learning to be meaningful, it has to be tied to one’s own environment or “context”, and that material needs to focus on cultural elements that the person in question can relate to – and the rest should be dropped. “It’s a method that has teeth in it, it really works,” she said. ♦

Corporal André Bigras

Helping People with Difficult Lives

By Louisa Coates, Communications Officer, Communications and Consultation Sector

André Bigras has worked with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for 25 years and could retire at any time, but he is not ready: he's too busy! His career has included different positions of responsibility, but all with the goal of helping people with difficult lives.

As well as working with the RCMP, Corporal Bigras joined the board of directors of Inner City Ministries, an organization that helps the needy in Ottawa, became an ordained minister and wants to be increasingly involved with offenders. He spends as many as three nights a week as a street counsellor helping homeless people. "I love what I do and I think that a lot of people have not had a fair chance and simply fall into a life of crime," Bigras said from his office in the Drug Enforcement Wing of the RCMP, overlooking the Rideau River in Ottawa.

GETTING INVOLVED

Corporal Bigras is the RCMP's Drug Awareness Service Coordinator. As an educator, he speaks to correctional officers, educators, schools, health professionals and even parents of home schooling groups about drugs. In addition, Bigras recently became a volunteer with the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) and often serves as an offender escort at Kingston's Pittsburgh Institution. He has been nominated to sit on the board of the International Association of Justice Volunteerism (IAJV), of which CSC is a member. He made his first contact with CSC through Policy Advisor and IAJV member Helen Friel, who heard of André through his street counselling. Helen was so impressed by his work with disadvantaged people that she invited him to be a guest speaker at the 1998 annual meeting of the IAJV.

"There is a lot that we can learn from Andy, and a lot that he can offer offenders. Andy is non-judgmental, caring and helpful. Being a police officer, he has a great respect for the law, but his kind of justice is tempered by his understanding of



Corporal André Bigras

human weakness and his desire to help," said Ms. Friel.

Peter Harper, Community Service Officer at Kingston's Pittsburgh Institution, invited Corporal Bigras to talk to inmates and give an address at the December 1998 annual Community Service Awards evening. While Bigras admitted that most offenders would be turned off by the sight of an officer in uniform, his reputation preceded him. An offender approached him and asked, "Are you the cop who talks to cons?" After conversing, the men realized they had grown up a few blocks from each other in Pembroke. One chose a career in law enforcement; the other fell into a life of crime. Both had become Christians and, that day, they reflected on how their entirely different paths had brought them back together.

"Christianity has led me so many places, to do worthwhile and satisfying things I never would have predicted," Bigras says.

GIVING TO OTHERS

Bigras had his own childhood problems, one of which was a club foot. This was corrected thanks to his family and additional help from the Kiwanis Club. Recently, he

returned to Pembroke to formally thank the Club, dressed in RCMP red serge. The Pittsburgh Institution offender, on the other hand, lived a childhood of abuse. But today, both are actively giving to others: the ex-offender visits other offenders to offer support and encouragement.

Bigras says his involvement with CSC satisfies his desire to bridge the gap between law enforcers and offenders.

"It's kind of unusual for a cop to be helping the person he helped convict. But there needs to be support for these guys when they are released, because if there is no support for them, they can easily return. None of these guys wanted to end up this way," he said. Bigras added that, based on his experience, most crime is drug-related and is often a result of physical or emotional abuse in earlier life.

In the evenings, as president and volunteer with Inner City Ministries, Bigras helps run the health clinic, delivers food and clothing to the homeless and, like everyone in the group, is committed to helping street people "from the cradle to the grave."

"We held our Christmas dinner in January this year, and 320 people showed up. There were more women than last year," he recounts. "We meet them where they are, on their own terms. If a guy is on the street and doesn't want to come to a shelter for the night, we give him food and a sleeping bag."

FIRST-HAND INFORMATION

Bigras has been conducting an informal survey at the health centre, for his own information. He wants to understand what is really going on at the street level. He asks visitors about their drug habits: what their home life was like, when did they start, what is their drug of choice, would they try a used needle? He says the drug statistics he reads are often prepared by researchers who aren't fully involved, so he is collecting his own first-hand information.

Corporal André Bigras says his goal now is clear: he wants to build bridges between the community, the prison and the police. ♦

A Pioneer in Canadian Corrections

By John Vandoremalen, Director of Communications, National Parole Board

On February 8, 2000, Frank Patrick Miller passed away peacefully at the age of 88.

Frank Miller was a remarkable man. He was a man of faith, a man of passion, a man of honour and integrity. His was a lifetime of devotion to the improvement and betterment of Canadian society and the human condition. He was a pioneer in Canadian corrections who laid the foundation for the building blocks we continue to build upon today.

ONE OF THE FIRSTS

His career in corrections was marked by a number of “firsts.” He was one of the first classification officers in the Canadian penitentiary system, the first at Kingston Penitentiary. He was one of the first Parole Board members and one of the first executive directors of the National Parole Service.

Frank was a United Church minister's son from British Columbia who graduated in history and sociology from the University of British Columbia. As an army captain during WW II, he worked as a personnel selection officer and senior rehabilitation officer.

He was one of the first classification officers in the Canadian penitentiary system, starting his career at Kingston Penitentiary (KP) on September 15, 1947. A classification officer was the forerunner of today's institutional parole officers. As Frank said,

Frank has been a dedicated and passionate advocate for corrections and criminal justice reform, both in Canada and around the world.



Frank Patrick Miller

“Nobody at the time really knew what a classification officer was supposed to do. There were no job descriptions, no reports to fill out and no established procedures.” But, according to Frank, this contributed to a very creative environment and morale was high.

In 1952, he left KP and moved to Ottawa where he became Assistant Director of the Remission Service which, at that time, was headed by Allan MacLeod, who later became Commissioner of Penitentiaries.

Allan MacLeod, Frank Miller and Benoit Godbout, another Assistant Director, were mandated to bring parole into the 20th century. This trio drafted the basis of the *Parole Act* of 1959 and brought about a series of major changes which we continue to see today. Frank recalled that “it was a period of excitement; we felt that we were doing something important. We weren't sure whether we were operating on a vision or on naïveté, but we were very successful.”

When the *Parole Act* was passed in 1959, establishing the National Parole Board as an independent organization for parole decision-making, Frank was appointed one of its first members. He remained a Board member until 1965, when he replaced Benoit Godbout as Executive Director of the National Parole Service.

In 1972, Frank left the Parole Service and was appointed Canadian Coordinator to the Fifth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment

of Offenders. He retired from the Public Service in 1976.

SUSTAINED INVOLVEMENT

Even after his retirement, he remained active in corrections and criminal justice. He was a member of the Task Force on Community Involvement in Criminal Justice and was Secretary to the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice. He was a volunteer for the Church Council on Justice and Corrections and the Canadian Criminal Justice Association, and later became president of both organi-

zations. He was a lecturer at the University of Ottawa and the author of numerous articles.

In August 1997, Frank returned to Kingston Penitentiary to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the date he had started work there as a classification officer. He was amazed by the transformation that had taken place. “There are such tremendous changes,” he observed, “it's remarkable how they've converted the inside of KP to modernize it.” The bricks and mortar may have changed and new technology may have been added, but the legacy left to us by Frank and his colleagues has been much more enduring.

A DEDICATED MAN

Frank has been a dedicated and passionate advocate for corrections and criminal justice reform, both in Canada and around the world. He will long be remembered and admired as a man of conviction who dedicated a lifetime to the pursuit of a professional and humane correctional and parole system.

Frank balanced his professional career with a rich family, community and religious life. He was deeply devoted to his family and they to him. He is survived by his wife, Ruth, his children Jane, Lyn and Gordon and his grandchildren. Jane is currently Director of Restorative Justice and Dispute Resolution for the Correctional Service of Canada. ♦

Featured Facts

Facts and quotes from articles contained in this issue

Seventy-seven per cent of Canadians view crime as increasing even though crime rates have been decreasing since 1991.

– *Public Perceptions and Corrections*

The news media do not inform the public how every day some 13,000 offenders in federal penitentiaries and another 9,000 in the community are safely managed by CSC with little if any risk to the general public.

– *Public Perceptions and Corrections*

Through the RELIEF program, offenders learn to care about others and be a friend to persons in need. They are part of the caring community and provide a valuable service to the prison population.

– *Getting By With a Little Help from Their Friends*

Literacy 2000 Conference, Towards Reintegration

“Literacy skills are considered a fundamental part of Canadian federal offenders’ correctional plan.”

Denis Barbe, National Headquarters

“I have been an educator for most of my career, but working with offenders has been the most rewarding experience of all.”

Phyllis Fleck, Edmonton Institution

“If there is success at school, a feeling of competence spills over into other areas of the offender’s life.”

Gary Sears, Edmonton Institution

FEATURES

Head-shaving Fundraiser at National Headquarters Cancer Can be Beaten!

By Louisa Coates, Communications Officer, Communications and Consultation Sector

Photos: Ron Devries

After many months of planning, a one-month blitz to raise money for cancer kicked off at National Headquarters on February 1 and culminated in a boisterous head-shaving session at noon on February 29, when staff gathered to cheer on 11 employees and one Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) volunteer.

“I want to congratulate the brave souls who have volunteered to do this, you should be very proud. There are few among us who have not been touched by cancer, and together we can make a difference in the fight against this disease,” said Solicitor General Lawrence MacAulay as he and CSC Commissioner Ole Ingstrup prepared to shave the first two heads.

More than 200 staff and supporters packed the 340 Laurier Avenue lobby in Ottawa, while dozens more stood outside looking through the large picture window to watch the eight men and four women go through the “hair razing” adventure.

“I’ve had a hairy morning already, and I’m going to be a little light-headed in a minute,” quipped Jim Murphy. “I am about to get dis-tressed,” added Marc Brideau, while David Snowdon admitted that his locks were “hair today, gone tomorrow.”

Emceed by Pierre Allard, Assistant Commissioner, Correctional Operations and Programs, and organized by campaign coordinators Bob Brown, Helen Friel and Jim Murphy, the two-hour event provoked thunderous applause as members of the “Dirty Dozen” lost their short, long, curly, straight, bottle-red, black or white hair and were transformed into symbols of hope and optimism for cancer research.

“This is a fantastic show of support today and I am proud to be part of CSC and its generosity,” said Commissioner Ole Ingstrup, who kept spirits high with his witty comments while acting as barber. “If I stop now, will you add another \$1,000 to the pot?” he joked, the electric razor poised in his hand over a final curly lock on Jim Murphy’s forehead.



Volunteers and head-shavers
Standing, left to right: CSC Commissioner Ole Ingstrup and Solicitor General Lawrence MacAulay
Seated: Jim Murphy and Graham Chartier

“I want to congratulate the brave souls who have volunteered to do this, you should be very proud. There are few among us who have not been touched by cancer, and together we can make a difference in the fight against this disease.”

*Lawrence MacAulay,
Solicitor General of Canada*

The event surpassed its financial goal of \$5,000 and raised \$6,742 for ovarian, breast, lung and other cancers.

Institutions in many of CSC's regions have held head-shaving fundraisers, with both staff and inmates participating. Last fall, National Headquarters' staff decided they would try the regions' method of garnering campaign donations.

The 12 volunteers described their own reasons for getting involved in the fundraising campaign, as did canvassers and donors.

"My colleague and dear friend Dan Rowan had signed up to have his head shaved at this event, and he was the one who inspired me to do the same," said

Graham Chartier. (Mr. Rowan died in a plane crash last November while travelling on a United Nations Mission to Kosovo). Volunteers commented: "I lost my father last year, and we were very close"; "I am a cancer survivor due to the support of my family and volunteers at the Cancer Society"; "I have a mother, wife and daughters who could be affected by breast cancer"; "Three people in my family have had it"; "My sister-in-law died last year. She was 51".

"I really believe we can beat this disease. I believe there is going to be a scientific breakthrough with all the research that is being done," said Connie Carr, Chris Carr's wife. ♦



Cancer campaign volunteers
Standing, left to right: Lise Fleury, Louisa Coates, Linda Elliot, Bob Brown, Connie Lamothe, Lyne Parks, Nicole Davidson
Front: Helen Friel, Maria Valenti, Suzanne Cuff, Suzanne St-Jacques
Not shown: Suzanne Blais, Suzanne Léger, Lynn Prudhomme, Francine Dallaire, Denise Gibbs, Linda McLaren, Bob Osterhout, Rhonda Kellett, Shereen Miller, Anna Greal, Brian Acres, Christine Laflamme, Stéphane Bachand



The 12 head-shaving volunteers
Standing, left to right: Jim Murphy, Marc Brideau, Terry Richardson, Graham Chartier, David Snowdon, Scott Harris, Tara Mason, Bob Brown and Chris Carr
Front: Denise Dessureau, Tina Larocque and Pamela Yates

Get it on the Net

Information about corrections and correctional issues available on the Internet

The Penal Lexicon

www.penlex.org.uk

The *Penal Lexicon* contains information about prisons, criminal justice and penal affairs with a primary focus on prisons in England, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as some coverage of European and North American correctional systems. Its objective is to keep up with the flow of reports in these regions and to throw light on the "twilight world" of prisons and the treatment of prisoners. The site contains a bulletin board listing recent publications, a search engine and information on dozens of topics, including women prisoners, young offenders and others. Information on Canada includes the *Arbour Report* and facts about suicides.

The Farm: Life Inside a Women's Prison

www.igc.org/thefarm/links.htm

Site offering links to information about women in prison, including the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, incarcerated women and mental illness, the global community of HIV positive women, women in prison (UK) and the Women's Prison Book Project.

Network for Research on Crime and Justice

www.qsilver.queensu.ca/rcjnet/links.html

Links to sites on criminal justice in Canada, the United States and internationally.

Terminally Ill Prisoners: Change the Law

www.penlex.org.uk/pages/oip2.html

A document financed by the European Commission and produced by International Prison Watch calling for the treatment and early release of prisoners in the advanced stages of an incurable disease. ♦

The Community Forum Program

Engaging the Public on Correctional Issues

By Louisa Coates, Communications Officer, Communications and Consultation Sector

One of the best ways to build community support for the safe reintegration of offenders is by giving people an “insiders’ view” of what community corrections is all about. The Community Forum program of the Correctional Service of Canada’s (CSC) Communications and Consultation Sector is making an important contribution to citizen outreach and public education.

The typical community forum is a one-day event where expert guest speakers – such as the warden of a local penitentiary, politicians involved in criminal justice, an offender on parole, and members of social agencies – meet to discuss a topic with local citizens. While the audience normally includes people who work in the criminal justice system, a forum is really directed at an audience that doesn’t know a lot about corrections but is interested in learning more. Often, the forum includes a question and answer period, and organizers may display an information exhibit or set up a tour of a correctional facility. Advertising is done through community newspapers, flyers and radio spots. Community forums normally attract 50 to 100 people.

Organizers feel that if local citizens can express their concerns and question people with expertise in the field, they gain a greater understanding that usually leads to more acceptance of community corrections.

The program’s goal is to rectify public misconceptions and provide information on how federal corrections contribute to public safety. Often, forums help to forge stronger partnerships between CSC and community-based groups. Organizers feel that if local citizens can express their concerns and question people with expertise in the field, they gain a greater understanding that usually leads to more acceptance of community corrections.

Since the Community Forum program was first launched in 1997, a total of 29 forums have been held across Canada. More than half that total – 16 – were organized in the last fiscal year, and there is growing interest among national voluntary organizations to participate.

Forums are sponsored by CSC’s Communications and Consultation Sector at the national level, and are organized at the local level by regional CSC staff, offender aftercare agencies such as the John Howard and St. Leonard’s societies and increasingly, with non-governmental organizations such as the British Columbia Criminal Justice Association or l’Association des services de réhabilitation sociale du Québec. Citizens’ Advisory Committees (CACs) also play an active role. CACs have organized 14 forums since 1997 and even if they do not host the event, they are frequently represented on local organizing committees.

Ole Ingstrup, Commissioner of CSC, is a strong believer in the Community Forum program. “I believe citizens must be involved in the federal correctional process if safe and effective solutions are to be created when offenders come back to our communities,” he said, in an address to the 15th National Citizens’ Advisory Committee Conference in Moncton, New-Brunswick last fall.

“Community forums may not be terribly newsworthy,” said Tim Farr, Assistant Commissioner of CSC’s Communications



Fernand Dubé, Mayor of Campbellton, New Brunswick addressing the April 20th Community Forum

Photo: Annie LeBlanc

and Consultation Sector, “but we know that they work. We evaluate every forum through a survey given to participants and the results to date show that not only does the public come away knowing more about corrections, but we are also seeing a change in public attitudes.” Mr. Farr noted that CSC’s biggest challenge is to “sustain the message” because one bad story in the local newspaper can undo all the positive benefits of the forum.

HOW THE COMMUNITY FORUM PROGRAM WORKS

Each year, CSC’s Communications and Consultation Sector solicits forum proposals from non-governmental and volunteer organizations involved in corrections. After further discussions with CSC regional staff and the sponsoring group, proposals are approved based on factors including geographic location, the capacity of the organization to host a forum, potential partners in the community and the proximity to a CSC facility. Because the number of proposals invariably exceeds the program’s budget, CSC is often faced with tough choices. But the process usually results in a firm decision on next year’s forum plan early in the new fiscal year.

Jim Davidson, Director General, Public Participation and Consultation Branch, says

CSC and the criminal justice community are increasingly interested in topics that focus on the public's needs and questions. "We want to avoid 'preaching to the converted' and hold community forums with groups that don't know much about offenders and the correctional system. What we hear from citizens is important to us and helps us to improve what we do," he said.

The John Howard Society has been a partner in the Community Forum program from its very beginning, and much of the program's success is based on lessons learned by its chapters. Twelve of the 29 forums held to date have been organized by the John Howard Society (JHS). "I think forums are the necessary way to go," said Graham Stewart, Executive Director of the John Howard Society of Canada. "We can't rely on the media to explain what good corrections is about in a 20-second news clip. People deserve the opportunity to ask questions and get the information they want." Mr. Stewart added that correctional staff benefit also, by hearing from the public and thus avoiding their own "bunker mentality." "The benefits are two-way," he said.

FORUMS HELP EDUCATE CITIZENS

The Citizens' Advisory Committee for Edmonton Institution organized a forum last September to discuss "Community Services Available to Help the Reintegration of Discharged Offenders," which attracted about 50 people. Guest speakers gave thought-provoking presentations and the participants later rated the forum as "highly worthwhile" on evaluation forms. That CAC is planning another forum this fall, on how parole contributes to safer communities. Organizers want to get the message across that most parolees are successful.

In March, in Brampton, Ontario a community forum organized by St. Leonard's House, Peel, attracted 229 people to the open house and discussion. The St. Leonard's Society of Canada is a 40-year old organization whose mandate is "to provide a place of safety, belonging, dignity, nourishment and education for men in transition."

The event celebrated the opening of a new Independent Living Residence which provides 19 apartments for federal parolees and 10 beds for homeless men, and discussed how Brampton can increasingly become a "safe and caring community." Solicitor General Lawrence MacAulay attended the opening, and a discussion panel included Reverend Pierre Allard, CSC's Assistant Commissioner of Correctional Operations and Programs, and representatives of the National Parole Board, St. Leonard's Society and the homeless.

"We are really proud of that forum. It was a classic demonstration of a community coming together to deal with real life issues, and recognizing that the safest way to return offenders to society is through support and compassion," said St. Leonard House Executive Director Rick Brown. "The whole theme of the evening was compassion, faith and empowering people." Evaluations by participants described the evening as "upbeat" and "uplifting."

COMMUNITY FORUMS IN THEIR FOURTH YEAR

Now in its fourth year, CSC's Community Forum program has become increasingly well-attended, better organized and more effective at delivering information to the grass roots. The results of evaluations conducted in 1999 showed that 78 per cent of

participants knew "nothing" to "a little" about the topic before attending, but 95 per cent came away having learned something about corrections. Even more encouraging, 66 per cent reported that their attitudes had changed as a result of attending the forum, especially in the areas of offender programs, reintegration and restorative justice.

Several products have been put together to help organize a forum. These include a "Guide to the Community Forum Program" that describes the program and how to get involved. Secondly, criteria for evaluating the forum have been listed, as well as reporting forms for organizers to record what worked and the lessons learned from each event. All of this material is available by contacting the Public Participation and Consultation Branch of CSC's Communications and Consultation Sector. ♦

SECTOR REPORTS

Corporate Development Sector

Victim Sensitivity Training

By the Restorative Justice and Dispute Resolution Unit Team

On January 21-22, 2000, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) held its first national Victim Sensitivity Training workshop for restorative justice and dispute resolution pilot project leaders, members of the CSC National Steering Committee on Restorative Justice and Dispute Resolution and some community partners. The training session

attracted a total of 22 people from across Canada. The training was co-ordinated by the Restorative Justice Unit with financial support from the federal government Dispute Resolution Fund. Wilma Derksen, Executive Director, "Victims' Voice" and Michele Landry, Project Officer, Community Reintegration, Victims Services, CSC facilitated the training session. ♦



Front row: Jody Brian, David Hough, Andrew McWhinnie and Lisa Hill
 Second row: Terry Hackett, Rev. Rod Carter, Mike Ryan, J.J. Beauchamp, Wilma Derksen, Michele Landry and Melanie Achtenberg
 Back row: Henry Saulnier, Rev. David Shantz, Jim Wladyka and Ken Jackson
 Not shown: Scott Harris, Chris Carr, Christina Guest, Kimberly Mann, Bram Deurloo, Jane Miller-Ashton and Carol-Anne Grenier

Protecting the Ozone Layer An Invisible Challenge



By Paul Provost, Senior Environmental Advisor

The use of halocarbons (CFCs, HBFCs, HCFCs and others) in a closed circuit, primarily found in refrigeration and air conditioning systems, is both safe and effective provided they do not escape into the atmosphere. Since the signing of the *Montreal Protocol* in 1987 – an international agreement aimed at protecting the ozone layer and hailed as the first truly international, cooperative effort in the field of environmental protection – the governments that signed this protocol have established strategies, policies and regulatory tools to address this genuinely global ecological challenge.

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT

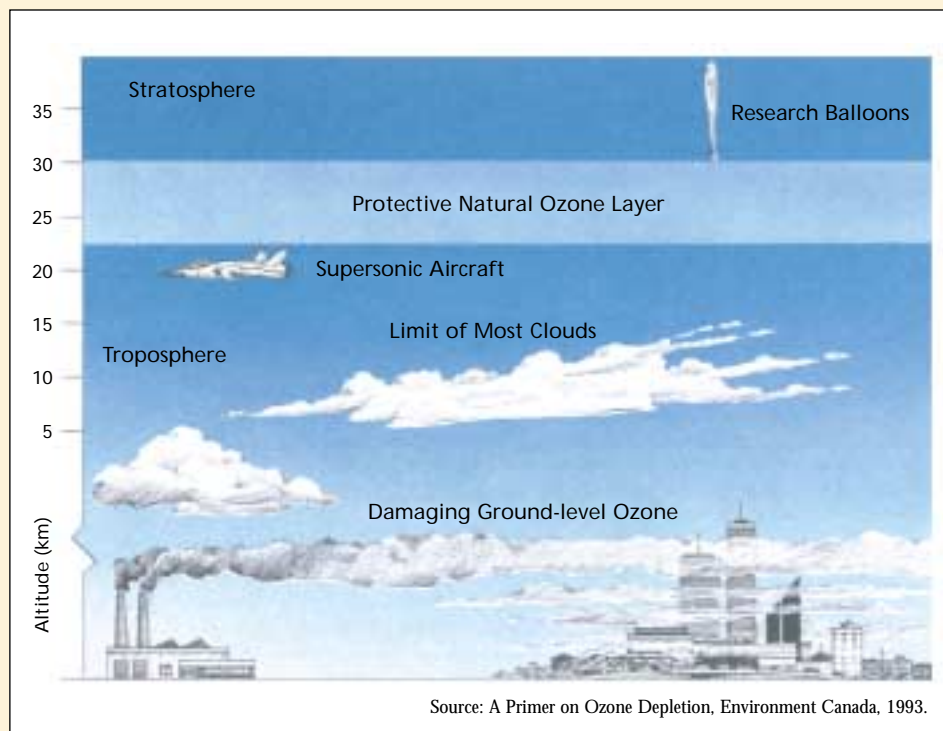
Unlike ozone on the ground (harmful ozone, a poisonous gas responsible for urban smog), the stratospheric ozone layer or beneficial ozone forms a kind of natural shield that protects us against the harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays of the sun. Above the ozone layer, UV rays are so intense they could burn skin in a few seconds, sun lotion or no sun lotion. Consequently, an increase in the amount of UV rays reaching the earth's surface as a result of ozone layer depletion can have damaging effects on all living organisms, such as sunburn, skin cancer and cataracts.

Discharges into the atmosphere of substances that can deplete the ozone layer, such as chlorofluorocarbons – commonly called CFCs – will continue to affect ozone levels in the atmosphere for many years to come. Scientific literature dealing with this subject reports that CFCs alone are responsible for about 80 per cent of the destruction of the stratospheric ozone layer. Widespread use of CFCs accounts for a good deal of this disastrous situation (see Figure 1). In fact, industrial halocarbons are major ozone destroyers for two reasons: one is that they are not reactive, which means that they stay in the atmosphere long

enough to rise up to the stratosphere, and the other is that they foster natural reactions that destroy the ozone. Since halocarbons quite simply do not decompose in the lower atmosphere, they can stay in the atmosphere

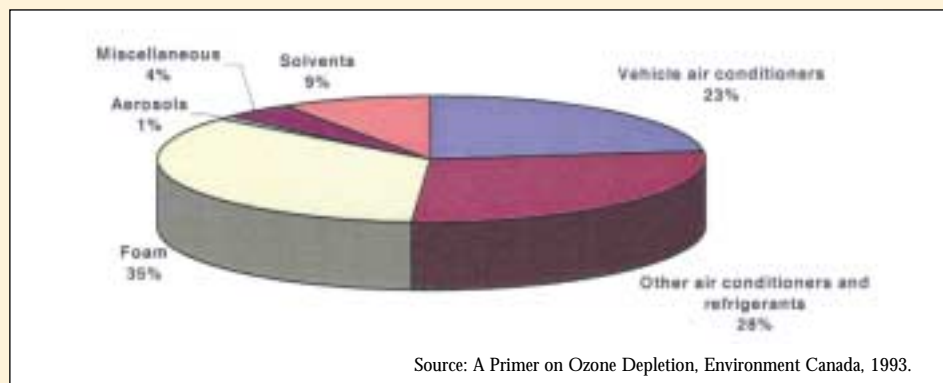
for 20 to 120 years or more. Therefore, even if all halocarbon emissions were eliminated right now, the consequences of previous CFC emissions will persist for decades to come. Call it our environmental debt.

Figure 1: Useful Stratospheric Ozone Versus Harmful Ground-level Ozone



Source: A Primer on Ozone Depletion, Environment Canada, 1993.

Figure 2: Use of CFCs in Canada



Source: A Primer on Ozone Depletion, Environment Canada, 1993.

CSC's Sustainable Development Strategy (December 1997) established a variety of targets for halocarbon management. The main ones were: compliance with relevant provincial regulations, a moratorium on purchasing equipment containing CFCs, the use of accredited personnel (certified technicians) to maintain systems containing halocarbons, compliance with standardized practices for handling refrigerants (reuse, recycling, purification or return to supplier) and safe elimination of used halocarbons considered hazardous waste. Along similar lines, we would also report that the CSC's environmental goals have since July 1999 found support in the *Federal Halocarbon Regulations*.

HOPEFUL SIGNS

Since 1994, vehicle air conditioning systems manufactured in or imported into Canada no longer use CFC-12. They now work on HFC-134a, a hydrofluorocarbon that is not harmful to the ozone layer. On another positive note, new refrigeration and air conditioning systems, like old ones requiring maintenance or refurbishing, have been or will be gradually converted to run on HFCs, HCFCs or a mixture of both, rather than CFCs. These changes are harbingers of progress, since HCFCs' potential for harming the ozone layer is twenty times less than that of CFCs. Clearly, the energy now being invested on the issue of halocarbons shows that governments can respond fairly quickly to global environmental challenges.

In short, we have gone beyond the environmental proposals of the not-so-distant past to the point where meticulous halocarbon management is now mandatory for all of Canada's federal departments. In the long term, our depleted ozone layer will fare all the better, not to mention our skin (for those of us with time for tanning!). ♦

We have gone beyond the environmental proposals of the not-so-distant past to the point where meticulous halocarbon management is now mandatory for all of Canada's federal departments.

The Cognitive Skills-Building and Reintegration Program

By Julie Ostiguy, Remedial Teacher, Quebec Region

A number of studies since the mid-1970s have revealed that a high percentage of offenders have learning disabilities (Brier, 1989). According to Brier (1994,1989), Larson (1988) and Waldie & Spreen (1993), these disabilities are more frequent among inmates than among the general public. While 5-10 per cent of the general public have learning disabilities, the figure among inmates in federal institutions is 25 per cent (Fisher-Bloom, 1995).



Julie Ostiguy (standing) with three inmates

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Learning disabilities hinder more than just academic achievement; they also create problems with the kinds of things most people learn automatically. Affected individuals have difficulty interpreting other people's actions and selecting responses appropriate to a given situation (Pearl & Bryan, 1994). They have certain characteristics that make them more likely to engage in criminal activities (Waldie & Spreen, 1993). They often exhibit many of the following traits: impulsive, hyperactive, unable to anticipate the consequences of their actions, irritable and rigid; they have poor social skills and problems interpreting social signals; they are always dissatisfied and tend

to resort to anti-social behaviour. Also, they have difficulty generating and selecting appropriate solutions because they fail to properly control their impulses.

Take Michael as an example: a young man in his twenties who was arrested for armed robbery and aggravated assault. He gets a sentence of three years in a federal institution. Like many other federal inmates, he left school early to join the workforce. He was never very good at school and soon found himself in special education classes,

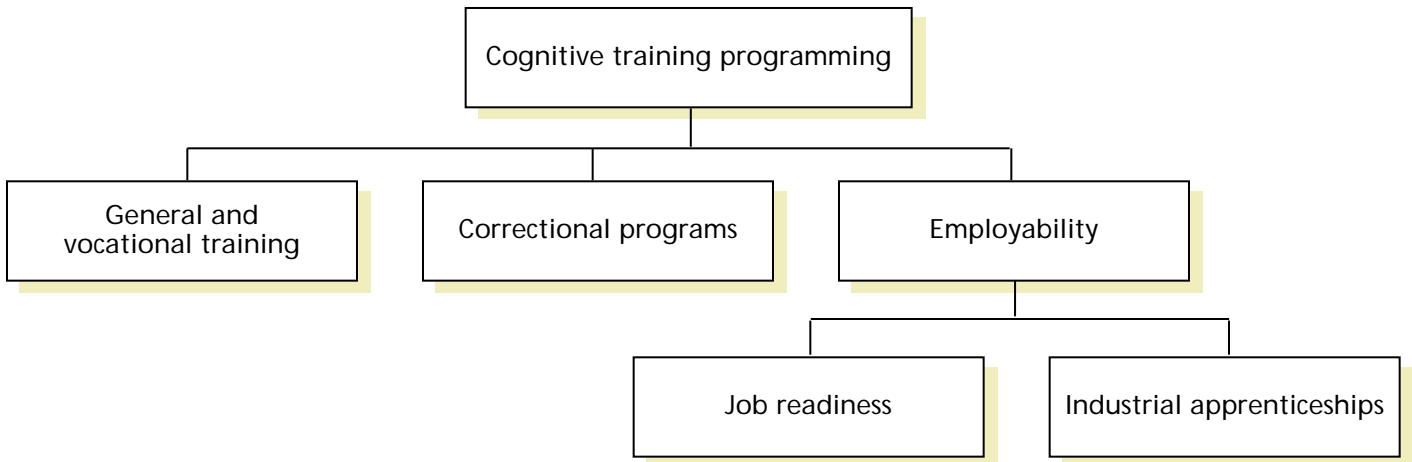
labelled as having serious learning disabilities. Despite his clear intellectual potential, he never learned to read and write. At work, things were not any better. He was never able to hold a job for more than a few months, and he would always end up being fired. He had

problems arriving at work on time, performing his duties in a satisfactory manner, and maintaining smooth relations with his workmates and his boss. His chances of a successful reintegration would appear compromised by his lack of education and employability. During his needs assessment, a variety of programs were written into his release plan, but they included cognitive content, and so his learning disabilities put him at a disadvantage because he could not understand.

LEARNING DISABILITIES AND REINTEGRATION

In 1993, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) undertook a study of how learning disabilities hinder offender reintegration. Starting from the premise that

Areas Affected by Learning Disabilities



every offender has the potential to live as a law-abiding citizen, it was determined that the treatment of learning disabilities might assist the reintegration process. In July 1995, the Assistant Deputy Commissioner consulted wardens and district directors, and it was decided that inmates identified as having learning disabilities should take cognitive training as a pre-requisite to participation in any correctional program that included formal instruction.

IMPACT

Learning disabilities do not affect academic achievement alone, they affect all activities that require some type of learning. Cognitive training programs have traditionally been connected to general education and general or vocational training. However, many studies initiated by the CSC have shown that cognitive training programs can also have a positive impact on correctional programs.

Still, Michael's needs are not limited to academic training and correctional programs. His most urgent need is to improve his chances of obtaining and keeping a good job. Once again, the skills he acquires in a cognitive training program will be a great help. Whether he takes an industrial apprenticeship or a job readiness course, he will constantly be called upon to learn, to acquire new knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours.

The cognitive training program affects intellectual skills, but also self-esteem, self-awareness, and the ability to learn socially

acceptable behaviour. That is why, over five years ago, Cowansville Institution initiated a learning strategies class to better equip inmates like Michael who have problems learning with cognitive tools.

LEARNING STRATEGIES CLASS

The learning strategies class is firmly grounded on the idea that intelligence is not rigid, that it can be developed and cultivated through suitable exercises. A variety of formal and informal tests are used to identify the source of the inmate's learning disability: defective cognitive or metacognitive skills, inappropriate behaviour, poor academic motivation, inadequate resource management strategies, and so on. Once the cause is identified, an individualized action plan is drawn up to help the inmate deal with his problems through appropriate exercises. The aim is to equip inmates with tools that will enable them to learn successfully by improving their ability to organize themselves and interpret information.

This initiative at Cowansville Institution has been repeated by other federal institutions in the Quebec Region. About 40 per cent of Quebec institutions that give training now have a learning strategies class, and other institutions have indicated that they wish to offer such a class in the near future. The main cause for delay appears to be budgetary constraints.

Note: This article has been submitted for publication in Education Canada, the journal of the Canadian Education Association.

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Former Offender Joins CORCAN Team

By Amanda Costen, Staigh and Green Communications

On March 13, 2000, Guy Ritchie moved in with his wife of seven years and their two daughters for the first time. After spending 17 years in all-male correctional institutions, living in a female household will take some getting used to. Then again, everything about life on the outside takes some getting used to.

"There's not much in prison that prepares you for being out of prison. It's sink or swim," says Guy, who is determined to swim. Guy is eagerly meeting the challenges of everyday life: paying rent, buying food, using transportation ... and holding down a full-time clerical job with CORCAN construction at National Headquarters.

SURPRISED? SO IS GUY

"I don't have the formal qualifications to do this job," he says, "and I wasn't looking for it. In fact, I had a lot of reservations about working at CORCAN headquarters because the people here never deal with offenders."

"I've been pleasantly surprised by my experience here," he says, in part because of

"When you are doing time, if you can fill some of the time by working, that's a bonus. If you get skills while working, that's another bonus, and if you get employment on the outside, even better."

Guy Ritchie

the positive and helpful staff. His worries about whether CORCAN "walks the talk" when it comes to working alongside a released offender have been alleviated.

"Originally, I took the job just to get me going, but I've been given an opportunity here that I want to see through," says Guy, who was hired on contract through St. Leonard's Society in 1999 while on day parole.

"Guy was doing a good job for us in the Kingston office, and we didn't want to lose his skills when he moved to Ottawa," says Barry Mair, Business Manager, CORCAN Construction. Because security requirements prevented Guy from working at headquarters until he got full parole, Barry says CORCAN set up an office for him in the halfway house, and then in his home.

In addition to dealing with accounts receivable and payable, performance evaluations and assorted paperwork, Guy is laying the groundwork for a CORCAN industry-recognized certification program. It's a project he saw a need for first-hand, and one which he is instrumental in promoting.

"Guy brings enthusiasm to this project like I've never seen before. He's responsible for the idea catching fire in the institutions," says Barry. "Guy knows the downfalls of programs on the inside, and now he has a chance to have input at the ground stage."

"I thought the idea of certification would have to slide by, but people really respond to it," Guy says. He spent two months getting the necessary infrastructure in place to support certification. "Until we had a system for tracking the actual hours an offender works, we couldn't start to sell the idea. Now we've got Joyceville Institution on-line with the new database and we're doing a dry run with the working model."

Guy's push to get certification in place is driven by his own experience. Sentenced to life in prison for second-degree murder in 1981, Guy was a 21-year old with a Grade 10 education when he was incarcerated at Millhaven Institution. After seven years, he was transferred to Joyceville Institution, where he started work in the

CORCAN metal shop. After that, he worked as a clerk in Frontenac Institution for CORCAN construction.

"Everyone looks at working at CORCAN at some point – it's got a lot of word of mouth. CORCAN isn't viewed as a program: it's work. That's its saving grace," Guy says. "When you are doing time, if you can fill some of the time by working, that's a bonus. If you get skills while working, that's another bonus, and if you get employment on the outside, even better."



Guy Ritchie

"I was surprised by the pride I took in the work," he says. "There's a co-worker relationship in the shops that creates a positive dynamic."

Despite the value of the CORCAN program – Guy describes it as "the only effective program because it teaches skills" – he knows that, without industry-recognized certification, offenders' chances of doing similar jobs in the private sector are slim. And he knows that offenders without jobs have a 70 per cent failure rate on parole.

"The way it is now, offenders don't want to show a prospective employer their letter from CORCAN because of the stigma attached to it," says Guy. "If offenders get out with industry-recognized certification, or they're on the road to certification, then they have skills to put on a resumé."

"If you keep someone in a cage too long, he'll lose the value of life and society," Guy says. "If you give him something to shoot for, he has a better chance of keeping afloat out here." ♦

Program Accreditation: Conclusive Results

By Arden Thurber, Director General, Program Accreditation

The Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) Management Committee has approved the program accreditation design and implementation plans. The Committee ensures that the programs delivered by the Service meet the highest possible standards and are efficiently implemented.

In his latest report on the CSC, the Auditor General wrote that program accreditation has had a beneficial impact on our work with offenders.

Four panels of international experts have accredited the following programs for a five-year period:

- Cognitive Skills Program
- Anger and Emotions Management Program
- Offender Substance Abuse Pre-Release Program (OSAPP)
- CHOICES – Community-based relapse prevention program
- Clearwater Program for Sex Offenders
- Persistently Violent Offender Program

In his latest report on the CSC, the Auditor General wrote that program accreditation has had a beneficial impact on our work with offenders.

The review panel experts have also led consultations on various components of the Cognitive Skills Program; the content of a high-intensity substance abuse program; a national, moderate-intensity sex offender program; and a national, moderate-intensity violence prevention program. An international consultation was held to determine whether the accreditation process could be adapted to programs for women offenders.

As a first step, the National Accreditation Panel, chaired by Gerry Hooper, Assistant Commissioner, Performance Assurance of CSC, reviewed the results of an examination involving twenty-seven institutions that deliver programs. The following institutions have been accredited for a three-year period:

For the Cognitive Skills Program

Pittsburgh, Ferndale, William Head, Rockwood, Riverbend, Beaver Creek, Bath, Drumheller, Montée Saint-François, Frontenac, Dorchester, Westmorland

For the Anger and Emotions Management Program

Pittsburgh, Ferndale, William Head, Rockwood, Riverbend, Beaver Creek, Fenbrook, Drumheller, Frontenac, Dorchester, Westmorland

For the Offender Substance Abuse Pre-Release Program

Pittsburgh, Ferndale, William Head, Rockwood, Riverbend, Beaver Creek, Bath, Fenbrook, Drumheller, Frontenac, Dorchester, Westmorland

Meanwhile, CSC has continued to work with the two other correctional services that



Arden Thurber

operate an accreditation program: Her Majesty's Prison Service of England and Wales, and the Prison Service of Scotland. We have also shared information with the corrections departments of several U.S. states and consulted with the International Community Corrections Association, the American Probation and Parole Association, the National

Institute on Corrections, and the State of Iowa.

COMING EVENTS THIS YEAR

This year, we plan to compile the tangible changes achieved since we first implemented our accreditation process. We will learn the initial findings of a research project aimed at evaluating the differences between operational units accredited for program delivery and others that have not yet met the accreditation standards. In addition, we will continue our review of six other institutions and sixteen parole districts.

On the international front, other review panels will examine programs that address violence (June), sex offender programs (August), family violence programs (February 2001), and substance abuse programs (March 2001). Accreditation workshops will be among the activities at two international conferences for corrections professionals. And for the first time, in January 2001, French-speaking accreditation panels will review programs designed and delivered in French.

We have made progress towards attaining the objectives of our accreditation program and intend to move full steam ahead this year. Check our bulletins on InfoNet for news about the other programs, institutions and parole districts to be accredited. ♦

New Programs for African-Canadian Offenders

Helping Black Parolees Reintegrate into Society

By Louisa Coates, Communications Officer, Communications and Consultation Sector

It is a little-known fact that African-Canadians make up seven per cent of the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) inmate population in the Atlantic Region. Moreover, between March 1992 and March 1997, the Black inmate population increased by 62.1 per cent. In Halifax, almost 20 per cent of parolees are African-Canadians.

"This group of people is different from other minorities in the system because there is a misconception that its culture is no different than the majority white culture, since it shares the same language and religion. But Black people lost the African culture when they were enslaved, so their issues are identity – meaning, who am I? – and self empowerment," said Robert Safire, an Afro-Canadian parole officer with the Carleton Centre Annex in Halifax.

risk assessment and case management incorporate the realities of African-Canadian offenders.

Following the release of these reports, Halifax parole staff joined with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Community Policing Initiative to create the Cole Harbour Project. From it emerged the African-Canadian Offender Initiative, which recommended the creation of an African-Canadian Liaison Officer position "to investigate areas in which the reintegration efforts towards African-Canadian offenders can be advanced." It also urged that the cultural and ethnic needs of Black offenders be addressed as holistically as they are for other minority groups in the federal correctional system.

PROGRAMS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The Correctional Service of Canada's Commissioner's Directive 767 states that ethnocultural programs must be created to help federal offenders reintegrate into society.

In response to this directive, CSC's Halifax District Parole Office has been studying local Afro-Canadian programs that are relevant to the needs of Black parolees. Programs that offer the chance for change and address key issues such as crime, cultural awareness, spirituality and employment may be funded in the near future. "It is not good enough that a community group wants to work with offenders. We are looking for programs that have been seen to effect lasting change, that deal with criminogenic aspects and offence cycles," said Marcel Kabundi, Manager of Ethnocultural Programs at CSC.

One program under consideration is COACH, which stands for Creating Opportunity for African-Canadian Heroes, delivered by Halifax's African Nova Scotian Training Centre. The Centre was estab-



Marcel Kabundi and Dr. Linda Carvery

lished in 1995 to provide employment training for African-Canadians. Mr. Kabundi is working with the Centre's Director, Dr. Linda Carvery, to create a parolee component of the program. The new component would include computer training, counselling and cultural history for parolees.

"Offenders would learn with other students at a normal school, instead of being isolated in a special classroom. They would be welcomed by staff at the Centre, which helps them, since they fear the rejection that is so normal a part of release," said Mr. Kabundi. He says students would be selected from community residential centres (halfway houses), and links would be made with community employers and schools. Five to 10 parolees could enter the program at a time.



Organizers of the Solicitor General's Black History Week, Ottawa
Left to right: Philippe Beaulière, Monique Godin-Beers, Marcel Kabundi and Ritha Payen

PAST INITIATIVES FOR BLACK OFFENDERS

The Correctional Service of Canada addressed this situation following the 1989 Royal Commission on the Donald Marshall, Jr. Prosecution, which called for the creation of resources that would support ethnic offenders. The 1997 Parsons Inquiry (which investigated the circumstances of a crime committed by a parolee) recommended that

African-Canadians make up seven per cent of the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) inmate population in the Atlantic Region.

Another program that CSC may help create and fund is an "Empowerment and Occupation Enrichment" program, which would be delivered at the African-Canadian Employment Clinic. The Clinic, established in 1994, is funded locally by the province of Nova Scotia and the Black Community Workgroup. The 12-week program would stress support – such as teaching job skills and encouraging self development – and help build links with the community. "We are convinced there is a void in the criminal justice system in services specific to the reintegration needs of persons of African heritage," says Mr. Safire, who prepared the program proposal.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS' STAFF GETS A GLIMPSE OF AFRICAN-CANADIAN CULTURE

This past February, during Black History Month, Linda Carvery gave National Headquarters staff a singing and spoken lecture, called a "spiritual journey," that described the African-Canadian community. Dr. Carvery received an Honourary Doctor of Letters

from St. Mary's University for her work with offenders.

She told the audience that the first group of African men and women arrived in Halifax in 1749. Others emigrated from the American colonies six years later (lured by the false promise of free land in Nova Scotia), from Jamaica in 1800, and then as part of the human cargo of slaves and free Blacks picked up by naval forces during the War of 1812. Finally, a large number arrived from the West Indies in the early 1900s.

Today, Nova Scotia's Black population includes some 30,000 people living in 30 communities across the province. Of these, 77 African-Canadians are incarcerated in the Atlantic Region of CSC, which represents six per cent of the region's entire inmate population, along with 49 on conditional release, or five per cent of the total. In other words, there are three times as many Blacks incarcerated as are represented in the community. Almost 93 per cent of Atlantic Region Black offenders are from Halifax.

"The COACH program is student-centred; it allows students to take control so they claim it as their own. We take the stu-

dents to the subject, not the subject to the students. We try to offer them the encouragement and empowerment they have been lacking," said Dr. Carvery.

Mr. Safire says COACH and other programs show a positive effort by CSC and the community to address the needs of Black offenders. He says that the Cole Harbour Project pointed out a need for CSC resources to offer support specifically tailored to Black offenders. Liaison officers and parolee-based programs would address cultural needs and help them gain a stronger sense of identity. "We want to reduce their alarmingly high number in federal prisons," he said.

Oscar Miller, a Black parole officer with CSC Dartmouth, also confirms the need for programs designed specifically to meet the needs of Black offenders. "I don't think staff necessarily understand the issues and the feelings of this group. I spend a lot of time in the community, working with parolees and ordinary citizens, and that is one way of making inroads and helping the outside world understand their reality," he said. ♦

Literacy Program Works for Community and Offenders

By Gerard Peters, Communications Officer

The Correctional Service of Canada, through its Kentville Parole Office, is funding a unique literacy program. The *Turning Point Services Adult Literacy & Upgrading Program* is helping community members and parolees achieve their educational goals. Program participants can complete basic education levels one, two and three and prepare to write their General Education Diploma (GED) exam. Successfully completing this exam gives them the equivalent of a high school diploma and qualifies them to enter post-secondary college programs.

Indeed, many of the program graduates have done just that. Last fall, ten graduates were accepted into various programs at the Nova Scotia Community College.

The program is delivered at a Community Residential Facility and is open to members of the public as well as offenders. Courses are offered during the day as well as

in the evening. With the help of qualified teachers, students complete assignments and work towards earning high school credits. The program works well for a variety of reasons and has had many positive spin-offs. The non-threatening environment has made learning easier for many participants. Those who might have been too intimidated to ask for help in upgrading their education now have a place to turn.

EXCELLENT RESULTS

So far, the results have been excellent. In the past year, 16 learners successfully completed their GEDs and 20 more are on their way to doing the same. Well over 100 others have improved their literacy and numeracy skills. Being able to read and do basic math opens doors and gives newfound freedom to those who had been previously unable to complete their education. People seeking to

upgrade their education after they have been out the school system, for what might be many years, encounter unique challenges. It takes a lot of courage to return to school after a long absence. The environment at the *Turn Around Point Services Adult Literacy & Upgrading Program* eases the transition.

This program also helps those who spent time in the correctional system to reintegrate into the community. By associating with members of the community on a regular basis and by upgrading their education, the transition from a correctional institution to the community becomes easier. Experience has shown that offenders who participate in programs such as this and who return to society gradually are much more successful and much more likely to live crime free. ♦

The Canada/New Brunswick Corrections Initiative Reaches the Two-Year Mark

By Claudine Daigle, Regional Administrator, Communications and Executive Services

On April 15, 1998, the Solicitor General of Canada and the Solicitor General of New Brunswick signed an Exchange of Services Agreement which allowed for provincial offenders serving a sentence of one year or more, or sex offenders serving a six-month sentence, to be transferred to federal custody in New Brunswick in order to gain access to the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) programs.



Claire Boudreau, Parole Officer for the Moncton Area Office and Teresa Johnson, Program Supervisor and Mike Johnston, Superintendent, both at the Moncton Detention Centre

Two years later, more than 280 provincial offenders from New Brunswick have been processed through the Canada/New Brunswick Corrections Initiative. They are participating in programs such as cognitive living skills, community substance abuse programs, sex offender treatment and violence reduction programs.

The vision for the Canada/New Brunswick Corrections Initiative was to strengthen crime prevention and public safety by combining the contributions of the federal and provincial correctional systems. And two years later, there is tangible evidence of a more harmonized corrections system in New Brunswick.

New Brunswick offers a unique opportunity for this initiative because there are vacant beds in its federal penitentiaries. The cost of offenders in these available facilities is about one quarter of the normal cost.

Savings from provincial inmate transfers to the federal system are being used to

develop programs and services within the community, including crime prevention initiatives, intensive rehabilitation programming for offenders on release back to the community, as well as diversion programs and programs that serve as alternatives to custody for low- and medium-risk offenders. To date, \$700,000 has already been invested in community infrastructure to support the release of federal and provincial offenders.

And most importantly, transferring provincial offenders to the federal system where they receive specialized programs reduces their likelihood of re-entering the system at the federal level. We know that, traditionally, two-thirds of the offenders admitted to the federal system in the Atlantic Region had served previous provincial prison terms. If we can provide the required programs and community supervision for these offenders at an earlier stage, we can prevent their "graduation" to the federal system. After two years, the figures show promise. A formal assessment will be conducted at the five-year mark.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES

Ovilla LeBlanc has never felt better. "Today I can make my own decisions," says the parolee who participated in the Canada/New Brunswick Corrections Initiative by being transferred from the provincial to the federal system earlier this year. "The staff were really good. I started school and was able to go to Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings while I was there. I kept busy and it worked."

Two years after the agreement was signed in April 1998, it is succeeding in its goal of working together to put public safety and offender reintegration first. More than 280 provincial offenders have been transferred to the federal system. The primary purpose of these transfers is to participate in need-based programs such as sex offender pro-



Judy Lombard, Program delivery officer for the Moncton Area Parole Office

grams, substance abuse, anger management and cognitive living skills. Research indicates that when offenders are appropriately assessed and participate in cognitive-based programs, recidivism rates drop.

"New Brunswick offenders were not receiving programs that allowed them to be better prepared to integrate into society," says Ron Brooks, Coordinator of the New Brunswick Initiative project for the Correctional Service of Canada. "Not only is this cost-effective in eliminating duplication, but it provides real benefits for everyone."

The cost savings that have been achieved have resulted in additional funds that are being used to deliver and enhance community corrections programs. These have acted as a major support to the additional programs the offenders receive in the federal system.

"We are quite pleased with how the agreement is going," says Brian Mackin, Director of Operations, Community and Correctional Services New Brunswick, "especially because the vast majority of the clients appear to be satisfied as well. Both sides have worked very hard to make sure that the process moves along very quickly."

Ovilla LeBlanc would certainly agree with that assessment. He began working just days after his October 1999 release and credits the assistance he received with helping him keep to his goals. "Everybody was really helpful. Now I'm just taking things one day at a time." ♦

The Social Adjustment Program

By Michèle Fournier, Port-Cartier Institution

In the wake of the *Arbour Report*, the Correctional Service of Canada was obliged to examine its segregation procedures and find alternatives to long-term segregation. Because of its protective custody mandate, Port-Cartier Institution had a problem with long-term segregation. Local analysis of segregated offenders showed that, although many of them experienced chronic institutional adjustment problems, there are no programs available to respond to their special needs. Often, the offenders in this group are ostracized by other inmates because of their poor social skills, problems living independently and serious hygiene difficulties; they may be intellectually challenged or lack good communication skills. They are frequently unable to function outside a highly structured environment. For want of better alternatives, they often end up in segregation where they receive no clinical treatment and are later released into the community only to often fall prey to recidivism. The Social Adjustment program was created to break this vicious circle.



Left to right: Donna Walker, Michèle Fournier and Yves Audette

The program was created to address the special needs of these inmates by offering them a more supportive, "treatment community" type of structure. The six-month program incorporates fixed components that participants are required to complete each day, such as living skills training, education, crafts and sports, along with activities that vary by week and season. The objective is to create a social environment in the range that emphasizes accountability and effective interpersonal relationships. At the beginning of the program, the reasons for an offender's segregation are analyzed on

a case-by-case basis and specific objectives are set to ease his return to the regular inmate population.

However, not all offenders who require long-term segregation need to complete the initial phases of the program. Consequently, the program team has created a second phase for segregated inmates. Together

with their parole officer and the program officer, participants in this second phase explore the reasons for their segregation during private meetings. Corrective action is taken to help participants return to the regular population at the end of the program.

In view of the kinds of problems confronting these offenders, the type of structure they receive is key to our intervention with them. After a year of operation and fine tuning, we believe the program is a winner, for the organization and for offenders alike. ♦

Offender Reintegration: Managers' Seminar

By Réal Charbonneau, Montée St-François Institution

From October 26 to 28, 1999, in St-Sauveur, managers responsible for safe and risk-free offender reintegration in the Quebec Region held a seminar that focused on their particular area of concern. Their slogan, "Un pont à franchir ensemble," urged them to "cross the bridge together" through partnerships and team work to safely reach the other side of offender reintegration – the community and society in general. The meeting attracted about 240 participants who discussed the Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) policy on offender reintegration in an effort to determine the best conditions for ensuring everyone's commitment to the Mission.

The main objectives were to:

- Strengthen our shared understanding of the goals for achieving safe reintegration and our commitment to these goals;
- Share best practices to ensure a fair distribution of the workload;
- Reaffirm the importance of the contribution made by correctional supervisors and unit managers in performing the tasks involved in safe reintegration; and
- Confirm the vital importance of the consulting role played by unit clinical coordinators and casework and other managers in achieving safe reintegration.

The meeting began with a skit by a player from IMPROCIBLE to warm up the audience. She was followed by the chairman of the Organizing Committee and the Warden of Montée St-François Institution, Réal Charbonneau, who went over the seminar's objectives and presented its schedule.

Regional Deputy Commissioner Richard Watkins then spoke to the participants, reiterating the basic components of the safe offender reintegration. He underscored that this seminar was not only a special opportunity to strengthen our beliefs, compare achievements and express concerns, but also to confirm our commitment and determination to work diligently in carrying out



The Organizing Committee
 Left to right: Richard Watkins, Jean Fuller, consultant, Réal Charbonneau, Ginette Grondin, Claude Morin, Clairette Cholette, Carole Plante, Nicole Rolland, Karol Prévost, Sylvie Patenaude, Chantal Lanthier, Martin van Ginhoven and Raymond Arpin of the IMPROCIBLE players



Panel Members
 Left to right: Manon Bisson, Guy Villeneuve, Michèle Boutet and Armand Laurin
 Second row, left to right: Réjean Arsenault, Pierre Bernier, Daniel Cournoyer, Richard Coutellier and Gilles Tétrault

members generally correspond to the nature of their work, and that they therefore displayed positive attitudes towards inmates and their reintegration into society.

IMPROCIBLE's comedians ended the proceedings on a humorous note by mixing with the crowd and gathering suggestions for the next day's discussions.

On Day Two, IMPROCIBLE introduced the day's topic through a skit aimed at boosting team spirit and energizing the participants to foster lively workshop discussions. The first block of twelve workshops dealt solely with the contribution made by correctional supervisors and unit managers towards safe reintegration. The next two blocks covered the following subjects:

- daily activities in safe offender reintegration;
- succession planning for managers;
- time management and work organization for correctional supervisors;
- quality control, clinical support, casework support for parole officers and Correctional Officers II;
- enhanced pride in CSC work;
- effective team work to encourage safe offender reintegration;
- what does safe offender reintegration mean to me?
- transition plan for exchanging case management knowledge between unit clinical coordinators and correctional supervisors;
- potential contributions of correctional supervisors in a casework role;
- harmonization of safety and reintegration components in daily operations;
- correctional operations can support safe reintegration.

"The values of CSC staff members generally correspond to the nature of their work, and they therefore displayed positive attitudes towards inmates and their reintegration into society."

Jacques Perron

our duties. Laval Marchand, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Corporate Services, gave background on offender reintegration achievements and statistics in Quebec.

In the afternoon, Jacques Perron, a consulting psychologist from the Université de Montréal who had carried out an opinion survey among the participants earlier, spoke about the staff's values and attitudes. His findings showed that the values of CSC staff



Participants from Leclerc and Montée St-François institutions

To wrap up the day, participants of similar responsibility levels met in workshops to discuss their own group's concerns and realities.

The last day began with an interactive forum led by IMPROCIBLE on the main topics of the seminar. Commissioner Ole Ingstrup gave the closing address, taking the opportunity to award certificates of merit to the regional trainers responsible for Operation Bypass. Mr. Watkins and one of the IMPROCIBLE comedians brought the seminar to a close on a lighthearted note.

A compilation of the evaluations completed by 181 respondents showed that participants were quite satisfied with the seminar, and many comments about the future of safe offender reintegration were very positive.

According to participants, the seminar helped demystify the concept of safe offender reintegration, clarify everyone's roles and underscore the importance of follow-up to ensure that the items discussed would be implemented.

As a forum for discussion and exchanges, this event shed light on the need to devote more time to the topic and to solicit increased community participation.

The seminar also reaffirmed the importance of the contribution made by correctional supervisors and unit managers in completing the tasks inherent in safe offender reintegration. Participants also emphasized the need for effective teamwork and immediate action.

Also recognized by all was the importance of the consulting role played by unit clinical coordinators (UCCs) and casework and reintegration managers. The UCCs did express some concern, however, about their future contribution. Participants also stressed the importance of achieving uniformity across all the institutions and including UCCs when implementing follow-up to the seminar.

All in all, participants deeply appreciated this symposium; they found it motivating and energizing. They would like to repeat the experience next year to follow up on discussions and developments in safe offender reintegration in Quebec. ♦

Caseworker Symposium

Working Together Towards Safe Offender Reintegration

By Mireille Boisvert, Federal Training Centre

Managers, caseworkers, teachers, instructors and program officers employed by the Quebec Region of the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), along with representatives of school boards affiliated with the penitentiaries and CORCAN Industries, met at a regional symposium held from November 16 to 18, 1999, to agree on a common definition of offender reintegration, share views on their respective roles, establish personal relationships and learn new approaches to working with offenders.

ISSUES FOR THE CSC

In his opening address, Regional Deputy Commissioner Richard Watkins stressed the importance and quality of the contribution made by CSC employees and the personal commitment of one and all to promoting the CSC's Mission. He reiterated the importance of working together to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of interventions with offenders. He said that believing in reintegration implies investing in offenders by establishing close, direct contact with them. To achieve this, we must activate their potential and equip them with indispensable tools vital for reducing their criminogenic factors and strengthening their newly acquired skills.

When measuring performance indicators, Quebec Region stands out in several respects:

- larger number of offenders supervised in the community;
- significant decrease in the number of segregated offenders and of incidents in the community;
- lower rate of security incidents;

- higher number of placements in minimum security institutions;
- higher number of offenders successfully completing their period of supervision;
- higher number of Unescorted Temporary Absences;
- higher number of Escorted Temporary Absences;
- significant reduction in special conditions.



Left to right: Richard Watkins and Raymond Arpin of IMPROCIBLE

For Mr. Watkins, these results underscore the efforts of all managers and caseworkers in dealing with offenders. The CSC is internationally renowned for the quality of its correctional interventions. And all correctional programs operated in Canada undergo an accreditation process supervised by a panel of international experts to guarantee and maintain program integrity.

DEPARTMENTAL POLICY

Robert Bisailon, Assistant Deputy Minister with responsibility for adult education in the Quebec Department of Education defined the role of education and the complementary relationship of training and education.

The high rates of offenders with fewer than nine years of formal education (80 per cent) and of illiterate offenders (35 per cent) and the growing number of offenders with serious learning disabilities (39 per cent) raise questions about measures to increase literacy and reduce unemployment and reliance on welfare.



Robert Bisailon, Quebec Department of Education

Convinced that skills and education are the best and fastest route to reintegration, the CSC and Education Quebec are striving together towards a higher rate of successful offender reintegration by promoting employability development for all offenders through skilled, semi-skilled and general vocational training.

Sudin Ray, Director General, Employment and Executive Director of CORCAN Industries, was the keynote speaker. He emphasized CORCAN's close cooperation with us and its contribution to our efforts to attain our objectives of greater employability and safe reintegration.

HOW CAN A PERSON FULFILL HIS POTENTIAL IN PRISON?

One representative from each of the groups that participated in the symposium, along with two parolees and their spouses, made up a "focus group" that tried to explode the myths around reintegration by sharing their own experiences. The guests indicated that a more humane, progressive approach in both institutional and community-based services has largely contributed to improving the quality of relations between offenders, caseworkers and managers. The opportunity for an offender to realize his potential, understand his strengths and weaknesses, acquire a sense of self-worth and a conviction that he is contributing to change, work on a daily basis to break the cycle of violence, and our efforts to be consistent, meet offenders' expectations, refrain from showing bias and set incremental goals

are all actions that can promote positive exchange. Confronted with our own value systems, biases and beliefs, we must be willing to treat others as we would see ourselves treated, question our own motivations, be sincere and avoid isolating ourselves from others.

In answer to a question from the facilitator, Mr. Watkins said that the reason we champion the cause of reintegration is that we espouse certain values. We are what our decisions make us: we can succeed only if we make a contribution to those decisions.

PRIORITIES OF THE CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM

Guy Villeneuve, Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Operations, Quebec Region, wrapped up Day 3 of the proceedings by speaking on the topic of "daily reintegration efforts to create peaceful communities." He said that the focus of reintegration used to be counselling; in future, however, it will shift to facilitating, motivating and fostering change in values and behaviour.

Canada has one of highest incarceration rates of all the democracies – we rank fourth in the world, with 130 of every 100,000 persons incarcerated – so it is important for the CSC to ensure the safe,



Sudin Ray, CORCAN Industries

secure custody of offenders while preparing them for a smooth transition back to the community. This is the only way to guarantee long-term public safety based on sound, Canadian values. And statistics show that significant progress is attributed to our programs.

Since crime is an expression of a defective sense of responsibility, the CSC's primary obligation is to engage offenders in a process of behaviour modification, followed closely by programs that address their criminogenic factors. Since 50 per cent of offenders serve two to five years and the average length of a penitentiary term is 44 months, we must emphasize early intervention.

Mr. Villeneuve concluded by voicing an optimistic view of reintegration. He believes that formal exchanges among the players in the correctional system, starting the reintegration process earlier, making programs more readily available and being more precise in reports to decision makers could bring about meaningful, lasting change in incarcerated persons.

WORKSHOPS

A symposium is only as successful as the activities it offers. It appeared from the evaluations of the workshops that the participants preferred exchanging their views directly with one another, without any special distinction. This finding points to the importance of close relations between the primary caseworker, the middle manager and the decision-making authority. The three groups appear to be able to arrive at a consensus and make common suggestions for meeting challenges. We must keep the lines of communication open and improve our work methods so that we can adapt our interventions to make the reintegration process more humane, effectively assessed, planned and motivated.



Safe Offender Reintegration Panel
Standing, left to right: Mrs. Clarkson, William Clarkson, Michèle Boutet, La Macaza Institution and Yolande Dawagne, Leclerc Institution. Seated, left to right: Jean-Pierre Tremblay, Federal Training Centre, Zoulikha Kouider, Montréal Métropolitain District Parole Office, Mrs. Comeau, Claude Comeau and Reynald Leblanc, CORCAN/Drummond.

Hats off to the symposium organizers! Friendship, teamwork and excellence characterized the three days. Our congratulations go to all of you for your contributions to workshops to be developed in the future and for the humour and professionalism you brought to the process.

The Correctional Service of Canada wishes to thank everyone who directly or indirectly helped make the symposium a reality and whose collaboration or presence made such a major undertaking a success, including Rémi Arsenault, Éric Blackburn, Renée Delisle, Brigitte Dionne, Jacques Dyotte, Lise Dubé, Carole Dugas, Denis Dugas, Claude Duguay, Michel Huard, Monique Laflamme, Lise Leclerc, Marielle Mailloux, Gérard Morin, Chantal Ouellet, Jacques Racicot, Réjean Tremblay, Michel Trépanier, Solange Trudel, Raymond Arpin and the IMPROCIBLE players, the workshop facilitators, the speakers, the focus group, the guests and particularly parolees Claude Comeau and William Clarkson and their wives. ♦



Program accreditation certificates and certificates of merit

Standing, left to right: Yvon Nadeau, Regional Reception Centre; Donald Moisan, Leclerc Institution; Mélanie Germain, Drummond Institution; Brigitte Dionne, Regional Headquarters; Lucie McClung, National Headquarters; Richard Watkins; Réjean Tremblay, Regional Headquarters; and Michel Trépanier, Montréal Métropolitain District Parole Office
Seated, left to right: Nicole Prémont, Donnacona Institution and Francine Paradis, Cowansville Institution

Community Agency Awareness Day

By Marie-Andrée Cyrenne, Joliette Institution

On November 16, 1999, Joliette Institution and the Citizens' Advisory Committee jointly sponsored an awareness day for community and government agencies. The event attracted nearly 40 participants from 25 agencies in the Joliette area, including the Lanaudière regional hospital, the City of Joliette, the Joliette Diocese, the Marie Dupuis Centre, the Rolland Gauvreau residential centre, and representatives from two local newspapers. For more than seven hours, participants learned about the process involved in admitting, assessing and reintegrating women offenders.

Interactive workshops allowed visitors to play the role of a woman offender being admitted, or a staff member conducting the intake assessment and case preparation. One of the visitors acted the part of a National Parole Board member during a simulated hearing. Staff members, includ-



Visitors participate in a workshop

ing the president of the local union, as well as inmates, were on hand to provide information to visitors and help make the day a success.

The purpose of this activity was to demystify the community's perceptions of the role that the Correctional Service of

Canada plays in the areas of public safety and offender reintegration, and to underscore the attendant risk assessment component of its work. At the end of the day, participants said they had learned a great deal and that the activity should be repeated next year. ♦

Clinical Career Development Workshop

By Réjean Arsenault, Laval Area Parole Office

On September 29 - 30 and October 1, 1999, the Nicolet police institute hosted the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) caseworkers and managers from the Quebec Region's East/West District for the fourth clinical career development workshop. The 1999 workshop's theme focused on basics and the rewards of offering clinical support.

After the opening address by Denis Fontaine of the Lanaudière Area Parole Office and Pierre Talbot of Des Laurentides



Pierre Talbot (standing) and Denis Fontaine in the opening comedy sketch about the work of a community Parole Officer

For many, "teamwork" is another way of saying "mutual assistance."

It is a way to break down the walls of isolation, make progress and avoid ruts.



Renée Colette, who spoke on Accepting our Power

Area Parole Office, the chairman of the clinical committee, Réjean Arsenault, presented the theme of the symposium, pointing out that the committee has been in existence for five years. District Director Normand Granger then spoke on the reasons for setting up the committee and its achievements. Deputy Commissioner Richard Watkins stressed the quality and complexity of the work of a parole officer, and made the connection between this work and the drop in the number of incidents in the community.

In a presentation on Rewards, Motivation and Change, Pierre-Yves Boily, the president of PROSYS Inc., a firm which specializes in human systems, said that, if we want to enjoy our work, we have to put in the necessary effort. At the same time, our work has to be meaningful and we also have to be aware of its demands. There is little gratitude expressed by offenders or by society for the effort that we put into motivating offenders to want a meaningful reintegration process. And yet we must commit to investing this effort and take pride in what we do. Last but not least, it is important not to feel isolated: we must help one another and work as a team.

On Day Two of the symposium, Renée Colette, Executive Vice-Chairperson of the National Parole Board (NPB) commemorated the centennial of parole and shared with the participants her thoughts on the theme selected for the morning's workshops: Power. Whether we are attracted to

or afraid of power, it can be used to promote a cause. Stressing the importance of shaping change instead of having change shape us, Ms. Colette said that parole officers (POs) are influential in the NPB. She stressed the importance of trust and mutual respect in this context. In the exchange that followed, the speaker came to realize that the POs have increasingly less leeway, particularly with violations of special conditions, which must be reported automatically to the NPB. These discussions showed how important it is to keep the lines of communication between our two organizations open.

The discussion then turned to the findings of a questionnaire on how the POs perceive their power. In general, these findings tend to show that the POs feel that they have some influence over the work they do and the way they manage their time. This feeling is based on the skill and trust they have built over time. Responsibility and accountability inevitably go hand in hand with power. Some participants thought they had certain powers, such as the power to make recommendations, but did not feel they were using this power. Sometimes, control measures and standards stymie our creativity in clinical interventions.



Pierre-Yves Boily, who spoke on Rewards, Motivation and Change

During the afternoon, the participants shared views about happenings in their respective units and ways to promote teamwork. For many, "teamwork" is another way of saying "mutual assistance." It is a way to break down the walls of isolation, make progress and avoid ruts. Participants shared best practices, such as working in tandem on difficult cases, holding team meetings to discuss suspension cases, or thinking about a specific theme. Some participants stressed that these meetings should be optional. Also, willing to freely express your opinion about your problems with an offender on your caseload, without having to worry about negative peer judgement, is an indication of trust, the ability to listen, respect and maturity.

Day Three concluded with an address by Gilles Ouellet, Professor of Management at Université Laval. Mr. Ouellet said that the



Gilles Ouellet, who spoke on Our Work at the Dawn of the Third Millennium

very essence of our work is the quality of our relationship with offenders. He felt that if we do not feel our life has meaning and if we do not feel comfortable in the community, we will have trouble helping offenders attain the goals we set for them. Beyond talk and body language, having values and beliefs that are in sync is crucial. Our ability to influence offenders depends essentially on the quality of our relationship with them and whether they find us believable, no matter what our status is.

Mr. Ouellet asserted that focusing on basics in our work should be seen in an organizational context. That is why it is important for all of us – POs and managers – to review our Mission and core values together. If we pull together, we are making a common commitment to produce results. If we don't, we are just going through the motions. We can be passionate about our work and find satisfaction in it, especially teamwork. Moreover, true power comes from being: being able to do the work well and being proud of it.

It takes time, energy, creativity, trust and a taste for adventure to organize these career development workshops. We believe we have addressed all the year's themes: commitment, the willingness and desire to work together, focusing on basics, and enjoying our work. See you next year! ♦



East/West District participants in the clinical career development workshops

REGIONAL NEWS

Ontario Region

Building Futures in Bath Institution

By *Graham Chartier, Communications Officer, Communications and Consultation Sector*

In the first six months of its operation, the CORCAN shop at Bath Institution in Kingston, Ontario became self-sufficient and is fulfilling both the correctional and the commercial mandates. Since the shop began operation, production is up, revenues are up and deliveries are timely.

"We've done what people said we couldn't," said Detlef Fischer, CORCAN's acting Operations Manager at Bath Institution. "We exceeded all our targets."

Mr. Fischer, a cabinetmaker by trade, has worked as an instructor for CORCAN since its inception. He combines the experiences

he has gained on the shop floor in the institution with those he learned in the private sector in order to run the operation like a true business.

"It's important to operate like the private sector in order to make the offenders more employable and to make the shop viable," he says.

Over 50 inmates at Bath Institution are employed at either a wood shop specializing in custom pieces, a DataQuick Centre for transferring microfilm records to electronic files, or a data imaging shop. Mr. Fischer relies on the skills and expertise of instruc-

tors Frank Carter, Tim Marshall and Scott Spencer in the wood shop, Mark Walker and Chris Ward in DataQuick, and Dave Tarynor in data imaging.

"Everyone here, staff and offenders, deserves credit for what Bath Institution has accomplished," says Mr. Fischer.

"The CORCAN operation at Bath Institution is an integral part of our correctional program strategy," says Warden Gerry Minard who credits Mr. Fischer for much of the program's success. ♦

Successful Reintegration

Leonard Janvier – A Pê Sâkâstêw Centre Success Story

By Susan Brownell and Elizabeth Maldonado Mejia, Canada World Youth Exchange Students

The Pê Sâkâstêw Centre, located on the Samson Cree Nation in Alberta, is a federal, minimum security institution which promotes a culturally-based healing process that encourages the safe, effective reintegration of Aboriginal offenders into society. The success of the Centre's reintegration efforts is a tribute to the staff and programs of Pê Sâkâstêw and the involvement and commitment of the surrounding communities. Recently, an Owîciyîsiw (a Cree word meaning "a person who wants to help himself") from the Pê Sâkâstêw Centre took part in a very successful reintegration project in the Wetaskiwin Community.

Leonard Janvier, an Owîciyîsiw, epitomizes community reintegration at its best. A very talented artist, Leonard has been drawing since he was five years old although he has no formal art training. At first, art was just a hobby for Mr. Janvier. Now, he considers art a tool for his personal advancement and wants to make it his career. Mr. Janvier has become involved in and contributed positively to the community by painting murals in the daycare of the Wetaskiwin Bingo Hall and in Wetaskiwin Centennial School where he also taught art classes. Leonard sees his art and his community involvement as a step forward towards his release.

GIVING AND RECEIVING

As part of Mr. Janvier's reintegration process, he participated in a 60-day work release program at Centennial Elementary School in Wetaskiwin. "Mr. Leonard," as the children called him, painted four murals in the school. While he was painting in the hallways, the children would stop to talk to him and enquire about his art. The hallway soon became a popular gathering spot where the students and staff would visit and chat with the artist. In addition to painting in the school, Leonard taught art to the students.

He instructed the children on how to use colour, blend paints and create scenery. According to Judy Olsen, one of the teachers at Centennial Elementary School who sponsored Leonard, "He not only gave the kids tools for art, but he made the children believe in themselves. Leonard really encouraged the kids and showed the children that they have a lot of potential inside themselves."

"Mr. Leonard" made a deep impression on the children who, staff members say, gave him their respect and affection. In the opinion of one of his pupils, "He (Janvier)



Mural by Leonard Janvier

is a nice guy, cool and fun to talk with." Judy Olsen sees Leonard as a positive role model for the children, especially for the Native children. All of the staff we interviewed at Centennial Elementary hope that Leonard will return to the school for another work release project in the future.

Community support and involvement along with the willingness and desire of the Owîciyîsiwâk to change gives offenders the motivation to steer their lives on a positive course. According to Janvier, he is a completely different person now than he was two years ago when he arrived at Pê Sâkâstêw

Centre. Indeed, Leonard is a new man; he is no longer angry but instead has a good attitude and is motivated. Leonard Janvier has set three goals for himself: education, art and success. Judy Olsen commented that the change in Leonard is clear, "He used to want to know what was in it for him in a situation, now he wants to know how he can help others."

A NEW OUTLOOK

Leonard Janvier's success is the outcome of community support, dedicated individuals

like Judy Olsen and her family, the staff and programs at Pê Sâkâstêw Centre and his own initiative. All of the people involved in Leonard's reintegration believe in him and have a very positive view of him as a person. The faith that others have in Leonard's success is apparent in Judy Olsen, "I have seen him grow, he has come so far and he is still going. Now he trusts people and he realizes that he can be a productive citizen and set goals

for himself. He can make it, and now he knows he can make it."

The success of Leonard Janvier illustrates that reintegration is a win/win situation. Leonard has benefited by being able to share his talents with the community and the community has benefited by learning art from "Mr. Leonard" and enjoying his work. Most importantly, though, this reintegration project has created meaningful relationships between Leonard and the staff and students at Centennial Elementary School based on trust and respect. ♦

Sisters of Hope

A New Resident at the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge

By Deborah Podurgiel, Freelance Writer

Come October, there will be a new resident at the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge and her name is the *Sisters of Hope*.

Thanks to a \$75,000 grant from the Millennium Arts Fund and to the vision of multimedia artist and educator Noni Dornstauder, the life-size bronze statue will be unveiled this year at an inauguration coinciding with Thanksgiving and Powwow.

For the past 10 years, Noni Dornstauder has concentrated on painting and sculpting the history of the Aboriginal people of the Plains. She has recorded their leaders and lifestyles, and the natural beauty of their surroundings while pursuing her traditionalist studies of the history of her people. Born on a homestead in Saskatchewan, she has always been fascinated by the beauty and uniqueness of the Plains, as reflected in the art she creates from a variety of media.

However, long before the millennium grant, and even before Okimaw Ohci's foundation had been poured, Noni Dornstauder was inspired by the grounds on which the healing lodge was to be built and by its very purpose. "My husband worked on the construction crew and I often accompanied him to the building site on weekends when he checked the fresh cement pours. The site is a Holy Place in the Cypress Hills. Before the healing lodge was opened, I made the sculpture hoping someday to find the funding to have it made into a 10-foot high bronze to be placed at the Eye of the Eagle at the healing lodge."

Once finished, it will weigh more than three tonnes. Ms. Dornstauder describes the life-size sculpture as "a kneeling, heroic-size figure of the Mother Healer. She has her



Noni Dornstauder, artist

buffalo cape stretched out and is sheltering three, life-size women in front of her. They are chanting a prayer to The Great Mystery. Her buffalo cape is rolled up at the back enfolding a sleeping child. On the back of the robe is an eagle with wings spread out. The eagle is the symbol of wisdom and knowledge. There is a buffalo skull at the left of the women, also symbolizing wisdom. I

called it *Sisters*. The staff and the residents of the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge are all called sisters, and our healing lodge is an overwhelming success."

In fact, the statue model has inspired more than a few residents at the healing lodge. One former resident in particular, Brenda L. Longman, was so touched that she suggested the new name for the bronze be *Sisters of Hope*. "At first sight, I thought of an angel spirit and the women sitting down reminded me of the inmates here. For me, the statue holds a lot of meaning and it represents the pain of women, like me. It gives comfort knowing that there is hope and forgiveness. The statue, in itself, gives a person strength."

Ms. Dornstauder says the *Sisters of Hope* is not only symbolic, it is an interactive piece which invites people to think about what the statue means to them. "Children can interact with it as well. I thought about that when creating the piece and there are no sharp edges so the children can sit in it." ♦



Talent Show at the Regional Health Centre

By Reva Malkin, *Native Liaison, Regional Health Centre*

On March 17, 2000, a Staff and Patient Talent Show was held in the chapel of the Regional Health Centre (RHC). The event was initiated and organized by Melissa Lund, a registered psychiatric nurse, who demonstrated what is possible with vision, imagination, positive energy, dedication and plain old hard work. The show featured 16 acts with approximately 25 inmate/patients and a dozen staff performing. In addition to the performances, there was a visual arts display.

Patients from all areas of the institution were represented in the talent show. Although most of the acts were musical, the show also featured poetry readings and comedy segments. The musical acts included a staff choir, a piano solo, and the Native Brotherhood drummers; two musical groups made up of staff and patients who played and sang together.

Groups were busy rehearsing and preparing for the event for several weeks. Preparation such as choir rehearsals visibly lifted the spirits of participants; twice a week for a month or so before the talent show, choir members could be seen leaving the chapel smiling and singing. The event showcased all of those involved as multifaceted beings. Indeed, we all have gifts to offer and creative parts of ourselves that need outlets for expression.

Many staff and patients commented that this event, where both staff and patients "let their hair down" was a refreshing experience. The majority of those polled felt that this innovative approach will promote better working relationships among staff and between staff and patients, and will contribute to a more trusting, relaxed atmosphere in the institution. The RHC has found a way to possibly expand and improve our communication with each other, and initiate healing by encouraging personal development on many levels.

Congratulations to Melissa Lund for her vision, steadfastness and hard work; Etienne Venter for coordinating the sound system; Mary-Ann Whittaker, Jean Koetz and

David Tso for organizing the visual arts exhibit; Gerry Ayotte, Dwight Cuff and Harvey Gunter, the chaplains who agreed to hold the event in the chapel; Nirnanjan Thurasamy and other senior staff members who supported the talent show; the Apex

program participants for baking cookies; and to all the talented staff and inmate/patient participants who shared their creative energy on stage and in the visual arts exhibit. ♦



From left to right, front row: Christopher Siemens, Paul Roote, Marie-Claude Baron and Etienne Venter
Back row: Dwayne Reynolds and Richard Condoin



RHC staff, from left to right, front row: Etienne Venter, Dan O'Hara, Crystal Grass and Paula Moore
Middle row: Dianne Simpson, Melissa Lund and Scharie Tavcer. Not seen: Reva Malkin
Back row: Lori McHattie and Rhoda Cheng

Certificate of Appreciation



Heather Pierce and Pieter de Vink

Heather Pierce and her treatment team, working in a special mental health program at Sumas Community Correctional Centre, were commended by three National Parole Board members for the quality of their professionalism in handling a difficult case. The Board recognized the excellent work performed by Ms. Pierce and the team as having “obvious benefits” for the offender. Ms. Pierce and the RHC treatment team have demonstrated their high level of commitment and professionalism to this project. This certificate, jointly signed by Commissioner Ingstrup and Pieter de Vink, Deputy Commissioner, Pacific Region, serves as a token of appreciation for a job well done. ♦

Ron Wiebe Boardroom

The Pacific Region officially designated a boardroom at its Regional Headquarters in Abbotsford, B.C. as the “Ron Wiebe Boardroom”, in honour of the late warden of Ferndale and Elbow Lake institutions and his family. On March 14, Mr. Wiebe’s family attended a small ceremony to dedicate the room. ♦



Photo by Dennis Finlay

Left to right: Bill and Elizabeth Wiebe, Ron Wiebe’s parents; his son, Jason; his wife, Shirley; his son, Jordan; Pieter de Vink, Regional Deputy Commissioner; and his son, Jeff

Proud Graduates

The graduation ceremony for the Pacific Region’s first Correctional Training Program of the new millennium was held March 23 at the Regional Correctional Staff College. The new correctional officers posed with their instructors before heading off to their new institutions. ♦



Photo: Sonya Henry

Front row, left to right, instructors Marcel Legacy, Maria Parton, Ingrid Woelke, Linda Hosier and Terry Raffan. Second row, left to right: correctional officers Denise Cork, Heather Byron, Tricia Shestopalski, Debora Riga, Janet Gerard, Anthony Boccinfuso, Wes Maitland, Aaron Fitzgerald, Scott MacAllister and Robert Garrett. Back row, left to right: Steve Poulin, Andrew Urquhart, Lori Wilson, Henry Braun, Don Trenaman, Pierre Bouvier, Jagjit Saran, Hans deWaal, Eugene Peters and Russell Pierce