

Virginia Probation and Parole Association
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Advancing Correctional Technology in Virginia

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"This article explores the user impact and major technology changes associated with Project 2 – Community Corrections."

As in many other states, the agencies of the Commonwealth of Virginia are trying to fulfill their public responsibilities while providing additional services with an increasingly strained workforce. For the Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC) this situation has become a growing concern. Over the last 15 years, the population of incarcerated offenders in Virginia has increased by 95% and the number of offenders under community supervision has increased by 63%. To compound the situation, most offender information is stored in hardcopy (paper) files without any benefits of a centralized location or system to store and access offender information. Over the years the VADOC had implemented a number of systems to handle various aspects of offender information. However, these systems operate in isolation and do not effectively interface with each other. Both the users, who are the officers and office staff which use these systems on a daily basis, and the Department, which supports the various systems, feel the pain of this situation.

In 2004, the VADOC released a Request for Proposal to establish a Commonwealth-wide offender management system (OMS). This system would replace a number of legacy systems, as well as introduce automation to additional offender management processes. Information from select legacy systems would be converted into the application. Overall, this system would bring the technology used in the legacy systems across the VADOC up to industry standards. The Department awarded the contract to xwave, a division of Bell Alliant, for their CORIS (Corrections Information System) solution. Soon after, a team of VADOC, xwave, and BearingPoint specialists (sub contractors to xwave) began planning the implementation of the new system and retirement of targeted legacy systems.

The CORIS solution, which is currently being used in Maine and New Hampshire, is being modified to meet the specific needs and requirements of the VADOC, thus creating the VirginiaCORIS program. VirginiaCORIS will replace the major systems used throughout the Department, as well as some of the smaller specialized databases. In the process of implementing the VirginiaCORIS system, the VADOC organization will experience a significant amount of change. To help alleviate the stress of this change, the application will be implemented in

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three projects: **Project 1** – Sentence Calculation, **Project 2** – Community Corrections, and **Project 3** – Facilities. This article explores the user impact and major technology changes associated with Project 2— Community Corrections.

What this Means to Probation and Parole Officers

Like many other states of its size, Virginia has felt the burden of the additional workload that goes hand-in-hand with the growing offender population. VirginiaCORIS will allow the VADOC to alleviate this growing burden by streamlining many of their administrative functions. Particularly, this program will change the way in which offender information is communicated, how computers are utilized, and the amount of offender information that is available to the entire Department.

Communicating Offender Information

Given the distance between offices and the critical timing of various notices, communication is crucial to VADOC. Current systems and processes cannot provide timely information and information is sometimes unreliable. VirginiaCORIS will streamline the way the VADOC communicates between offices, between the institutions/facilities and probation and parole offices, and with outside agencies (see Figure 1). These advances in how the VADOC communicates will allow the Chiefs, Officers, and any other users to access and utilize information from their own computer.

Figure 1 – Communication Matrix

| | From (Current System) | To (VirginiaCORIS Application) |
|---|--|---|
| Between Offices | Information is mailed/faxed between offices | Offices can access files real time through the system |
| Between Institutions and P&P Offices | Offender information is seldom communicated and unreliable | Information automatically sent and accurate |
| With Outside Agencies | Unable to fulfill all requests and fulfilling requests is time consuming | Interface requests will be viable options |

Computer Use

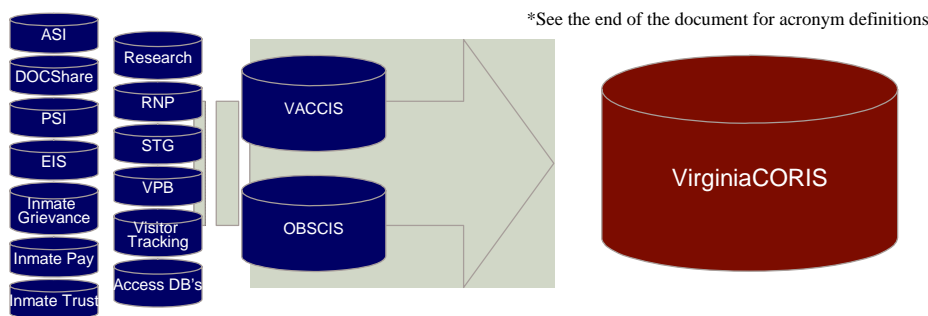
Computer use varies between offices in terms of frequency and use of computers. Some offices use computers to enter offender information into their own database, while some offices simply use computers to access their email. The VirginiaCORIS system will create a change in that the officers will be entering information directly into the system from their desks. While this will increase the amount of time spent on the computer by staff, this is not an effort to change all of the officers into data entry people. In fact it will ensure consistency, accuracy, and timing in data entry and free up administrative staff for other purposes. Officers will also gain valuable computer skills and be able to manage their offender information with more rigor and organization, freeing them up to do their work with the offender population. Once officers become acclimated to the system they should be able to enter information quickly, obtain more information, and be more successful in their jobs.

Advancing (Continued)

Increased Offender Information

With the consolidation of the different legacy systems, users will have access to an offender’s entire historical record through VirginiaCORIS. As shown in Figure 2, there are a number of systems that are being consolidated and replaced by VirginiaCORIS. With this new system, an offender’s file will include all information from an offender’s lifetime, from the first offense until they are deceased. Additionally, VirginiaCORIS will include any offender information that is available from other states. In the end, this will provide officers with a comprehensive look at an offender’s history in Virginia and other states when they view their electronic file.

Figure 2 – Consolidation of Systems



Three of the major changes that the Officers will experience are the way information is communicated, their use of computers, and the amount of offender information they are able to view. These changes represent the change that the users will experience, however there is an equal amount of change that will be experienced in terms of the technology used by the VADOC. This initiative enables the VADOC to make much needed improvements to their offender management technology.

What this Means for Technology

The VADOC relies on four main systems to support operations. While all of these systems serve different purposes, they have one thing in common: they no longer meet the needs of their users. The CORIS solution was selected because of the functionality it provides and its underlying technology. Supporting this technology platform requires changing the way the Department views and implements its offender management systems. Three of the major changes include the Department’s reliance on many different systems, how information is managed, and how information is exchanged with its partners.

Number of Systems

While there are four main systems that are used throughout the Department, there are also an unknown number of ‘homegrown’ databases also in use. One estimate showed that there are more than 500 Access databases in use across the state. In the hopes of eliminating the need for additional databases, the functionality currently offered by the main systems, as well as additional functionality, are being incorporated into VirginiaCORIS. After the implementation is complete the users, Department, and external agencies will have one system to rely on for managing all of Virginia’s offender information.

Advancing (Continued)

Information Management

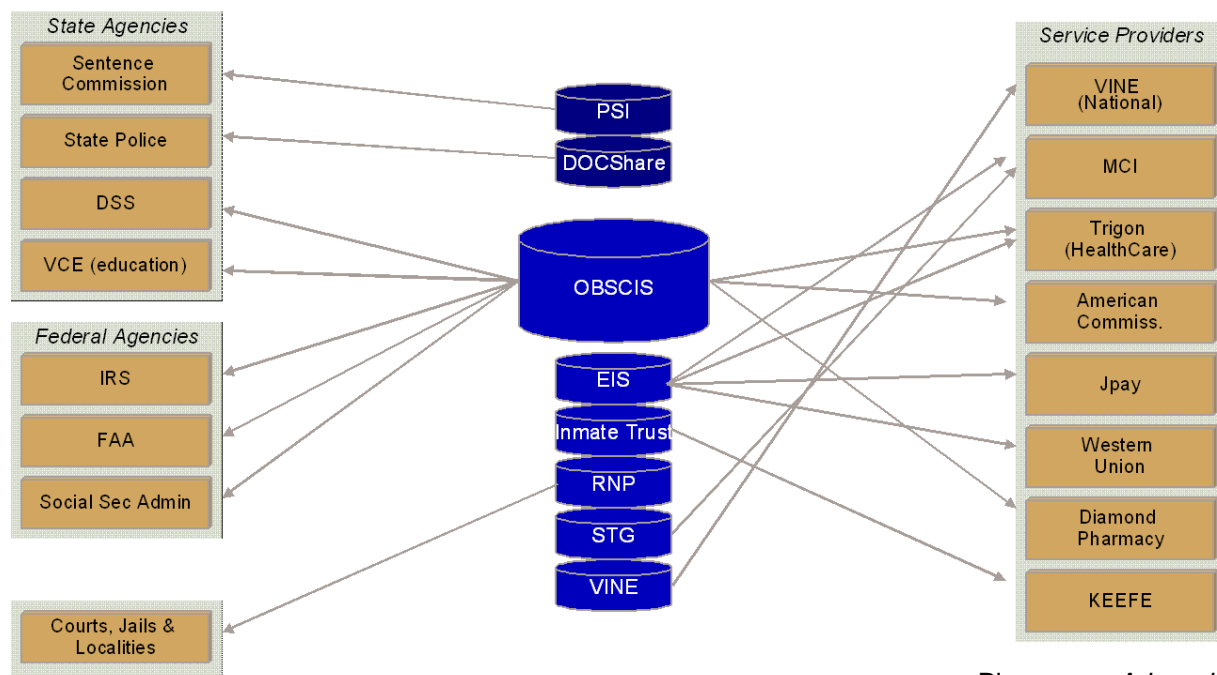
Depending on which district or office you are in, the number of systems you work with to enter offender information may differ. Today, if the office created their own databases, officers usually enter their information directly into the database and then re-entered the data into Department-wide systems. In the offices that do not have databases, they use hardcopy forms and reports to record information, and administrative assistants enter the necessary information into the existing Department-wide system. With VirginiaCORIS, the officers will enter their own information directly into the new system as they would currently do with the offender's hard copy file or their office's system and eliminate the redundancy of entering the information into multiple systems.

Maintaining paper files of offender information is a common practice across the state. Forms and reports have been modified to fit the needs of the different offices. While this practice is accepted, problems arise when a file is lost or damaged. Currently, if a file is lost or if an office is damaged, VADOC employees must recreate those records. This causes more than a simple inconvenience to the offices, because offices must recreate those cases or new files must be created if old information cannot be recovered. Obvious problems with this process include the inefficient use of officer's time having to either recreate or start from scratch, as well as the Department's loss of valuable historical information that cannot be recovered. VirginiaCORIS will allow the users to access offender information electronically from a central location, which will reduce the time and effort needed to recreate lost or damaged hardcopy files. By transferring the information into electronic format the information will also be stored at a central location that is backed-up and accessible to all users and other agencies that will interface with VirginiaCORIS.

Information Exchanging

It is not uncommon for neighboring states to share various forms of information with each other. With the current legacy systems the VADOC is unable to easily interface with other agencies, on both the state and federal level. To add to the complexity, the interfaces come from different systems and create a matrix of interfaces across the Department (see Figure 3). VirginiaCORIS will use current technologies that will allow the VADOC to centralize their interfaces and interface with a broader range of systems across the country (see Figure 4). This will provide the users with more reliable information from other agencies, as well as provide VADOC information to others.

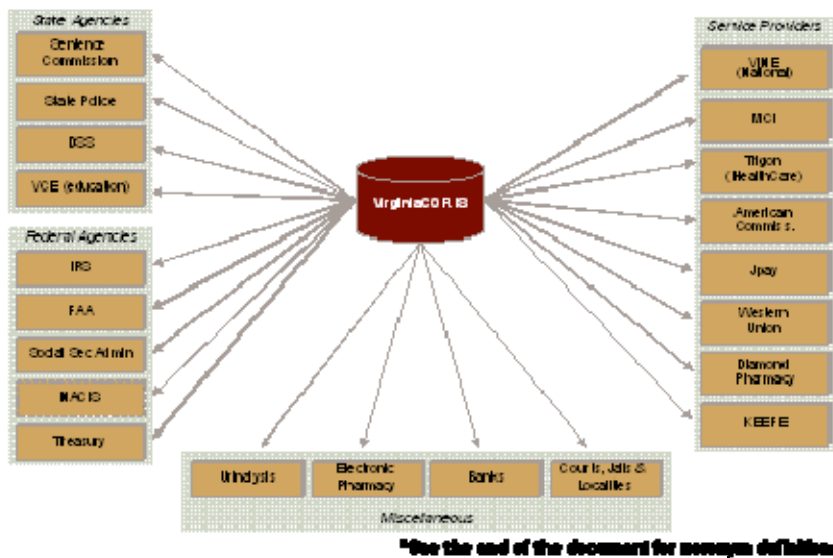
Figure 3 – Current Interfaces



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Advancing (Continued)

Figure 4 – Future VirginiaCORIS Interfaces



The number of systems used across the VADOC, how information is managed, and updating how information is exchanged with outside agencies are three of the major changes that will be brought about by this initiative. These changes, in addition to changes in how officers utilize technology, represent a dramatic departure from the way the probation and parole offices currently operate across the state of Virginia. Where in the past information was stored on paper, users will now be accessing the system through a web browser, a program nearly every employee uses on their personal computer. In addition, this system will allow the Department to provide maintenance and upgrades easily, as this is a technology that is widely known throughout the technical community. Collectively these changes represent an advancement in the way Virginia manages their offender information.

Going Forward

The VirginiaCORIS Program is scheduled to be implemented throughout the VADOC in 2009, at which time it will also be used by representatives from other agencies such as the Virginia State Police. In March of 2006, VirginiaCORIS went live with the Project 1 - Sentence Calculation area of the system throughout the state. Currently the xwave and VADOC teams are working to modify the CORIS application to meet the needs of the Virginia probation and parole offices. In late 2007, the application is scheduled to be implemented in all probation and parole offices. After the implementation in the probation and parole offices, system modifications for the institutional facilities will begin. Go-live for the final, institutional, phase is scheduled for late 2008.

Users from the various areas of sentence calculation, probation and parole, and institutions are playing an integral part in the project by providing their time and expertise. They are working hand-in-hand with the xwave team to ensure that the changes and modifications that are being made to the CORIS program will create a system that is user friendly and doesn't create unnecessary work for its users. With their knowledge of Corrections in Virginia and the support of the Department leadership the VirginiaCORIS application will help Virginia adjust to the increasing workload and financial pressures that they are currently facing.

Advancing (Continued)

Outline of acronyms used in the figures

| Acronym | Definition |
|---------|---|
| ASI | Addiction Severity Index |
| EIS | Executive Information System |
| OBSCIS | Offender Based State Correctional Information System |
| PSI | Pre/Post Sentencing Investigation |
| RNP | Release Notification Program |
| STG | Security Threat Group |
| VACCIS | Virginia Automated Comprehensive Correctional Status Information system |
| VCE | Virginia Correctional Enterprises |
| VINE | The National Victim Notification Network |
| VPB | Virginia Parole Board |

Ms. McClelland is a Senior Consultant with BearingPoint and the Change Management Team Lead for VirginiaCORIS. In this role, she is working to prepare the Department for this transition and provide the officers who will be using VirginiaCORIS with the information they will need to be successful. Her background is in working with manufacturing and technology companies that are experiencing changes of this magnitude, and she is excited to be able to learn about the correctional system in Virginia. The VPPA appreciates her contribution to this newsletter and looks forward to future updates.

2007 Expanded Basic Skills for Community Corrections

by Linda Chaffins, Karen Hall-Green & Harlos Larrowe

In December 2005, a Task Force was convened for the purpose of reviewing the Department of Corrections' training program for new probation officers. They were charged with making recommendations for change where needed. The Training Task Force consisted of Harlos Larrowe, Task Force Chair, Richard Crossen, Linda Chaffins, Jane Reedy, Jenny Pauls, Christine Eacho, Abby Fedor, Jessica Sleppy, Chena Younger and Vincent Combs.

The Task Force met numerous times, surveyed other states, and developed a survey for Probation Officers, Senior Probation Officers, Deputy Chiefs and Chiefs. A separate survey targeting newly hired officers who had completed Basic Skills training was also developed. Various experts were interviewed and studies aimed at job analysis and needs assessments were examined. The Community Corrections Program Council provided valued recommendations.

The New Expanded Basic Skills was developed based on the direct recommendations of the Training Task Force. The training program will consist of 6 Phases and will be offered at least four times per year. The new employee must immediately register for the next basic skills offered. **Until they have completed training, they cannot be solely responsible for a caseload or investigative reports and cannot receive assignments during training. The idea is that new staff should concentrate on training instead of having assignments that compete for their time.**

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Training (Continued)

The newly developed shared vision for training is aimed at total immersion into the field of criminal justice in ways that will promote active learning instead of passive absorption of information. The Academy will provide new and innovative rich learning opportunities for staff that will not only be challenging but will also require critical thinking throughout each training phase. Much of the training will be CCOP based and will require new officers to demonstrate their ability to successfully handle case supervision scenarios they will be faced with in the field. The newly designed curriculum will actively build new knowledge through a variety of interactive and hands-on approaches. Emphasis will be placed on assisting new employees to develop skill sets necessary to perform the often complex and demanding elements of their work. **Successful completion of all training phases is now a condition of employment and performance based testing will be taken seriously.**

Expanded Basic Skills for Community Corrections

| Phase | Subject/Title | Hours | Location | Trainer |
|------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--|
| Phase I | Community Corrections Orientation Week 1 Week 2 | 32 Tuesday-Friday 32 Monday-Thursday | Region Return to work unit | Regional Trainers |
| Phase II | Community Corrections Policy and Procedures (3 weeks) | 120 | Academy | ASD Trainers and Adjuncts |
| Phase III | Officer Safety | 40 | Academy | Jimmy Burgess |
| Phase IV | VACORIS (Fall 2007) | 40 | Region | TBA |
| Phase V | Competency Skills and OJT | 53 hours | District/ Unit | Training Point Person (Unit Head or designee) |
| Phase VI | Additional Training Effective Communication for Working with the Resistant Offender (formerly known as Motivational Interviewing) VCIN GPS, HEM, Self Report System and Robocuff | Within 18 months | Region and Academy | ASD Trainers, Regional Trainers and Contract Providers |

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Training (Continued)

OJT Manual to be completed within 12 months of employment. Completed Rosters should be sent to The Development.

In addition, 3 Regional Trainer's, under the direct supervision of the Academy for Staff Development are currently in place. They will assist with basic skills, develop and deliver in-service programs, teach stand alone courses, conduct training on transition issues, conduct regional training, coordinate with the Training Point Person designated for each district/work site by the Unit Head, identify adjunct trainers, assist with developing Memorandums of Agreement with the local colleges, universities and institutes, and develop additional training sites.

Phase 1 consists of two weeks of training that will be completed at the Regional Level. The Regional Trainers will train this section along with selected Adjunct Trainers. This section will include an introduction to Community Corrections. For the Central Region, this training will be held at District #21, Fredericksburg; the Eastern Region will be conducted at the Eastern Regional Office, Suffolk; and for the Western Region, the location will be determined by the area where the majority of new hires originate.

VACORIS will revolutionize the way we do our business. At the present time complete training details have yet to be finalized. The new basic will include VACORIS but the exact amount of time and Phase is yet to be determined. Once training methods are finalized, VACORIS training may migrate into Phase II.

Phase V is a critical component as it provides an opportunity to exhibit competency while completing the field practicum and OJT Manual. Each district/work unit will designate a Training Point Person. More information will be forth coming as to the duties and responsibilities of this position.

The District's Training Point Person(s) will serve as a mentor for new staff and will assess their progress as they move through the training phases. The Training Point Person will work in concert with the Regional Trainer in coordinating and delivering training at the District level that ensures compliance with training requirements.

Please note that Districts/Units may refer to the LMS for the start dates for the 2007 Basic Skills Training but new hires will not register through LMS. The Registration Forms and Tracking Forms will be coming soon to DOCNet and should be available in January 2007 and will be sent to Karen Hall-Green. Once available, new hires will be able to download these forms.

The New Expanded Basic Skills consists of Competency Based Training and Testing that requires new officers to pass as a condition of employment. Competency Based Training and Testing will allow each individual to achieve competencies required in the performance of essential job functions. It will build confidence as they succeed in mastering competencies. In addition, more training time will be devoted to working with participants individually and in small groups.

So the question is, Why a new basic skills? Much time energy and money is expended in hiring new staff. It is critical that they receive the best training so that they can assume their role in providing effective and cost efficient supervision to ensure public safety and assist the offender in becoming a productive citizen. The New Expanded Basic Skills will build morale because Officers will be better prepared to handle the responsibilities of their job. They will be more satisfied with their performance, have a better understanding of their purpose, and find their work more rewarding and fulfilling, while enhancing their personal and professional growth.

The Department expects to continually make necessary adjustments to the training phases in order to meet the changing needs of its employees. This is a "fluid" approach to this project, meaning the Department remains open to new training methods and ideas.

President's Letter

John F. Smith

In late November, Doug MacDonald advised the VPPA Board that he was leaving his employment with Virginia Community Corrections to take a position with Fauquier County Community Corrections Services. Consequently, he advised that he was stepping down as President of the Association. On behalf of the membership, I want to extend our thanks to Doug for his service over the years, and extend our best wishes to him as he undertakes his new employment.

The Association's Constitution calls for the Vice-President to assume the vacated office. When I was advised of that Constitutional mandate, I recalled the saying, "If nominated, I decline and if elected I resign." The saying seemed to fit perfectly in my situation, and I enjoyed a few good laughs with my colleagues each time I recited it.

Now that I have had a few good laughs, it is time to accept the new responsibilities. This sudden transition is not dissimilar to our daily experiences in Community Corrections. New challenges and a constant array of changes confront us in our work as Probation Officers. Refusing to accept the challenges and changes is not a viable option. Rather, we must draw on our resourcefulness and the collective pool of creative ideas that resides in officers with whom we work to fulfill our responsibilities to our clients and the community.

I foresee some significant challenges and struggles on the horizon for the Association. For several months, we have been engaged in discussions regarding the future of Association Conference formats. Those discussions are ongoing. We also anticipate continued challenges to VALORS and expect to be confronted by other legislative issues. These issues and tasks require the work of many. Recognizing this, I do not undertake my new role lightly, nor do I take it alone. Rather, I embrace it with the confidence that the members and friends of the Association will lend me their support, time, talents, enthusiasm, and ideas. We will succeed together – not alone.

The Virginia Probation and Parole Association is your association. Please, join me in our continuing success!

Thank you and Happy Holidays,

John F. Smith, President

aroundthestate

News and Briefs

District 2 On Halloween, the Norfolk office conducted operations to ensure sex offenders complied with special Halloween restrictions that called for them to remain in their residence with the porch light out after 5:00 p.m. Probation Officers worked in tandem with local police to monitor offenders that night, and were pleased to find a high level of compliance, indicative of offender progress.

Simultaneously, a United States Probation Officer conducted a meeting with sex offenders in the District 2 office. Trooper Kauffman, Virginia State Police, made a presentation during that time. Those offenders were expected to be in the office from 5:00 until 8:00 p.m.

District 3 The Portsmouth Office instructed 51 sex offenders to report to the Portsmouth Circuit Court Building on Halloween at 5:30 p.m. Virginia State Trooper Kauffman reviewed sex offender registration priorities. An educational film, "First time Felon," was shown following a presentation made by a local criminal justice official. DCPO Terry Carter coordinated the special operation. The offenders were restored to supervision at 8:30 p.m.

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District 4 All sex offenders under supervision in the Accomac Office were instructed to report to the Office between the hours of 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. Two local Virginia State Troopers reviewed the sex offender registration process. Sr. Probation Officer Glenn Crim and Surveillance Officer Kenny Midgett moderated the session.

District 5 The Gloucester Office also conducted Operation Porch Lights Out on Halloween. Probation Officer Michael Meczkowski instructed all sex offenders not to participate in Halloween activities. During the course of the evening, random surveillance of sex offender homes ensured compliance with the instructions.

District 6 The Suffolk Sex Offender Team, under the oversight of Sr. Probation Officer Catherine Honeycutt, solicited a “plan” from all District 6 sex offenders regarding their whereabouts for the evening of October 31, 2006, in an operation dubbed “Project Safe Company.” Offenders who lived alone were instructed to provide a suitable plan to spend the Trick or Treat hours with a friend or family member. They were not to be home alone. Offenders were required to provide a telephone number that could be called to verify their compliance. Calls were made to the offenders randomly. Sr. PO Honeycutt and PO Hyman conducted Suffolk visits, and Sr. PO Honeycutt conducted Smithfield visits

District 7 In Petersburg, Probation Officer Aaron Sumpter coordinated “Operation No Trick or Treat” from 5:00 until 10:00 p.m. in the Petersburg General District Court. Activities included a presentation by the Virginia State Police Sex Offender Registry and Community Contact representative Trooper Walker; a sex offender counseling group session facilitated by Behavior Awareness, Inc., a drug screening, and an overview/reinforcement of the conditions of supervision and sex offender special instructions.

As 2006 closed, the Petersburg Office bid a warm farewell to Mark Alley, Deputy Chief Probation Officer. Mark, a long time friend of the Association, retired on the last day of the year. He had been with the Department since 1976, and he served with District 7 almost exclusively for those three decades. We all wish him well and District 7 especially thanks him for the lasting positive impact that he had on District 7 and the Virginia Department of Corrections.

District 9 The Charlottesville Probation Office recently concluded a frenzied Fall. They have been working on a number of initiatives that they hope will lead to better probation outcomes and reduce recidivism among their clientele.

They continue to add elements of Evidence-Based Practices to their operation, and as of November 1, 2006, they became the first District to use the new risk assessment tool, COMPAS. This is a 4th generation risk assessment instrument that identifies and measures the key criminogenic issues that lead to recidivism, violence, absconding and supervision noncompliance. The tool also helps the Officer craft a supervision plan that is focused on risk reduction by addressing the criminogenic issues identified in the assessment. The District has decided to use the COMPAS Lite (which consists of 40 pieces of data) on all newly-opened cases and to do the full COMPAS (about 150 pieces of data) on those who present the highest risk. As they move forward with the development of effective, measurable interventions, this new risk assessment/case planning will be a big help in better understanding why people fail under supervision and what can be done to prevent it.

Additionally, the District continued its involvement in the Human Capital Project, which seeks to improve the culture of an organization through improved communication and directed goal-setting. The District developed a scorecard by which the next year will be measured and staff participated in several Human Capital sessions to prepare them to achieve and exceed the milestones set by their scorecard.

Congratulations to Amy Morris, who recently graduated from the Public Safety Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University. Amy spent six weeks as a full-time student, learning and interacting with other members from a broad spectrum of public safety occupations. She learned a great deal about how these other agencies work, and how we can all work together to improve public safety.

around (Continued)

District 10 Sr. Probation Officer Michele Arkin-Hodges (Arlington), Deputy Chief Wendy Goodman (Charlottesville), Deputy Chief Tracy Lavelly (Manassas) and Deputy Chief Lisa Stapleton (Alexandria) have been invited to present a workshop in January, 2007, in Tampa, Florida, at the Winter Training Conference of the American Correctional Association. The workshop, entitled "Enhancing the Image of Probation & Parole," will be based on a project the four women developed as part of the LEAD Program, which involved, among other things, the production of a public service announcement and creation of a brochure.

District 11 For the third straight year, the Winchester Office conducted operation Trick or Treat on Halloween night. Three law enforcement agencies - the Warren County Sheriff's Department, the Winchester City Police Department, and the Virginia State Police - assisted in the operation. Six staff members comprised five teams that conducted sex offender home contacts in three jurisdictions. One team assisted by State Trooper Jerry Bosserman, arrested a client for felony Failure to Register for a Second or Subsequent time. Intensive Senior Probation Officer Brad Triplett reported a suspected drunk driver, who was weaving across the yellow line and up on the curb near Trick or Treaters. It ended up being someone in medical distress. Officer Triplett's quick action possibly saved the lives of the driver and children out for the evening. Special thanks go to Surveillance Officer Jim Christiansen, who organized and led the entire operation.

District 15 The Roanoke Sex Offender Team gathered all sex offenders on supervision at the Roanoke Day Reporting Center on Halloween night for operation Trick No Treat. The purpose of the event was to provide a safer environment for children out on Halloween. Those officers who contributed to the success of the project included Randy Phillips, Norm Berkeley, Mike Fosbre, Charles Sweetenberg, Bill Carroll, Andy Martin, Ted Abernethy and Matt Spencer.

On November 8 -9, 2006, the Roanoke Office participated in "Operation Inked II." The names of all individuals who had outstanding warrants on file with the Roanoke Police Department, the Bedford County Sheriff's Office, and the United States Marshals Service were listed in the Roanoke Times. According to the Roanoke News Release, "the objective of this operation was to encourage these individuals to turn themselves in, and to solicit assistance from the community in locating wanted individuals who refused to cooperate with law enforcement. The operation resulted in the service of over 300 warrants. The following staff from District 15 participated in the operation: Kyle Hatten, Abby Fedor, Mike Fosbre, Matt Spencer, Laura Pope, Todd Carroll, Stephanie Witt-Coughlin, Paul Keiser, Herb Hastings, Crystal Pulley, Lynn Roe, Leslie Matney and Carla Fosbre.

The Roanoke staff recently opened the Clothes Closet to assist offenders who have clothing needs. Officers collected a variety of items for infants, children, men and women. The project was envisioned by Crystal Pulley, who coordinated the effort, but many staff members donated time and clothing to the project. The full staff is commended for this worthwhile undertaking.

District 16 On October 10, 2006, the Wytheville Office enjoyed "Lee Denim Day." In recognition of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, employees paid \$5 to wear their jeans to work. The money raised that day was donated to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

On December 1, 2006, Probation Officer Robert Clarke retired from the Wytheville Office after 30 years with the State. He rose to the rank of Captain at Southampton Correctional Center, before joining Community Corrections on March 1, 1991. He will be missed, and the Department wishes him the very best.

District 19 On Halloween night, the Newport News Office conducted surveillance on high-risk predatory sex offenders under their supervision. During the evening, in "Operation Porch Lights Out," Officers conducted random home contacts to ensure compliance with curfew instructions and confirm offenders followed instruction that barred all participation in Trick or Treat activities.

around (Continued)

District 21 On October 31, 2006, the Fredericksburg office conducted "Operation Trick/Treat." The staff worked in partnership with the Virginia State Police, Spotsylvania County and Stafford County Sheriffs Offices, Fredericksburg City Police Department, Spotsylvania County Commonwealth Attorney's Office, and the Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault to enhance public safety on Halloween Night. The successful operation conformed to the District Motto: "TOGETHER EVERYONE ACHIEVES MORE."

Two District 21 staff members recently traveled to Haiti on a mission trip. Senior Probation Officer Faye Jones and Office Services Assistance Shelia Thomas shared their experiences with staff during a presentation in November.

District 23 The Virginia Beach office instructed identified sex offenders to report to the District 23 office during the high-risk Trick or Treat hours. Offenders were processed by supervising Probation Officers in conjunction with community service providers. Offenders were restored to supervision after the Virginia Beach curfew had passed.

District 28 On Halloween night, the Radford Office reprised the New River Valley "Operation Light's Out." Fifty letters were mailed to registered sex offenders in Floyd, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties and the City of Radford, instructing them to eschew all Halloween activities, and to remain in their homes with all outside lights off from 5:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. During the course of the evening, Officers Karen Alderman, Patricia Ball, Rick Callahan, Anil Goswami, Leigh Ann Henderson, Doug Irvin, Chad Phillips and Phillip Reese made unannounced surveillance contacts at 23 sex offender's residences. The team reported 100% compliance with instructions.

On November 2, 2006, Radford Senior Probation and Parole Officer Donald Roop, in conjunction with the Radford Police Department, finalized a "Site Assessment Photo Manual for Probation and Parole District #28," which was created to provide photographic structural information to first responders as to the entire layout of the District office building and grounds, including interior and exterior views, for sight lines in case tactical team involvement is required.

Planning was given to multiple-user scenarios including fire, hostage taking, bomb threats, etc. Copies are stored in secure locations, one in the District office and another in the Radford Police Department. Should an incident occur while staff is in the building, this photo log would be part of a compact package of materials that would be accessed. If the District's copy would be unavailable for whatever reason, then first responders would utilize the Radford Police Department's copy.

On November 17, 2006, Deputy Chief Probation and Parole Officer Sam Arnold - a 2006 Department of Corrections participant - graduated from the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Public Safety Institute. This scholarship opportunity, developed through the L. Douglas Wilder School for Government and Public Affairs, began in early October and utilized an intensive six-week course of study at the VCU campus in Richmond.

District 29 This year, the Fairfax Probation Office again planned and successfully administered the 2006 version of "Porch Lights Out" on Halloween night. Eighty sex offenders in Fairfax County/City were targeted and given specific instructions regarding their activities and whereabouts during the time when children would be on the street "Trick or Treating." From 5:30 p.m. through 9:30 p.m., the District's Team, comprised of Terrel Adcock, Denise Hayes, Jim Irving, Robert Jackson, Don Needels, Tom Quinn, Robert Smith and Monica Tressler, conducted drive-by surveillance and intervention to ensure that sex offenders were home with their porch lights off and not a threat to the children in the community.

The Fairfax Recidivist Prevention Program's 2006 Winter Graduation Ceremony was held on December 13, 2006. The event, attended by family and friends of the eighteen graduates, were honored to have in attendance four Fairfax County Circuit Court Judges: The Honorable Kathleen H. MacKay, David T. Stitt, Arthur B. Viereg, Jr., and Robert W. Wooldridge, Jr. Three of the program graduates shared what they had learned in the Program, how it had helped them, and how they expected it to continue helping them in the future. Those who contributed to the success of the program and the graduation included Ronald E. Dawson, Scott R. Dulaney, Hermene Rocamora, Angela L. Tillman and Barbara Novak Timms.

around (Continued)

District 30 The Hampton Office joined other offices around the state this year to enhance public safety in the community on Halloween night. All sex offenders were notified to be in their homes with Porch Lights Out during Trick or Treat hours 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Predatory sex offenders were targeted for random home contacts to ensure compliance

District 32 During the month of November, Jerry Fitz convened the inaugural sessions of a group he created in the Henrico Office - "The African-American Peer Group." Meeting agendas incorporate such topics as Fatherhood, Starting your Own Business, and Keeping a Checkbook.

On Halloween night, Henrico conducted a "Trick no Treat Operation." All District sex offenders reported to the Henrico Police Department for a lockdown. Thirty-two offenders were expected. One offender, however, failed to report, which resulted in an immediate arrest the following day. Four DNA samples were collected for the database, and Henrico Police conducted warrant checks. The evening also included a poignant movie on victim sensitivity.

District 33 In Warsaw, the ongoing sex offender treatment group was convened on Halloween night and sex offenders were held in the District Office during trick or treat hours.

District 34 On Halloween night, the Williamsburg Office utilized contracted treatment providers to conduct group and individual sessions for the highest risk sex offenders. Additionally, home contacts were conducted on offenders not present for the scheduled group session.

District 36 In mid-October, Lynde Jirikovic, Probation Officer, and Lisa Stapleton, Deputy Chief, Alexandria, attended a training conference in Lexington, Kentucky. The conference, which sponsored by the American Probation & Parole Association, in conjunction with the [Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women](#) (OVW), focused on "Community Corrections' Response to Domestic Violence." The two Officers attended with a local jurisdictional team that included a prosecutor, public defender, police detective, victim advocate, and a Circuit Court Judge. Their attendance was funded through a federal grant awarded to the Alexandria Police Department by OVW. The training presented guidelines for the supervision and investigation of domestic violence offenders. The District envisions employing these guidelines and making proposals for state-wide implementation.

District 37 The Rocky Mount Probation and Parole Office staff, along with Boy Scout Troop #456, donated non-perishable food items as part of the Rocky Mount Police Department's annual "Feed the Elderly" program. The food items were placed in baskets and distributed to needy elderly people in Franklin County. This marked the second year the District 37 office participated in this worthwhile program. The Office also sponsored an "Angel" (a twelve-year-old boy) through the Angel Tree Child Advocacy Center.

Charles K. Rigney, who served as Probation and Parole Officer in District 37 for twenty-eight years, retired in November, 2006. "Chuck" was an outstanding probation officer, who will be missed. Chuck is wished the very best in his future endeavors.

On October 25, 2006, a Regional Manager's Audit concluded in the Emporia Office. Auditors failed to find any areas of concern and asserted that the District was in very good standing with regard to standards.

District 38 Operation Porch Lights Out, in the Emporia Office, targeted 43 sex offenders, who were instructed to remain in their homes with porch lights out. All displays of Halloween paraphernalia were banned and offenders were instructed to abstain from all Trick or Treat activities. Intensive Supervision Officer Glenn Driver, four Probation Officers and a surveillance Officer conducted random checks to verify compliance with the instructions.

around (Continued)

District 42 A total of twenty letters were forwarded to sex offenders under supervision in the Franklin Office instructing them to appear in the office on Halloween evening. Offenders with verified legitimate obligations were exempted. One was arrested on outstanding warrants. The remaining offenders were held from 6:00 until 8:00 p.m. A Virginia State Police Trooper provided Sex Offender registration information, and a contracted treatment provider facilitated substance abuse groups for attendees. Probation Officer Ken Bradley coordinated the activities for the district.

On October 13, 2006, Franklin personnel completed its first official trash pick-up for the Adopt-a-Highway Program. The crew consisted of five offenders and five staff members, including Chief Probation Officer Aaron Boone. The District, which has a strong reputation for community involvement also raised a total of \$873 for the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign. The total represented an increase of \$289 from last year.

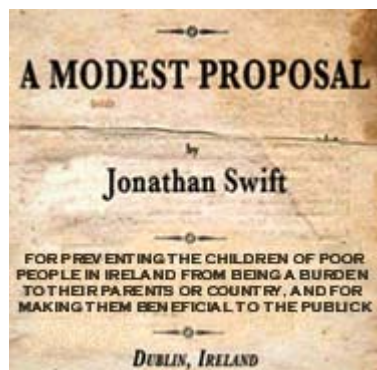
EVDRP The Eastern Virginia Day Reporting Center (EVDRP) recently benefited from the combined efforts of a local Boy Scout troop. The troop landscaped and refurbished the flower beds in front of the facility as a public service project that earned them credit toward their Eagle Scout Order of the Arrow. No offenders were present during the project, and the EVDRP staff made a conscious effort to have coverage focus on the efforts and achievements of the Scouts.

SoapBox

A Modest Proposal

D. Maurice Dean (2006)

For Preventing The Drug Users of America
From Being a Burden to The Economy or Community, and
For Making Them Beneficial to the Public



“It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms.”
Opening Lines of a Modest Proposal by Jonathan Swift

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Count me among those men who consider myself to be fortunate to have been born in this country. And although I am often ashamed of how my country behaves, I am nonetheless proud to be an American, albeit by accident of birth. That said, I am embarrassed by the hypocrisy my country exhibits with regard to two matters: (1) Our schizophrenic treatment of the drug alcohol; and (2) our fondness for depriving men and women of their liberty and pursuit of happiness.

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SoapBox (Continued)

America - first in liberty, first in flight, first to land on the moon, and first in per capita prison rates. It is a melancholy fact that the United States imprisons more people per capita than any country in the world, including Russia, South Africa, and Cuba. The number has steadily climbed over the years. In 1992 for every 100,000 Americans, 505 sat behind bars. By 2004, the number had swollen to 723 per 100,000. Our zeal for imprisonment appears unabated as we enter 2007.

On the eve of the holiday season, Virginia's Governor held a press conference in Richmond to announce his budget wish list. Presumably, had it been ready sooner, he could have sent it to Santa, but the time being short, he delivered his request to the good citizens of the Commonwealth instead; and thus began his budget advertising campaign. The budget included a medley of wishes, including a request for additional retirement funds for deputies. (Surely, the legislature will not start eyeing our VALOR money again.) But the headline-provoking item in the budget was the plan to build a 1,024-bed prison in idyllic Grayson County, Virginia.

Not mentioned at the press conference was the fact that Virginia already has two other prisons, each with the same 1024 bed capacity, under construction – one in Chatham and one in Tazewell. The announcement of a third means prison capacity will expand by more than three thousand beds in the near future.

The Governor's press conference - the opening salvo in his budget advertising campaign - coincided with the opening salvos in the annual parade of festive beer commercials featuring, among other things, sleighs, glowing fireplaces, Christmas lights flashing in rhythm to music by the Trans Siberian Orchestra, and horses frolicking in the snow.

The state budget, which usually resides inconspicuously somewhere in the Governor's office, moved front and center just as grocery store managers were hurriedly building holiday towers of beer in the aisles and frantically moving the Martini & Rossi Asti Spumante from the wine shelf to displays near store entrances, aisles and check out counters.

These corresponding events triggered a storm in my brain. Let me assure you that the storm was in no way related to my personal consumption of the aforementioned ethanol products. If you will bear with me, I will explain this mental tempest.

The projected cost of this new, as yet unnamed prison, is \$100 million. Although we do not have the money for this penal complex, the Governor proposes we borrow it. He touted both the need and the benefit of the project. He assured citizens that the prison would profit the good folk in the New River Valley. According to his statement, the prison, which is being built in the district of Sen. William C. Wampler Jr., R-Bristol, a leading budget negotiator in the General Assembly, will generate 350 jobs and boost the local economy. That is the good news.

But there is bad news. What will it cost to operate this prison? According to Virginia Department of Corrections' figures, it costs \$22,854 a year to incarcerate one person. (And to think parents get a measly \$4,300 tax credit each year to raise their little inmates.) So Virginia citizens, in addition to paying back the \$100 million loan, will pay \$23.4 million each year to operate the new prison. And as I mentioned above, we have two more prisons with identical capacities that will be operational in the near future. The total annual operational cost for these three new prisons extrapolates to \$70.2 million.

I was already alarmed upon discovering that we were leading the world in prisoners per capita, then comes this information about borrowing money so we can lock up some more people. The announcement intensified a storm that already was brewing in my mind. For days I brooded over this sad news. I wondered, what can we do to slow this pattern of building new prisons every few years? Then suddenly there was a moment of clarity and part of the solution came to mind – stop locking up so many people.

Note, I say this would only be *part* of the solution, so dear reader, I implore you to bear with me. I have yet to share the genius of my cerebral tempest.

SoapBox (Continued)

We know this about the effects of incarceration: (1) it adversely impacts future employment opportunities; (2) it has a deleterious effect on families and children; (3) it costs the taxpayers enormously, not only in direct incarceration costs, but also in collateral costs; and (4) it means there is less money for other essential services.

Furthermore, we know that “Prisoners released for property and drug crimes (recidivate) at a higher rate than those released for other non-violent or violent crimes.” (*Recidivism in Virginia: Tracking the 1999 Release Cohort*, Virginia Department of Corrections, May 2005.)

Nearly one-third of all drug offenders will return to prison according to the recidivism report. If we take them out of the incarceration loop, we reduce the prison population, and we can abandon these three new facilities.

But my modest proposal goes beyond saving money – we can actually make money with my brainstorm!

For the time being, forget the research out of Harvard and Princeton that says imprisoning young men substantially reduces the possibilities for future gainful employment. Forget the fact that we can save money by abolishing some re-entry programs. (There is no need for re-entry where a person is never yanked out of his Fairfax community and transported to Grayson County 320 miles away.) Forget the study out of UCLA that found incarceration drained money from the economy while “Every dollar spent on substance abuse treatment generated \$7 in monetary benefits for society.”

Forget all of the ancillary financial benefits of locking up less people; there is real money to be made with my plan.

I propose we treat drugs like alcohol. I am fully persuaded that we can Budweiser our way out of this financial burden. Here is how it would work.

First, there is the money to be made in the America’s superb entrepreneurial system. Last year, Anheuser-Busch reported a net profit of 1.8 billion dollars. (Gross profits were many times higher.)

Anheuser, of course, is just one major beer company. If you consider all of the domestic beer companies, wineries, and distillers combined the profit reported by Anheuser is multiplied over and over again. Is there any reason to believe that we cannot expect an equal profit from the sale of other drugs?

I will leave it to the wise to decide who the drug distributors would be, but it occurs to me that we could bring the drugs on line quickly if we utilized the distribution system already in place. We could give marijuana to “Bud”weiser, and perhaps let Miller “High” Life market the powder cocaine. And we could let the current, cheap, “Bum Wine” makers have the crack cocaine; after all, Cisco already enjoys the nickname, “liquid crack.”

Second, there is money to be made by the local, state, and federal governments. We can charge excise taxes and sales taxes on the current street drugs just like we do on alcohol. Licensing fees would also apply. Here in Virginia we might develop a hybrid distribution strategy similar to the one we now have with alcohol, where retailers enjoy the profits from the soft alcohol, and the state operates a monopoly on hard alcohol. Under such a system, retailers could sell the marijuana and maybe even the cocaine, and let the State distribute Heroin and Crystal Meth.

According to Virginia’s ABC website, “ABC had a remarkable eighth straight record-breaking year by reaching \$572 million in gross sales in the ABC retail stores and producing net profits of \$93.3 million. Total contributions from ABC to the Commonwealth for Fiscal Year 2006 totaled \$280.9 million and more than \$1 billion in the last five years.” I have to believe that sum would double, if not triple, if the Commonwealth embraces my proposal on drugs.

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SoapBox (Continued)



Third, there is money to be made by the huge advertising companies. The alcohol industry reportedly spent over one billion dollars in advertising last year. In the beginning, they probably would not make that handsome sum from drug advertising, because the drug consumer pool is considerably smaller than the alcohol pool. At present, 2 out of 3 Americans consume alcoholic beverages; but less than 10% of the population regularly consumes illicit drug. This should not deter us from embarking on this endeavor. It is reasonable to expect the number of users to rise quickly once ad agencies start working their magic. A buxom woman here and there, a few smiling happy faces at a party, the repeated sly insinuation that it is hip and cool to do drugs - the numbers will soar. After all, these clever guys in the ad agencies are the ones who pictured a man doing sit-ups with beer in the foreground as if working out and drinking beer are healthy companions.

Fourth, there is money to be made from criminal behavior associated with drug use. As you will see, I am not suggesting we legalize these street drugs, I am merely suggesting we shift the criminal focus, just as we have with alcohol. Foremost, it would be illegal to sell any of these drugs to minors. Perhaps, it would be a good idea to keep hallucinogenic drugs out of the mainstream. The market for them is limited, and continuing to make them illegal would serve to purposes: (1) It would provide politicians with a "tough on crime issue"; and (2) It would give opportunity to marginalize a different demographic for a while. Unfortunately, we would miss a chance to sell tie-dyed t-shirts and psychedelic posters promoting psilocybin if we keep hallucinogenic drugs on the banned list, but we could let that opportunity pass knowing there is plenty of money to be made elsewhere.

I propose we punish illegal producers and sellers just as we now do with moon shiners. Likewise, I suggest we punish anyone who imports these drugs from other countries without paying requisite import duties, taxes and fees. Transportation across state lines could be illegal, and punish should ensue for anyone who carried unsealed open packages of drugs in a vehicle, and anyone guilty of public intoxication. Drugs, of course, are covered already under our current DWI laws, but we could develop a separate court-ordered program – Drug Action Safety Program (DASAP). This approach would create more jobs and generate additional revenue. Likewise, additional revenue would be generated for the insurance companies, the courts, attorneys, and DMV.

Fifth, and finally, there is money in this for the politicians. During the recent six-year period, the National Beer Wholesalers Association – only one of many alcohol related lobbying organizations – gave \$8.6 million to congressional candidates. Closer to home, in 2005, according to the Public Access Project, the alcohol beverage distributors and brokers contributed in excess of \$900,000 to Virginia political campaigns. Is there any reason not to expect the emergence of similar lobbyist for street drugs - National Marijuana Wholesalers Association or a Virginia Cocaine Broker network? Political candidates could double, even triple, contributions under my modest suggestion.

To conclude, I want my dear readers to understand that it is not my intent to promote the promiscuous or irresponsible use of any mood altering substances. Nor do I have any personal stake in this humble proposal. My only motive is the public good. It has the noble benefits of advancing trade, providing new jobs, and reducing our prison population, while giving pleasure to the rich and enhancing the government coffers. If indeed my plan finds favor, I would anticipate that the state would establish an agency to manage the distribution of controlled drugs. I suggest it follow the example set by our current ABC Department that promotes responsible consumption (in their words, "through the use of prevention initiatives that focus on environmental, educational and information dissemination strategies") while simultaneously promoting the sale of liquor (for gift ideas visit [Virginia ABC](#)).

SoapBox (Continued)



It is reasonable to expect that once the government embraces my lucrative proposal, certain warnings would be required, both on individual products and in advertisements. I would be disappointed if the government failed to mandate warning labels or failed to develop advertising campaigns to discourage the use of drugs by minors and encourage responsible use by adults. Of course, I suggest the government exercise measured restraint in this area, just as it does now with alcohol. Otherwise, profits could be adversely impacted. Finally, I would expect companies, to demonstrate civic goodwill and responsibility and voluntarily to encourage responsible use in discreet fine print.

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IT'S MORE THAN COMMUNITY SERVICE . . .

Peggy Anthony

Over the last several weeks, the District 25 staff engaged in a contest between the men and women to see who could collect the most blankets. A blanket drive was conducted for the local shelters after receiving reports that record numbers of homeless were expected this winter. Over 100 new blankets for children and adults, pillows and sleeping bags were collected. In addition to the collection, one major contact with the Leesburg Hospital provided 50 blankets and hygiene kits to the Warming Shelter in Leesburg. The shelters have been a wonderful resource for officers seeking to help offenders who find themselves without a place to live. The desire to assist these shelters is driven by the fact that some of the facilities are not located in the district 25 jurisdiction, yet they are still willing to help. The men won and they are eagerly awaiting just desserts from the women.



Dave Curro & Brian Kimble - Up to their necks in blankets

District 25 also participated in the annual "Not in Our Homes, Not in Our Community" vigil on October 27, 2006. The Domestic and Sexual Violence Coordinating Council organized the vigil in coordination with other local community agencies and churches. Ribbons were signed by staff members, some being dedicated in honor of victims. OSA Bernadette Amos-Watts attended the vigil and had the ribbons added to a rope tied with ropes from at least 28 other organizations. The vigil was held to honor victims and to heighten community awareness and prevention.

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