

DOCS



TODAY

May 2004

New York State Department of Correctional Services

Vol. 13, No. 5

Goord: inmate health care among the best



Dr. Jon Miller, facility health service director at Coxsackie's Regional Medical Unit, examines an inmate. Commissioner Goord recently told the Assembly's health and corrections committees that inmate health care, provided by staff like Dr. Miller, affords inmates a level of treatment that meets or exceeds community standards.

Attica brings prison history series to a close

New feature to spotlight employee jobs, highlighting work performed by units

This month, with the publication of the history of the Attica prison, DOCS|TODAY completes an ambitious task begun roughly seven years ago: publishing the histories of each of the state's now 70 prisons.

It began in February 1998 with the state's first prison, Newgate, and ends, intentionally, with its most controversial.

In recent years, I had hoped the history of Attica could be published along side an article announcing the resolution of the concerns of the Forgotten Victims of Attica, thereby closing another chapter in the history of the 1971 riot and its aftermath.

That was not to be.

Each month, we have devoted several pages to the history of each prison. We could fill this month's 16 page-edition with Attica's past and admit we had only scratched the surface.

As a result, we have chosen to write the history of Attica using the same general format employed in writing the story of the state's other prisons.

We know some will say that this month's history gives the riot less than its due: but the more thoughtful reader will agree that every one of the dozens of movies or books on the same subject have received the same criticisms, even when they labeled themselves the "tell all" or "final" versions.

We acknowledge up front that our history is the overview of Attica, not an attempt to tell the story of the riot.

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New feature begins

Next month, we'll inaugurate a new standard feature that succeeds the monthly histories.

It will revolve

around the work performed by the thousands of employees of this Department.

For example, the first feature will highlight our Training Academy and the various forms of training offered each year.

I suspect it will be revealing to our civilian employees, most of whom have never set foot inside the Academy, let alone attended its recruit classes and other training sessions.

For security personnel, it can be 5, 10, 15 or more years since some veteran officers passed through its training programs.

I suspect they may be as interested as they will be surprised to see how training of various types has changed over the years.

In upcoming editions we'll look at operations such as reception centers, personnel offices, health units, commissaries, business offices and how we interact with parole, EnCon and the Office of Mental Health, among others.

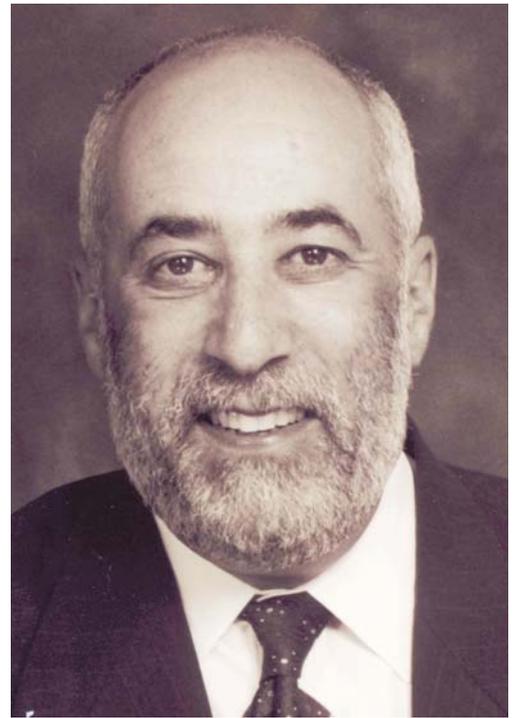
Our goal is to provide employees with an eyewitness view of the work performed by their colleagues, and to show your colleagues what your unit contributes to this agency.

We will continue to focus upon the labors of our employees in the field, the men and women whose professionalism, dedication and hard work make our prisons the best in the nation.

As we prepare to bring you this new feature each month, I'd like to remind each facility that they are welcome to submit story ideas and photos through their superintendents for consideration for publication in DOCS|TODAY.

Many of the stories you read in the *Facility Highlights* section are the result of employee suggestions. So we are always on the look out for a few more good story ideas.

We'll welcome yours. 



Commissioner Goord

This month's articles

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DOCS|TODAY is published monthly by the New York State Department of Correctional Services: George E. Pataki, Governor of the State of New York; Glenn S. Goord, Commissioner of the Department of Correctional Services; James B. Flateau, Director of the Public Information Office; Linda M. Foglia and Nicholas J. Lyman, Assistant Public Information Officers.

ON THE COVER: The masthead brings DOCS|TODAY together with its past via "Copper John," the Colonial soldier who has stood atop the front gate of Auburn, the state's oldest prison, since 1821. The American flag was affixed to his bayonet in memory of those who lost their lives during the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks upon the United States. The flag itself was taken from a photograph of it flying above Ground Zero.

CORRESPONDENCE: Should be sent to the Department of Correctional Services, Office of Public Information, Building Number Two, Room 203, 1220 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12226-2050, or to the Department's Internet address: <http://www.docs.state.ny.us>

PUBLICATION: DOCS|TODAY is prepared in-house via desktop composition. Camera-ready pages are sent to the Elmira Correctional Facility and published in the print shop operated by the Division of Industries (*Corcraft*). DOCS|TODAY is available on the Department website at docs.state.ny.us

745 inmates linked to new crimes among first 1,000 DNA 'hits'

Law expanded to include more crimes, Governor proposes further expansion

Inmates had accounted for 745 "hits" linking offenders to unsolved crimes when the state's DNA data bank recorded its 1,000th match in May 2003.

That 74.5 percent match rate is consistent with inmate DNA samples making up 69 percent of the data bank at that time – 76,680 of the 110,527 samples on file at that time.

Nearly 200 convictions have resulted thus far from among those 745 matches, most of which involve crimes of sex and violence that are unrelated to the crime that sent the inmate to prison in the first place, according to statistics from the state Division of Criminal Justice (DCJS).

Those matches have included:

- Detectives collected blood samples from a murder scene where the victim had disturbed a burglary in progress. One of the samples returned a hit on a former inmate who had been paroled after serving time in a previous burglary. The offender was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 25 years to life.
- Police were unaware of the connection in three sexual assaults – two involving young children, the other an elderly woman – until DNA linked the three crimes. Subsequently, that DNA was matched with a sample taken from an inmate convicted of attempted burglary. He was convicted of the assaults and sentenced to 25 years to life.
- Bloodstains that had been preserved from an old murder case were analyzed following the 1999 amendment of the law. The resulting DNA profile matched the profile of an inmate serving time for a crime that did not require DNA sampling prior to 1999. He was convicted of first degree manslaughter and sentenced to 14½ to 25 years in prison.

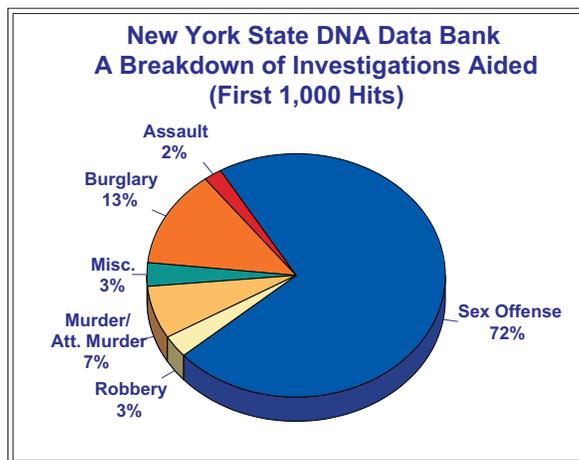
The law requiring DNA samples from inmates dates to 1994 and covered persons entering prison starting Jan. 1, 1996. Inmates convicted of assaults, homicide, sex offenses, incest, escape and absconding were required to provide samples to the state's DNA data bank.

Governor Pataki and the Legislature expanded the list of crimes in 1999 to include all violent felonies; burglary and attempted burglary, 1st through 3rd degree; criminal sale of a controlled substance, 1st through 5th; criminal possession of a controlled substance, 1st and 2nd, and grand larceny, 4th degree subsection 5). Anyone who committed such crimes on or after Dec. 1, 1999, was made eligible for DNA sampling. In addition, the law also specified anyone still serving a sentence, on probation or on parole on that date for any of the listed crimes

(except drug offenses and the grand larceny charge) would also have to provide a sample.

Governor Pataki wants to expand the state's DNA designated offenses by including all felonies, A and B misdemeanors and crimes committed by youthful offenders.

The busiest years for DOCS testing staff were 2000-01, since the law extended DNA sampling to nearly 40,000 inmates already in custody. A total of 59,870 inmates were tested.



Through 2003, the Department has tested 38,721 inmates serving sentences for eligible crimes before the law changed in 1999, plus 41,806 admissions since, for a total of 80,527 DNA samples.

"DOCS is by far the biggest contributor to the state DNA data base," said John Hicks, Director of Forensic Services for DCJS.

He said the state's total data bank now contains about 125,000 DNA profiles of convicted offenders and more than 11,000 crime scene DNA profiles. New York shares DNA information

with other states through the FBI, which serves as the connection to the national DNA data bank. The state data bank is maintained at the New York State Police Forensic Investigation Center in Albany.

The data bank maintains DNA profiles of convicted offenders that can be used by law enforcement to identify a perpetrator of a crime when DNA evidence is retrieved from a crime scene.

A DNA profile can be developed from tiny amounts of biological material (e.g., saliva, skin oil). These profiles can now be submitted to the DNA data bank to determine whether a match exists against a convicted offender profile or against evidence from another unsolved crime.

DNA evidence is collected from a crime scene and analyzed by a forensic laboratory accredited in DNA testing. A scientist develops a DNA "profile" and uploads it to the data bank.

That profile is then run against the convicted-offender DNA profiles in the state data bank to determine if a match exists. In addition, profiles from other unsolved cases are compared against it to identify serial crimes.

All crime scene and offender profiles are uploaded to the Federal DNA Index System for comparison with DNA profiles from other states. DNA profiles remain in the federal data bank and are regularly searched against new profiles as they are added to the system.

Mr. Hicks said all states have laws requiring offenders to supply DNA samples. Like New York, most states that began with more limited sampling requirements have since expanded the list of eligible crimes. 

Commissioner cites record of improvement in inmate medical care

AIDS deaths drop 94%, TB cases by 88%

(Commissioner Goord testified on March 15 before a joint session of the Assembly's committees on health and corrections to discuss medical services for inmates. Here is his opening statement before the committees.)

I thank both chairmen and your committee members for the opportunity to meet with you today.

This is the first time that I have been invited to appear before a joint meeting of these committees.

I appreciate this opportunity to go on the public record before the Assembly. I welcome this forum as a means to detail the hard work, professionalism and dedication of the 1,700 men and women who provide inmate medical care throughout the prison system.

Like them, I am very proud of our success in expanding and improving quality health care for the 65,000 inmates housed in 70 prisons across the state.

I read the committees' announcement publicizing today's hearing. It did not acknowledge the many program improvements and new initiatives affecting inmate medical care that we have implemented since George Pataki became Governor.

I'd like to enter them into the official record of this hearing. But we would be here all day if I were to enumerate all of them. So let me say that my list is representative and not intended to be all-inclusive. Our systemwide record includes:

- Increasing inmate health care spending by 63 percent since 1995 – while the inmate population has declined by 9 percent from its high point in 1999. That increase came even as our treatment policies allowed us to reduce inmate outside hospital days from 38,000 in 1995 down to 15,000 in 2002.
- Interviewing every incoming inmate – more than 26,000 last year alone. We record their medical histories while providing physical, dental and x-ray exams. Screening or lab work is completed as necessary for tuberculosis, Hepatitis B and C as well as for sexually-transmitted diseases.
- Exposing every inmate to educational and instructional

materials about TB, HIV and other blood borne diseases. The material is targeted by gender and is offered in both English and Spanish.

- Providing inmates with one million primary care visits annually.
- Arranging nearly 113,000 medical specialty consultations each year. About 7,000 of these visits are with infectious disease specialists. Inmates have contact with nearly 1,000 specialty care providers around the state. These are the same providers who treat New Yorkers in the outside community.
- Reducing the number of AIDS deaths by 94 percent. There were 258 in 1995 but only 15 last year.
- Shipping more than one million pharmaceutical items last year and filling 78,000 prescriptions per month.
- Testing more than 15,000 inmates last year for their HIV status.
- Cutting the rate of active TB infection by 88 percent. It was 225 cases per 100,000 inmates in 1991 but only 28 per 100,000 last year. More than 66,000 inmates were tested for TB exposure in 2003.
- Ensuring all inmates who meet clinical guidelines established by the U.S.



Commissioner Goord speaks with Assembly Corrections Chair Jeffrey Aubry (center) and Health Chair Richard Gottfried.

Centers for Disease Control and National Institutes of Health are receiving appropriate Hepatitis C treatment.

- Arranging thousands of hours of annual in-service training for our medical personnel. It is provided by outside sources such as medical centers and AIDS experts. Nearly 27,000 non-medical employees receive OSHA's mandated annual training regarding blood borne pathogens and TB.
- Requiring American Correctional Association accreditation of all health care units. That includes meeting "performance-based standards." It requires collection and use of "outcome measures" of the system and the care that we provide.

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- Working with the Department of Health's AIDS Institute. We use the same quality improvement program reviews that it employs in outside communities. Our guidelines are consistent with theirs.
- Monitoring quality infection control by reviewing inmate medical records – 25,000 of them last year alone – to ensure compliance with CDC, state health department and our own guidelines for the treatment and prevention of such diseases.

I know one of the issues on your agenda is mandating Department of Health oversight of our medical facilities and staff. I believe our record shows we do an excellent job of providing medical care to inmates. I don't know of any state health department in the nation responsible for prison medical care. I don't believe it is required in New York, either. I also do not believe the state health department deems it necessary.

I don't see how it serves inmates to debate this one-house issue that has divided us for 20 years. I think the effort could be better spent advancing issues that we agree would actually improve health care.

I offer the same advice to those who disagree with our policy of limiting condoms to the Family Reunion Program. Once again, let me point out that the Department's policy has been consistent for at least the past two decades. And 48 other states agree with our position on condoms. Let me take just a few minutes on this issue: I want to explain why what some see as a medical issue is viewed as one of security by professionals in 49 state prison systems across the country.

Vermont is that one state in the nation that makes condoms available to all prison inmates. It has fewer than 2,000 inmates. It reports a consistent pool of 15-25 HIV-infected inmates among them.

I hope no one recommends that we blindly go where Vermont's prison policies lead. But if they do, I can save money by reducing the hours of operation in our inmate visiting rooms: Vermont limits inmate visitors to family members. Its stated goal is to reduce prison contraband, particularly drugs. Barring non-family visitors in New York prisons would reduce our inmate visits by several thousands each year.

Vermont makes no claim of scientific documentation that condom distribution reduces the spread of HIV. There is also no scientific documentation that the lack of systemwide distribution increases its spread among inmates in the 49 other state prison systems across the nation.

Since I am talking about one New England state, let me report to you on a drug bust two weeks ago in another. It was conducted by a multi-agency law enforcement task force in Maine. *The Associated Press* reported that police raided a heroin distribution center in Waterville. They seized \$50,000 worth of heroin packaged in what they called "little balloons." The distributors said they were all to be smuggled into the visiting room of just one, nearby prison. The "little balloons" were to be passed by visitors to inmates while exchanging a kiss.

In our own system, my staff has been vigilant in its battle to keep drugs out of our facilities. We conducted nearly 93,000 inmate drug tests last year – with a positivity rate of less than 4 percent. I think that indicates how successful we have been in reducing illegal drug use among inmates. It also indicates our success in reducing the violence that can accompany drug trafficking in our prisons as well as on our streets. Our efforts contribute to the fact that our current rates of prison violence are the lowest since 1979.

But all is not perfect. Visitors are being caught with condoms and "little balloons" as they attempt to smuggle drugs into Great Meadow, Auburn, Elmira, Attica – and virtually most

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Those testifying included (from left) Dr. Bruce Agins, Medical Director of the AIDS Institute at the Department of Health (DOH); Wayne Osten, Director of the DOH Office of Health Systems Management; Dr. Guthrie Birkhead, Director of the AIDS Institute and the Center for Community Health; Commissioner Goord; Dr. Lester Wright, DOCS Chief Medical Officer, and DOCS Deputy Commissioner and Counsel Anthony Annucci.



Writing a future mindful of its past

Attica

Attica was representative of how jurisdictions across the nation operated their maximum-security prisons during the turbulent '70s, long before the designations of medium- and minimum-security facilities entered the correctional lexicography. Then, a Sept. 9, 1971 dispute between an officer and an inmate mushroomed into the deadliest one-day encounter among Americans since the Civil War, leaving 11 staff and 32 inmates dead in its wake. While debates continue today as to the root causes and direct results of the riot, this much is clear: Attica's increased staff is now among the best trained in the nation, while inmates participate in a myriad of programs unheard of 33 years ago. Rates of violence inside its walls are at near-record low levels. The prison is today representative of the nation's best in correctional administration and operations.

Many of the criticisms leveled in the 1970s at the nation's penal system in general and Attica in particular have long since been addressed.

Security and civilian staffing have been considerably increased, inmate out of cell time has been expanded along with a myriad of rehabilitative programs to occupy inmates in a productive manner. The prison's operations and management have been accredited several times as meeting national standards.

Attica first made headlines when it opened in 1931. Hailed as "the last word in modern prison construction," with advanced security features and technological innovations.

Ironically, Attica would next make headlines in 1971, when a mechanical breakdown of the most primitive kind – a faulty weld on a gate – foiled that much ballyhooed technology and led to the most deadly riot in New York state prison history.

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Attica becomes fifth maximum-security facility

In 1926, more than 7,000 inmates were crammed into the 4,831 cells in the four state prisons, and prisoners were “doubled up” in tiny, primitive, unsanitary cells at Sing Sing, Auburn and Clinton. A wall was being built around Great Meadow to convert it to maximum-security.

Since those four prisons were located in the eastern and central areas of the state, the new institution was to be built out west, with the location chosen by a site selection committee.

With admissions exceeding releases by 500 a year, the Legislature in 1927 authorized a fifth prison, appropriating \$3.5 million for the 697-acre plot and construction of Attica.

Contracts were let in September and ground was broken on October 15, 1929. The architect and contractors were equal to the “quicksand problem.” The location of the wall and some of the buildings was shifted to avoid silt deposits; foundation pilings were driven to depths of 70 feet, and steel tubing was sunk in “soft spots” and then filled with concrete.

William J. Beardsley of Poughkeepsie, designer of the Erie County Penitentiary (now DOCS’ Wende facility), was engaged as architect. Beardsley produced a blueprint remarkable for its strength and simplicity. The architecture is marked by dignified symmetry, with repeating window and roof patterns but little in the way of ornamental flourishes. The principal structures are laid out in three nested rectangles: an inner quadrangle of adjoining cell-blocks ringed by an outer group of support buildings, all enclosed within the prison wall.

The nucleus of the prison is a rectangle of around 7½ grassy acres. Each side of the rectangle is a three-story cellblock. Within this innermost quadrangle, enclosed corridors connect the cellblocks in a plus-sign, intersecting at a point called “Times Square” – the geometric and symbolic center of the prison. The corridors divide the interior into four smaller recreation yards, with security observation towers overlooking each

Second, ringed around the cellblock quadrangle are administration, program, industry and support buildings, all located within the exterior wall of the prison.

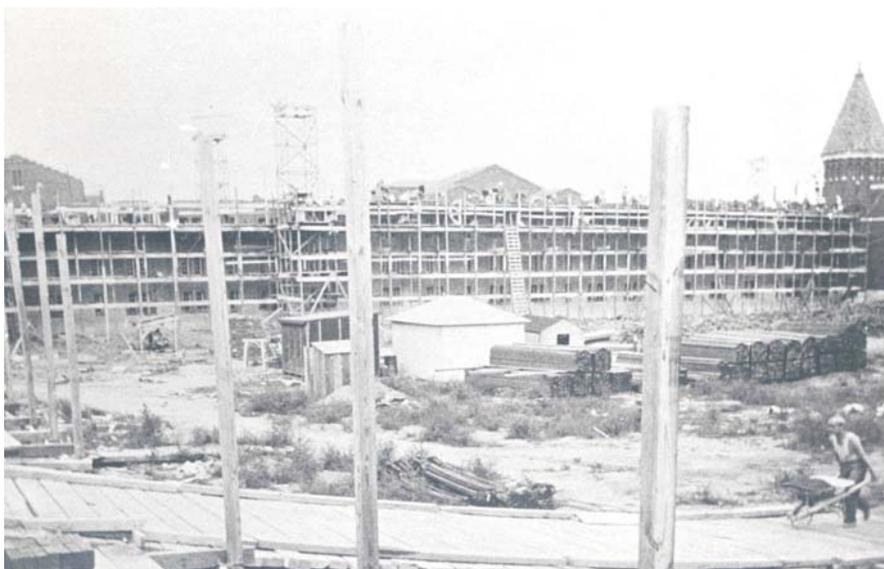
Lastly comes the great, gray wall – a mile and a fifth long, 30 feet high and sunk 12 feet into the earth. Attica’s wall created a stir when it was built. It cost \$1,275,000 or more than three times what was appropriated in 1911 for the construction of the Great Meadow prison.

Unlike most prison walls constructed earlier, Attica’s wall had a rounded top, so that it could not easily be conquered with

grappling hooks. The rounded top also meant that it could not be patrolled on foot. Instead, guard posts, with spired roofs, were built at the corners and other critical points. The front wall angles away from the cellblocks to provide distance before coming to a point, allowing an improved view for the wall tower officers while creating “breathing room” for the administration building behind it.

The cell-blocks, 600 feet long and three tiers high, are identical with one interesting difference. Three (designated as A-, B- and D-Blocks) were built on the Auburn design, with inside-cells back-to-back in the center of the building. But

C-Block, on the north side, was built on the older outside-cell plan, with the cells against the outer walls and walkways down the center of each tier. Since each inmate had his own window at the rear of his cell, C-Block was considered preferred housing and was reserved for well-behaved inmates with farm, mess-hall and hospital work assignments. This continued until D-Block (on the south side of the quadrangle) was renovated as honor housing in the 1970’s.



Construction underway at Attica in the 1930’s.

A-Block construction was completed two months early, in 1931. Some 120 “guards,” then the official title of the custodial officers, were hired. William F. Hunt was appointed Attica’s first warden, transferring from that post at Great Meadow.

Locals refer to inmates as “fellow citizens”

The first 36 prisoners arrived from Sing Sing in June 1931, followed by 50 more from Elmira. Auburn inmates, who had earlier been transferred in to help with construction, departed their cantonment, which was then converted to a farm building.

The town welcomed the new prisoners. They referred to them as “fellow citizens” and brought books and magazines to the prison. “Amateur projectionists” went into the prison with reels of motion pictures to show the men. The town organized a “home guard” to assist tracking down escapees and be on hand in the event of a riot.

One Head Teacher was appointed in 1933. He supervised a crew of inmate instructors. In 1935, three more teachers (elementary, commercial and vocational subjects) were hired, assisted by some 35 inmate teachers providing classroom and cell study instruction in morning and afternoon sessions. Some inmates took correspondence courses. Altogether, between a quarter and a fifth of the population usually partook of some kind of formal education program.

Little was offered in the way of recreation. The prison chaplain was in charge of organizing diversions: movies on Satur-

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day afternoons, musical performances by the prison band, orchestra and choir groups, and occasional shows by outside performers. There were baseball and football leagues, segregated by race. It was not until 1974 that a gymnasium was built.

Only one of the original structures is gone: the building holding the carpenter, tailor and shoe shops behind D-Block, destroyed in the 1971 riot.

Several buildings were added to the original construction. A fifth housing unit, E-Block, a two-story, cross-shaped building with 270 cells, was completed in 1966. The same year, a long, one-story structure was placed between the administration building and A-Block; this contains the guidance office, chaplains' offices and the visiting and package rooms. In 1973, a new commissary was snuggled in between the mess hall and the laundry/shower building, and a large storage building was placed behind the mess hall in 1976. In 1990, a long, low warehouse for Corcraft was built.

A gymnasium, part of the original plan, was at long last built in 1974. A new two-story vocational building was placed alongside the auditorium-chapel building in 1978, and a one-story school annex was placed next to the academic building in 1984. The three Family Reunion Program modular homes, where inmates are permitted extended visits with legal spouses and approved family members, were added in the late 1980's. The last major addition was the completion of a modern infirmary, located near the north wall, in 1995.

When Attica opened, it replaced Auburn as the receiving facility for prisoners sentenced out of courts in the western counties of the state. An ambitious "classification clinic" was set up in 1933, with the psychiatrist in charge assisted by a psychologist and clerical staff. Newly-received inmates were housed for several weeks in the reception building, where they would be examined and evaluated by the psychiatrist, physician, dentist, social worker, head teacher, industrial superintendent, chaplain and security officials.

The new Department of Correction had just recently established, in 1927, for the purpose of unifying New York's various prisons, mental hospitals and reformatories into a rational system. Riots at Clinton and Auburn in 1929 led to a reaffirmation of purpose with the report of the Lewisohn Commission, whose progressive vision of a professionally run, diversified system was enthusiastically embraced by the legislative and executive branches of government. The classification clinics were a core

of the Lewisohn program, and steps toward diversification were taken with the opening of Wallkill, Coxsackie and Woodbourne in the early 1930's.

The depression and World War II ended the dream. Funding for the promised system of diversified institutions and professional staff was not forthcoming. Within a few years, the psychiatrist and psychologist positions went vacant; still vacant, they were transferred in 1945 to the new reception center at Elmira. Attica continued to receive inmates from the courts, but classification was largely reduced to a review of the probation pre-sentence report, an enemies check and an interview to determine gross physical or psychiatric problems.

When a service (guidance) unit opened in 1950, it assumed some of the classification functions, and an infusion of funds after the riot brought back professional classification staff. The classification unit closed in 1975 when the classification function was shifted elsewhere, first to Clinton and then to Downstate. Attica's designation as a receiving facility was finally discontinued when Wende opened in 1983.

"Attica is every prison, every prison is Attica"

That quote is how Robert B. McKay summarized his 1972 tome entitled *The Official Report of the New York State Special Commission on Attica*.

It examined the September 9-13, 1971, riot that left 11 employees and 32 inmates dead. While 10 employees and 29 inmates were killed in the re-taking of the prison, it should also be remembered that one employee and three inmates were murdered during the stand-off by the inmates who incited the riot in the first place.

Attica was representative of penology across the nation in 1971; the riot made it the flashpoint for reform. It stands today as an example of the best the penological system has to offer in the new millennium.

The Attica riot spurred a reflection upon those issues not only at Attica, but throughout the Department as well as at prisons and among systems across the nation.

At Attica in particular, changes led to a safer institution, staffed by professionally-trained uniformed and non-uniformed personnel who provide the "best practices" developed since 1971 that are accepted today as national standards for prison operation and administration.

The facility has also been accredited triennially since 1989 by the American Correctional Association, which establishes

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CO's Shawn McIntyre (left) and Shawn Kelly stand their posts during Attica's 2003 annual ceremony at the memorial in front of the prison.

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and then audits compliance with nationally-accepted standards for the administration and operation of correctional facilities.

DOCS has, over the past three decades, become a national and international leader in correctional policy. It is as much a symbol of penology today as it was the focus of national policies that existed in 1971.

The most significant changes are these key components designed to provide DOCS with the in-house capability of resolving inmate issues and prison incidents without the use of excessive or outside force:

- A statewide U.S. Justice Department-certified Inmate Grievance Program, wherein responsive supervisors provide a venue where complaints can be addressed and answered in a timely fashion.
- Inmate Liaison Committees at each prison, representing the population in regular meetings with the prison's administration.
- The Crisis Intervention Unit (CIU), formed in 1979, composed of security and civilian staff trained in negotiations and other techniques at every prison to defuse situations before the use of force.
- Correction Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) of Correction Officers and supervisors specially trained in 20 teams strategically located at facilities around the state which, since 1977, have used the least force required to quell disturbances within prison walls.



Officer installs cell shield in Attica SHU.

- CERT (with CIU after 1979) was used to resolve multiple hostage incidents without serious injury to staff or inmates during the four such incidents since 1971 – at Eastern in 1977 (14 hostages), at Sing Sing in 1983 (19 hostages), Coxsackie in 1988 (five hostages) and Southport in 1991 (five hostages).
- Ongoing monthly training for both of these specialized units demonstrates DOCS' continued commitment to providing unparalleled public safety, a safe, humane institutional environment, for both staff and inmates, and the ability to quickly respond to any emergency at a moment's notice. Attica has both a CERT and a CIU.

DOCS leads the nation in providing extensive, mandatory and state-of-the-art, in-service training for employees. Attica's 872 employees participated in more than 32,000 hours of training last year.

Most inmates will return to society. DOCS has, over the past 30 years, made a commitment, and has maintained that commitment, to provide meaningful rehabilitative programming for inmates who want to make use of them. While inmates spent 14 hours a day in their cells in 1971, today they have 16 hours out of their cells each day.

To accommodate that, security staff has been increased since 1971 by 45 percent and civilian staffing by a whopping 86 percent. The massive infusion of civilian staff was to provide services to inmates unheard of in prisons around the nation in 1971 – and in some other state systems even today.

Since 1971, a vocational school and a gymnasium have been constructed at Attica. There are currently 12 vocational shops, with State Education Department-certified instructors teaching printing, welding, building maintenance, floor covering, custodial maintenance, radio/TV repair, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation workshop, electrical trades, plumbing and heating, small engine repair, plus two general business programs.

Academic education employs 11 teachers, provides for instruction in Adult Basic Education, pre-high school equivalency, high school equivalency plus English as a Second Language.

A state-of-the-art computer lab provides computer-assisted instructional opportunities. All DOCS facilities make education mandatory, at least to the ninth grade level in reading and math.



Attica's mess hall in 1978.

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A Guidance Unit, comprised of three Senior Counselors and 17 Counselors, provides for transitional service programming plus group counseling in specialized areas such as Sex Offender Counseling and four Aggression Replacement Training Programs. In addition, several other counseling programs are offered, such as Anger and Violence workshops, anti-drug groups, “long-distance Dad” parenting training and domestic violence counseling.

Effective substance abuse treatment programs are often paramount to the success of an individual upon release. DOCS is a national leader in providing inmates with substance abuse treatment programs. At any one time, nearly 15,000 inmates within the Department are participating in substance abuse treatment programs, with more than 30,000 inmates participating in such programs annually.

Attica has an 86-bed Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) program providing a six-month intensive therapeutic community-based treatment regimen. The RSAT program is staffed by certified alcohol and substance abuse treatment specialists. In addition, an Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment program accommodates 50 inmates in the afternoon and evening program modules. These programs are augmented by A.A. and other facility drug programs.

In partnership with the state Office of Mental Health (OMH), DOCS provides for an extensive array of mental health services at Attica. Attica was the first prison in the state to provide a Specialized Treatment Program (STP), a mental health group and individualized treatment program for those inmates whose disruptive behavior led to their long-term confinement in disciplinary Special Housing Units (SHUs). A new, state-of-the-art OMH satellite unit is being constructed at a cost of \$5 million. It will open in August. Attica is in the national forefront in providing this type of treatment.

Attica in 1983 opened a 78-bed Intermediate Care Program (ICP), a physically-separate residential treatment program for inmates who, by virtue of a debilitating mental illness, are unable to function in the general prison population. Also provided is an OMH Satellite Unit dormitory and observation unit.

Attica provides a full array of medical services to the inmate population. In 1995, a 30-bed, \$6.5 million infirmary was added at Attica. A full range of dental services is also provided to inmates.

The Family Reunion Program and extensive visiting programs allow inmates unparalleled access to and time with their spouses, children and all other family members.

Religious services and studies are provided by seven chaplains at Attica (three full-time and four part-time), assisted by over 200 registered volunteers. Religious services and studies in a large number of faiths are provided on a weekly basis to meet the varied spiritual needs of the population.

An extensively stocked, up-to-date law library, with inmate



Among those testifying during 2002 hearings by the Attica Task Force were (from left) Attica Sgt. Mark Cunningham, Wyoming CO John Cunningham and James Cunningham. Their father, Attica Sgt. Edward Cunningham, was killed in the 1971 riot.

assistants trained to assist their peers, provides resources and access to the legal system. The general library offers inmates a variety of choices as well as access to periodicals of all types from virtually all sources.

One area that remains an on-going challenge to the Department is the recruitment of minority staff. By collective bargaining agreement, employees are free to choose the facilities at which they work based upon their seniority. State law and equal protection statutes prevent this Department from enticing minorities to work at Attica by offering them any incentives not available to all employees.

Those obstacles notwithstanding, the Department mounts intensive advertising and recruitment campaigns in minority communities whenever it plans to offer an Officer exam.

Attica’s legacy was to transform penology

Tremendous change has taken place in Attica over the last three decades. DOCS is proud of the job that staff at Attica and 69 other prisons perform each day. They are representative of the best correction professionals in the country, providing the highest security in a humane, progressive environment.

Chairman McKay’s observation about Attica in 1971 – that “Attica is every prison, every prison is Attica” – is still true today, but with an immense difference. Where Chairman McKay used Attica as a symbol of the neglect of correctional systems by governments across the nation, Attica today is a symbol of vast improvement over the course of three decades.

Attica is representative of prisons across New York but ahead of many around the nation. It offers a safe and secure environment for a professional, prepared and well-trained staff.

That environment also allows willing inmates to participate in full and productive rehabilitative programming, while meeting our obligations to meet or exceed constitutional minima in providing medical and mental health services, access to the courts and outside world, maintaining family ties and a host of other programs – offerings that increase prison safety while affording inmates the best chance of success upon their release.

Attica remains at the forefront in changing the face of penology. As we enter the new millennium, DOCS has recalled its past in order to write a better future.

The true legacy of Attica is that today’s prison system in New York bears no resemblance to the one McKay examined in 1972. 

Facility Highlights

Adopt-a-Soldier program expands from Mt. McGregor beginnings

Volunteers come together to aid America's bravest

Operation Adopt-a-Soldier, a program that began quietly with a couple of Mt. McGregor employees sending packages to their sons in the armed forces in the Middle East, has now grown dramatically.

Several hundred soldiers in combat zones have been "adopted" and the program has caught the attention of the community.

Steve Seguin, son of Mt. McGregor head cook Cliff Seguin, was ordered to Iraq in early 2003 with his Rutland, Vt.-based Army Reserve unit. "He was missing his mother's chocolate chip cookies," Mr. Seguin said, so he began shipping care packages overseas.

An idea took root and began to grow.

"I figured if I was going to send to him, I should send some to the other guys," Mr. Seguin reasoned.

So Operation Adopt-Soldier was launched around Valentine's Day last year to collect and ship needed items to the 368th Combat Engineer Battalion, his son's unit.

Meanwhile, Dominick Commisso, an alcohol and substance abuse counselor at Mt. McGregor, was lending similar stateside support to his two sons in the Army in the Middle East – Jason, then a sergeant in a signal battalion in Iraq (now stationed in Germany) and Michael, a specialist in the 1st Armored Division in Iraq.

"I was sending stuff over to my sons and fellows in their units. Cliff was doing the same for his son and the fellows in that unit," Mr. Commisso said. So they joined their efforts and the program really began to take off, spreading beyond Mt. McGregor to include other DOCS facilities and into the community at large.

While Mr. Seguin and Mr. Commisso are the co-chairmen of the program, they are also its chief foot soldiers. They have been arranging drop off locations for donations with area merchants and government offices, emptying collection boxes when they are full, packing the cases that will be mailed to sol-



Head Cook Cliff Seguin, co-chairman of Operation Adopt-a-Soldier, conducts a silent auction to raise funding for the group.

diers, hauling the packages to the post office, buying the postage, maintaining mailing lists of soldiers, appearing on television and radio, making speaking engagements and coordinating events to boost support for the program.

"The man-hours they commit, it's just unbelievable," said Mt. McGregor Superintendent Harold McKinney, a member of the Adopt-a-Soldier board.

"It may sound a little corny, but I connect the names of all the soldiers to my family, and they become like family." – Cliff Seguin

While the program began with just the 368th Combat Engineer Battalion, it has since expanded to include soldiers from other units serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and Haiti. The mailing list now contains the names of about 350 soldiers who are sent packages and letters. As individuals leave the combat zones they are replaced on the list with new names supplied by returning soldiers, families and friends. Mr. Seguin said he hopes to expand the mailing list.

Continued on next page

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“We’ve gotten hundreds and hundreds of letters” from grateful soldiers, he said.

While the size of the operation has grown, so too has its base of support.

In addition to Mt. McGregor, DOCS employees at Summit, Coxsackie, Adirondack, Washington, Great Meadow and the Training Academy in Albany are pitching in to help. Local schools and businesses have also joined the effort.

At Mt. McGregor a drop box for inmates was established. “They took it upon themselves to ask the superintendent if they could contribute,” Mr. Seguin said of the inmates there. “The inmates have been writing letters. Whatever they can give is good.”

By mid-March, Operation Adopt-a-Soldier had sent more than 600 cases overseas and spent more than \$3,500 just on packaging and mailing costs.

A rally and silent auction Feb. 29 at the Glens Falls Civic Center raised a much-needed \$3,000.

A major rally is planned for Armed Forces Day, May 15, at Gavin Park in the Town of Wilton, Saratoga County.

There will be a parade, rally, silent auction, barbecue and military flyover. Expected to participate are Police and Fire Department teams, the VFW, American Legion, the DOCS Emerald Society pipe and drum band, military units and some 1,000 motorcyclists.

“We’re trying to get events every three or four months to keep this in everyone’s mind,” said Mr. Comisso. “People are still dying.”

The program’s biggest need is for money to pay packaging and shipping costs. Contributions can be sent to Operation Adopt-a-Soldier, c/o Mt. McGregor Correctional Facility, 1000 Mountain Rd., Wilton, NY 12831.

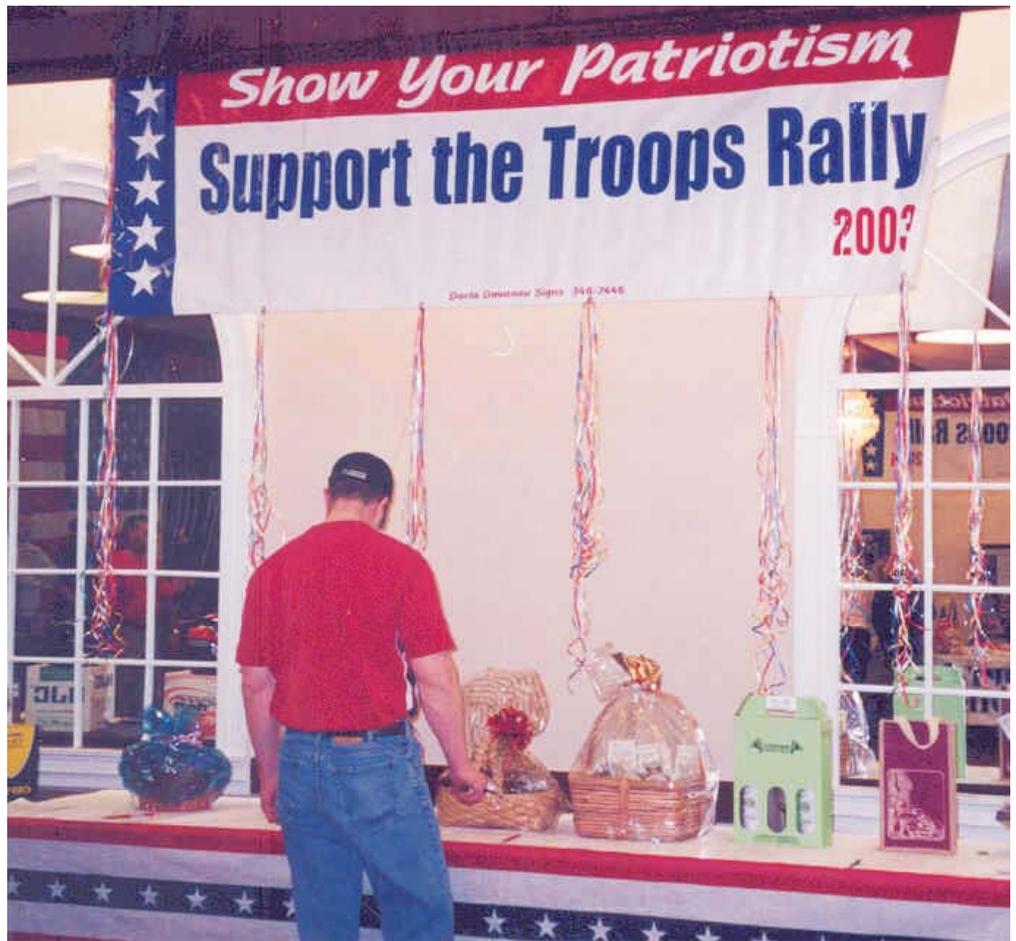
Information about the program and a list of soldiers who would like to receive mail can be found at the CSEA Local 1000 website (Mr. Seguin is president of the local CSEA chapter.)

Both men said their work in the program will continue after their personal stake is over.

“It doesn’t end with the sons coming home,” said Mr. Comisso, who joined DOCS in 1989.

Mr. Seguin, a 19-year DOCS veteran whose son returned safely in March, agreed.

“It may sound a little corny, but I connect the names of all the soldiers to my family, and they become like family,” he said. 📖



A supporter of McGregor’s Adopt-a-Soldier program (above) examines the offerings available to the public during a recent fund raiser. Below, co-chairman Cliff Seguin spreads the word by explaining the group’s history and goals to a an Albany-based television reporter.



Veteran Officer says enjoyment offsets hardships of DOCS K-9 unit

Don't think CO David Rybak would be particularly amused by another joke about his life going to the dogs. Don't think another round of "Who let the dogs out" – an inmate favorite – would strike him as very clever.

He's heard all the jokes and the singing many times over.

After all, with 22 years of service in the DOCS canine unit, he's the most senior K-9 law enforcement officer in the state.

"I've had an exciting career. I've been called in on basically all the major stuff that's happened in the past 20-plus years," said CO Rybak, who joined the Department in 1978 and was accepted into the K-9 unit in 1982.

"I heard about it and I guess it was something different," he recalled. "I edged out probably 700 other guys to get the job." Even today, he said, he's not entirely sure why he was picked over others for the service, but he's happy he was. "It was like getting a lottery ticket."

The K-9 unit began in 1981 with three officers and their dogs. Over the years the unit has operated with as few as two teams and as many as five, its current strength. Handlers and their dogs are put through 26 weeks of training together by the State Police. CO Rybak's training was at Sydney, while the State Police now conduct the instruction at Cooperstown.

There the dogs are trained in the skills they will need to perform their jobs. They learn to obey hand and oral commands; to climb ladders and scale walls; to protect their handlers and others; to track with and without scents; to locate all kinds of drugs; to search buildings and to conduct mountain rescues.

"The bonding starts on Day One," said CO Rybak. "You're with the dog 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year for the rest of his life." The dog becomes part of the family.

Every three or four months the animals are recertified by the State Police. If they cannot pass the test they are retired to their handlers.

The dogs are all male shepherds received from animal shelters or donated by private individuals. They are typically named for State Police officers who died in the line of duty.

For security reasons, CO Rybak prefers to identify his dog – the third he has handled – by its official title K9-15, designating the 15th shepherd to serve in the DOCS unit. Out of earshot of inmates he calls his dog by its name.

The K-9 unit is on call around the clock. Officers must be in

good physical shape and willing to relocate anywhere they are needed. Since the Department makes a significant investment in each team, candidates for the K-9 officer position must have at least five years of CO service (to ensure experience) but not more than 15 years of CO service (so they can be expected to continue in the position for several years).

Significant time away from home is also part of the K-9 CO's job description. CO Rybak said living out of a suitcase, missing birthdays and other events in his children's lives are a downside of his work, "but I wouldn't still be on the job if I didn't like it."

He said his family has been supportive of him from the beginning, when officers used their personal cars to transport the dogs.

"My wife had reservations when they pulled out the back seat and put in a platform," he related, "but she was behind me 100 percent."

Because of the dogs' unique ability to find drugs and other contraband, the K-9 teams play a key role in maintaining security throughout the Department's facilities. Last year the K-9 units discovered and confiscated a shopping list of contraband items, including weapons, drugs and drug equipment, clothing and road maps.

K-9 units check prison areas regularly, but with no set schedule. They also do sweeps when requested by a facility. CO Rybak said the element of surprise and unpredictability is an important tool in the team's work.

The units are also deployed to find inmates who have escaped from work crews or secure facilities. CO Rybak, whose first K-9 operation involved perimeter security at the Sing Sing riot in 1983, has worked on all the major escapes and most of the others since joining the unit.

Outside of their DOCS responsibilities, the K-9 teams are called upon to help the State Police search for missing persons, murder victims and cadavers.

Following the World Trade Center attacks, when so many resources were engaged in the rescue and recovery effort, DOCS teams were posted in Middletown. That was so they could move quickly to New York City if needed there (they were not) while still providing coverage to the rest of the state.

CO Rybak has also been on his share of searches for missing children. "Sometimes they have a happy ending," he said, choosing his words.

"Sometimes they don't." 



CO David Rybak with K9-15.

Transitions

March 2004

| Name | Title | Location | Retirements |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Promotions | | | Jacqueline M. Weichman . . . Calculations Clerk 1 Albion |
| Michael D. Hickey | Plant Superintendent C. | Albion | Michael G. Parrott Superintendent Altona |
| Mary L. Walter | Secretary 2 | Albion | Bruce D. Sergel General Mechanic Attica |
| Patrick Townsend | Quality Control Supervisor | Albion | Joseph S. Paxhia. Dentist 3 Auburn |
| Joe Middleton, Jr. | Stores Clerk 2 | Bayview | Eileen Magno Secretary 2 Bedford Hills |
| Penny Jock | Institution Steward | Chateaugay | Kathleen C. Prince Principal Stores Clerk Cayuga |
| Roger L. Martino | Plant Utilities Engineer 1 | Clinton | Patrick T. Caetano, Sr. General Mechanic Collins |
| Thomas M. Scalia | Head Account Clerk | Elmira | Elizabeth Dorsey Secretary 2 Downstate |
| Joy M. Comeau | Senior Mail & Supply Clerk | Fishkill | Patrick J. McGann Dep Supt Administration 3 Downstate |
| Joanne M. Hazen | Senior Mail & Supply Clerk | Franklin | F. J. Tracy Superintendent Downstate |
| James E. Tourville | Plant Utilities Engineer 3 | Franklin | Richard T. Cerio Dep Supt Programs 3 Elmira |
| Lori A. Montroy | Nurse Administrator 1 | Franklin | Edward Cygan Head Cook Gowanda |
| Russell S. Kellar | Head Account Clerk | Gouverneur | Margaret L. Drew. Nurse 2 Gowanda |
| Emily Bessette | Ed Supervisor (General) | Greene | W. E. Tyler Plant Utilities Engineer 1 Great Meadow |
| Robert Barbini | Plant Superintendent C. | Hudson | Diane L. Warner Inmate Records Coord 2 Greene |
| Melissa Trostle | Classification Analyst (SL) | Main Office | Veronica Keegan. Member Main Office |
| Margaret McRoberts | Coord. P&T Services. | Main Office | Linda Davis. Principal Clerk Main Office |
| Della M. Robarge. | Secretary 1 | Main Office | Diane E. Jones. Stores Clerk 1 Marcy |
| Daniel Kuhner | Tandem Tractor Trailer Op. | Main Office | Dana M. Smith Superintendent Ogdensburg |
| David Schott | Plant Superintendent B. | Main Office | Alexander C. Melnick. Plant Utilities Engineer 1 Otisville |
| John R. Huntington. | Facilities Planner 3 | Main Office | Phyllis Hollis Counselor Queensboro |
| Suzanne E. Halse | Production Control Supr | Main Office | Kenneth L. Cosky Senior Counselor. Sullivan |
| Lucy Buther | Affirmative Action Admin 2 | Main Office | Ann M. Stark Cook Washington |
| Diane M. Scott | Purchasing Assistant II | Main Office | Donna L. Streeter Commissary Clerk 2 Washington |
| Herbert O. Therrian. | Plant Utilities Engineer 1 | Moriah | Michael Morency Plant Utilities Engineer 2 Washington |
| Anthony F. Gurdo | Head Cook | Oneida | Herbert E. Blackmer, Jr. Stores Clerk 1 Washington |
| Obafemi A. Wright | Supr Volunteer Services | Queensboro | Gregory J. Janish Electrician Wende |
| Debra Marciano | Supr Volunteer Services | Sing Sing | Steven C. Roller Correction Lieutenant Cayuga |
| Debra A. Bowers | Secretary 2 | Sullivan | M. J. Gosselin Correction Lieutenant Great Meadow |
| Maria B. Tirone | Dep Supt Programs 3 | Upstate | G. L. Allen Correction Lieutenant Washington |
| Roxanne L. Bruner | Health Info Administrator 1 | Wende | Eugene Urban Correction Sergeant Camp Gabriels |
| Judy A. Matuszak | Payroll Clerk 3 | Wende | Roy Warner Correction Officer. Adirondack |
| Mary Elizabeth Clemens | Clinical Physician 3. | Wende | Thomas L. McIntyre Correction Officer. Attica |
| Barry F. Tripp. | Plant Utilities Engineer 2 | Willard | Thomas J. Darrah Correction Officer. Auburn |
| Penny L. Brown | Payroll Clerk 3 | Wyoming | David J. Lamphere Correction Officer. Auburn |
| Daniel Phelix | Correction Captain | Franklin | David H. Meyers Correction Officer. Auburn |
| Jeffrey Case | Correction Lieutenant | Bayview | Sharon Minde Correction Officer. Auburn |
| Michael Giambruno | Correction Sergeant | Arthur Kill | Fredrick Starkes Correction Officer. Bayview |
| Raymond Abbott | Correction Sergeant | Fishkill | Randall C. LaFreniere Correction Officer. Chateaugay |
| Patrick Anson | Correction Sergeant | Fishkill | Douglas T. Monette Correction Officer. Chateaugay |
| Timothy Gerasimchik. | Correction Sergeant | Fishkill | Raymond F. Brokos Correction Officer. Clinton |
| Mark Ballachino | Correction Sergeant | Shawangunk | Norman Peryea Correction Officer. Clinton |
| Robert Marinaccio | Correction Sergeant | Taconic | Nelson Montalvo Correction Officer. Downstate |

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| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Andres Velez, Jr. | Correction Officer. | Downstate |
| Eriberto Gonzalez | Correction Officer (SL) | Downstate |
| Charles H. Meyer. | Correction Officer. | Eastern |
| Daniel G. Waite, Jr.. | Correction Officer. | Elmira |
| Walter Sweeney | Correction Officer. | Elmira |
| Ronald V. Sullo. | Correction Officer. | Fishkill |
| David A. Trumble. | Correction Officer. | Franklin |
| Lee P. Carter, Sr.. | Correction Officer. | Franklin |
| Charles M. Benton | Correction Officer. | Greene |
| John Sluka | Correction Officer. | Groveland |
| James B. Moulton | Correction Officer. | Hudson |
| Dennis Tillery. | Correction Officer. | Mid-Orange |
| Francis T. Hanlon | Correction Officer. | Mid-Orange |
| Vincent J. Monti | Correction Officer. | Mid-Orange |
| Keithly C. Warner | Correction Officer. | Queensboro |
| Donald Rivet | Correction Officer. | Riverview |
| Gary Marion | Correction Officer. | Shawangunk |
| Wayne Davenport | Correction Officer. | Shawangunk |
| Anthony Gioielli. | Correction Officer. | Shawangunk |
| Jocelyn Huggins | Correction Officer. | Taconic |
| Woodrow Wells. | Correction Officer. | Taconic |
| Michael Paterno | Correction Officer. | Ulster |
| Donald E. Mead | Correction Officer. | Washington |
| Edward Pilat | Correction Officer. | Wende |
| Paul Lucyk | Correction Officer. | Woodbourne |
| Gerald Scandore | Correction Officer. | Woodbourne |
| Paul M. Baetzold | Correction Officer. | Wyoming |

Deaths

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Patricia A. Barnick | Calculations Clerk 2 | Five Points |
| Donna J. Salvador | Licensed Practical Nurse | Mohawk |
| Patrick M. Dunn | Mail & Supply Clerk | Oneida |
| Candace A. Planty | Secretary 1 | Riverview |
| Robert L. Edge | Sr. Counselor ASAT | Taconic |
| Frank J. Zimmerman | Correction Lieutenant | Mid-Orange  |

On the web ...

Readers with Internet access can obtain information on the world wide web from the offices of both Governor Pataki and Commissioner Goord. Their addresses:

Governor Pataki: <http://www.state.ny.us>

Commissioner Goord: <http://www.docs.state.ny.us>

Colorized editions of DOCS|TODAY, beginning with the January 2003 edition, now appear on the DOCS website. Editions are posted as PDFs when they are sent to the Elmira print shop for publication. 

Commissioner's testimony

Continued from page 5

other prisons you care to name. New York's suppliers of illegal drugs use more than oral cavities when attempting to smuggle drugs into our prisons. So do inmates, when they move drugs around inside. It is a credit to our staff that they detect as much contraband as they do.

The nation's highest court has ruled that my obligation as Commissioner includes taking the steps necessary to try to prevent crimes from occurring in prison. It also demands that I prosecute the crimes that are committed, despite our best efforts to prevent them.

We all know that rape and other sexual assaults are crimes of violence and control, not of sexual gratification. Giving inmates condoms would embolden some inmates to commit aggressive and predatory attacks on weaker inmates.

The attacker would know that use of a condom will reduce chances of leaving DNA evidence. Attackers would also know that chances of contracting HIV or other diseases from their victims will be decreased by the use of condoms.

Prison system policies banning condoms are also consistent with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. It requires that the states take the steps necessary to reduce the opportunity for, and incidence of, inmate sexual assault. If we don't, states face a loss of federal funding for prison-related programs. I'm not certain we should become the second state in the nation to distribute condoms in the face of that law.

I have summarized our success in improving inmate medical services over the past decade.

Each and every one of them flows from initiatives proposed by Governor Pataki.

Our views on oversight and condom distribution represent the almost unanimous positions of correctional health care and security professionals across the nation – many of whom also believe that New York offers inmates the best prison medical care in the country.

But I do not believe we have taken inmate health care as far as it can – or should – go.

As with health care on the outside, there is always room to improve, to expand and to fine-tune the medical care offered inside of prison.

We would welcome the Assembly majority if it now chooses to enter into a partnership with us. We invite your input on how to improve upon inmate health care.

But taking us further requires an understanding and acknowledgment of how far we have already come.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this opening statement. I welcome your questions. 

Above-ground systems replacing some subterranean heating units

The Department is more than halfway through a \$50 million program to repair hot water heating systems at “cookie cutter” prisons built during the construction boom of the 1980-90s, improving the reliability of the heat plants and cutting their maintenance costs.

Where projects have been completed reliability concerns have disappeared and emergency repairs costing \$1 million to \$2 million a year have been eliminated.

The medium-security prisons were all designed with boilers, either on site or connected to a neighboring DOCS facility, to heat the buildings and to provide domestic hot water for cleaning, cooking and other uses. The systems used a loop of underground pipes to deliver the hot water from the boiler plant to facility structures and return cooled water to the plant. And in nearly every prison the pipes have sprung leaks over the years, said facilities planner Maynard Porter.

Problems developed from loose pipe insulation, corrosion and high water tables, causing leaks that interrupt service, are difficult to locate and expensive to repair. Complicating repairs is the fact that other utilities – water, waste water, electric lines and fire alarm systems – are next to the heat pipes.

“We tried in several facilities to put underground piping in conduits,” he said, but that proved to be inadequate. Walk-through tunnels were another possibility, but that would have been too expensive. So the solution was to rebuild the pipe loop aboveground, retiring the old underground pipes in place.

“The guys in the power plants are pretty happy about it,” Mr. Porter said. “They don’t have to go looking for leaks in the dead of winter.”

Gary Baker, plant superintendent at Riverview, agreed.

Repairs at Riverview were completed in late 2001 and the new system has performed without problems ever since. With the underground piping, he said, “We would spend half the winter digging up leaks” and the entire system would have to be shut down to make repairs. That’s no minor inconvenience in places like Riverview, across the St. Lawrence River from Canada, where winter comes early, runs deep and stays late.

Mr. Baker said operators had expected the aboveground system might prove to be an eyesore. Instead, it blends in well with the environment.

“It’s a proven system,” he said. “It works well up here.”

In addition to making the system much more accessible for

maintenance and essentially free of corrosion, the aboveground pipes also add significant operating flexibility. If work needs to be performed, repair crews can open or close zones to isolate problems. That avoids or minimizes service interruptions.

Raising the pipes has created no new problems with exposure, either to the weather or to vandalism or accidents.

For security reasons, the main pipe coming from the heat plant, typically eight or 10 inches in diameter, crosses the facility perimeter underground. The system then rises above ground to deliver hot water to the facility’s buildings. The pipes are wrapped in three inches of cellular glass insulation and coated with either polyvinyl chloride (PVC) polyester or a rubberized sheet membrane similar to materials used in roofing. Those materials, rather than metal, were chosen for the pipe covering as a security measure. They would be useless as weapons.



Underground piping was replaced by this above ground system at Livingston.

The height of the pipes is also a security feature. Anyone who wanted to damage them would need a ladder and would be in easy view of staff. And where the pipes cross roadways they are elevated above vehicle height to avoid accidents.

To date the Department has invested more than \$25 million to replace the underground pipes at seven facilities. They include \$4.1 million at Cape Vincent (which opened in 1993), \$3.9 million at Riverview (1992), \$3.7 million at Gouverneur (1990), \$3.3 million at Orleans (1985), \$4.3 million at Livingston (1991), \$4.5 million at Cayuga (1988) and \$1.4 for a portion of Mohawk (1989).

Projects in the design phase and their cost estimates include \$7.2 million at Franklin (which opened in 1986), \$6.1 million at Bare Hill (1988), \$6.6 million at Wyoming (1984) and \$3.2 million at Greene (1984), for a total of \$23.1 million.

The boiler plants that serve all of the facilities are dual-fueled – natural gas or fuel oil – to protect against supply shortages and to allow operators to take advantage of competitive prices.

The Department’s newest facilities, Upstate (which opened in 1999) and Five Points (2000), are maximum security prisons with corridors connecting all the buildings. The corridors serve as a conduit for the heating system piping at these facilities. 