

MCA TODAY

News from the Michigan Corrections Association
Spring 2007



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2007 has gotten off to a great start. The MCA Board is planning some exciting things for the coming year. We will be arranging mini conferences over the next twelve months. We are also looking at forming Student Chapters through several of our colleges and universities. We are updating our website, resulting in drastic upgrades in the near future. Please contact MCA if you are interested in assisting with these projects.



We kicked off 2007 by attending the American Correctional Association's Winter Conference in Tampa, Florida. For those of you who have not attended a national conference I would highly recommend your participation. The education and networking complement the overall experience.

Author James Bradley was the keynote speaker. Mr. Bradley is the author of *Flags of Our Fathers*, a New York Times best seller. His book is a literary work depicting the 1943 rising of the American Flag in Iwo Jima. His father was one of the American GI's in the well known artist rendition. Along with being an outstanding writer, he is a dynamic speaker. In his keynote address he referred to the flag rising as 'Six nice young boys doing the impossible and doing the impossible well.'

We hope to see and hear from our members throughout the coming year. Our upcoming Executive Board meetings are April 25, and May 30 at 5:30 pm at the MSI Offices on Cedar Street in Lansing.

Michelle Van Dusen, President
Michigan Corrections Association

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NEW BOARD MEMBERS GET RIGHT TO WORK

New members of the MCA Board of Trustees got right to work after the holiday season. Several members including President Michelle VanDusen, Raymond Ball, Cheryl Bradshaw, and Tamara Davis, went to the ACA Winter Conference in Tampa, Florida. The event was a great place to network and learn about the newest trends in correctional practices. The conference planning committee got to work on a June conference. The Board also created a Website committee chaired by the vice president. Membership initiatives continue through Tony Owen. We are currently under 400 members but would like to see a climb to 500 members by 2008. If you know someone who is interested, they can join through the ACA website.



MCA TO HONOR 2007 STATE CORRECTIONS OFFICER OF THE YEAR



MCA is proud to recognize 2007 Corrections Officer of the Year Steve Houck from Carson City Correctional Facility. At the Corrections Officer of the Year Banquet on May 9th, MCA will be presenting Officer Houck with a gift certificate for a one-night stay at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids, MI.

Houck has been with the department for 17 years, all of them at Carson City. Prior to that, he earned a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Northern Michigan University. He served as C/O until June of 1993, when he moved into his current position as a resident unit officer.

Houck wears many hats, including working as an Emergency Response Team member, acting Hearings Investigator, Unit Fire/Sanitation Inspector, "Strategies for Thinking Positively" Instructor, Substance Abuse Instructor and Cell Extraction Trainer. He also serves as a varsity football coach, team mentor and power lifting coach who has led students to victory in power lifting competitions held as far away as London, England. – *Source MDOC FYI*

MCA SEEKS FINANCIAL SECRETARY

MCA is sad to see Barb Slovisky retire from her position on the board. Barb has been a proponent of MCA and all that it offers its members. Her commitment and professionalism will be remembered by all who she influenced while serving the membership. We are looking for someone who can step up and fill Barb's shoes (which won't be easy). Please contact MCA if you are that person.






MCA SEEKS ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS FOR KEY COMMITTEES

The MCA Board is looking for interested members to actively participate on committees currently being formed. Trustee Tamara Davis is Chairperson of the Conference Committee, Trustee Tony Owens is Chairperson for the Membership Committee. A new committee on college and university student chapters, chaired by past president Rich Johnson, is also being formed. John Cordell is editor of *MCA Today*, our newsletter and would gladly accept articles for the publication. Please contact MCA if you are interested.



NEW WEBSITE COMING!!

MCA is developing a new website this summer. We are pleased to be actively pursuing this initiative. The new site will allow members greater connectivity with the Executive Board and other corrections organizations throughout Michigan and the nation. It will also highlight upcoming information events and provide information on how to join. MCA is looking to have the site up by June 1st. If you have any suggestions for the site, please e-mail John Cordell at cordelj@chic.gov.

HOME	CONSTITUTION	BY LAWS	BOARD OF TRUSTEES	LINKS
	 Michigan Corrections Assoc. Member of American Correctional Association			
		Welcome To MCA We heartily welcome you to the homepage of the Michigan Corrections Association, MCA, the gathering place for all Corrections Professionals in the State of Michigan!		
Newsletters	How To Join		Contact Information	
 Spring 2006	Online Form: http://www.aca.org/membership/		 Michigan Corrections Association P.O. Box 12021 Lansing, MI 48933 (800) 842-9982	
 Autumn 2006	Download PDF Form: ACA Membership Application ACA Bank Draft Deduction Form			

BUDGET CRUNCH COULD AFFECT STATE AND LOCAL CORRECTIONS

The current budget in the state of Michigan is bleak. With a \$680 million dollar deficit in fiscal year (FY) 2007, and a \$1.1 billion dollar deficit projected for FY 2008, state corrections is going to have to make some serious decisions on how it operates the state's prison system. Everything is being scrutinized in state government, but with a \$1.9 billion dollar budget, The Michigan Department of Corrections is a big target.



So how does that affect corrections in Michigan? What citizens may see is a reduction in state services, cuts to local budgets, and less school funding. The impact goes beyond that though. The state seeks to reduce its prison population by 2500 prisoners, while laying-off State Police troopers. Local municipalities may be forced to cut police and fire services. County sheriff's offices may be forced to release inmates earlier. Ingham County currently rents about 200 beds to the MDOC, but is at capacity and has to release county inmates early every month. This means more offenders in the community and less law enforcement officers supervising them.

It may not be a time to panic though. The Michigan Department of Corrections has some initiatives designed to make offenders more successful in the community. A program called The Michigan Prisoner ReEntry Initiative (MPRI) partners the MDOC with community organizations that support offenders once they are released. Studies in other states show a downward trend in recidivism and promising results for offender successes in long-term work and home placement in the community.

Diversions tactics for prisoners may also be used to reduce the budget of the MDOC. But placing more prisoners in jails and diversionary programs will put pressure on county governments. Ingham County Sheriff Gene Wrigglesworth said, "If the State diverts more prisoners [to county jails] all the counties will be in a bind."



Being an informed citizen is the best way to help the State through this budget crisis. Let your state legislator and the Governor know what you will and will not tolerate in terms of program cuts and revenue enhancements (new taxes). For information on how to contact your legislator, go to the website below:

[http://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(cm1s252yhqsnpw45mitnv055\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=SponsorSearch](http://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(cm1s252yhqsnpw45mitnv055))/mileg.aspx?page=SponsorSearch)

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WORKING BOTH SIDES OF THE HYPHEN: THE PROGRAMS/CUSTODY BLEND

By Joseph Bouchard

Programs and custody staff often view each other with suspicion. Each sees the other as thwarting their primary goals. This breeds mistrust, alienation, and manipulation, all of which diminish safety for everyone. It is imperative that all corrections professionals work both sides of the hyphen. For example, the corrections-librarian must do corrections well and also perform as a good information resource.

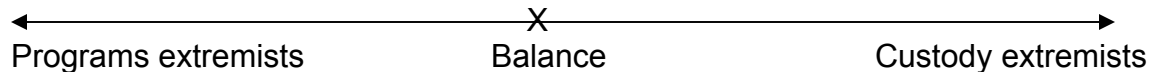
Corrections programming produces many positive outcomes. Prisoners that participate in them may help themselves find creative outlets, spiritual fulfillment, job experience, or academic achievement. Custody staff benefit by having programming which occupies the time of inmates and dissuades them from improper behavior. Programmers enjoy the vocational satisfaction of building and maintaining curriculum. All staff experience the reward of a safer institution

Unfortunately, these benefits are not always recognized. It is the classic case of custody versus programs. Extremes on both sides fail to look beyond their specific job duties and appreciate the interconnectedness of corrections.

Some custody staff view programmers as coddling convicts and rewarding the incarcerated. Custody elitists brand all programmers as giving the store away.

Some programs staff exercise academic chauvinism, adopting an ivory tower mentality over their custody colleagues. Programs extremists are willing to portray all custody staff as sadistic rule enforcers. Zealots on either side are willing to sabotage the other side in pursuit of their own narrow interest.

This is well illustrated with a continuum. As always, when considering continuums, the extreme ends are the minority, and define the larger group in the middle.



A well conceived program is merely academic without the support and respect of custody colleagues and the administration. It is exacerbated by any specialist who feels isolated and helpless. This is the challenge that is pervasive and crippling. It gnaws away at staff confidence and trust, opening the door for manipulation and disorder.



This is not an impossible challenge to solve. It is a case of working both sides of the hyphen. For example, let's look at the corrections-teacher. The right side of the hyphen (education) can be very well developed. But the left side of the hyphen (corrections) also needs to be strong. Otherwise, the education program is lessened through lack of support from custody colleagues. All sub-sections of the corpus corrections have to have a firm custody-oriented base.

One of the biggest challenges to corrections-teachers comes from other staff that do not see the value of the classroom. The educator should adopt two goals - being an effective teacher and doing so within the parameters of safety for all in the facility

It may seem that the burden for this is on programs staff. Yet, it is their responsibility to promote their work area while proving themselves as a potent partner is security. No, this is not necessarily a call for all programmers to completely abandon their niche for ticket writing. Rather, it is a matter of balance.

The quickest way for programmers to earn respect of custody staff is to engage in contraband control in their area of control. They must let custody staff know that they are thinking beyond their desk. Formally, each programmer should inform the chain of command what is found, where it is secured, and which misconduct was written. Informally, the corrections-programmer should relay the details of any contraband finds to the school officer. Programs staff should let all concerned know that the incident is recorded and will be monitored.

The best educator in the world would have diminished skills in an institution where he or she is not respected by the bulk of his or her colleagues. A security conscious corrections-teacher not only reinforces the mission statement and enhances safety, but also gains the respect of most colleagues.

This is not to suggest that ALL custody staff will proclaim programs as the best idea in creation. But, realistically speaking, working both sides of the hyphen produces professional empathy and cooperation. In that situation, with the custody front secure, the education process can move forward.

Policy and perspective help combat negative reactions of colleagues reluctant to see the possible good that can be done by programs in a corrections setting. With all of the pitfalls we face in dealing with prisoners, we can mitigate the sting of it all by buttressing staff relations.

These are the opinions of Joseph Bouchard, a Librarian employed with the Michigan Department of Corrections. These are not necessarily the opinions of the Department. MCA is not responsible for the content or accuracy. You can reach him at (906) 353-7070 ext 132

CURRENT MCA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

President:	Michelle Vandusen	Trustee:	Joe Bouchard
Vice President:	John Cordell	Trustee:	Tamara Davis
Past President:	Rich Johnson	Trustee:	Anthony Owen
Treasurer:	Raymond Ball	Trustee:	Kip Smith
Recording Sec.:	Cheryl Bradshaw	Trustee:	Jeanine Winger
Financial Sec.:	Vacant	Trustee:	Vacant
		Trustee:	Vacant

NOTES:

Barb Slovisky has retired from her position of Financial Secretary. If you are interested in the position please contact us.

If you have anything that you would like to see in the *MCA Today*, please e-mail John Cordell at cordelj@chic.gov. Thanks to TJF Printing and everyone who assisted with the publication and content of the Spring 2007 edition.

— JOIN —
Correctional Health Care
Professional Interest Section
American Correctional Association



Joining treatment *and* security in
effective health care delivery to
every area of corrections.

Make Plans Now to Join
ACA's Health Care Professional Interest Section and
attend the ACA Winter Conference in Tampa, Fla.,
Jan. 19-24, 2007 for Just \$175!

Call 1-800-222-5646, ext. 0129 or
go online at www.aca.org



Michigan Corrections Association
P.O. Box 12021
Lansing, MI 48901-2021
1-800-455-9906

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THE STATE BUDGET AND MPRI: INFLUENCING THE DIRECTION OF CORRECTIONS

PRESENTED BY THE
MICHIGAN CORRECTIONS ASSOCIATION

Training Seminar Information

Date: June 15, 2007

Place: Michigan State Police Academy, Lansing, MI

Presenters:

- **State Budget Office (Tentative)**
- **Michigan Department of Corrections – Planning Community Development**

The correctional system in Michigan supervises well over 100,000 offenders throughout the state. Both local and state correctional entities work tirelessly every day to meet their mission – keep the citizens of Michigan safe, while keeping costs at a reasonable level. This mission is being challenged by a horrendous state budget outlook and the “new way of doing business” in corrections. In FY 2007, the State of Michigan predicts a \$680 million dollar shortage. FY 2008, is even worse at \$1.1 billion dollars. A new program, set to be unveiled state wide by 2008, touts cost-savings while maintaining public safety.

The Michigan Prisoner re-Entry Initiative, a program developed from a National model, is the “new way of doing business” in corrections according to state Corrections Director Patricia Caruso. This new initiative changes the way prisoners return to society. According to the goals of the program, offenders will re-enter the community with more tools for success, and greater community support from both private and public organizations. The end result is to reduce recidivism, the rate at which offenders return to prison. At an average annual cost of \$30,000 per prisoner, keeping more prisoners from coming back, while keeping the community safe, will save millions of dollars annually.

Please join MCA for a spirited and informative discussion on our state budget and the impact of MPRI on corrections in Michigan.

***Training Credit is available for certified law enforcement officers through MITN and to MDOC employees as a professional training seminar.**

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**The Michigan Corrections Association Presents:
“The State Budget and MPRI: Influencing the
Direction of Corrections”
Seminar Registration Form**

Date: June 15, 2007 - 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Place: Michigan State Police Academy, Lansing, MI

Name _____ Title _____

Address _____

Email Address _____
(Your registration verification will be sent to this e-mail address)

Worksite _____ Membership Number _____

Seminar Prices: The conference price includes attendance, continental breakfast, lunch, and a mid-afternoon snack.

Prices

- \$ 35 member
- \$ 45 non-member
- \$ 55 includes membership

Make Checks Payable to: Michigan Corrections Association

Credit Card Payment:

Visa MasterCard Other _____

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Card Security Number _____

(This is a three digit number on the back of most cards, or a four digit number on the front of the AMEX card.)

Please send payment to: Michigan Corrections Association
P.O. Box 12021
Lansing, MI 48901-2021

***Summer Seminar Registration Form:** Please Complete and Return to MCA for Guaranteed Inclusion in the Summer Training Seminar. The deadline to **pre-register is June 6, 2007**. On-site registration will be available at the event.