

The Connecticut  
Department  
of Correction

# P.R.I.D.E.



Our motto: Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dignity, Excellence

# AT WORK

Remember Our Troops

## Commissioner Lantz Swears in Her Team



With the auditorium of the Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development filled with the pride of close family and correctional colleagues, more than 30 Deputy Commissioners, Directors and Wardens raised their right hands and received the Oath of Office from Commissioner Theresa C. Lantz. The recent swearing-in ceremony was termed an important new tradition for the agency, which in the past has not so publicly celebrated the attainment of these managerial ranks. After thanking the relatives and friends of the assembled managers for the support of their loved ones, Commissioner Lantz launched into a nearly hour long recitation from memory, of the accomplishments of each of the managers as they individually came to the stage for their plaque and picture.

Even though some had held their position for a number of years, Commissioner Lantz made clear that they were each now part of her team. "One vision, one mission, one team," was how she closed her remarks. The ceremony concluded with the agency's Honor Guard, assembling the managers in front of the stage, leaving only the Commissioner looking out over those whom she has chosen to assist her in running the agency. The oath completed, the Honor Guard saluted those now entrusted to uphold the laws of our state and country.



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### Our Mission

The Department of Correction shall protect the public, protect staff, and provide safe, secure and humane supervision of offenders with opportunities that support successful community reintegration

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About and for  
correctional  
professionals

December  
21-January 3,  
2004

# From the Front Lines

*As part of our continuing series on news from the war front, Officer Shirley Lambert of Northern CI thanks staff members and sends wishes for the new year.*

Good morning from Kuwait. I hope everyone in the Department had a great Holiday. I can not believe that I have NOT been at work in the facility for a year now. How the time has flown. I am so glad that my son had a good time at the DOC Christmas party with his new Garner CI family. Let everyone know that my thanks go out to them. (See "DOC Celebrates" on Page 4



for photo) Being in Kuwait and trying to support the units in redeploying back to the states is very demanding. An understanding in all units is that we all want to return home safely and get back to our families as soon as possible. I would like to thank Nancy Leiper of Northern CI as well as all of my fellow Officers for supporting us (the troops) during the Holiday season. The soldiers in my unit were very surprised and eager to use the phone cards that were sent to us. Many were glad to be able to speak to our loved ones at home on Christmas. It was a very gloomy time for us but we had each other and supported each other. Once again thank you and hope good things happen for all of you during the coming new year.

Officer Shirley Lambert.

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## DOC Care and Share

The Department of Correction staff members rallied to support those Connecticut residents in need by facilitating food drives that were to benefit FoodShare of Windsor CT. Over three pallets of food were collected and donated to FoodShare. Robert Frank, Director of Food Services, would like to thank all the Food Services staff for their help in coordinating the food drives at each facility. Once again FoodShare thanked the Department of Correction for their support, especially during this holiday season.



Volunteers load food items donated by DOC staff

**Pride.**  
*AT*  
**Work**

for  
Dec. 21 - Jan 3,  
2004

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month in advance  
for calendar events.

# DOC Celebrates the Season

Pride at Work, Dec. 21 - Jan. 3, p.3



The hopes that Saint Nicholas soon would be there were answered when Santa took time out of his very busy holiday schedule to pay a special visit to the 3<sup>d</sup> Annual DOC Christmas Party at MCSTD on December 19, 2003. The academy's gymnasium was magically transformed into a winter wonderland complete with fun, games and enough incredible food to fill even Santa's belly. Over 1200 DOC staff members and their families attended the event.

"Especially during this holiday season, it is so important that we take time to appreciate and celebrate the sustaining daily support of our loved ones and our correctional colleagues," said Commissioner Theresa C. Lantz, who enjoyed the festivities along side her staff.

Kids and grown-ups alike took part in the holiday activities that included viewing Christmas classics, getting their faces painted and watching Mrs. Clause turn balloons

into wild creatures. All were invited to have their picture taken with the jolly old elf himself or participate in a "best gingerbread house" contest; which was won by the food services staff at Café 24 –Central Office).

## Tunxis Class 13 Overcomes Obstacles

The tale of Class 13 sounds like the correctional version of the Mailman's Creed. Neither national disaster, budget constraints or staff lay-offs shall keep this class from doggedly reaching graduation day. And nearly a year behind schedule, the 14 members of this Connecticut Criminal Justice Command Institute Class did finally celebrate their commencement on December 12<sup>th</sup>, surrounded by family and friends. Members of the class jokingly compared their drawn out Leadership Program to a fairy tale, complete with appropriate roles for each member based on their personalities.



(First Row L-R) Karen Bernard, Janet Sicilia, Kathryn Dudley, Commissioner Lantz, Myrta Soto and Elizabeth Martinez. (Second Row L-R) John Medina, Terri Hagans, Bruce Johnson, Troy Malavenda, Mark Murry, Thomas Hunt, Deborah Henault and Charles Barberi. Missing from the photo is Joyce McKinney

The Class's first session came the day after September 11, 2001 and would be a precursor of what was to come. The state budget crisis would suspend classes in November of 2002. Not knowing if they would ever meet again, or ever complete their program, they finally reassembled in September of this year. In the interim, Captain Terri Hagans would be laid off, with no promise that she would ever be re-hired. But through it all the class set new standards for perseverance. The Visionary Leadership Awards were won by Deborah Pierce Henault and Elizabeth Martinez for their project on the reconfiguration of Addiction Services. In the end, Class 13 proved, theirs was far from an unlucky number.

# DOC Celebrates, Cont'd

A special guest of honor this year was 12-year-old Jeffrey Lambert, son of Officer Shirley Lambert of Northern CI, who is currently on active duty in the Middle East. Warden Gomez and the Garner CI staff arranged for the youngsters' presence, which included his personal escorts Counselor Supervisor Stacy Marmora and Food Service Supervisor Dave Potz.



(Above) Jeff Lambert takes a moment from the festivities to pose for a shot with Counselor Supervisor Marmora and CFSS Potz.



(Above) Various toys collected at the MCTSD Holiday Party, donated to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Connecticut



Mary Dunn, The DOC Coordinator for Big Brothers Big Sisters wanted to thank all those who showed their support by bringing an unwrapped toy to the agency Christmas Party held at the Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development. Over 300 toys were donated and collected that evening. These toys will be distributed to needy children throughout Connecticut. Mary stated that the staff who work for DOC continue to go out of their way and show their generosity during this holiday season and she is proud of the PRIDE that the DOC shows when we rally together to support our local community agencies.

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## Letter of Thanks

In a letter written to Warden Gillis of the Gates CI, Colonel Dana Marsh of the US Air Force Reserves thanked the Warden and staff at the Gates CI for the support they have provided to C/O Manuel Ray, as he serves in the USAF. Colonel Marsh wrote “ We recognize that it is dedicated employers, such as yourself, that make it possible for the Reserve Forces to be ready to defend our freedom at a moment’s notice. The events of the last two years have reminded us that the Reserve Forces are vital to our Nation’s defense and your role in supporting our citizen airman is essential in this noble effort.”



C/O Manuel Ray of Gates CI

# Officers Subdue Suspect in Courthouse Altercation

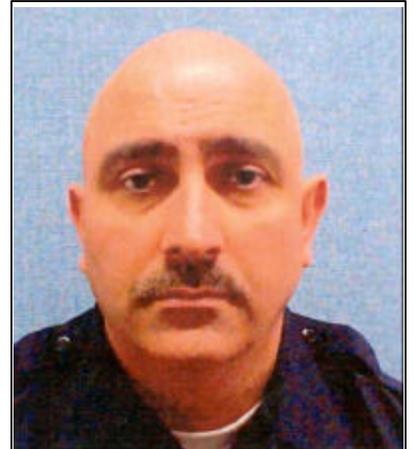
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Two correctional officers from the MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution are being praised by the public,



C/O Michael Watson

judges, lawyers and Commissioner Theresa Lantz, for their recent courageous actions in subduing a potentially violent man at the New London Courthouse. Officers Jesse Rizzo and Michael Watson, who were in a courtroom guarding an inmate on trial, reacted quickly in restraining the out of control individual. Media reports said that pandemonium spread through the courthouse when a juror suddenly became irate, burst into a courtroom, jumped onto a prosecutor's desk and announced he had a gun. While many in the courtroom sought cover and tried to flee, Rizzo and Watson utilized their pepper spray and restraints to end the threat. In



C/O Jesse Rizzo

her letter of commendation, Commissioner Lantz stated the officers had embodied our mission of protection of the public and had displayed why there are none better than the Connecticut Department of Correction.

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## Condolences Praise from across the world



Warden Cuscovitch and the staff of Willard-Cybulski, Warden Carter and the staff at the MacDougall-Walker CI and Director Folz and the staff of Central Office are saddened by the passing of Vernita McKinney, mother of Captain Joyce McKinney (WCCI) and Correction Officer Kurt McKinney (MWCI). She was also the grandmother of Correction Officer Vernetta Sharp (MWCI) and mother in law to Patricia McKinney (Central Office). Our condolences go out to the entire McKinney family during this solemn time.



Dom Rossi, Voc-Ed Instructor in the Bicycle-Wheelchair Repair Shop, at Cheshire CI received a letter from Sam Buxton, Manager of Wheels for the World. "I wanted to write and give you a report of the wheel chairs, canes and walkers we received from Cheshire, Connecticut



where Dom Rossi is the supervisor. (The chairs went to Belarus, formerly of the USSR). These items were all in EXCELLENT condition. They were the best I have EVER seen. Dom was very helpful in every way making sure we received these high quality chairs, canes and walkers. I know we will see many tears of joy when we deliver these items to the children and adults that so desperately need them..." "This is the highest praise that any prison restoration shop has received. We are all very proud of the entire shop and send our thanks and prayers."

# Donations for reservists stationed abroad



The HEART in Hartford CC has shown through again, as the staff stepped forward to collect items to send to HCC staff stationed abroad. A property box for each staff person was filled with baby wipes, snack items, batteries, and personal care items, as well as many thoughtful donations in other categories. Additionally, four huge bags of paperbacks, by the most-in-demand authors, was included in the donated materials.

HCC Quality of Worklife Chairman Correctional Officer Marion Baker, pictured, thanked the Hartford staff for their generosity.

## Recent MVP recipients:

Avezzie, Richard	HVAC	CRCI
Barber, Earl	C/O	CRCI
Bonfiglio, Albert	CTO	CRCI
Ellerbee, Calvin	CC	MYI
Faherty, Thomas	C/O	MYI
Glasheen, Thomas	C/O	CRCI
Gregory, Michael	C/O	CRCI
Johnston, Helen	Sec 2	CRCI
Kehoe, Charles	C/O	CRCI
Kowar, Pamela	PO 2	WCB
Meeker, Kelli	C/O	BCC
Morneau, Robert	C/O	CRCI
Ouellette, Paul	CCS	CRCI
Pickett, Machell	C/O	BCC
Salls, Frank	CC	CRCI
Soto, Fred	C/O	HCC
Swoverland, Daniel	C/O	CRCI

# Chartable Campaign Hits New Mark

Commissioner Theresa Lantz expresses her personal thanks and PRIDE to all those DOC staff who helped make the agency's contribution to the 2003 Connecticut State Employee's Campaign for Charitable Giving, a record breaking success. The final tally of the funds raised by the Department was \$128,556.40. That was more than an eight- percent increase over last year. A total of 1,224 individuals from the Department selflessly thought of others in this season of giving and contributed to that total. The largest contribution by facility came from the Hartford Correctional Center, which had 146 staff members, who donated \$20,392. Bridgeport CC was second with \$13,289.50 in contributions. Commissioner Lantz also extended her gratitude to Deputy Warden Sandy Bundy for her boundless and infectious energy as the agency's coordinator for the Campaign. "Your work has brought out the best in our extremely generous and caring staff," Commissioner Lantz said.



## Calendar

January 7- 18, 2004

"The Plot" a murder mystery written by William LoCasto, son of FAS Joe LoCasto of Commissary services will be performed at the Creative Place Theater located at 750 8th Avenue in New York City. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased by calling (212) 388-2772.

### February 20`

Join the Tactical Operations Unit in celebrating the retirement of Major Bruce Bussiere on February 20, 2004 from 7 p.m. - 12 a.m at the La Renaissance in East Windsor. The \$40.00 donation includes a gift and music provided by 96.5 TIC's Mark "The Shark." Tickets may be purchased by calling the Caninie Unit at 860-763-5362.

# Bridgeport CC Awards Ceremony

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*Secretary II, Pamela Neuendorf, who was instrumental in coordinating the Awards Ceremony, recited the following:*

“Today is a day to honor our staff and to recognize your accomplishments, personally and professionally. During the past year, staff has experienced good times and bad times on a professional level and on a personal level, and as always, WE RISE TO THE OCCASION. The day may be a difficult one, however, the job gets done and at the end of the day we can exit this facility with PRIDE. Today’s ceremony proves that the staff assigned to the Bridgeport CC are dedicated employees both on and off the job and we congratulate those staff receiving awards.”

- |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Counselor of the Year:          | CTO John Burns                   |
| Food Service Staff of the Year: | CFSS II James Pliss              |
| Maintenance Staff of the Year:  | GMO Steve Lukaszewski            |
| Medical Staff of the Year:      | Supv. Psych. II Dr. Richard Moon |
| Teacher of the Year:            | SST Michael Mota                 |
| Correction Officer of the Year: | 8-4 Shift - C/O Alba Nieves      |
|                                 | 4-12 Shift - C/O Melvan Curran   |
|                                 | 12-8 Shift - C/O Aymet Ojeda     |
| Manager of the Year:            | Captain Michael Capasso          |
| Employee of the Year:           | Counselor Joseph Gessaroli       |
| Circle of Merit:                | C/O Harold Rowe                  |
| Distinguished Public Service:   | C/O Alba Nieves                  |
|                                 | C/O Scott Whiteley               |

## Toys for Tots

Melissa Thompson of the Research Unit at Central Office coordinated the 2003 Toys for Tots Campaign for the Department of Correction. Representatives from the US Marines stopped by Central Office to make their first pick up of donated toys on December 15th. The Toys for Tots drive will continue until January 6th. Cash donations will also be accepted. Thank you to all who helped support this worthy cause.



## Congrats



W a r d e n Cuscovitch and Willard-Cybulski staff offer congratulations to Officer Holly Hensley and her husband Officer Jim Hensley of CRCI, on the birth of their son. Baby Tristan, born on December 19, weighed in at 7 lbs., 11ozs. and was 21”.

## Around the cell block



New York- Toothpaste, vitamins and toilet paper make up the inmate art at a gallery showing entitled, “Insider Art, the new Outsider Art”.



Pennsylvania- Under pressure, the Buck’s County Prison reinstated Christmas day visits that had been canceled due to staff shortages.



Kansas- State legislators rejected a \$500,000 damage claim from a transgender inmate who has been denied hormone therapy in prison.



Georgia- A state lawmaker wants to put inmates to work in private industry and then charge them for their incarceration.