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Name change by criminals made tougher

From: timesunion.com 11/25/00

Victims can contest attempts by convicts to mask identity under law

ALBANY -- The victims of serious crimes must be informed when their assailants seek to legally change their names under legislation signed into law Friday by Gov. George Pataki.

The bill, which takes effect Jan. 24, is intended to give people the chance to argue against an impending name-change by criminals if they want, sponsors said.

Pataki said he wants to give more rights to crime victims and fewer to criminals, including those who seek to "mask their true identity" by changing names after they commit offenses.

The legislation was motivated mostly by the attempt of Mark Christie, serving 25 years to life for killing 4-year-old Kali Ann Poulton in East Rochester in 1994, to change his name while in prison.

Christie said he wanted to seek anonymity because of the "high notoriety" his case had attached to his name.

A judge in Clinton County initially granted Christie's name-change petition. But a storm of protest erupted after Christie's request became known in the Rochester area -- more than 100,000 people signed petitions opposing the name change -- and Christie eventually withdrew his request.

In addition, Kali Ann's mother sued to block the name change. She was represented by state Sen. Richard Dollinger, a Rochester Democrat and lawyer, who filed legislation in 1999 similar to the bill signed into law Friday by Pataki.

Dollinger complained bitterly in the Legislature earlier this year when Republicans refused to allow him to co-sponsor the name-change bill. GOP Nassau County Sen. Dean Skelos carried the measure.

The new law requires:

A form be sent to crime victims notifying them of the impending name change and, if they ask, for information on when the name-change petition will be submitted to a court.

The publication of notice of the impending name change in a newspaper in the community where the criminal was convicted. In the Christie name-change controversy, notice was posted in the northern New York city near where he is in state prison, but not in a newspaper in Rochester, where he committed his crime.

The state Division of Criminal Justice Services must get notification of a pending name change.

Name-change petitioners must say what crimes they were convicted of and when.

The new law will apply to most violent felony offenders, including murderers, rapists, people convicted of kidnapping, unlawful imprisonment and incest.

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Man may sue over cruelty charge

By DON LEHMAN dlehman@poststar.com

A Fort Ann man who was charged with cruelty to animals in August after a couple driving on Route 4 in Kingsbury thought they saw cats thrown from a moving pickup truck has filed a notice of claim against the SPCA of Upstate New York and the state of New York.

Robert Hartung of Baldwin Corners Road is seeking \$1 million for false arrest and illegal imprisonment after misdemeanor charges filed by the SPCA were dropped by the Washington County district attorney's office for lack of evidence.

Hartung, a corrections officer at Great Meadow Correctional Facility, was charged based on the statements of passengers in a car who claimed they saw the cats tossed from the truck about 8:30 a.m. on Aug. 19. Both cats died.

But when representatives of the district attorney's office interviewed the witnesses, they found that the couple didn't actually see the cats thrown from the truck, Hartung's lawyer said.

Hartung also had several alibis, including dropping his wife off at Mount McGregor Correctional Facility

in Wilton that morning, an eye appointment afterward and a trip to Lake George after that, said Michael S. Martin, the lawyer who represented him in Kingsbury Town Court.

In all, he had statements from more than a half-dozen people backing up his claims he couldn't have been driving on Route 4 in Kingsbury at the time the cats were tossed, Martin said.

"He had a whole list of alibis," Martin said.

But Michael McDonald, the Washington County assistant district attorney who prosecuted the case, said Hartung's alibi was far from airtight and prosecutors believed he could have been driving in that area at the time. He said the witnesses described the make, model and color of his truck exactly, along with the license plate.

But the fact they couldn't say for sure that the cats came from the truck presented evidentiary problems, he said.

"They weren't able to give enough proof beyond a reasonable doubt," he said. "Their statements just weren't going to cut it."

Cathy Cloutier, the Kingsbury-based SPCA's director, said Wednesday the shelter had not been served with the notice of claim.

But she said she believed the agency's investigators acted properly. They filed charges based on a sworn statement from witnesses who contended they saw the cats thrown from the moving truck, whose license plate they jotted down.

"These people signed a statement in front of a sheriff's deputy saying they saw what they saw," she said. "We don't go to the DA with these cases unless we have sworn depositions."

But John Hogan Jr., the lawyer representing Hartung in the civil case, said the SPCA should have done a better job investigating the case before filing charges. The state Department of Correctional Services sought to discipline Hartung over the arrest, he said.

"You just don't go arresting people on mere suspicion," he said. "You have to have some pretty darned good proof."

A notice of claim is the precursor of a lawsuit and is required when someone wishes to sue a municipality or the state. It preserves a person's right to sue if a settlement cannot be reached.

Hogan said the state was named as a defendant because the SPCA based the charge on state Agriculture & Markets Law, and he said he didn't know if any state agencies had been consulted during the investigation.

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State corrections officer charged by police with rape

From: dailygazette.com 11/21/00
The Associated Press

SCHENECTADY - A state corrections officer has been charged with rape, a state official confirmed.

Paul St. Lucia, 48, of 65 South Pine St., Albany was arrested at 2 p.m. Friday by on a warrant and charged with first-degree rape, according to the Schenectady Police Department. Sgt. Doug Mulligan of the city police was listed as the arresting officer.

St. Lucia faces disciplinary charges within the Department of Correctional Services, department spokeswoman Linda Foglia said Monday.

St. Lucia has been a corrections officer since 1978 and worked at the Coxsackie Correctional Facility since 1979. He makes \$43,320 a year.

Foglia said St. Lucia was suspended without pay Monday. Today, the department is expected to issue a notice of discipline that could result in his dismissal pending the outcome of the criminal case, she said.

If he is convicted of a felony, he will be fired. A misdemeanor conviction would be subject to arbitration, Foglia said.

Police officers in Schenectady were unable to comment on the details of the case Monday. However, the Schenectady police blotter has St. Lucia due in City Court on Nov. 27.

No details were available from state prison officials on the alleged crime.

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Dues Increased

New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

194 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12210

(518) 4271551 www.nyscopba.org nyscopba@nyscopba.org

PLEASE POST

TO: Chief Sector Stewards (institutional Payroll)

FROM: The Executive Board

DATE: December 6, 2000

RE: Dues Increase

As per the NYSCOPBA Constitution, dues for active members can only be raised by the same percentage as the increase in salary of members of the collective bargaining unit. Additionally, such increases are effective upon the effective date of the raises themselves.

Accordingly, the new NYSCOPBA dues amount is raised 93 cents (from \$15.50 to \$16.43) per pay period. Since the effective pay raises date back to October of 1999, the formula for calculating the retroactive dues is as follows:

Effective payroll period beginning October 7, 1999, through payroll period ending April 5, 2000: a 3% dues increase (or 46 cents) for a total of 13 retroactive payroll periods (13 x 46 cents) = \$ 5.98

Effective payroll period beginning April 6, 2000, through payroll period ending November 15, 2000: a 3% dues increase (or 93 cents) for a total of 16 retroactive payroll periods (16 x 93 cents) = \$14.88

Total Institutional Payroll Retroactivity for Dues \$20.86

We have coordinated this deduction with the Comptroller's Office to occur on the 12/14/00 pay period (the same pay period containing the retroactive pay dating back to October 1, 1999).

Effective 12/28/00, NYSCOPBA's dues will be the standard \$16.43.

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Sing Sing museum plan moves forward

From: nyjournalnews.com 12/17/00

ROBERT MARCHANT
THE JOURNAL NEWS

Ossining - Plans are moving ahead to open a museum at the Sing Sing Correctional Facility, and local tourism promoters are meeting several times this week with marketing consultants to assess how many visitors the attraction could expect to bring to the area.

With preliminary design plans completed and a working relationship with the New York State Department of Corrections in place, the museum promoters seek to contract a full-scale marketing study and plan to select a firm to do the research this winter.

Marketing information would help the planners with the next step: raising from \$5 million to \$8 million to make the museum a reality.

"We're making good progress," said Walter Ludlum, who heads the tourism committee in the town of Ossining.

"We've been very pleased with the response so far. There's been no negative feedback. People are interested in bringing a first-rate tourist attraction to Ossining."

The design concept sketched out by Scott Guerin of DMCD Inc. of New York City would guide visitors into a raised platform over the old jailhouse built 175 years ago, and, it is hoped by the promoters, deep into the history of America's most famous prison.

"You'll be guided down a walkway near the railroad tracks, into the magnificent old cells that are still standing. You'll get a sense of what it was like in the 18th and 19th century," said Ossining Town Supervisor John Chervokas, a leading proponent of the planned museum.

The museum would be built in an old power house on the prison site. It would incorporate the old stone walls of the original penitentiary built by prisoners in the early 1800s, which stand as a ghostly ruin in the middle of the modern prison.

The museum would be separate and secure from the operations of the prison, and there would be no contact with inmates.

Chervokas said the tone of the museum would be educational and serious, and there would be no attractions "for those interested in the macabre."

Town officials hope the project could boost the local economy and put Ossining in a position to benefit from the regional tourism trade. Once museum planners get a detailed account of attendance estimates and operational costs, Chervokas said, a lengthy fund-raising drive will commence, tapping governmental and non-profit sources.

The prison's supervising superintendent, Brian Fischer, said he favors the proposal, though he has no active role in the planning process. Sing Sing has long been a source of mystery, much of it based on false information and misunderstanding, he said.

"It's always been 'infamous' Sing Sing prison. Maybe the museum will cleanse that label," he said. "People will be able to see us in a more realistic setting, not the hype you get on television."

"At the very least, it will help people understand us better," he added, referring to prison staff. "We're not the bad guys. We're providing a necessary service. Maybe they'll get a better perception of what we're all about."

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120 state prison inmates probed for possibly getting workers' comp

From: dailygazette.com 12/22/00

By MICHAEL GORMLEY
The Associated Press

ALBANY - The state is investigating 120 state prisoners who may be collecting as much as \$400 a week in workers' compensation benefits.

The cross-indexing of prison records and active workers' compensation records turned up 120 inmates who may still be receiving checks for being disabled on the job. The payments are not tax dollars, but are paid through insurance companies, the state Insurance Fund or private funds collected from the recipients' former employers.

"When people collect workers' compensation benefits and shouldn't be, that eventually is passed on to everyone else," said Jon Sullivan, spokesman for the state Workers' Compensation Board.

The cross-indexing will become routine. Workers' compensation records will also soon be compared to state Taxation and Finance Department records of newly hired workers to ferret out fraud involving "injured" workers who are employed.

"From finger imaging to prevent welfare and Medicaid fraud to workers' compensation, we are committed to using state-of-the-art technology to make sure people who need our help get it without letting criminals prey on the compassion of New Yorkers," Gov. George Pataki said Thursday.

If convicted of fraud, or if others are fraudulently cashing a prisoner's check, the penalty would be up to four years in prison.

"The matches uncovered by the board will enable insurance carriers to take action on these claims," said board Executive Director Richard Bell said of the prisoners' cases. "The preliminary findings are very

promising."

Prisoners, however, may not know their benefits end at the barred gates. A 1974 court ruling made prisoners ineligible for the work-injury compensation even if the state Workers' Compensation Board awarded a lifetime benefit, Sullivan said.

However, prisoners aren't routinely told and notice isn't in any brochure. "That's why [fraud investigations] would be on a case-by-case basis," Sullivan said.

"That's ridiculous," said Alison Coleman, director of the Prison Families of New York. "I'm just concerned if they do determine that fraud occurred, that fraud really occurred."

Coleman said that although ending the benefits to prisoners "probably makes sense," she's concerned the brunt of the action could be another penalty for the families of prisoners.

"I would really be concerned about the question of restitution," she said, adding that families might be left to pay for any improper payments.

She said she's never heard of prisoners receiving workers' compensation.

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Always on Guard

<http://www.westchesterweekly.com/articles/guard.html>

What happens when correction officers bring home the hurt with the uniform?

By Patrick Range McDonald

This is the first in a series of stories on the prison system and how it affects communities.

"This is my job until the day I retire. It is not what I enjoy the most, but it's what I am comfortable doing. It pays the bills, and I am reasonably sure that I will never be laid off like a factory worker; job security is everything. You can't trust the big companies anymore. They have been downsizing and laying off for the past few years, and I want to think that I will always have job security. I don't want to be looking for a job when I am too old to compete in the job market...The job security, the paycheck and the benefits are keeping a lot of us right where we are."

-- Anonymous New York State Correction Officer

You go where the work is, and these days the work is not at the factory. Whether it is in Enfield, Conn., or Tarrytown, N.Y., the factory has been shuttered and the work has gone to Mexico. But politicians have found another form of factory life for their constituents; it's called the "prison-industrial complex."

But working inside the prison system can be ugly. Sensitive and trusting men and women turn into thick-skinned paranoids who can't leave their eight- to 16-hours-a-day jobs at the gate. They watch their back inside the walls, and they do the same when they walk the streets. The politicians, however, don't talk about the occupational after-effects for these constituents, and few people know the psychic baggage

involved with the job when they sign up. It is a job, after all, and many people can't be choosers. But is a decent paycheck worth losing your health and your family?

Americans live in the era of the prison boom. We have built more prisons and incarcerated more people in the last decade than at any other time in American history, and we need correction officers to watch these people. This past August, the Justice Department released a survey that totaled state and federal prison beds at 976,000, an increase of 43 percent from 1990 to 1995. The survey also showed a 31 percent increase in prison employment for the same time period; today, 347,320 people work inside the walls of prisons across the country. That same month, Gov. George Pataki announced the "largest single-year expansion of maximum security beds in 70 years." At a cost of \$226 million-\$422 million, New York State will build an additional 1,550 cells for 3,100 convicts. Correction jobs will undoubtedly follow.

But the correction officer is often called "the forgotten cop." It's a mind-jarring job, and the correction officer is often the most ignored constituency in a system that is without much humanity. Politicians want to cut posts in prisons to save money, sociologists research the impact of prison life on inmates, and the public wants anything associated with criminals to disappear. The stresses and anxieties of a correction officer are the last things anyone wants to hear about.

"One of the things outside [of] the dangers of the job that bothers us, and has certainly bothered me for years, is that we don't get the public respect and recognition for what we do," said Joe Spano, president of the Westchester Correction Officers Benevolent Association and a member of the Westchester Spano clan. "It just doesn't happen. You're out of sight, out of mind. Actually, it goes deeper than that -- they don't want to know."

I met Spano and Correction Officer Joanne Santana at WCOBA's Hawthorne office, which is a five-minute drive from the Westchester County correction complex in Valhalla. In the past year, Westchester County correction officers have been accused by county government of faking injuries and staying on leave for too long, which resulted in \$9.7 million in overtime spending. Gannett Suburban Newspapers ran a recent front-page story that gave the impression that correction officers were slacking off, and County Executive Andrew Spano was going to "crack down on claims, leave time." Of course, the article did not mention the possible mismanagement behind the over-spending.

"I can speak on Oracle Management Services, [a Millwood-based firm that handled correction injury claims]," Joe Spano said. "They were horrible managers of the program. I have had individuals who would wait three to six months for two weeks of therapy. They would submit for an MRI, and it would take three to four months to approve it. Then the MRI shows they needed surgery, and it would take three to four months to approve the surgery."

In the last days of the O'Rourke administration, Risk Management Planning Group Inc. replaced Oracle Management Services as the county's claims handler. There also seems to be a bureaucracy problem with injury hearings.

Department of Correction Deputy Commissioner Luke Smith gave me a tour of the Westchester County jail. But before leaving his Valhalla office, he explained that insufficient staff due to injury leave was a problem. He also said it "takes some time to gather up the doctors and lawyers for the hearing."

An injury claims "hearing" takes place when the correction officer's personal doctor makes a different diagnosis than the county's doctor, and the county wants to go to arbitration. It can be a long and arduous

process that costs money in legal fees for the union and the county. In the meantime, the correction officer is not allowed to work until his personal doctor allows it. If the hearing takes a month to convene, then the officer may sit out that month. The deputy commissioner, however, did not seem to understand the implications of what he said.

So working life really hasn't changed for blue-collar folk. When management needs someone to blame for lost monies, the rank-and-file takes the fall and gets hit with the deepest cuts. Only with this job, quick cost-cutting solutions can put people's lives in immediate danger as they work inside the walls.

The Westchester County correction complex in Valhalla stands next to the Sprain Brook Parkway. Amid leafless trees and an isolated location, the complex looks depressingly drab. Smith and Chief of Operations Richard L. Davis led me on a two-and-half hour tour of the county's new and old jails, where anyone from a hardened murderer to a drunken driver is incarcerated to await trial or sentencing.

WCOBA treasurer Nate Estes, a 13-year correction officer veteran, also walked with us. Estes said the biggest concern among fellow COs was their personal safety. One cell block we visited in the old jail holds 30 inmates and is watched by one officer. Because of insufficient staffing due to injury leave and, according to the WCOBA, inadequate manpower, correction officers are often forced to work overtime, which prolongs their work day to a 16-hour shift.

Correction officers will get some relief with the county's hiring of 31 new correction officers, who will complete their training at the end of February. But, Joe Spano said, Valhalla loses 15 to 16 officers a year due to retirements, firings and leaving for another line of work. And while overtime pay can double a correction officer's pay -- the top salary after four years on the job is \$47,050 -- the mental side effects become obvious. Officers, who carry no weapons, must always be alert in a jail. They have to watch out for their own personal safety and the safety of inmates, who are often susceptible to inmate-on-inmate attacks. After 16 hours of protecting themselves and inmates, the mental part of the job becomes exhausting.

As we walked out of the block toward the Emergency Response Team headquarters, everything was in order. Gates opened and closed with precision, and the jail felt secure.

"It's a controlled environment," Deputy Commissioner Smith told me. "The officers do an excellent job."

There was a time, however, when increased gang activity inside the jail posed real danger for the officers and the population at large. It was the Emergency Response Team (ERT) that played a major role in re-establishing safety in the jail.

When correction officers cannot handle a threatening situation, an alarm sounds for the ERT, a group of seven correction officers and one supervising sergeant who are all dressed in flack jackets, riot helmets and military fatigues. The only weapons they carry are nightsticks, and the sergeant is armed with pepper spray. When the ERT responds to an alarm, everything is videotaped as they take care of business. More often than not, an inmate surrenders as soon as ERT enters a cell.

There are a total of 60 ERT-certified correction officers who rotate through the unit on a three-week basis. Since the ERT started in 1994, it has been a success. "The inmates want to feel safe," said Sgt.

Richard Maccabee, a 14-year veteran. "The ERT protects the inmates as much as the correction officers, and it cuts down on overall job injuries."

This may sound like the usual company line, but the prospect of running into the ERT is something inmates want to avoid, and, by sheer reputation, the ERT helps keep the jail controlled. Because in a prison, the threat of quick, hard-hitting discipline is as effective as the act itself.

Despite the needed preventive work of the ERT, such a unit does not exist in the women's jail or the penitentiary. There are also a number of posts being cut by the county, even though they are state-mandated. It's these kinds of money decisions by the administration that eventually eat away at the correction officer's morale.

Besides the horrors of getting attacked by an inmate or watching an inmate die from stabbing wounds, correction officers are the first targets for money-saving policies in a bloated prison-industrial complex, which the politicians first built with mandatory sentencing and harsh drug laws. This often results in added stress due to safety concerns and potential lost income. Correction officers also have to deal with the repercussions of other cost-slashing tactics. Whenever inmates are denied something, correction officers, who only enforce new policy, bear the brunt of inmate anger. Officers often say that cuts in medical and food services for inmates are the two most common reasons for a prison uprising.

The politics of the administration, the ignorance of the public and the potential violence of the inmates can cause an enormous amount of stress for the correction officer. Some people learn how to handle it, and others never learn at all.

Correction Officer Joanne Santana works at the women's facility at Valhalla. After eight years on the job, she's been unable to fully ignore the inmates' insults and demands. "I just keep walking," Santana said. "You can't say nothing. It still bothers me now, but you just keep walking."

To keep her work life separate from her life outside the jail, she has adopted the habit of changing out of her uniform at Valhalla. She was never trained that way, it was something she picked up on her own. Other officers bring home the hurt with the uniform. "I remember it being such a strain for me at 21 years old," Joe Spano recalled while we were sitting in his Hawthorne office. "I was not accustomed to individuals disrespecting me and getting away with it. It was extremely difficult. And I remember going home with such headaches, and you're just transformed into someone else. It put a tremendous strain on my marriage, at the time. I remember my wife saying, 'My God, what happened to you?'"

"How did your wife deal with it?" I asked.

"Not very good originally. There was a tremendous strain. You learn to turn it off and not discuss it at all, which, at times, is even more difficult. To offset that, you go out with the guys after work and blow off some steam. And then that puts strain on the marriage. You find yourself not going home at all. I remember those days as well."

Spano acknowledges that irresponsible, and sometimes reprehensible, behavior exists among some WCOBA members. In January, for example, a Westchester County correction officer was charged with second-degree assault after he attacked a Mount Vernon woman outside her home. Mount Vernon police called the arrest the result of an ongoing dispute between the two people over an "extended" period of

time. The Employee Assistance Program offers psychological therapy, alcoholism counseling and other treatments, but too often that help comes too late.

"EAP has been very good to the officers," Spano said, "but unfortunately, a lot of the time it's after the fact. After the incident occurred. And that's part of the problem. And it is something I have spoken to [Chief Davis] about because we have noticed an increase [in unsuitable behavior]."

I was unable to get Spano to quantify "increase." There aren't many official statistics kept about this kind of law enforcement. Unlike police officers, who have much of their lives documented by state and city governments, correction officers receive little attention from politicians and sociologists. Westchester resident Dr. Jack Kamerman, for example, writes in *The Keeper's Voice*, a correction officer newsletter, that "there has been no work that has focused specifically on correction officer suicide."

Kamerman, a professor of sociology at Kean University in New Jersey, later told me, "It's easier to get material on police, and that's one of the barometers of the difficulties in status and public image of correction officers."

Kamerman felt "very few departments keep accurate statistics on correction officer suicide," but the number of cases were a handful. Santana and Spano could recall only one correction officer suicide in Westchester in the last 16 years.

In every prison system, however, serious alcohol abuse problems exist. "We have a lot of individuals who get into trouble," Spano said about WCOBA. "The stress carries over and it escalates into something else. That's a big problem here."

In the prison town of Enfield, Conn., Mike Minney, a correction officer, called alcohol abuse "rampant."

"I can speak from experience," Minney said. "Every night I'd go down to the [local bar] and stay there until 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. The owner loved COs so he'd keep the place open. And I almost got divorced before I was married."

The hard nights then take their toll. Marriages break up or sudden violence breaks out. Spano has recently become highly concerned about domestic abuse among his "troops." "[Chief Davis and I] have talked about incorporating [domestic abuse] into the training days," Spano said. "We are required to train three days during the year, and we want to have a seminar because it has increased a lot in the past couple of years. We want the individual to know there's help out there."

Currently, Spano said, there is no program for dealing with a correction officer's life outside the prison walls. The correction officer's private life is not the concern of the county, and that may sound like a good thing. Yet people never realize just how much their lives will change once they work inside the system.

According to correction officers like Nate Estes, Joe Spano and Mike Minney, they soon realized they couldn't be themselves when working in a prison. They had to adopt a strict persona that exuded order, or the inmates would not respect them. If correction officers don't have some kind of authority within the walls, then they are not safe and the officers can lose control of the prison. But this hardness insinuates itself into their private lives.

"You get conned so many times during your career, you have trouble trusting anybody," Spano said. "I mean, I got to the point where I didn't trust anyone, even outside the job."

Families and individual lives are often ripped apart by this line of work, and there are few outlets for support.

Two women, wives of Connecticut correction officers, want to change that. "We find that these issues run through every single state, every single prison and there's not one person who doesn't deal with the same exact issues we're dealing with," said Barbara Murray, director of Connection in Enfield, Conn., which is 20 minutes north of Hartford. "It's so universal and across the board, it really blows my mind sometimes."

Murray and Sue Jandreau sat behind heavy, wood desks in a white ranch house. The two women met through Connection, a non-profit support group for correction officers' families, and they work at the ranch house every Wednesday. Murray founded the group in 1992 when Enfield's Carl Robinson Correctional Institution went through a year of constant prison turmoil.

"I worked in a prison," Murray said, "and I know the insides and outs. So it gave me security [when something happened]. That's when I decided that people who don't have this knowledge must really sit home and worry."

Murray worked two years as a social worker at one of the Enfield area's eight prisons, and her husband is a 14-year correction officer veteran. Murray's husband, Gary, was laid off from his machinist job in the early 1980s, and he became one of several hundred men and women who found a job during Connecticut's prison boom. Within the last five years, five prisons have been built in Enfield and nearby Somers.

The land the prisons were built on was once owned by Shakers, who were among the first activists to promote rehabilitation in the prison system. The Shakers sold the land to Connecticut on the condition that the state promised to never build walls around a prison so inmates couldn't look out. As a result, cyclone fences with barbed wire surround every prison in Enfield and Somers. When United Technologies, an aerospace parts manufacturer, laid off several hundred workers in the Enfield area, the state began to build prisons. The eight area prisons house around 6,800 inmates and staff 1,800 correction officers.

Connection has a membership of 300 families in Connecticut, and the support group provides information on prison work, gangs and tips on living with a correction officer. It is one of the few family support groups in the country, and it was founded without the state's help. Connection is an example of the amount of indifference held by state governments toward correction officers and their families.

"Many spouses, unfortunately, don't know how to deal with [living with correction officers]," Murray said. "So that's why there's a need for an organization like ours, and we've found that need across the country. There aren't many organizations like ours." (See related story, page 9.)

Before Connection, correction officers were not allowed to call home if they had to work overtime. If a riot started up, there was no phone network in place to inform families of the facts and there was no official command center where families could gather. Cadets at the academy were also given no instruction about the consequential changes in their family lives.

"For people who don't know this line of work," Murray said, "it's a real blow." Murray and Jandreau, for

example, did not announce their weddings in the local newspaper, and they pay the phone company to keep their numbers unlisted. They fear reprisals from ex-convicts and gang members who are still on the outside.

"It's not common," Murray said, "but it does happen."

Murray also remembers the time she was 20 years old, pregnant and without her husband on New Year's Eve. "I was bawling my eyes out," Murray laughed. "I couldn't believe what I was going through."

Missed holidays are the norm for correction officers, and Murray's husband won't take off Christmas until he's retired. Then there are the nightmares. When Sue Jandreau was first married, she'd only wake up her husband, Buck, from across the room. "He was up and out of bed with his fists up in two seconds," Jandreau said.

"We hear that a lot," Murray added. "There's a lot of correction officers who have nightmares. They flail in their sleep. There's a girl who does my nails who said [her boyfriend] punched her in his sleep. It's just a product of being in a prison."

The result of these many personal upheavals, Murray claims, is an 80 percent national divorce rate among correction officers.

As Murray and Jandreau became more influential within the correctional system through their persistence, family life in Enfield began to turn around. They taught a class called "Life with a Correction Officer" at the correction officers' academy when prison hiring was at its peak, and a phone network was put in place. In 1995, the state donated the white ranch house. With a complete kitchen, bathroom, playrooms and bedrooms, the ranch provides spouses a familial setting when a riot breaks out. But one of the biggest contributions Connection gave to the correction community was the practical tips of living with a correction officer.

"Some of the problems with other families we see is that they don't understand the difference between the correction officer and Daddy, and why they exist," Murray said. "They don't understand why their husbands don't like to drive through Hartford or sit with their back to the door in a restaurant or don't like going to a grocery store with a lot of people...It is these little things I know that other families don't understand, and I try to get them across to these families."

The common theme for all of Murray and Jandreau's tips centers around space. When the correction officer walks in from work, let him undress and take a shower. Never talk to a correction officer about life decisions when he is still in uniform. COs also go through a mental workdown period when they're off-duty, and the first day he will still have the mindset of a correction officer, not a husband or father. But despite the tips Murray and Jandreau are always ready to offer, sometimes they get fed up with their own husbands' behavior.

"We even have our moments when we just don't get it...but life goes on," added Sue Jandreau, whose husband is an 11-year veteran. "We still have to get the kids to school, and we have to get them to swim lessons, and, you know, your house still has to function...Then all of a sudden, boom. They come home and try to integrate themselves back into the family. And it can be very difficult because you have your routine."

"And Daddy is also drawn to this job because of a 'control' personality," Murray continued. "He's in a control situation. He expects to come home and be in control. Well, that's not the way it works. Our lives have gone on, and we've learned to adjust. You can't come in here and expect us to walk the line, which is a prison term, because you just came from that. That's not how we live. You can't come in and just start barking."

Murray and Jandreau tell spouses it's important to be strong and honest with a correction officer. As Jandreau put it, "I'm not afraid to tell my husband he's being an asshole." The two women reported one case of domestic abuse in the past 14 years, which I found hard to believe. They claimed, however, that "emotional abuse" was more prevalent in their community.

"I've seen it in my own house," Murray said. "Where the husband comes home, or the wife comes home, and they're treating their kids or spouse like inmates. Because all day long they're disciplining and barking out orders. They're controlling things...and they're still in that mind frame."

Murray said her 13-year marriage is the longest surviving relationship at Carl Robinson, where her husband works. Jandreau has been married for eight years and works part-time as an X-ray technician at the local hospital. They both have two sons, and they live in Enfield. During our discussion, correction officer and local union president Mike Minney joined us.

Minney reported that two correction officers had been attacked the previous night at Carl Robinson, and he complained that safety at the prison is still a problem. "[The administration] hasn't done what they should to bring assaults down to an acceptable level," Minney said.

I later asked Minney if the problems with the administration caused as much stress for the correction officer as working with inmates.

"I've been FOling [Freedom of Information] the shit out of these people," Minney said. "Because what they've done is decrease the number of posts. So there's less people on duty at a given time. At the same time, they've been fighting us on raises. We were in negotiations for four years. I've got statistics right here that show managers have received as much as 50 percent raises in that four-year period. So it's do as I say, not as I do."

Minney left his job at Milton-Bradley for a \$3-an-hour raise at the Department of Correction in the early 1980s. He has four more years until he can retire on a full pension. I asked him if the paycheck and pension were worth all the mental anguish.

"No," he said bluntly. "And everybody that comes to me, and I have a lot of people coming up to me for a job, I tell them, no, don't do it. I tell my friends, don't let your kids get into this job. I'll kill my kid if he tries to get into this line of work. I will not let him. I may sound like a mean father, but I'm telling my kid, 'You're going to college, you are going to get into anything but corrections.' This is the shittiest job you'll ever want to be in."

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You Never Know

<http://www.westchesterweekly.com/articles/guard2.html>

While politicians debate over crime and punishment, our family members are walking the line every day.
By Barbara Murray

This morning, like husbands in other households in my neighborhood, my husband went to work.

He showered, shaved, trimmed his already buzz-cut head, put the coffee on and began to dress. He pulled on his carefully pressed military-like navy blue cargo pants pegged at the cuff, so they may be tucked into his spit-shined, black, "HI-Tech" boots. Tucked his shirt in, aligning all the pleats. He donned his silver badge, name tag and whistle, and strapped his key holder and handcuff case to his thick black leather utility belt. His most important piece of equipment is with him always--his mind. Armed only with the training and common sense it possesses. He removes his wedding ring and places it with his wallet on his bureau--these are not part of the uniform. He bends and kisses me. "Love you," he says. "I love you, too," I say. As he leaves for his day at the office, the little voice in my head says, "You never know."

"You never know what?" You may ask. Well, my husband is a correctional officer. So there are many things I never know. Many things our children should never know. Many things our extended family will never know.

For instance, how would our lives be different if he didn't go to work each day behind a 12-foot-high fence of razor ribbon? He and his brother officers locked behind gates along with 1,600-2,000 of society's outcasts: murderers, rapists and drug dealers. All acting in the same manner "behind the walls" as they did outside "the walls." A place where profanity, violence and sexual deviance is the norm. Would he be the same person? Would we be the same family without the little voice repeating, "You never know"?

In order to properly do your job as a correctional officer there are certain characteristics you must adopt in order to protect yourself, society and the inmate population. You must be vigilant and in control at all times. Armed with the knowledge that situations and circumstances can turn on a dime. This persona becomes your "game face," your survival. These characteristics do not lend themselves easily to the role of father, husband and son. You must also learn to leave this persona at the gate. In order to create a healthy balance for your life you must leave behind the suspicions, mistrust and cynicism that develop naturally as a product of this environment.

What is the fallout from Daddy's day at the office? Will he have left it all at the gate? We as a family have to understand and ignore the harshness of his voice, his intimidating presence and his need to continue controlling his environment, his suspicions regarding large crowds, strangers and his discouragement about society. We will not have discussions regarding family situations or make decisions until he has put his uniform and game face away. As he slips in and out of his c/o persona we sometimes gently remind him he is home now and no longer at the prison. As he drowns his memories and experiences in booze and/or drugs, we face the crisis. And while statistics show that only 20 percent of us will survive with our marriage intact, we encourage, help and support. He may drown his

experiences in exercise, hunting and fishing, and we need to understand and encourage the need for these healthy alternatives of stress management. When he is not home and the telephone rings, our minds quickly process: Is this the call? Was he injured? Will the D.O.C. car pull up in our driveway today?

We hear and face statistics regarding the instances of AIDS, TB, Hepatitis in our society. Statistics that show us the highest concentration of these communicable diseases are found in our prison systems. Who will breathe or cough on my husband today? Will he be bit by someone suffering from these dreadful diseases?

When the unthinkable happens, how do you tell your children they cannot kiss Daddy for months, maybe years? How does one face not making love with your spouse at the peak of his life because he was exposed to a communicable, fatal disease?

We adapt. We adapt to the Hollywood stereotypes. We adapt to the never-ending questions from neighbors, family and friends about "what it's like in prison." We adapt to the insensitive jokes. We adapt to the questions from our children on issues like the death penalty and the electric chair and does Dad have to watch? And we find explanations for why people don't always like Daddy. We adapt to the negatively-charged atmosphere that surrounds the prison system and those who are involved in it.

We adapt because it is our sacrifice. Our spouses, sons, fathers, even wives and mothers sacrifice everyday to protect society, and to carry out the mandate they have been charged with.

While politicians, educators and theorists debate over crime and punishment and rehabilitation, our family members are walking the line everyday. Often they are "the forgotten cop," providing understanding, safety and the opportunity for change to a population whom some see as not deserving. Although the public can sleep easy at night knowing they are there, they often forget the risk and sacrifice the c/o and their families face. They'll never know.

Hopefully, we as family members will never know the types of sacrifices that have been made by other officers and their families. Officers who have been killed, assaulted physically or emotionally. Hopefully, we won't ever know the reality of that little voice in our head echoing fear as our spouses leave each day. We will hopefully always only know the pride behind their badge.

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Directive # 2223 Intershift/RDO Swaps Draft December 13,2000

Here are the big ones in the new directive, soon to affect your swaps. (it's 4 pages long, so these are the big changes) Ask your CSS or Vice President or Business Agent for a copy. These are proposed by the state. NYSOPBA has objected. There may be some changes but most of this will become IMPOSED on us all.(kind of like the contract)

A. Objective: To provide a standard policy for the recording, monitoring and controlling of swapping.

B. Definition: voluntary exchange of specific shifts.

C. Implementation: Effective January 1, 2001. Swaps scheduled, but not yet started, are considered void, and must be resubmitted for approval on the new form. Local facility agreements are considered NULL and VOID as of midnight December 31, 2000.

D. Time periods:

1. All swaps paid back in 365 days of initial swap.
2. All swaps submitted at least 48 hours in advance. Must be specific with dates, shifts, and posts. No open ended swaps.
3. swaps can be cancelled up to 24 hours before the initial swap shift.

E. Swap paybacks:

1. The only acceptable payback is physically working a full shift.
2. Paybacks must be one for one.
3. Once the initial swap has been worked, the payback date cannot be changed without signed approval of facility management.
4. No third party swaps except in cases of documented emergency and approval of DSS.
5. Swaps not repaid will result in charge to leave credits. Personal, then annual leave, then the owing employee will be docked a days pay if he/she has no time on the books. The employee owed the swap will >> receive compensation. This will occur only when:
 1. The employee transfers out.
 2. The owing employee resigns or is fired.
 3. The owing employee is on sick leave for over 12 months.
 4. The swap is not repaid within the 12 month period.

F. Eligibility and restrictions:

1. Must meet qualifications for post worked.
2. Probationary employees must be at a facility for at least 30 days.
3. Full shifts only.
4. No overlapping swaps allowed.
5. No time off will be granted for any employee working a swap except in cases of documented emergency and signed approval of W/C.
6. You can't bang in work a swap on any shift immediately following the absence. There must be at least one shift between the absence and a worked swap.
7. You cannot work a swap on a known scheduled training day.
8. All swaps must be repaid before an employee is promoted, appointed or reassigns to another facility. Otherwise, there will be charge to leave credits or a pay dock.

G. Rights and responsibilities:

1. Swaps are voluntary.
2. You are responsible for fulfilling their commitments and reporting on time.
3. Cannot work more than 2 consecutive shifts.
4. The original employee remains responsible for coverage of the shift. If no one reports, then you must use leave credits and will be considered AWOL. The employee scheduled to work may be penalized.
5. If your scheduled to work a swap, and cannot report, you must contact the other employee. If they cannot be reached, you must notify the W/C prior to the shift. An employee can be penalized for failing

to do this.

H. Recording:

1. Time cards must have "Swap on" or "Swap off" followed by the other employees name.
3. Time and attendance Lt. is responsible for reviewing and approving all swaps.
7. New 5 part form.

I. Penalties: Violations can be dealt with counseling or disciplinary action. Penalties may include suspension or loss of swapping.

J. Management:

1. This policy must be used and complied with without any modification at the facility level.
 3. The Dept. can amend this policy as required.
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Former officer details horrors of Attica

By ANTONIO M. PRADO
Star-Gazette

HORSEHEADS -- Horseheads High School psychology teacher James Keenan has been trying for years to get his brother-in-law to tell him about his ordeal as a hostage during the 1971 Attica prison riot.

Eugene Smith

On Tuesday, he finally got his wish when retired correction officer Eugene Smith talked to Horseheads students about being a hostage during the five-day riot, which started on Sept. 9, 1971.

Eleven officers and 32 inmates were killed. Smith, 62, said he and some of the other officers locked themselves in an office when the riot started, but the prisoners eventually broke down the door. The officers were forced to strip, and Smith said that when he didn't undress quickly enough, a prisoner beat him with his own nightstick. "I don't know how many times I was hit, but finally, another prisoner said, "That's enough,"" Smith said. Smith said he was luckier than other officers, such as William Quinn, who was severely beaten on the first day of the riot and died several days later.

During the ordeal, a group of Muslim prisoners watched over Smith and other officers, protecting them from other prisoners. Smith and the other hostages were blindfolded at times. Smith remembers that while he was blindfolded, he heard hammering and the loud clanging of metal. "I'm not a real religious person, but I thought they were making crosses so they could crucify us," Smith said. "Then when they took the blindfolds off, I could see what they were building. They had built tents for shelter because they planned to stay for a while." Smith recalled when officers retook the prison. "When the shooting started, one of the things I had on my side was that -- and I don't mean to sound racist -- at that time, we had no black officers," Smith said. "Anybody with a black face was the bad guy. So a white guy had a better chance of not getting shot. That was a big help for me.

"Corina Forsythe, a 17-year-old senior, asked Smith whether his experience at Attica had made him dislike black people. "No. Never," Smith said, recalling that a 6-foot-8-inch black inmate had the opportunity to harm him but chose not to. "He was carrying around a pipe," Smith said. "I asked him what

the pipe was for and he said, 'Don't worry, Mr. Smith, I'm not planning on using it on you.'"In most cases, we got along just fine with the black inmates."Smith said he still thinks about the riot every day.

He and his wife raised three daughters in Attica and still live there. Smith transferred to Wyoming Correctional Facility in Attica in 1985 and retired four years ago.He said he is a member of a group called Forgotten Victims of Attica that plans a press conference Jan. 25 in Albany to advocate a plan for helping victims such as himself. The group wants an apology from the state; opening of the state's sealed records on Attica; counseling for family members of correction officers still suffering emotionally; a monument and annual ceremony at Attica; and financial compensation

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Correctional Services slated for \$50M les

Albany -- A projected reduction in New York's prison population for the first time in more than 20 years led Gov. George Pataki to propose slashing the state Department of Correctional Services' 2001-02 budget by \$50 million.

By April 2002, officials say, the state will be housing 6,600 fewer people in its prisons. Some even called that estimate conservative as it does not take into consideration the effect of reforming the Rockefeller drug laws, for which Pataki will unveil his plans today.

The \$83.6 billion budget released by the governor Tuesday includes \$2.29 billion for Correctional Services. Pataki proposed putting \$1.8 billion in the department's general fund, which is used to pay day-to-day operations of prisons, compared with just under \$1.86 billion last year.

The governor also wants to spend \$1 million to create a State Police Special Weapons Interdiction Field Team (SWIFT) that would help staunch the influx of illegal guns into New York, and \$4 million for a ballistic identification databank police could use to locate shooters by checking spent shell casings from crime scenes.

State Criminal Justice Director Katherine Lapp called the governor's budget "good news." She said there will be no layoffs or mandated transfers of correction officers as the state downsizes its prison system because staff reductions will be made be through attrition.

The \$50 million savings from the Correctional Services budget would return to the state's general fund. Chairman of the Assembly Corrections Committee Jeffrion Aubry, D-Corona, said the money would be better spent on inmate health care and education.

"There ought to be a recommitment to make sure that those who are incarcerated ... will come out better able to sustain a law-abiding lifestyle," Aubry said.

Senate Crime and Corrections Committee Chairman Dale Volker, R-Depew, said he doesn't expect big fights over criminal justice issues as the Legislature tries to agree on a spending plan.

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NY Prisons Are Emptier As Crime Drops

ALBANY

New York's prison population is dropping - from 72,000 inmates last spring, the highest number ever, to 70,000 now.

The Pataki administration expects the trend to continue.

The governor's proposed state budget includes a \$57 million reduction in prison spending, cutting the prison workforce by 600 correction officers.

The opening up of prison beds stems from a steady drop in the state's crime rate.

According to the state Division of Criminal Justice Services, the crime decline in New York has outpaced a similar national trend, with the state seeing a 35% decline since 1994, while the country as a whole experienced a crime-rate reduction of 19.7% in that period.

Gov. Pataki's proposal yesterday to eliminate harsh sentences for drug offenders could reduce the prison population further.

About 21,000 inmates - 30% of the state prison population - are locked up for drug convictions, though only 600 of them were convicted of the highest-level drug felonies. Those offenders would continue to draw stiff sentences.