

July 12, 2013

Weekly Views

Local playwright Andrew Black presented his new play, "Puppet Man," at the Indianapolis Re-entry Educational Facility (IREF). The play is based on real-life events that took place in an Ohio prison where a group of inmates worked with a New York University professor and the puppet theater she started in a prison. Seven IREF residents participated in the developmental reading "Puppet Man" in different capacities. The "Puppet Man" reading was the premier for the IREF Center for the Performing Arts, which was started by residents with the goal of performing and bringing other forms of theater arts and entertainment artists to the facility. (see photo below)

Congratulations to Westville Correctional Facility's Therapeutic

Community (TC) Creative Writing class, an elective in the TC. The offender/students have completed their children's story and coloring book; "Lost Paws, A Puppy's Tale". The children's book will be available in the facility's Children's Library; and copies are being sent to the Life Center in Michigan City, for their young guests. The book includes fill in the blanks, where children can name their own puppy.



Students enrolled in Martin University at the Indiana Women's prison had the privilege to learn about Indiana House Bill 1006. Larry Landis, Executive Director at Indiana Public Defender Council taught a two hour class about the process of rewriting Indiana's Criminal Code which had not been revised and reviewed since the 1980's. At the end of class the students had the opportunity to ask questions related to the bill and a research project about the History of Indiana Women's Prison. Mr. Landis encouraged the students to write articles for the newsmagazine that will explain the changes in the code and possible unintended consequences of the sentencing changes that the legislature made. The legislature delayed enactment of the new law until 2014 to enable the legislature to consider the impact that the bill may have.

Agents and supervisors from the Indianapolis Parole District#3 Office rode over 300 miles on a 3.5 mile loop surrounding the campus of Butler University for "24 Hours of Booty", a bicycle ride to fight cancer sponsored by the Livestrong Foundation in its tenth year. A portion of the funds raised by each rider from its sponsors will directly benefit the Indiana University Simon Cancer Center. Each rider in the event raised individual funds towards their participation in the event and assisted with corporate and individual donors as well, in meeting the team goal that exceeded \$2,500. (see team photo left)



Miami Correctional Facility received visits from two writers from the AMC television show "The Killing". The writers came in to interview staff and tour the facility to get incite and do research on how a prison operates and about individuals who work there. They are preparing for a new series called "Prisontown" which centers on a prison warden and his connections in the prison and outside in the community near the prison. Laurence Fishburne has shown interest in playing the warden.

Father Bob Nemergut has retired from the Wabash Valley Correctional Facility after over 16 years of service. "Father Bob" provided spiritual guidance to offenders in segregation, the facility's mental health unit and minimum-security. Prior to becoming a facility chaplain he was a religious services volunteer, something Father Bob plans to revisit soon. Superintendent Richard Brown presented the longtime chaplain with a commemorative plaque and custom quilt from the PLUS Unit in appreciation for his service to population and staff. Father Bob said he has been asked to serve as chaplain for an upcoming excursion to Jerusalem and he plans to fine tune his hobby, playing in competitive ping pong tournaments. (see photo of Father Bob right with his PLUS quilt)



Fox 59 reporter Ann Keil visited the Pendleton Correctional Facility to interview Correctional Police Officer and Internal Affairs Supervisor Tom Francum in connection with a story she is preparing relative to the issue of cell phones in prisons. During her visit, Ms. Keil was also provided the opportunity to observe a demonstration of a cell phone detection canine searching a cell. The air date for the story has not yet been determined.

The Correctional Industrial Facility (CIF) PLUS garden reaped its first harvest with ten pounds of went to the Read and Feed program in Pendleton, IN which is a combination of bookmobile and food pantry. This year looks to be a great year for gardens and the CIF garden is off to a great start with the help gardeners, Ann Bull and Kay Marcson who are working with the PLUS offenders. Ms. Bull stated, with how the offenders have taken ownership of the garden and the hard work they are putting into it".

Offenders from the Jewish Community purchased a Red Dogwood tree in honor and memory of Mr. Saul Berkowitz, a volunteer of 35 years at the Indiana State Prison. Three generations of Mr. Berkowitz's family were in attendance as Chaplain Terry Harman read the memorial and planted the tree on the grounds of the Indiana State Prison. (see photo left)



The Indiana Women's Prison had the honor of presenting the 2013 Indiana Canine Assistance Network graduation. The graduation was held after a two week long training for the dogs new placements. The new owners and "handlers" for the dogs spend two weeks in the facility learning to communicate their needs to the dogs and getting appropriate response. Each dog is paired with their new owners months before the team training so the dogs may be trained for specific needs of their owners. This graduation celebrated ICAN's 100th placement. Festus, a Red Fox Labrador Retriever was placed with a combat injured veteran. Also during the ceremony eight handlers were honored for their accomplishment of completed the U.S Department of Labor apprenticeship program of dog training.

Rockville Correctional Facility (RCF) CLIFF Participant, Melissa Stinson recently had a poem published in Yard Out, a publication of Prisoners for Christ Outreach Ministry. The information in this literature is submitted by and distributed to incarcerated individuals throughout the United States. Ms. Stinson's experience in the CLIFF Unit at RCF brought her to an understanding of her situation through her children's eyes; which is the premise of her poem.



Offenders at the Pendleton Correctional Facility were treated to a special meal in recognition of the July 4th holiday. The meal included a hot dog, grilled barbecue chicken, ice cream, and a can of pop provided by PCF Offender American Legion Post #608. (see photo left)

Parole Agents from the Indianapolis Parole District#3 Office participated in a comprehensive community policing effort with the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department-East District (IMPD), in response to the spike in criminal activity and multiple homicides recently in this area. Parole agents made positive contacts with many residing in the area of concentration and one paroled-offender was arrested for felony firearms violation and ammunition in his possession, while in other cases credible intelligence was realized concerning recent criminal activity to benefit our law enforcement partners.

Wabash Valley staffers responded in a big way to launch the 2013 IDOC Blood Drive Challenge! Sergeant Ron Powers and Stores Clerk Joan Jackman (pictured right) joined 57 other silent heroes in donating blood. The Indiana Blood Center noted this is the critical need time of year for donations. Each pint of blood donated can help up to three people! 25% of all blood products go to help people suffering from cancer or leukemia, or those who need bone marrow transplants. WVCF has been the large facility winner two years running but the real winners are the men, women and children who benefited from the gift of life!



Miami Correctional Facility held its IDOC Challenge Blood Drive, donating about 36 pints of blood to the American Red Cross. There was a steady stream of staff donating from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (see photo left)

A Blood Drive was conducted by the Indiana Blood Center at the Pendleton Correctional Facility. The event resulted in the collection of 18 units of blood and donors received a \$5.00 Wal-Mart gift card for their participation.

Correctional Industrial Facility (CIF) Superintendent Wendy Knight reports that thanks to the participation of staff, 37 units of blood were collected during the Red Cross visit to the facility on July 9 and 10. Superintendent Knight said, "The facility looks forward to this event each year and the yearly competition between facilities is a lot of fun." The

facility would like to thank all the employees who donated, covered posts so that others could participate and those that tried but could not donate.

A graduation ceremony was conducted at the Chain O' Lakes Correctional Facility to recognize offenders who received their GED. The graduation also included offenders who completed the U.S. Department of Labor Housekeeping program. Family members of the graduates were invited to attend the ceremony. Superintendent Kathy Griffin expressed her appreciation to all those who worked so hard to make the programs a success, the family members who supported the graduates and to the graduates for their determination to succeed. (see photo right)

The Putnamville Correctional Facility hosted its first Oakland City University (OCU) education graduation. OCU site manager, Barbara Auman, and staff organized the ceremony in recognition of 130 offenders' successful completion of academic and vocational programs.



Miami Correctional Facility hosted two Straight Talk programs this week with about 35 students and adults. The first group came in from West Lafayette and the second group came in from Four County Counseling Center. The groups met with three offenders who tell them about the negatives of prison life and the importance of education and parental respect. The program has been in existence for 10 years.

The Pendleton Correctional Facility would like to welcome Internal Affairs Officer Bravlio Eloiza (pictured left) to the facility. Mr. Eloiza began his employment at Pendleton on Monday, July 8 as a transfer from the Pendleton Juvenile Correctional Facility. Mr. Eloiza will be a valuable addition to the PCF Internal Affairs Staff and we wish him well as he begins this new phase of his career.