Bidding Farewell and Saying Hello
Personnel Changes Abound at the DOC

When Roberta Richman, who spent 33 years making the RIDOC a better place, retired at the end of June, the Department lost a significant piece of its history. Many know Roberta for her tireless work championing the needs of inmates, particularly females, and paving the way for them to have a more successful return to their home communities upon leaving prison. What few know, however, is what it was like for Roberta when she first came on board in 1979 and as she climbed through the ranks, often unintentionally, going from creative arts instructor to Assistant Director with approximately 225 employees reporting to her.

Originally from New York City, one of the strongest influences in Roberta's life was her maternal grandmother, whose framed portrait holds a place of honor in her home. Active in politics, her grandmother helped create a junior high school back in the mid 1930s when women weren’t typically the movers and shakers they have become today.

Roberta came to Rhode Island in 1967 when her then husband got a job teaching at the University of Rhode Island. Both she and her spouse had Master's of Fine Arts degrees. Roberta taught at URI in the Continuing Education program for seven years and worked in her studio while also having babies. She stayed home with her children (two daughters) until they were in preschool and decided to take classes in art therapy, which she could do tuition-free due to her husband’s position. As part of a psychology class, she did an internship with an artist working at Bradley Hospital with whom she became fast friends. When the grant money supporting her position ran out, the friend saw a posting on the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) website for a Coordinator of Arts in Prison. She got the job, and the two stayed in touch. Six months later, she called Roberta to say she had fallen in love with her supervisor and would be moving with him to Colorado, and asking Roberta if she wanted the job. At the time, she was working part-time at the Groden Center, planning on moving to full-time in the fall. The call changed the course of her life, and the rest, as they say, is history.

From the earliest days of her work with the RIDOC, Roberta felt comfortable and found the prison environment nonthreatening. It wasn’t, however, a place she’d ever envisioned herself making a career. “I never gave a moment’s thought to a career in corrections,” she reflects. The lesson she’s learned is “Don’t say no to something just because it’s foreign. Try it.” Roberta did just that starting in 1979 as Coordinator of Arts in Corrections. When federal funds for that position ran out in the ’80s, she was asked to stay on as Coordinator of Recreation, to include her beloved art. During this time, among

- continued on page 3 -

Twenty-nine Year Veteran
Aaron Aldrich Retires

With the original team of Inspectors, from left: Steve Boyd, Kim Mallett, and Bob Catlow

“I’ve grown up here; I know every inch of this complex,” said the RIDOC’s Chief Inspector and 29-year veteran staffer Aaron Aldrich, before leaving at the end of April to take on a new position as Director of Investigations at the Donald W. Wyatt Detention Facility in Central Falls, a post he left after a week citing philosophical differences with leadership. Aldrich was recognized by ACI colleagues and friends during a reception in his honor on Tuesday, April 17th, at the RIDOC.

- continued on page 7 -

In This Issue:

- Leadership Changes
- National C.O. Week
- Who’s Where: A Roadmap
- Class 79 Graduates
- Habitat Home Dedicated
- NEADS News
and much more...
A Roberta Richman Photo Gallery

Earliest Staff I.D. Badge

Roberta’s awards over the course of her 33-year career fill a drawer in her office.

Chatting with Director Wall at the November 2011 RIDOC sponsored Reentry Summit.

With former Assistant Director for Administration Ellen Evans Alexander and Director Wall at an annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony

With Director Wall and Kenny Alston, Chief Legal Counsel to Governor Chafee, at the National Prisoner Reentry Summit held in Washington, D.C., in December of 2011

With Ellen Evans Alexander, Director Wall, and Ellen’s sister, Joanne Evans, at an annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony

With Director Wall and Ellen Evans Alexander at the National Prisoner Reentry Summit held in Washington, D.C., in December of 2011

Chatting with Peter Wells, Publisher of the Providence American, as Director Wall chats with URI’s Dave Lavallee at a semiannual Media Day

Speaking to female offenders during National Women’s Health Week 2012

With the Director and members of the Probation & Parole Unit

Presenting an award to Probation & Parole Supervisor Chris Imbriglio

With Superior Court Judge Kristin Rodgers
other things, she organized baseball teams. Through her work, she got to know many of the inmates. She found that if she treated them respectfully, they would treat her the same way. After about a year, the Director of Educational Services left, and Roberta was asked to assume that role. “I had no credentials,” she admits. “I learned on the job.” When in about 1985 the head of Correctional Industries left, Roberta was asked to step into that role, for a brief time continuing to oversee Education simultaneously. Yet another shift came when then Corrections Director George Vose asked her to become Warden of the Women’s Facilities. “There was a lot of resentment because I had no training,” she shares. Noting that she had a steep learning curve, Roberta again dove in and began what she considers the hardest ten years of her career. “I learned a lot about them and myself,” she says of the inmates. “I felt strongly about how they were being treated.”

There were many tears shed during those years, but all in private, according to Richman. “The despair and sadness of the women I was seeing in that setting was overwhelming.” Noting that some were as young as her daughters, and most were born into cycles of poverty, violence and abuse, Roberta says that but for the right circumstances, they would have been just like you and me. It was painful to see such wasted lives, she notes. “I was often close to saying ‘I can’t stand the pain anymore,’ and my intent was never to let that pain show.”

Roberta saw it as her goal to bring the community inside the prison and set out to provide programs to help the women begin to understand how they got there and to see a light at the end of the tunnel. At the same time, she worked with staff who had little or no understanding of need to be trained and held accountable,” she says of custody staff. The rampant misconduct and abuse she witnessed when she began had stopped by the end of her tenure. “I have been witness to a transformation in the staff, which is a source of great satisfaction. My role was small, but I was a part of it,” she notes. Training was developed for C.O.s on managing female offenders. "They was a lot of resentment because I had no training," she shares. Noting that she had a steep learning curve, Roberta again dove in and began what she considers the hardest ten years of her career. “I learned a lot about them and myself,” she says of the inmates. “I felt strongly about how they were being treated.”

There were many tears shed during those years, but all in private, according to Richman. “The despair and sadness of the women I was seeing in that setting was overwhelming.” Noting that some were as young as her daughters, and most were born into cycles of poverty, violence and abuse, Roberta says that but for the right circumstances, they would have been just like you and me. It was painful to see such wasted lives, she notes. “I was often close to saying ‘I can’t stand the pain anymore,’ and my intent was never to let that pain show.”

Roberta saw it as her goal to bring the community inside the prison and set out to provide programs to help the women begin to understand how they got there and to see a light at the end of the tunnel. At the same time, she worked with staff who had little or no understanding of need to be trained and held accountable,” she says of custody staff. The rampant misconduct and abuse she witnessed when she began had stopped by the end of her tenure. “I have been witness to a transformation in the staff, which is a source of great satisfaction. My role was small, but I was a part of it,” she notes. Training was developed for C.O.s on managing female offenders. A whole gender specific curriculum was introduced under her watch.

By the end of the ’90s, Roberta felt she had done what she could to change the culture at Women’s. She had established programs in addiction, mental illness, and abuse. Still a practicing artist with a busy studio in her hometown of Peace Dale, she was thinking of moving on. In 2000, Ashbel T. Wall was appointed Director and invited her to interview for her final position with the Department as Assistant Director of Rehabilitative Services. She was moving into her twelfth year in that job at the time of her retirement.

Among the many programs Richman is most proud of is a residential therapeutic community for women with addiction issues launched in 1994. Roberta was instrumental in launching Women in Transition, a residential program for women at the end of their sentence. The state-funded program lasted four years and enabled women to live in a communal setting, get a job, take the bus, etc. “No community wanted the program in its neighborhood,” Roberta says regretfully. The first location was in Exeter at Phoenix House. Then it moved to the prison, where one floor was utilized as a residential setting, painted brightly, and included day rooms with TVs. The Department contracted with an agency which brought in its own staff. Domestic violence classes were also provided. Though very successful, resulting in a reduced recidivism rate, the program ultimately ended due to lack of funding and support.

In the ’90s when the Prison Rape Elimination Act was passed, the Department was able to establish policies in line with the Federal statute that allowed it to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct, which was most common between female offenders and male officers. “That was huge,” Roberta notes. Many of the allegations proved to be true. “I was in a position to protect these women,” Roberta winces. “I saw people abusing others. That’s infuriating.” Women began to share that they felt
**Administration**

Bree Derrick, Principal Planner, spoke to students at Salve Regina University in October of 2011 on *Lifting the Veil on Incarceration: the Impact of Imprisonment and the Opportunity to Heal.* In March of 2012, she spoke to Prof. Leo Carroll's Criminal Justice class at the University of Rhode Island about women offenders.

Gina Caruolo, Chief of Policy and Program Development, taught *Women and the Criminal Justice System* at Roger Williams University and *Social Deviance* at Johnson & Wales University during the Fall 2011 semester.

Paul Gutowski, Human Resources Analyst III, and Marc Moreau, Supervisor of Training, spoke about *Managing the Multigenerational Workplace* in January of 2012 at the International Personnel Management Association’s Rhode Island Chapter (IPMA-RI) meeting at Rhode Island College. The two were among those RIDOC employees trained in this program by the National Institute of Corrections. Paul also spoke to students in Gina Caruolo’s *Ethics and Criminal Justice System* seminar about the RIDOC’s Code of Ethics and Conduct in February.

Caitlin O’Connor, Principal Research Technician, spoke about mapping and corrections to students at Stonehill College in March of 2012.

John Laverty, Training Instructor, spoke to students at Coventry High School about the career path of a Correctional Officer and what life is like for prisoners in December of last year.

**Director’s Office**

Aaron Aldrich, Chief Inspector (since retired), gave an overview of the role of the Department’s investigative units to the Burrillville Police Department’s Citizens’ Police Academy in February.

Director A.T. Wall participated in a regional conference on prison overcrowding in Mexico City in June of 2011 and spent time with colleagues from Latin America courtesy of the U.S. State Department.

**Institutions & Operations**

Michele Auger, Deputy Warden, spoke about corrections at Johnson & Wales University in October of 2011.

Steve Cabral, Investigator, spoke about gangs and prison life to students in a law class at Tiverton High School in January of 2012.

Carole Dwyer, Warden of the Women’s Facilities (currently on loan to the DMV but due to return soon) participated in a discussion on incarcerated women and health issues they face at Brown University in November of 2011. The event was sponsored by the Center for Prisoner Health and Human Rights.

Lou Cerbo became Clinical Director/Psychologist with the RIDOC in November of last year. He was most recently Administrator of Adult Psychiatric Services/Director of Psychological Services of BHDDH’s Eleanor Slater Hospital.

Lois Hayes, who has 31 years of state service, joined the RIDOC in April as Human Resources Administrator of the Public Safety Human Resource Service Center. She replaces Paul Mancini, who left for a position at Brown University.

Governor Lincoln Chafee was among the honored guests at the March 6th rededication of the Gloria DiSandro McDonald Women’s Attending Trial and Medium Security Facility. Several other dignitaries were in attendance including Gloria McDonald’s nephew, Magistrate Domenic DiSandro III.

**Rehabilitative Services**

Al Alba, Academic Teacher, spoke about *The Benefits of Educational Software in a Correctional Curriculum* at the Rhode Island Adult Educators’ Conference at RIC on May 24. He spoke on the same topic at the Correctional Educators’ Association meeting in Cape May, NJ., on May 31.

Donna Broccoli, Administrative Officer in Probation and Parole, and Lisa Blanchette-Chamorro, Probation and Parole Officer, represented the Department at a Government Career Fair at Johnson & Wales University in November of 2011.

Gordon Bouchard, Director of General Nursing Services, was interviewed in April 2012 about issues in correctional nursing by Lorry Shoenly, Ph.D. R.N., for the website http://correctionalnurse.net.

Loretta Cimini, Librarian, spoke about *Public Library Outreach to Recently Released Offenders* in June of 2012 at the Rhode Island Library Association Conference at Bryant University.

Richard DelFino, Probation and Parole Administrator, taught *Corrections in the U.S.* at Roger Williams University, during the Fall 2011 semester.

Jean Embrey, Probation and Parole Supervisor, taught *Sentencing Probation and Parole* at New England Institute of Technology during the Fall 2011 semester. She invited Lynne Corry, Probation and Parole Supervisor and Christine Chase, Probation and Parole Officer, to be guest speakers in October. Embrey also led a training at the Cranston Public Library on prisoner reentry for CODAC in October of 2011.

Teresa Foley, Professional Services Coordinator/Transitional Services and Ralph Orleck, Special Education Director/Principal, provided Network RI staff with an overview of education and training programs and reentry services within the RIDOC in October of 2011.

Christine Imbriglio, Probation and Parole Supervisor, spoke about challenges faced by those involved in the criminal justice system who are homeless and in recovery as part of the Homelessness and Recovery Institute’s program at RIC in December of 2011. She spoke about domestic violence supervision and offenders to Prof. Warren Hurlbut’s class at Salve Regina University in April 2012. Also in April, she spoke about Rhode Island’s statewide sex offender management program at the Executives of Probation and Parole meeting in Aurora, Colo. She led a May 2012 training on Probation and Parole for the West Warwick Police Department.

Ralph Orleck, Special Education Director/Principal did a presentation for the Pawtucket Reentry Council on educational and vocational program offerings for the inmate population in February of 2012.

Robert Richman, Assistant Director of Rehabilitative Services spoke at the Recovery Rally Kickoff event at the Anchor Recovery Center last fall. She was also a guest speaker at the Samaritans’ annual dinner in September of 2011.
A warm welcome to the following people who were hired between September 30, 2011, and March 31, 2012:

- Caitlin Bouchard, Clinical Social Worker
- Nicole Farias, Senior Reconciliation Clerk
- Pamela Lacerda, Clinical Social Worker
- Kelly Levesque, Adult Counselor
- Simon Melnick, Physician II (General)
- Laura Nevadonski, Senior Word Processing Typist
- Kimberly Selyman, Physician Extender
- Marianne Warren, Physician Extender
- Fred Vohr, Medical Program Director

Congratulations to the following persons who received promotions between September 30, 2011, and March 31, 2012:

- Lynda Aul, Correctional Investigator I
- Alisa Berrio, Probation and Parole Officer I
- Brenda Brodeur, Assistant Director, Financial and Contract Management
- Jeannine Brown, Correctional Officer
- Louis Cerrito, Clinical Director Psychologist
- Iris Cianci-Gilbert, Probation and Parole Officer I
- Danilo Claros, Correctional Officer Lieutenant
- Christopher Desautel, Building Maintenance Supervisor
- Eric DiNitto, Data Control Clerk
- John Flynn, Electrician Supervisor
- Alcides Franco, Motor Equipment Operator
- Karen Lupo, Probation and Parole Supervisor
- Thomas Mariani, Building Maintenance Supervisor
- Adrienne McGowan, Probation and Parole Supervisor
- Joakima Means, Probation and Parole Officer I
- Jessica Medeiros, Probation and Parole Aide
- Richard Meunier, Deputy Warden
- Dale Scurry, Probation and Parole Officer II
- Debra Woods, Correctional Officer Hospital II

Farewell and best wishes to the following people who voluntarily retired or resigned or transferred to another state agency between September 30, 2011, and March 31, 2012:

- Roland Belanger, Correctional Officer
- Noah Bourk, Correctional Officer
- Ronald Case, Correctional Officer
- Sean Collins, Probation and Parole Officer I
- Delores Donnelly, Probation and Parole Aide
- Jose Duarte, Correctional Officer
- Michael Fine, Medical Program Director
- Susan Fred, Adult Counselor
- Eugene Gwizidak, Correctional Officer
- John Halapa, Correctional Officer
- Susan Hart, Physician II
- Tara Igoe, Senior Word Processing Typist
- Kevin Jeffrey, Correctional Officer
- Andrew Kordec, Correctional Officer
- Erin Larmie, Correctional Officer
- Timothy LeFevre, Correctional Officer
- Micheline Lombardi, Probation and Parole Supervisor
- John Lopez, Inspector
- Robert McNichols, Correctional Officer
- Kathleen Mulcahy, Probation and Parole Officer II
- Jorge Navedo, Correctional Officer
- Domenic Pastore, Correctional Officer
- Robert Quinn, Probation and Parole Officer III
- Joseph Wojtanowski, Correctional Officer
- Mary Zayatt, Probation and Parole Officer II

Our condolences go out to the families of former Adult Counselor Edward Allison and Correctional Officer Patricia Baker, both of whom died in August, to the family of Stephen Stabile, Chief of Motor Pool & Maintenance, who died in October, and to the loved ones of retired word processing typist Beverly Koly and retired correctional officer A.J. Marcotte who died in June.

Richard Meunier, 2nd from right and Danilo Claros, far right, both received promotions last quarter. Meunier is now serving as Deputy Warden and Claros as C.O. Lieutenant. They are seen here with Deputy Warden Sergio DeSousarosa, Assistant Director David McCalley, Warden Stephen Boyd, and Director A.T. Wall.

Brenda Brodeur was recently promoted to Assistant Director, Financial and Contract Management.

Longtime Inspector John Lopez has retired.

Dr. Michael Fine left the RIDOC for the position of Director of the RI Department of Health.
doors are shut, they become desperate and they relapse. “We have to educate the community about a better way to do business,” she says. “Incarceration is a bad idea for almost everyone who hasn’t committed a serious crime.” Noting that there could be any number of wonderful programs now about teaching people to examine themselves and what they need to do to turn their lives around. When they don’t get a break. “Most, except for sociopaths, do want to change. In most cases, they get locked up and they learn. We have understood its responsibility.” When offenders leave prison, the community is still full of anger and fear. Ex-offenders aren’t welcome. They are part of the community. She sees a prison system today that is running about as smoothly as it can run. “Now the community has to wonder change in thinking around what women should expect in prison wasn’t an easy battle.”

“I’m a great believer in the arts as a way to manage a peaceful environment,” Roberta claims, highlighting the Brown University S.P.A.C.E. program which gave inmates the opportunity to express their emotions in an acceptable way. Roberta is also proud of programs that allowed inmates to deal with past trauma and of the increasingly strong presence of prison chaplains. The Women’s Mentoring Program lasted several years and provided women with a role model they could trust, often the first person in their life who genuinely cared about them. Roberta hired a coordinator who trained and recruited volunteers for what was to become “a quite wonderful program.” Unfortunately, the coordinator’s position was eliminated in budget cuts, but the mentoring program lives on through volunteer leadership, a great legacy to Roberta’s visionary leadership.

“I have been very fortunate in my life,” Roberta says. From a working class family, she describes herself as “loved” and as a first generation college attendee. “I see so many who don’t have those advantages,” she notes, “and I’m grateful to be in a place where I can give back.” “It’s been a gift being put in a position where I can do something that makes somebody else feel good and benefit.” For Roberta, there is no greater gift than having provided an inmate with an opportunity and then hearing that it has made a difference in their lives, that they’re grateful. The recipient of so many awards they barely fit into a huge drawer in her office, Roberta says there is “no greater award than receiving a woman’s letter saying that she has never forgotten something I said to her and that she is doing great.”

In recent years, Roberta’s work has focused largely on getting regional Reentry Councils off the ground in all of the major communities to which offenders return. Asked about her vision for the continuation of her work in the future, she speaks immediately of the community. She sees a prison system today that is running about as smoothly as it can run. “Now the community has to understand its responsibility.” When offenders leave prison, the community is still full of anger and fear. Ex-offenders aren’t welcome. They don’t get a break. “Most, except for sociopaths, do want to change. In most cases, they get locked up and they learn. We have wonderful programs now about teaching people to examine themselves and what they need to do to turn their lives around. When doors are shut, they become desperate and they relapse.” “We have to educate the community about a better way to do business,” she offers. “Incarceration is a bad idea for almost everyone who hasn’t committed a serious crime.” Noting that there could be any number of cheaper and better alternatives such as halfway houses and day reporting centers, things the state of Rhode Island doesn’t have at this point. Roberta sees continuing to build on the regional reentry council model as the “next step” in the work she is so passionate about.

Roberta had been thinking about retirement for about three years before she finally made the difficult decision to do it, noting that “no one lives forever. I leave the job reluctantly,” she shared in a conversation about a month before she left, “but what I don’t love is not being able to do the many other things I love to do. There are just so many more years I can garden, focus on my creative life, spend time with my grandchildren.” As to her position, Roberta adds, “I was never bored here, but I have reached a point where most of the problems I am facing I have faced before.”

Asked what she will miss the most, Roberta speaks of the “wonderful source of reinforcement” that comes with people asking for and listening to her opinion. “That doesn’t happen in the real world,” she shares. She also mentions “the people.” Over the years, her work has afforded her the opportunity to get to know many inmates fairly well. When she is in one of the prisons speaking to a group of inmates, there are always several who have known her over the decades and recall her fondly as someone who cared and made a difference. She never would have had the opportunity to get to know them or the hundreds of staff members she has come to know and respect in any other circumstance of life. Admitting she is not one likely to come back and visit, she states, “I will miss the constant stimulation. I have learned something new about human nature every day I have spent with this Department,” she adds. “This whole career has been a gift,” Roberta says. “It was nothing I sought. Each position has given me a chance to learn new things.” She notes that, “I couldn’t have gotten the same learning in an educational setting or by any other means.”
Director A.T. Wall issued a long email to all staff on April 6th announcing Aaron’s intentions to retire from state service. In it he wrote, “Aaron’s personnel file is replete with testimony to the ability, leadership and work ethic that are among the hallmarks of his approach to his job. He has received letters of appreciation and commendations for key roles played in virtually every type of event that can occur in a correctional environment: riots and disturbances, homicides, suicides, narcotics trafficking, escapes, high-profile releases, crimes, security breaches, and misconduct perpetrated by either inmates or, sadly, sometimes our own staff.” As to Aldrich’s personality traits, Director Wall wrote, “He is a pillar of integrity, rock-solid in his values and possessed of an unwavering ethical compass.”

At his retirement celebration, Director Wall noted publicly to Aldrich, “You go out with your reputation intact. Your only client was the truth.” Using adjectives like “fearless, dogged, and intense,” the Director spoke of the two sides of Aaron Aldrich. “You can strike terror in the hearts of those who will be dealing with you,” he noted, “but we all know the other side; your profound sense of decency, caring, and constantly showing the heart that lies behind the job.” “People whose jobs you have taken,” the Director went on, “shake your hand and thank you for your respect in dealing with them.”

In addition to the Director, also sharing remarks about Aaron during the reception was Major David P. Tikoian of the Rhode Island State Police, with whom Inspector Aldrich worked very closely throughout his long career in corrections. Representing RISP Superintendent Colonel Steven G. O’Donnell, a close friend and classmate of Aaron’s from the RIDOC’s Training Academy, Major Tikoian presented Aldrich with a Certificate of Appreciation from the organization, noting how helpful he has been to their agency over the years.

Aldrich joined the RIDOC in 1983 as a line Correctional Officer, working at the High Security Center until 1991. In that year, he was tapped to join the inaugural team of investigators when the Special Investigations Unit was created. Fifteen months later, he was promoted to the Chief of SIU. His success in that position led to his appointment as an Inspector in 1994. Two years after that, he became Chief Inspector, a title he held for over 15 years.

Aldrich, a native of Glocester and graduate of Ponaganset High School, and his wife, Ellie, live in North Scituate on a farm. He refers to his RIDOC position as “not a job, but a 24/7 way of life,” one that has “left my family short on many occasions.” In retirement, he is caring for his elderly father and tending to the animals and the farm.

On May 4th, Director Wall announced the promotion of former Chief Legal Counsel Patricia Coyne-Fague to Assistant Director of Administrative Services. Ms. Coyne-Fague had been serving in that role in an acting capacity since the departure of Ellen Evans Alexander, who left in February of this year.

Trish joined the RIDOC’s legal team as Senior Legal Counsel in January 2000 having served as Deputy Director of the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit at the Rhode Island Attorney General’s Office for three years. Prior to that, she was a Family Court Prosecutor/District Court Prosecutor for the RIAG’s Office for three years. She was promoted to Chief Legal Counsel at the RIDOC in 2004, a role she held until her most recent promotion.

In an e-mail to the Department’s employees, Director Wall wrote, “During her years with us, Trish has earned a reputation for being approachable, knowledgeable, capable and very effective in representing the interests of our agency and its staff.” He went on, “Her knowledge of our agency’s operations, her acquaintance with virtually every aspect of our work, and her understanding of the extensive interplay between administrative activities and legal issues render her well qualified for this promotion.”

Asked what she most likes about her work at the RIDOC, Trish speaks about her colleagues. “From the Officers, to the wardens, to the lawyers, to the medical, probation and other rehab staff, to administrators, and everyone in between, the level of knowledge, commitment and professionalism exhibited by the employees of this Department makes me proud and grateful to work here.”

Coyne-Fague received her law degree from New England School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts (cum laude) from Rhode Island College. She has taught as an adjunct professor at Rhode Island College and volunteers at LaSalle Academy and St. Philip’s Church/School in Greenville.
Each year during National C.O. Week, the Rhode Island Brotherhood of Correctional Officers holds a moving Memorial and Wreath Laying Ceremony outside of the main Administration Building on Howard Avenue to acknowledge all correctional employees around the country who have died in the line of duty the previous year. The RIBCO Honor Guard and Pipes & Drum Band participates, and this year’s invited guest speaker was Senate Candidate Brendan Doherty.

Susan Lamkins Promoted

Director Wall recently announced the promotion of Susan Lamkins of Fairhaven, Mass., to Programming Services Officer. She served as his Administrative Assistant/Confidential Secretary since the fall of 2008 and has been in her new role in an acting capacity since the retirement of Ann Fortin last June. Susan was selected following an extensive recruitment and selection process.

“Susan brings supervisory skills, a strong work ethic, and experience in designing and implementing systems that improve the effectiveness of operations,” noted Director Wall in his recent announcement to RIDOC employees about Susan’s promotion. He continued, “Susan also possesses the very important personal qualities needed to be the supervising staff member in the Director’s Office. She is level-headed, very well organized, and uses her strong interpersonal skills to deal with the great variety of people who interact with this office. There is no task that she is unwilling to assume with competence, enthusiasm and creativity.”
Elizabeth Earls Newest Assistant Director

After an extensive selection process, Director Wall has announced the appointment of Elizabeth Earls of South Kingstown as Assistant Director of Rehabilitative Services.

For over two decades, Earls has served as President and CEO of The Rhode Island Council of Community Mental Health Organizations, a nonprofit association with an annual budget of $700,000, representing eleven nonprofit community behavioral healthcare organizations. During her tenure there, she has, according to Director Wall, “gained enormous respect for her knowledge of the field, collaborative philosophy, integrity and skill in working through complicated and sensitive issues.” Director Wall goes on, “Liz possesses a sophisticated and comprehensive understanding of the ways in which mental illness and involvement with the criminal justice system intersect.”

From 1994-1997, she also served as CEO of Community Treatment Affiliates, Inc., where she was responsible for all aspects of management and development of the managed behavioral health care company, including contract implementation, business development, and network development.

Ms. Earls’ professional affiliations are too numerous to name but include serving as Board Chair of the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Council for Community Behavioral Health, and the Rhode Island Coalition on Mental Health. She is an appointee to the Governor’s Advisory Council on Health, the Governor’s Council on Behavioral Health, and the Governor’s Commission on Healthcare Reform. She is a founding member of the Rhode Island Children’s Policy Coalition, and the Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap Coalition. She is a past Board of Directors member of the Women’s Development Corporation and Women in Transition – a nonprofit dedicated to developing community correction alternatives for women. She is a member of the Rhode Island Housing, Mortgage and Financing Corporation’s Thresholds Advisory Board. For five years during the 1990s, she was a mentor with the RIDOC’s Women’s Mentoring Program.

Ms. Earls received her B.S. in Psychology from Georgetown University and her M.A. in Pastoral Ministry from Boston College’s Institute of Religious Studies. She was a member of Leadership Rhode Island’s 1993 class. She will join the Department in late July.

Carson Byers Brings His Ministry to Minimum Security

Just a few short years ago, RIDOC Institutional Chaplain the Rev. Carson Byers, originally from Dallas, Texas, was working for an international portrait company based in Houston. His position as a sales representative and trainer for the company’s Northeast region, headquartered in upstate N.Y., required that he travel throughout the east coast. In January 2010, he was directed to oversee a three-week sales promotion in Warwick, R.I. at a well-known national wholesale club. Although he had major reservations about leaving New York State, he followed through having no clue that the course of his life, as he knew it, was about to change forever.

When he arrived at the Warwick venue, Byers did something he had grown accustomed to doing at each location to which he traveled...he displayed a portrait of himself, taken by his company’s photographer. This move not only increased his overall sales but also caught the attention of the Rev. Dr. Janice Thompson, an Institutional Chaplain at the RIDOC’s John J. Moran Medium Security Facility, who spotted the portrait when the Rev. Byers was on a break. Intrigued by the photo, she approached and spoke to Rev. Byers before leaving the store and the rest, as they say, is history. The two arranged to meet for lunch and remained in contact. Although he was a committed employee, the Rev. Byers’ travels came to an end at the close of 2010 when he and Dr. Thompson were married in a unique ceremony attended by family and friends.

Since early in their relationship, Pastor Byers has assisted Dr. Thompson with the services she conducts at the Moran Facility. Shortly after they married, an opportunity arose enabling him to become a part of the RIDOC family as Institutional Chaplain in the men’s Minimum Security Facility. “Pastor B,” as he is affectionately known among the inmates as well as parishioners at his local church, gladly accepted the position. “I viewed this opportunity as divine providence” he reflects, further noting, “It represented my purpose coming to fruition.” Pastor Byers explains his calling this way - “It has been my longtime desire to reach out to men who are struggling and bring them into alignment with their higher power, so that they may fulfill their destiny and become the ‘men of purpose’ they are destined to be.”

In addition to holding interdenominational worship services at Minimum, Pastor Byers walks through the modules and yard interacting with prisoners on an informal basis. His responsibilities include initiating furloughs in the case of critical illness or death, counseling inmates and their - continued on page 14 -
Who’s Where: A Road Map of Facility Managers

The Anthony P. Travisono
Intake Service Center

Warden Matthew Kettle
Deputy Warden
Sergio DeSousarosa
Deputy Warden
Richard Meunier

Minimum Security

Warden Stephen Boyd
Deputy Warden
Nelson Lefebvre
Deputy Warden
Silma del Langley

John J. Moran Medium Security

Warden James Vierra
Deputy Warden
Robert Clancy
Acting Deputy Warden
Rui Diniz
Subscribe to the RIDOC Review or the biweekly RIDOC Happenings:
Any former employee or interested member of the public who would like to receive the newsletter RIDOC Review or the biweekly RIDOC Happenings electronically can submit email addresses to the editor at tracey.zeckhausen@doc.ri.gov.
Forty-four men and 12 women graduated from the RIDOC’s Correctional Officer Training Academy on Friday, April 20th, at 2 p.m. at Rhode Island College’s Gaige Hall.

Family and friends of the graduates and RIDOC staff attended the ceremony where U.S. Attorney Peter F. Neronha was the invited keynote speaker. Corrections Director A.T. Wall also spoke, commending the graduates for making it to this point, noting that almost 4,000 applied to be members of Class 79 during the recruitment period.

During the arduous nine-week schedule, participants underwent physical fitness and weapons training and on-the-job training and had classroom instruction in defensive tactics, communication skills, and the law as it relates to correctional officers. The Sunday following graduation, the new class of Correctional Officers began by shadowing more senior officers for a two-week period, after which they were assigned to posts in one of the prisons.
The RIDOC Again Participates in Habitat for Humanity

Last fall, Habitat for Humanity of Rhode Island – Greater Providence, Inc. and the Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC) teamed up once again for the Habitat Prison Partnership, a program that gives select Minimum Security inmates the opportunity to learn valuable skills and give something back to the community by helping to build a house with a deserving family as part of a volunteer construction crew.

The team of inmates varied slightly from week to week but included up to ten female inmates at a time who worked on site at the future home of the Ruth Cedeño family located at 20 Newcomb Street in Providence. The women were assigned to the project by C.O. Grace Ellis and accompanied and supervised by a C.O. from the Women’s facilities under the supervision of Lt. Joseph Avila and Lt. Mark Moore. Since July, they were transported to the site on Fridays and Saturdays and worked there from approximately 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Site supervisor, Andre Castonguay of Halexi Construction, says the inmate crew was a blessing because unlike the volunteer crews he would normally have on a Saturday, it’s a regular crew he can count on being there twice a week on a dependable schedule. “They have great attitudes,” he says. Castonguay was site supervisor on the Women Build project the RIDOC women inmates participated in four years ago and, according to Herman deKoe, Executive Director of Habitat Providence, he has a great rapport with the women. “It was a good fit, then,” says deKoe, “so I decided to place the women with Andre again.” deKoe is also grateful for the consistency of the crew, saying “It helps tremendously to have the same crew coming back weekly.

Ruth Cedeño and her family, which includes four daughters ranging in age from three to 14, in a June 23rd dedication ceremony attended by Providence Mayor Angel Tavares, Senator Jack Reed, and Director Wall, among others. As is customary with Habitat houses, the Cedeños participated in the build. They were on site every Saturday and Ruth says she was so grateful to the prisoners for their hard work she occasionally made them homemade food for lunch.

Donna Collins, Acting Warden of the women’s facilities, was equally enthusiastic about the project. “It provides the women with hope and makes them feel they are making a difference,” Collins notes. “Not only did the project provide them with important skills that could help them find work in a growing field for women upon release, it’s also helped them forge positive relationships, something that’s been lacking in many of their lives.”

The house is one of eight new and three rehabs deKoe expects to be started by Habitat Providence this year and finished next year. The organization currently has six houses under construction in Providence and plans two more. “We have expanded our capacity over the last few years,” deKoe says proudly. “This year (2011) eleven house starts, next year 12, then 13…. and so on.”
families, visiting those who are hospitalized and praying with them. He participates in new inmate orientation, where he introduces the various ministries available to the prisoners and encourages them to take advantage of every opportunity to grow mentally and spiritually. Through these various interactions, he learns that he genuinely cares about them and their individual needs. “This causes them, more often than not, to open up and let me into their space” he reflects.

Pastor Byers is enthusiastic about his new role, noting, “My position calls upon me to be chaplain to both inmates and staff alike. I have heard that I am the first chaplain to interact with the inmates in the manner that I do. I count it a privilege, and I love my ministry at the ACI.”

The Rev. Byers recalls a time-honored saying, “Find a job that you love, and you’ll never work a day in your life.” “This is that job, for me,” he notes. Citing another favorite quote, he explains what to him is unacceptable - “If you see a problem and do nothing to change the problem, you become as much of the problem as the problem itself.”

Pastor Byers has been engaged in some form of ministry for 36 years. His first public speaking engagement came at the age of three when he recited the Ten Commandments before a convention audience, standing on a table without missing or mispronouncing one word. He received his first pastoral appointment at 21. “I guess you can say this is my life,” Byers states of his pastoral work.

Outside the walls, the Rev. Byers shares a ministry with his wife, Janice, known as the Kingdom Seekers Fellowship. They work together as co-pastors, ministering to many ex-offenders who come to them seeking guidance as they face the sometimes overwhelming task of re-assimilating into society. He concludes, “Our shared goal is to make a difference in our community through the lives we touch!”

---

**NEADS News**

On Thursday, April 26th, Erin Garceau of Charlton, Mass., and service dog *Freedom*, Pat Sheely of Pittsfield, Mass., and service dog *Shadow*, and other staff from the NEADS campus in Princeton, Mass., traveled to the John J. Moran Medium Security Facility where *Shadow* and *Freedom* received their training. Living 24/7 with inmate handlers, *Freedom* and *Shadow* each spent close to a year in Moran, living, playing, and working among the prisoners, leaving only to spend time with Weekend Puppy Raisers to gain the socialization the prison setting doesn’t allow. Both clients use wheelchairs.

The inmate handlers were excited to see the dogs who were such a big part of their lives for a year, and the dogs seemed just as pleased to see them. Pat and Erin had a chance to express their gratitude, and the handlers demonstrated for the audience some of the special tricks they'd taught their pups, including praying, telling a secret, and playing dead.

The NEADS Dogs for Deaf and Disabled Americans Prison Pup Partnership Program provides life-changing results for the inmates who train the pups and the disabled clients who eventually receive them. It is overseen by Deputy Warden Bob Clancy and Officer Joe Souza. So grateful are the recipients, many choose to visit the prison to meet and thank the inmates and staff who were responsible for the bulk of the training of their service dog. Client visits are emotional for the inmates, who get to see in a concrete way the fruits of their efforts; for the clients who are so appreciative of the inmates’ dedication to training their dog, and for the dogs, who feel like they have “come home again” when they return to prison and are reunited with their inmate handlers.

Nothing drives the success of the NEADS Program home more powerfully than the client visits, which normally take place each quarter. After a tiring but rewarding morning, the clients and their dogs often go to lunch at an area restaurant, since bringing the dogs to restaurants is a part of the “exam” the clients much pass in order for them and their dog to “graduate.” It is often something they have done before with volunteer weekend handlers who train the dogs on weekends and work on socialization skills that can’t be addressed in the prison setting.

*Freedom’s inmate handler has her demonstrate how she “sits pretty.”*
as well. The Bible is used as a reference to help improve lives, and that Christian focus is made clear to the men up front and is critical to their participation in the program.

In addition to the residential program, the Mission now also offers a program behind the walls called Learning to Live. The twelve-week course covers anger management, loss and grief, and parenting among other topics. A cadre of volunteers leads the program in each facility at the ACI.

This group, the Providence Reentry Council, meets monthly at the District 2 Adult Probation and Parole Offices on Prairie Ave. They focus on offenders who will be coming home to that neighborhood and how their collective knowledge can be woven together to help ensure success for those returning offenders. The council is one of the few with a paid part-time coordinator, NeSmith, who also serves halftime as a Discharge Planner with the Providence Center.

Left: A weeping cherry, purchased and nurtured by Dr. Fred Vohr, has been planted in Roberta’s name outside of the women’s facilities. Here she holds a copy of the plaque positioned near the tree and poses with Director Wall. Above - among the crowd at the tree planting ceremony were women from the Bernadette Facility. Roberta’s career touched lives across all spectrums of the RIDOC population.

The RIDOC Review is published periodically by the Office of the Director. Suggestions for future topics and feedback may be sent to: Tracey E. Zeckhausen, Chief of Information & P.R., Editor, Designer, and Photographer, 401-462-2609; tracey.zeckhausen@doc.ri.gov.

Far Left: JoAnne Ash was one of two former prisoners who spoke about the difference Roberta made in their lives through her position as Warden of the Women’s Facilities, a role she filled for ten years. Both credit their success in life to Roberta’s encouragement and support when no one else believed in them, including themselves. Left: Roberta stands with her granddaughter. Among the many things she hopes to do during retirement is spend more time with her grandchildren.