

# The Condition of Probation

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## Happiness

By Janene Conner

When we think of wellness, I wonder how many of us think about the importance of happiness and how it plays a key role in our overall health. Some of us do believe in the connection between mind, body, and spirit, while others are less willing to include the "spirit" when assessing their overall health. Most people want to be happy but not everyone is aware that a happy person is often also a healthy person. Data shows that happiness, a positive mood, optimism and humor are all traits that are linked to better health, both in individuals and communities.



Consider the power of optimism as an example of this capacity for the "spirit" to impact the mind and body. According to the Huffington Post, optimism has been shown to be an important part of good health and wellness. Optimism has been shown to impact nearly every aspect of our lives

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## Chief's Corner

By Michael Daly

It is that time of year when all cities and counties pay close attention to the governor's May Revise. The Governor's office typically puts out a budget in January of each year to highlight his intentions for the upcoming budget year. From January until May, state legislators, government officials and others often lobby the Governor's office to either secure aspects of his budget or to modify them. Well, the May Revise came out on May 13<sup>th</sup> and much of what the Governor intended to allocate to the field of probation actually came through nicely. The advocacy of the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), led by Karen Pank,

helped ensure that our needs were taken care of in a fair manner.

From my standpoint as President of CPOC, it is exciting to be in on some of these internal conversations that sometimes turn into direct negotiations with the Governor's office. As much as I preach about how important relationships are critical to our probation officers and getting their job done, relationships are just as important in Sacramento. It is clear to me while sitting down talking to the Governor's "right hand woman", Diane Cummins, that CPOC has made many years' worth of inroads based primarily on solid relationships and trust.

The Governor's Office continues to hold probation departments across the state in high regard. Jerry Brown has personally visited numerous counties to inquire how probation departments are handling Realignment. He has left impressed and subsequently continues to fund probation departments in a fair manner consistent with our local obligations and responsibilities. This bodes well for our profession and for our ability to successfully assume a greater responsibility for criminal justice in California.

## Mission Statement

*The mission of the Marin County Probation Department is to reduce the impact of crime in the community by providing accurate and comprehensive information to the courts, by providing community based sanctions and treatment for offenders, and by working cooperatively with law enforcement agencies and community organizations with similar objectives.*

## Happiness (from pg. 1)...

from living longer, to doing well on a test, to enjoying success in our work. Likewise, pessimism has shown to contribute to feelings of depression, illness and withdrawal from the world. Without such sparks of inspiration or encouragement, we can tend to forget that life can be more than just the daily grind of work and responsibility. We can lose our optimism, our wide-eyed wonder at things that inspire us, lift our spirit or open our hearts. Once that happens, according to research on the subject, we are much more vulnerable to encountering health problems.

Once convinced that tending to the spirit can help to keep our mind and body healthy, the trick becomes how to achieve that happiness. According to all the literature I reviewed on the topic, there is a consensus on certain techniques that help achieve and maintain happiness. Here is a list of simple things to consider incorporating into your healthy routine to help balance your mind, body, and spirit.

- Exercise - Find an exercise you enjoy and start doing it regularly.
- Eat healthy foods

- Be grateful - Stop to think about the things you have going for you and appreciate them.
- Getting plenty of sleep is regenerative for your body. The more sleep you get the better you will perform the next day.
- Spend more time with loved ones. In our busy lives we need to make time for the people who matter to us most.
- Live your passion - Do more of what you love.
- Get outdoors more - Go for a hike and enjoy nature.
- Meditate

Happiness is linked to good health and one's happiness has other implications as how it relates to the work place, communities and society as a whole. Like so many of us, I am a proponent of work, life, balance as I believe this contributes to one's happiness. If everything that I have read is true, happy people overall, are likely to be more productive, inspired and inspiring,

creative and an asset to an organization. Eating fruits and vegetables, getting exercise regularly, staying away from unhealthy foods and habits; these are all easily recognized practices that are likely to lead to good health and a long life. One more strategy to add to your wellness plan is to keep a happy attitude !

“A human being, like a business, makes profits and suffers losses. For a human being, however, the ultimate currency is not money, nor is it any external measure, such as fame, fortune, or power. The ultimate currency for a human being is happiness.” *Happiness the Ultimate Currency- Huffington Post*

Happiness in intelligent people is the rarest thing I know.”

— *Ernest Hemingway*

<http://www.theeconomicsofhappiness.org/>

## Violators Softball Update

By David Cole

It is that time of year again, where the Violators dust off their cleats, rub oil on their gloves, stretch out their legs, and get ready to hit the field. It is time for SOFTBALL!! The season has started off with a bang. The team took home victories in their first three games, beating the league champions from last season. Unfortunately, the perfect record came to an end at the fourth game, losing to the Assessor's office. The team would like to welcome some new members to the squad this year; Lindsey Macquarrie, John

Duong, Heather and Zack Donoho, and Elizabeth Carranza! All these players have been a huge part of the team's success this year. We would also like to welcome back Gary Trent, who has returned to the team from retirement. Gary has once again decided to play ball and has returned to his All-Star ways! The team would like to extend an invitation to all who would like to come out to the field and root for the team! All games take place at 6:00 P.M. at McGinnis Field in San Rafael. If you have not received the team

schedule, please feel free to email David Cole at [dgcole@marincounty.org](mailto:dgcole@marincounty.org) and ask for a copy.



## **Employee of the Month**

**By Michael Daly**

The Employee of the Month program and award ceremony at the Board of Supervisors meetings was the brainchild of the late, great Supervisor Hal Brown. Supervisor Brown wanted to establish a program that recognized the work of Marin County employees and it has been up and running for almost 15 years. Recently, one of my favorite Department Heads, Bob Beaumont of Public Works, retired and is now somewhere in France loving life. Bob headed up the Employee of the Month Committee until he retired. Well, prior to Bob Beaumont leaving, he asked

me if I would lead this committee. I first thought, "I need another committee appointment like a hole in the head" but agreed because I like Bob so much. Little did I know that I would have the pleasure of spending time with a committee of former employees of the year and Jeanine Michaels from County Counsel, who also leads this group. We get together once a month at lunch and go over all the submitted applications and decide who gets selected. What a fun group of people and the amount of people doing great work for the County

is inspiring. So, I hope Hal Brown is looking down at us with a smile while his program is still alive and well. Below is a list of Probation employees who have been honored with an Employee of the Month award since its inception.

### **Probation Departments Previous Employees of the Month**

Cecy Watson	June 2000
Karen Willig	June 2002
Mike Daly	April 2004
Chris Perine	March 2006
My Tran	August, 2006
Venise Nahmens	June 2007
Marina Cassimus	October 2007
Teri Taketa-Graham	August 2008
Grady Livingston	July 2009
Jesus Contreras	September 2009
Giuliana Ferrer	September 2012
Eric Olson	October 2010
Tim Farrell	February 2011
Cynthia Fix	February 2014

For a county wide list of previous employees of the month and photographs dating back to 2009 click here...

<http://www.marincounty.org/depts/hr/employee-recognition>

## A “Renovation” in Juvenile Services

By Kevin Lynch

The reception area of the Juvenile Services Center will soon undergo a major renovation. For several months, the building will be closed and, after the renovation is completed, the interior of the building will be completely different from what it has been like since the building was constructed several decades ago. In many ways, this will be symbolic of the massive “renovation” that juvenile probation is undergoing across the state. This “renovation” is characterized by a number of factors; although there is a substantial reduction in caseload sizes, there is nonetheless, a corresponding increase in both the complexity of cases and the demands on staff to perform, document and substantiate their work.

Reduced caseload sizes do not always mean less work. Indeed, as staff spend more time with these cases than their predecessors did when caseloads were larger, they often discover a greater level of need and concern that requires even more attention and time. In order to confront those issues, a variety of treatment providers and community supports have been established to ensure successful completion of probation. However, the demands to coordinate and collaborate with an increased array of partners also increases demands on deputy probation officer staff. In order to get an idea of this, I recently shadowed Deputy Probation Officer Frank Peterson as he made a number of field contacts. In just a few hours, this is what issues he was dealing with as he talked to youth and their families:

- 17 year old child on probation whose mother is mentally ill and unable to provide care for her. The child will turn 18 in a few weeks

and hopes to transition from wardship probation to “non-minor dependent,” which is the AB12 program of extended foster care program. This child lives with foster parents but is struggling with a lack of support and guidance.

- A 17-year old girl whose mother is addicted to drugs and alcohol and unable to care for her. The child lives with her great-grandparents and had been struggling with staying away from drugs and alcohol and attending school. She is doing well now, however, and will be looking to attend beauty school after she graduates high school.
- A 17 year old boy who has lost 5 male friends or family members in the last two months to violence. In spite of his background and his initial referral for a serious crime, this youth has gone from a 0.0 GPA to a 2.2, since being placed on probation.
- Two youth who have engaged in risky behaviors via social media that likely involve a pedophile. Our meeting with these families involved notifying one set of parents, unaware of their son’s involvement, and introducing the families in order to collaboratively help protect these youth.

Needless to say, these contacts kept Frank busy and engaged as he met with the youth, their parents, school officials and other involved parties (i.e., case managers and therapists). However, even after all of these con-

tacts were completed, Frank’s tasks were not yet done. As the old saying goes, “if it isn’t written down, it didn’t happen.” Frank would spend the rest of his afternoon documenting his contacts in multiple information systems. He must note them in our Division’s primary system, Odyssey. He also has to make notations in a separate system that tracks his work for the purposes of claiming federal funds which support probation efforts to keep youth out of foster care. Frank also maintains a risk assessment and case plan for these youth, which also requires updating and documentation. Tomorrow, Frank will face a similar schedule, as he is asked to see either the youth or their parents ideally once per week. The demands of having the interpersonal skills to manage stressful situations such as those described above, the mindfulness to control one’s own reactions and maintain professional distance, are hard enough. These issues have always been present for deputy probation officers in the Juvenile Division. However, what is different today and more demanding, is that our focus is on high risk youth and families exclusively. Learning how to navigate multiple technologies to document the work is a challenge. Finally, staff are expected to collaborate with a larger number of partners and service providers.

Similar to the reception area at the Juvenile Services Center building, our tasks in juvenile probation are undergoing a major renovation. I anticipate that the trend of having fewer cases with greater demands will continue

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## **Today's Draw: Thabiti Terry**

**By My Tran**

Thabiti Terry was born in Oakland, California and spent his childhood in Sonoma County. He grew up playing sports and was fortunate to be able to play both basketball and football at high levels. Prior to his employment with Marin County, he was a bounty hunter for six years. He has also worked as a Worker's Compensation Fraud Investigator and a Group Home Counselor. Thabiti Terry became employed with the Marin County Probation Department in May of 2012. He began his career as a Group Counselor in Juvenile Hall, where he developed his interest to promote to the position of Deputy Probation Officer. With a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Sonoma State University, he was promoted to a Deputy Probation Officer nine months after his hire date. All of his past experiences have helped him gain the knowledge and skills to be an exceptional Deputy Probation Officer. Thabiti is committed to learning all

aspects of his job and to building strong lasting relationships with his fellow workers. He is currently assigned to the Supervision Unit of the Juvenile Division.

A couple of years ago, he was blessed with a beautiful son. Thabiti has devoted his life and time to raising his son and being able to prepare him for each stage of his son's life. Thabiti said, "I find great joy being a father and would not trade this experience in for a million dollars." Thabiti enjoys nurturing his son's interest in whatever he wants to do, whether its art, music, or gymnastics. He is looking forward to seeing what he is passionate about and watching him develop, both mentally and physically.

As the love he has for his own child, he has the energy and motivation to help his juvenile offenders change their behavior. Thabiti is friendly, a



quick learner, and provides a helping hand to his team. Marin County Probation is fortunate to have Thabiti Terry be a part of our organization.

## **Recipe of the Quarter:**

### **Banana Bread**

**By: Alisha Krupinsky**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup butter
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 1/3 cups mashed overripe bananas



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease a 9x5 inch loaf pan.

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt. In a separate bowl, cream together butter and brown sugar. Stir in eggs and mashed bananas until well blended. Stir banana mixture into flour mixture; stir just to moisten. Pour batter into prepared loaf pan.

Bake in preheated oven for 60 to 65 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into center of the loaf comes out clean. Let bread cool in pan for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack.

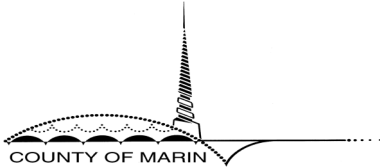
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***The Condition of Probation***

***Marin County Probation Department Newsletter  
Editorial Policy***

*The Condition of Probation* is published quarterly by the Marin County Probation Department. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a forum for communication and the sharing of information. *The Condition of Probation* publishes articles and information related to Mission and Departmental operations & activity. Articles submitted may be edited for content, clarity, or length.

**Editorial Board Members**

Michael Daly, Kevin Lynch, Matt Perry, Nancy Hillman, and Alisha Krupinsky

**A “Renovation” in Juvenile Services (from pg. 1)...**

into the foreseeable future. Unlike the building renovation, there is much about our work that we cannot control. For the renovation, we develop architectural plans, we schedule our work and we can plan around it. For juvenile probation, we unfortunately find ourselves in the position of having to react to outside variables we do not control. Youth’s behavior, the changing demands of outside agencies, and juvenile justice trends are uncontrollable variables that have great impact on our work. These are all of the issues that help to make our jobs both fascinating and maddening. In the end, we will not know what our “renovation” of juvenile probation will look like. We can be sure, though, that it will be challenging, demanding and rewarding.

**Oh, Baby**

**By: Abby Dennett**

Submit a favorite childhood photo to Alisha Krupinsky to be featured in our next newsletter. Photos via email are preferred. However, hard copies can be scanned into the computer and returned to you the same day! It will be a “Guess Who?” section that will undoubtedly bring some laughs.

To find out who this adorable little one is, keep an eye out for our next edition!



**On the Look Out!**

It’s softball season again. Don’t want to play? That’s fine, there are lots of opportunities to be a part of the fun by joining the cheering section!

Summer time is just right around the corner. That brings fun adventures, activities and amazing photo opportunities! Share your vacation and summer activity photos with Alisha Krupinsky for a future newsletter!

