

# The Condition of Probation

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## Probation Department's "Wall of Change" Program on the Airwaves

By Anthony Nunez and Andrew Guidi

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On March 5, 2018, Deputy Probation Officers David Cole, Anthony Nunez and Andrew Guidi participated in a radio show in Point Reyes at a local public broadcast station. KWMR hosted a 30-minute radio presentation highlighting the Wall of Change program which is displayed in the Adult Division of the Probation Department. In addition to probation staff, an ex-offender and current Wall of Change member, Fred, joined the celebration and offered, arguably, the best insight for listeners to see into the world of recovery. Through Fred's detailed explanation and the DPO's experiences, listeners in West Marin were treated to an abundance of ideas regarding the criminal justice system and rehabilitation. The show's host, Mia Johnson, led the discussion with captivating questions and had all four guests engaged. At the end of the evening, Fred was treated to Mexican food at a favorite



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## Chief's Corner

By Michael Daly

### Employee Retention

When people ask me how my job is going, I almost always say everything is great. I mean it. I have great employees, we train extensively, they truly care about people and have confidence that folks can make changes to better themselves. So the operational piece is fine. But what about the stress levels and the daily grind? How are my employees doing personally? This, by far, is my

biggest concern and it all starts with housing and commutes.

Marin County is an affluent County and very few county employees can afford to live here. Most of my employees live in surrounding counties with commutes of up to 60-90 minutes both ways at times. Are we getting adequate sleep? How do we get our children to school and get into work on time? Who watches the kids after school? Do I have time to exercise to keep a good,

healthy work-life balance? These are questions my employees face every day and it is very concerning to me. In order for employees to want to continue to work in Marin, we have to make the employee workplace and environment exceptional. Otherwise, why would you get in your car every day and do this?

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## Mission Statement

*The mission of the Marin County Probation Department is to further justice and community safety, and to hold offenders accountable while promoting their rehabilitation.*

## **Two Retirees from the Juvenile Division**

**By Kevin Lynch**

On March 30, 2018, Bonnie Cressler and Martha Grigsby celebrated their retirement with a group of family, friends and colleagues at San Rafael Joe's Restaurant. It was a bittersweet event for most of us, as both Bonnie and Martha have had long careers that spanned multiple divisions within the Department.

Bonnie's career with the Department began in 1985, when she took on a position as what was known then as a "Group Counselor" at Juvenile Hall. Bonnie moved to Juvenile Services and started her career as a Deputy Probation Officer in the Intake Unit. Bonnie also served in the investigations Unit of the Adult Division, and she returned to Juvenile for the last few years of her long career. Bonnie cared passionately about youth and families, and about fairness.

She was vocal when she felt like something needed to be said. What most people comment on, however, with Bonnie, is her writing skill. Perhaps the best description of that is that when you read one of Bonnie's reports, you feel like you really know the person being discussed. Whenever there were cases that were filled with nuance and complexity, it was nice to have Bonnie available to take the referral.

Martha was a Legal Process Specialist with our Department and she began her career in 1996. She also spent time in the Adult Division, but finished her career at Juvenile, primarily providing support to the Placement Unit. Martha was the primary staff person responsible for inputting data into the CWS/CMS database, and for that we will be forever grateful. However what Martha will be most remembered for was her calm, pleasant and warm personality;



Martha was often asking people how they were doing, how their weekend was, and she was one of the first people to help out when we planned celebrations.

It is amazing how quickly time goes by in one's career; I'm sure both Martha and Bonnie will tell you that. They will both be missed, and we wish them all the best in their retirement endeavors!



## **The Passing of Dee Diebel**

**By Michael Daly**

I would like to note the passing of a Probation legend. Dee Diebel worked for our Department for over 40 years. I remember Dee as being such a classy individual who represented our department in the finest light. Dee worked inside the Juvenile Hall as well as being an administrative assistant working the front desk. Dee was the face of Probation for many years.

About a year ago, Carmen Vance and I were out to lunch together. Dee's name came up in conversation and we both decided to visit her at the Nazareth house. We knocked on the door and

found our way in. We located Dee and she was so surprised and happy we were there. We chatted with Dee for about 30 minutes, telling stories about the Juvenile Hall. She looked at me at one point and said, "Mike, I could tell you stories about that place until midnight."

It was an honor to work with Dee and I am proud to have been her friend. The Board of Supervisors closed a meeting in her remembrance and staff and family attended that ceremony. Dee was a class act and she will be missed.



## Welcome to Our New Hires

Alexis Beebe was born and raised in the Bay Area where she attended Our Lady of Grace and Bishop O'Dowd High School, all the while playing volleyball as a setter and/or digger; she was never quite tall enough to be blocker. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from San Diego State University (Go Aztecs!) and then decided to move to London, UK and worked for a public relations company where she was able to travel to various countries in Europe. After moving back to the Bay Area, she obtained her Master of Arts Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and Art Therapy from Notre Dame de Namur University. She has a passion for working with culturally diverse, underserved, high risk populations and has worked with various community-based organizations both in Sacramento and San Mateo County. She is a recent transfer from Health and Human Services working with the STAR Program for two years. She is very excited to be working again with youth and families providing clinical, therapeutic services as part of the amazing PORTAL team with Juvenile Probation. Alexis enjoys listening to live music, dancing, running, and spending time with loved ones.



Damon Evans was born in Modesto, CA and was raised in Stockton. He attended Tokay High School, San Joaquin Delta College, and Sacramento State earning his Bachelors of Science in Sociology. After graduation he started with the San Joaquin County Probation Department; and worked there for 21+ years. Damon lives in Lodi, CA with his wife of 22 years along with five of their six children (5 boys and 1 girl). Damon describes the lively house as “organized chaos” with most time being spent as an “UBER” transporting from one practice or game to the next. Damon spends most of his free time with his family; and coaching his kids in youth sports in the Lodi area. Damon is very happy to be part of the Marin County Probation team.

Ceci Sibrian was born in Guatemala, raised in Sonoma County and currently resides in Marin County. She graduated from San Francisco State University with a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. After she obtained her degree, she continued learning and growing in the Criminal Justice field by working in different capacities within two District Attorney's Offices. She is currently working on her Master's degree in Public Administration from Golden Gate University. In 2016, she began an internship at Marin County Probation Department's Juvenile Division. During her internship she learned a lot about probation and knew quickly she wanted to join the team. In her free time, she loves spending time with her fiancé, family and friends. She loves traveling, running, hiking and camping.

She is excited and grateful to be part of the Marin County Probation family and she looks forward to her future within the department. She has been assigned to the Intake Unit of the Juvenile Division.





## **Armed Intruder Preparation**

**By Kevin Lynch**

It is an unfortunate reality of our society that workplace violence is an issue that must be considered. While the latest statistics for homicides in the workplace are only available through 2016, that year showed nearly a 20% increase in these tragedies from the previous year. High profile events since that time seem to appear in the media regularly, and the most recent spate of mass shootings indicate this will be an issue for the foreseeable future. In our work as law enforcement officials interacting with high risk individuals at times in tense and confrontational situations, the concern is only heightened.

At the Juvenile Services Center facility, we have a variety of advantages to assist us with this issue. The renovation of the building in 2014 provided a number of security upgrades which make it a far safer facility than it had been. In addition, nearly one-third of all staff housed at the building are now armed and well-

trained for this sort of event, and most staff have undergone First Aid training. The downside of our situation is primarily the remote location that translates to a longer delay in first responders arriving at the scene; this means that our staff must be prepared to handle the incident initially until help arrives. The key now is to provide staff with training and practice around armed intruder scenarios so that if the unthinkable does occur, we will be prepared to respond in a manner that will save lives. In conjunction with Mariano Zamudio, our Chief Deputy and manager of the Department's arming program, we will begin formal training on this issue soon. The Adult Division, which faces a different set of advantages and disadvantages in this area, will follow as soon as the dust settles from the office remodel which recently took place. Their preparation will obviously be different from that of the Juvenile Services Center, but the basic premise of being prepared and aware



will be the same.

Preparing for an event like this is not what any of us want to be doing in our work. However, given what is occurring in our society, it only makes sense to do it. We all want to feel safe where we work, and practicing how we would deal with this kind of scenario is an unfortunate but necessary reality for us.

## **Juvenile Division Introduces "A Show of Hands" Program**

**By Kevin Lynch**

Movement of staff between Divisions of our Department has been an increasing trend over the last few years. Some of the benefits we see from this movement have been to get a new set of eyes on how we do business, and the introduction of new ideas. Heather Donoho, who transferred from the Adult Division to the Juvenile Division in 2017, right away saw a gap in how we recognize accomplishments of youth on our case-loads. While at the Adult Division, Heather had been a supporter of the "Wall of Change" program, which recognizes adult probationers who have made sustained and substantial changes in their lives. Heather wondered why we could not do something similar in the Juvenile Division, and so she helped to craft what has been named "A Show of Hands" program.

This program acknowledges that if we want to see young people do the right things, we should encourage them by applauding when they show a move in that direction. Unlike the adult system, where our Department has several years of involvement with probationers to monitor change, stints on probation in the juvenile justice system tend to last less, usually 12-18 months on average. This means that we cannot be as sure that a change is going to be long lasting; we all know that for many youth, the path is often "two steps forward, one step back." However, we want to still celebrate the forward steps, even if we know this young person may still have a ways to go.

Everyone who works in our system has been encouraged to nominate a youth if they believe they have accomplished a change worthy of recognition. It might mean completing a treatment program, probation, or



perhaps graduating high school; it will depend on the circumstances of the young person. Once nominated, the matter goes before the Show of Hands Committee, which meets and decides if the situation meets the criteria. If the child is approved, we hold a celebration in honor of their accomplishment, and we ask the child to make a hand print, which we hope to display in our office.

The Committee has several nominations in place and we hope to have our first celebration in June. Hats off to Heather for bringing the enthusiasm for this idea to the Juvenile Division !

## **Chief's Corner (continued from pg. 1)**

Here are some things that the Probation Department does to hopefully offset our housing and commute issue.

**Teleworking.** We have long had a policy that allows employees to work from home as the workload indicates. We have very strict procedures in order for this to work and employees really appreciate this opportunity. Supervisors will check the work product as necessary and all emails and phone calls must be returned within one hour. Supervisors monitor this privilege and we have had great success.

**Hours of work.** We recently modified our hours so that employees can start work as early as 6:00 AM or as late as 10:00 AM. This creates flexibility from day to day in regards to some family obligations that must be met. The traffic at both ends of this spectrum are considerably mitigated. Staff have appreciated this as well.

**Regular Days off.** I have never been a fan of allowing four ten-hour day schedules. After many meetings with staff and managers, however, we now allow 4/10's as well as 9/80's. Staff have very much appreciated this flexibility. I leave it up to my Supervisors and Directors to manage their responsibilities with two main principles in mind. The public we serve is number one and cannot be compromised. Second, we cannot have any negative impacts on work flow of office responsibilities. All of these times are a privilege and supervisors have sole authority to manage this.

**Work Balance.** The work that we do requires us to be physically fit. We are also under some amount of daily stress and exercise is an excellent way to balance the day. We have set up a full gym inside the Juvenile Services building for all Probation employees to enjoy. The County also offers discounted memberships at local gyms and recently opened up a gym on the basement floor for all county employees .

**Overnight accommodations.** More and more agencies throughout the Bay Area are offering employees a place to sleep if needed/desired. The Probation Department will be setting up sleeping quarters at the Juvenile Services Center. We have staff who work three 12-hour day shifts in a row at Juvenile Hall and some of those folks have up to 90 minute commutes (assuming no traffic). The Sheriff's Department recently added living quarters at their facility and it is working out well.

These examples are just some of the ways our department is trying to be creative and innovative in our attempt to retain our employees. Our employees are our greatest asset, so we should be treating them with the utmost respect and care. We want to be an exceptional Department in that regard, because we believe we have exceptional employees who deliver an excellent service.



### **CALLING ALL ALUMNI !**

If you know a retiree of our Department who would like to receive the newsletter but is not, please have them call Kevin at 415-473-6659 to give us their contact information (we prefer e-mail addressees, but will mail copies if that is more con-


venient). We have added a section on what you are up to. If you would be willing to tell us what you are doing, we would like to include that in all future editions as a regular feature. Please contact us with pictures, adventures, news or just catching up.

## **Probation Department's "Wall of Change" Program on the Airwaves (continued from page 1)**

local restaurant as a "thank you" for driving three hours to the Bay Area to share his story. Wall of Change members like Fred who continue to stay involved in the Wall of Change program serve as the example that people can and do change.

The Wall of Change program continues to operate in the Adult Division and is expected to continue to grow. Members of the public are welcome to stop by the office and view the prominent display of all of our shared stories of success. Please feel free to join us in our next annual Wall of Change Celebration on December 12, 2018. More details to come!



What?!?! <b><u>More</u></b> people are moving?	
Susana Cenicerros	Susana has transferred from the Adult Division to Juvenile. She is assigned to the Intake Unit.
Ulises Ramirez	Ulises has moved from the Juvenile Division to Adult, where he is assigned to the High Risk Unit.
Jeff White	Jeff has transferred from the Juvenile Division to a Juvenile Corrections Officer position at the Juvenile Hall.
Tony Raitano	Tony has left the Juvenile Division and now works in the AB109 Unit in the Adult Division. He will eventually be assigned to represent our Department in the COPE Unit, after he has had a chance to learn about the adult court system.

## **Today's Draw: Maria Teresa Cozzi**

**By Lindsey MacQuarrie**

Maria Teresa Cozzi was raised in Chile and is the eldest sister of six siblings. Her father is Italian while her mother is from an old traditional Chilean family. She has had an interesting the upbringing including travel, studies, and family. Her parents were very influential as they would gather as a family every Sunday at lunch time, where they would discuss politics, religion, and other topics. She said at the end of the days they would all fight for their points of view; however, she believes the exercise has made her a person who can understand the diversity of people's opinions, which she is grateful for.

Maria Teresa studied one year of Architecture Design in the University of Chile and dropped out to become a Flight Attendant for LAN Chile in 1979, where she worked 8 years. She had the great experience of being in a Presidential flight with President Pinochet. She described her time as a Flight Attendant as magnificent as she was able to visit many places around the world as well as explore the diversity of the cultures and languages.

In 1986, Maria Teresa travelled to the US for a long vacation and decided to stay. Shortly after, she had her only child, Angelica, in 1987. While in the US she continued her education and earned her Master's Degree in History and Art History, as well as emphasis in "women," particularly women in the workplace from Dominican University.

Outside of work, Maria Teresa enjoys art, music, classical and all kind of music, movies, outdoors, housekeeping, and visiting new places. She visits her family in Chile each year.



Working in Probation has given her an opportunity that allowed her to find a niche in working with the Adult Offender Work Program (AOWP), as well as getting to know many of the people from the department and county wide. A few years from now, she plans to retire and dedicate her time to visit her family for longer periods of time.

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### ***The Condition of Probation***

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

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