



Regular citizens make the difference in kids' lives

The wavy-haired brunette sheepishly announced she had a question.

"I'm not sure it's appropriate, but would you like to see pictures of the kids?" she asked, her husband sitting next to her.

"Of course!" "We always ask to see pictures!" "Yes, please!" the answers came out, tumbling over each other.

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Check out these other stories in this month's bulletin:



Our Detention Center library has roughly 15,000 reasons to visit.

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Jack came for a visit recently. Check out Page 16 to see who else came.



Our community partners are working together to keep kids out of detention.

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PCJCC's detention library a welcome respite for kids

There's just one thing about the detention center library Savannah doesn't like. She can only take six books out at a time.



Librarian William Bevill has spent seven of his 10 years with the Pima County Library in the PCJCC branch.

The 16-year-old is a voracious reader. Whenever she's not in class or participating in programs at the Pima County Juvenile Detention Center, she's devouring books about real-life problems. Her favorite author is Ellen Hopkins.

Surprised? Don't be.

"Many of the kids here are very smart and intelligent. They love to read," said librarian William Bevill.

"When you get one-on-one with them and talk, you see that they are capable of reading and dissecting

books and understanding life."

Thirteen years ago, if kids wanted to read for pleasure, they would have to wait until a cart came around to their living units and choose among the books on the cart.

Nowadays, kids walk down the hall and visit their very own branch of the Pima County Library twice a week. They can select up to 12 books per week and even place special orders for books at other locations.

The library has close to 15,000 books and magazines, none of which glamorize gangs, drugs, alcohol or weapons.

Bevill and librarian page Gennifer Shafer work hard at making the library's atmosphere comfortable. In October, pop star magazines decorated the walls along with superheroes. Murals painted by kids brighten the area. Natural sunlight pours in from the outside courtyard, which boasts a garden the kids tend themselves.

"We try to promote a hip vibe here to make the library as welcoming and as different from detention as much as we can," Gennifer said.

"Urban stories" or stories about getting sober and living on the streets tend to be the most popular books, Gennifer said. Poetry and books by James Patterson and Stephen King are also in demand. (Contd. Page 3)

Mariah, 17, loves the Vampire Diary series by L.J. Smith. Zech, 13, appreciates a good mystery or science fiction novel.

“It’s good to have a library in a facility like this,” Mariah said. “It helps people get through what they are going through. They can escape through books.”

All three kids sang the praises of William and Gennifer.

“They’re really nice,” Zech said. “Other librarians tell you to be quiet. They think you’re being disrespectful, but (William and Gennifer) don’t tell us that here very much.”

“A person who inherently loves to read is much different than someone who you are teaching to love to read,” Gennifer Shafer said.

William and Gennifer steer kids who dislike reading toward comic books, magazines and books on art and drawing.

They also tell kids about the other services the library provides in the hopes they will continue to visit libraries once they are released.

Libraries are a great place to get CDs and DVDs, tutors, access to databases, free music download sites, classes and community resources.

Every once in a while William will see a kid who spent some time in the detention center in a library or bookstore.

“They are often looking for some of the books they read here and they want to own them and keep them because they meant so much to them,” William said. “It’s a compliment.”

William and Gennifer prefer the detention center branch over the others.

“It’s exciting because they often don’t know what they’re looking for to read and its opening them up to worlds and books they’ve never come across,” Gennifer said.

Recently, a young man proudly announced he’d just finished “Roots” by Alex Haley. The young man had asked Gennifer for Haley’s “Malcolm X” and she turned him onto “Roots.” He finished both books within a couple of weeks.

When you work in a regular library branch, chances are you are dealing with people who have read their entire lives, Gennifer said. That’s not always the case in the detention center.

As a result, there’s a great sense of fulfillment when you watch a kid go from being a non-reader to one who can’t wait for the next book in a series to arrive, Gennifer said.

“A person who inherently loves to read is much different than someone who you are teaching to love to read,” Gennifer said.

PCJCC's other library a wonderful resource for staff

It was a stroke of bad luck that brought Gwen Reid to Pima County Juvenile Court.

Or good luck, depending on how you want to look at it.

Gwen, 63, was working in the University of Arizona's catalogue department in the early 1980s when Reaganomics forced the UA to lay her off. Unable to find a paying job, Gwen became a volunteer librarian here.

Eventually, the position became a paying job and Gwen had her hands full running the staff and detention center libraries. She now works 12 hours a week in the staff library, which is crammed with an eclectic collection of works pertaining to child abuse, juvenile justice and mental health issues.

There are roughly 1,000 books in the library available to anyone who works for juvenile court. The court also has subscriptions to roughly 20 magazines and periodicals, such as Psychology Today, Families in Society, Arizona Capital Times and Domestic Violence Report.

Gwen spends her time purchasing new books for the staff library, performing research for staff members and maintaining the judges' law library. It's Gwen who goes through the periodicals, keeping administrators and judges up-to-date on the latest trends and stories via email.

Although she misses her days working with detention center youth, the University of Arizona graduate still loves her job. She has a bachelor's degree in creative writing and literature and a master's in library science.

If someone needs a particular book, she'll order it for them, Gwen said. After 9/11, she ordered books believing people would be interested in knowing more about the Muslim faith.

Although she has health issues and more than 32 years with the court, she's not ready to retire.

"It gets me out of the house; it gives me something to do," Gwen said. "I think it's good to keep your mind active."



PCJCC Librarian Gwen Reid, who didn't let Halloween pass unnoticed, has been with the court 32 years.

Citizens work hard to see foster kids' needs are met

The wavy-haired brunette sheepishly announced she had a question.

"I'm not sure it's appropriate, but would you like to see pictures of the kids?" she asked, her husband sitting next to her.

"Of course!" "We always ask to see pictures!" "Yes, please!" the answers came out, tumbling over each other.

The pictures of the tomboy in the princess dress and her siblings weren't being passed around at a holiday party, though. The oohs and aahs weren't coming from indulgent grandparents, either.

The pictures came out during a recent Foster Care Review Board meeting.

Since 1978, specially trained volunteers all over the state regularly meet to assess the status of the thousands of kids in Arizona's

foster care system. They check on the safety and well-being of the child, the progress being made toward reunification and whether the parties are compliant with the case plan that was drawn up for the child.

They also make recommendations to the judge within 30 days of the meetings. Common recommendations pertain to visitation or the need for behavioral health or treatment services, tutoring or a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

Sandy Guizzetti oversees the southeastern counties' boards.

"Before 1978 kids were languishing in the system," Sandy said. "People were concerned that children were being taken out of a bad situation, placed somewhere and stayed there." (Contd. Page 6)



Volunteers with the Foster Care Review Board carefully review the files of 18 children who are currently wards of the state.

Nowadays, the law requires FCRB members to review cases within six months of a child's removal. They continue to review the case every six months after that point.

Pima County currently has 26 boards made up of five volunteers each that meet once per month for day-long sessions. Twenty-six boards aren't enough, either.



"Parents often say this is the first time they feel as though they've been heard," Sandy Guizzetti said.

As of mid-October, there were 2,964 children under review, Sandy said. Pima County should have at least three more boards or 15 more volunteers to handle the load.

During one recent board meeting, the volunteers reviewed 11 cases involving

18 children. One week prior to the meeting, they each received a packet containing information on each child for them to review.

Several people are invited to attend the meeting – parents, foster parents, behavioral health experts and CPS caseworkers.

Because there are no attorneys, those who are present can say whatever they like, Sandy said.

"We wanted to create an environment much less formal than a courtroom," Sandy said. "We try to make people feel comfortable. We want to make sure we hear each person's perspective. Parents often say this is the first time they feel as though they've been heard."

During the morning session on this particular day, it was a mixed bag in terms of participation. In two of the cases, the foster parents and one grandmother attended the hearing, but the natural parents did not. In two other cases, the natural mothers attended, but the foster parents did not.

Among the topics that came up – sexual abuse, mental illness, domestic violence, neglect, substance abuse, alcoholism, unemployment, incarceration and lack of medical insurance.

The board applauded one mom for finishing her parenting classes, but then felt hopeless when she told them she lost her job because she wouldn't sleep with her boss and has been unable to find another one. Until she has a job, her chances of getting her child back are slim. (Contd. Page 7)

In another case, the board commended the foster parents for swiftly arranging various therapies. They cheerfully agreed to see about getting the couple twin beds. Apparently the couple's chatty foster daughters (one of whom was the tomboy in the picture) giggle nights away because they must share a bed.

After hearing the children's parents have not been abiding by their case plan, the board also agreed they no longer believe the primary goal should be reunification. Instead, they told the foster parents they will recommend them as permanent guardians.

"We hope that by doing what we do no child will lose their life again. That's a personal issue for me," said FCRB volunteer Mary Harris.

In another case, the board recommended a psychological evaluation be performed on a teenaged sexual abuse victim whose mental health suffers each time she is moved from one treatment facility to the next. Despite being on several medications, she's never had a full psychological evaluation.

The board was unable to make immediate recommendations in two of the cases because they could not contact the CPS case manager. In a third case, they received a written statement from the case manager. In the fourth case, they spoke briefly with the case manager on the phone, but she admitted she had just received the case from a colleague and hadn't yet had time to review it.

Mary Harris, who has been a FCRB volunteer more than 10 years, said CPS case workers are simply over-whelmed by a huge increase in cases.

"Most of the case workers do come here and they do respond to our phone calls, but they have huge caseloads," Mary said. "Plus, they have court dates to keep, meetings to attend and new cases coming in all of the time. I think some people expect them to be superhuman. A lot of them really do go above and beyond."

Mary, a retired Arizona Department of Corrections deputy warden, raised four foster children. She decided to become a FCRB volunteer years ago after hearing about a 2-year-old boy who died in a trailer fire shortly after being returned to his neglectful mother.

"We hope that by doing what we do no child will lose their life again," Mary said. "That's a personal issue for me."

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with the Foster Care Review Board call 388-4300.

Foster Care Review Board in serious need of volunteers

With nearly 3,000 Pima County children in out-of-home placement, the state needs more volunteers who can keep track of the cases and ensure their needs are being met.

If you are interested in volunteering for the FCRB, regional manager Sandy Guizzetti said you must be someone who has time to review the necessary documentation, attend the monthly meetings and go to occasional trainings.

It takes eight hours to prepare for the board's monthly day-long meeting, Sandy said. Volunteers receive six hours of annual training and new volunteers receive one full day of training.

"The interview process makes sure you understand this work isn't easy," Sandy said.

"There's not only the time commitment, but the information you read and hear is difficult. These kids aren't removed from homes because it was a good situation."

In addition, volunteers must work well with others and have a love for children, Sandy said.

You must also believe in the state's primary goal – reuniting families.

"Volunteers have got to be willing to believe and promote the idea that people can change," Sandy said. "Kids don't do well in foster care. They do better with their family whenever possible -- whenever it's safe, stable and secure."

Mary Harris, a FCRB volunteer, agreed.

"Mom and Dad are always going to be Mom and Dad," Mary said. "If they have issues that can be remedied, the family entity can be strengthened."

Although difficult, the rewards are well worth it, Sandy said.

"Volunteers have the opportunity to know they impact children's lives," Sandy said.

"They have the ability to advocate for system changes."

Mary agreed. She's cried at meetings because of the horrible situation children were living in, but she's also been thrilled to play a part in families overcoming obstacles and coming together.

"It's an excellent opportunity to invest some time into helping children grow into being successful adults," Mary said.

Current board members come from all walks of life, Mary said. She herself is a retired deputy warden.

To find out more about volunteering, call 388-4300.

Probation officer on a quest for girl-specific programs

Sheila Pessingua has been a Pima County juvenile probation officer 10 years. More importantly, she's a mom and as the mother to a now-adult daughter Sheila knows a fair amount about raising girls.

It's the reason she's on a quest.

Sheila is determined to discover what is available for Tucson girls and to share that information.

**"The sooner we understand what's available, the sooner we can help all of the girls in our community," —
Sheila Pessingua**

She's not just curious about places where girls can be sent to do community service or receive counseling – although she wants to know about those too. She wants to know about fun programs, places where girls can be empowered, organizations that will teach skills they need to get a job, to navigate through life.

"All of our girls need help," Sheila said. "I want to know what's out there for all of our girls, not just the girls who are in the system, or who are runaways or who live in foster homes."

A 16-year-old girl living in a foster home and a 16-year-old girl living with two parents has to deal with the same issues – relationships, grades, bullying,

parents, self-esteem, etc., Sheila said.

To accomplish her goal, Sheila will be hosting meetings to share information and ideas.

"I always tell girls they can be whatever they aspire to be, that there's nothing holding them back, it's knowing how to get there," Sheila said. "For example, just because you don't have the best grades and just because you don't have a lot of money doesn't mean you can't go to college."

Sheila's first meeting in October was attended by nearly 20 people from an eclectic array of organizations, including GAP Ministries, Boys & Girls Club, FBI, Southern Arizona Children's Advocacy Center, Sold No More, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Mingus Mountain, Teen Challenge of Arizona, the Pima County Attorney's Office and the Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona.

Each member of the group discussed their organization and what they offered.

"One of my favorite parts of the meeting was seeing the connection made between our detention center and the Boys & Girls Club," Sheila said. "I think it would be great if we could channel our kids through the club once they are released from the center."

The plan is to hold quarterly meetings and to incorporate presentations on specific themes each time. One theme might be sex trafficking, for example.

Sheila hopes additional organizations will come forward to share their thoughts and programs.

"The sooner we understand what's available, the sooner we can help all of the girls in our community," Sheila said.

If your organization would like to participate in the discussions, call Sheila at 740-2009 or email her at sheila.pessingua@pcjcc.pima.gov.

Community partners work to keep kids out of detention

Eugenia Favela, the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services for Sunnyside Unified School District, has just one word to describe what's going on here at Pima County Juvenile Court.

"Groundbreaking," she said.

Dani Tarry, Director of Family and Community Outreach for Tucson Unified School District, has another word for it.

"Cool," she said.

For the past few months, court staff, several school districts, multiple charter schools and the Tucson Police Department have been working hand-in-hand with one purpose – to find a way to keep children out of the detention center and in school while keeping public safety a priority.



Eugenia Favela, Lt. Paul Sayre and Dani Tarry

For the school districts and charter schools that means creating protocols that will provide guidance as to when law enforcement should be called.

For the Tucson Police Department, it's using a risk assessment tool in the field to help them figure out which children meet the criteria for being detained.

For the past decade, the PCJCC and community stakeholders have made a coordinated effort to reduce the number of children held in pretrial detention. Study after study has shown the detrimental effect being detained has on children.

Children once locked up for misdemeanor domestic violence offenses are now taken to the Domestic Violence Alternative Center and given a paper referral. In addition, children paper referred for the first and second-time are now given a chance to participate in diversion programs where they complete a consequence and avoid court.

Detention center staff also began using a risk assessment tool to determine which children are likely to re-offend before they make their first court appearance. The tool looks at past criminal history, school attendance, type of offense they are alleged to have committed and any services they have received in the past.

Children who score lower than 12 are released.

Naysayers believed that reducing the number of children detained would result in a higher crime rate. (Contd. Page 11)

It didn't happen. In fact, at the same time the number of children participating in diversion skyrocketed to 69 percent, the number of children referred for prosecution by the Pima County Attorney's Office decreased nearly 62 percent.

Unfortunately, the court noticed the percentage of children of color who were brought to the detention center remained disproportionately high.

To this day, court officials and stakeholders doggedly continue to seek ways to reduce those numbers.

That's why officials have high hopes about the schools using new protocols and TPD using the risk assessment tool in the field.

TPD Lt. Paul Sayre said he believes TPD is the first agency to take a deep look inside itself to decide to see if officers were contributing to the disproportionate minority contact (DMC) problem.

Using grant money, TPD had the W. Haywood Burns Institute look into the issue.

They looked at 345 cases involving children who were considered low to medium-risk offenders, but were taken to the detention center between 2008 and 2012.

TPD officials assumed the study would show the numbers were skewed because of geography or directed patrols, Sayre said.

In other words, they thought that maybe children of color were being detained because they lived near the detention center, making it easy for officers to drop them off. They also thought that maybe officers had more of an impetus to drop them off if the officers were part of a directed patrol or were school resource officers.

Neither of those theories proved to be true.

While the study validated most of the TPD's practices, it found some "small instances of DMC," Sayre said.

TPD now believes some officers were basing their decision to take a kid to the detention center for emotional reasons rather than a real belief the kid was a threat to the community, Sayre said.

For example, Sayre said an officer who is forced to chase down and tackle a 16-year-old burglar is probably emotionally invested.

As a result of the study, on Nov. 3 officers and the detention center's intake unit began using the same risk assessment tool used by the intake unit in the field.

So now, children receive paper referrals to the court and instead of taking low-risk children to the detention center, officers are taking them to their parents, adult siblings, extended family members or trusted friends and neighbors. (Contd. Page 12)

“It’s a big win-win for everyone,” Sayre said. “From an operational standpoint, it’s more efficient to find an alternative place to take them. Also, the bigger picture is that we’re not taking a kid to intake that wouldn’t be held. We’re avoiding all of the trauma associated with that.”

Writing paper referrals is much faster than booking children into the detention center so officers are on board with the new policy, Sayre elaborated.

“We don’t like the administrative end of things. We want to get back out there,” Sayre said.

TPD is also excited that thanks to a U.S. Department of Justice grant, Pima Prevention Partnership will be able to track the cases where the risk assessment tool was used. They will be able to determine how many of those children did go on to re-offend.

The hope is that one day, police officers all over the state will be taught about the juvenile detention alternative initiative, disproportionate minority contact and using the risk assessment tool, Sayre said.

In order for that to happen, however, the juvenile justice curriculum created by the Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training Board would need to be updated, Sayre said.

“We would use Judge (Karen) Adam’s approach,” Sayre said. “We’d bring everyone to the table, re-write the curriculum and then present it to AZPOST.”

Favela and Tarry believe Judge Adam’s ability to do just that – bring everyone to the table – is the reason so many positive changes are underway.

For years, school districts would simply call the police or sheriff’s office whenever they were experiencing problems with a student. They weren’t always aware what happened after that, Tarry said.

Judge Adam and others at the court opened their eyes by encouraging them to attend conferences in such places as Kansas City, Mo., Portland, Ore., Phoenix and New York City.

Favela and Tarry learned even more through regularly scheduled meetings at the court’s training center. They learned many of the children who come through the juvenile justice system have suffered significant trauma in their lives and what it means to be trauma responsive.

Their new-found knowledge led them to begin looking at children who had been suspended and expelled from their districts and they discovered the same thing as TPD – instances of DMC. (Contd. Page 13)

Sunnyside and TUSD created and continue to revise protocols about consequences and when to call law enforcement agencies. They are trying to reduce the non-specific use of “may” call and provide more consistency regarding when the school “will call” or must call.

They are now sitting with other districts, private schools and charter schools to find commonalities and differences.

“I can’t emphasize enough that it’s the trust around the table that’s allowing this work to move forward,” Tarry said.

“We probably can’t have the same consequences across the board, but the fact that everyone has agreed not to call law enforcement unnecessarily is a big thing,” Favela said.

A key moment came last month when Judge Adam, court administrator Stephen Rubin and other court officials hosted a meeting with nearly 50 school officials in the detention center itself. Representatives came from six school districts and 20 charter schools.

Although Tarry had been inside the detention center before, she said she burst into tears when she entered the building.

“When I walked down that long, long hallway and I heard the clank, clank of the doors, I thought ‘There are real human children in here,’” Tarry said.

“It brought it home – we don’t want children here,” Favela agreed.

For the next few weeks, Favela, Tarry, Sayre and court officials will continue to hold weekly meetings with the other school districts and charter schools.

Whatever recommended protocols are developed as a result of those meetings will be presented to superintendents and school boards.

“I think the boards are going to be thrilled,” Tarry said. “I think they do look at all aspects of the students and they are going to be grateful to have a group of professionals come forward and say ‘This is Best Practice and how it should be done.’”

Favela and Tarry said they are proud to be part of such a great team.

“The folks here at the court have worked very hard to let us understand their world and the difficulties they have in it,” Tarry said. “Because they’ve done that in such an open way and because they have such a desire to understand our world we’ve been able to share our vulnerabilities, too.”

“I can’t emphasize enough that it’s the trust around the table that’s allowing this work to move forward,” Tarry said.



This month, the Bravo Team awarded seven Gems and two team awards.

Halka Gordon from Justice Services received a Gem for “dropping everything and providing 300-plus brochures just like that” for the three-day Tucson Meet Yourself event.

Caryn Strober from Court Appointed Special Advocates received a Gem for “going the extra mile and stepping right in” to present at a state CASA training when the presenter didn’t show up.

Kim Chumley from Detention Services was awarded a GEM for the work she did preparing for the National Commission on Correctional Health Care’s lengthy accreditation process. She worked collaboratively with the medical team.

Adela Linares, Elizabeth Parker and Sylvia Franco from Probation Services were awarded Gems for helping make sure the Multi-System Summit Training a success. Part of their duties included putting together more than 80 binders of pertinent information

Gary Alvarez from Probation Services was given a Gem for updating the full process and operations relating to the Title IV-E program, which allows the court to be reimbursed for money spent on treatment and other programs.

Natalie Carrillo, Halka Gordon, Gilbert Delgado, Joy Johnson and Karil Yamamoto from Justice Services, IT and Detention Services received a Team award for planning and executing the Oct. 25 school superintendents and One Court Steering committee event. “This group of individuals sets forth their commitment to the court and its mission by working together to achieve a setting that is professional and comfortable for the presenters and audience.”

Detention Kitchen staff members **Maria Castillo, Kimberly Larkin, Robbin Miranda, Carla Roach, Carlos Salazar, Randall Taylor and the children participating in the culinary program** were given a Team award for providing Family Drug Court and Celebrating Families participants with “tasty” cookies and cupcakes.

Questions about the Program?

Call one of the following:

Maureen Accurso (Family Drug Court)
740-4780

Julie Auvil (Human Resources) 740-4763

Gilbert Delgado (ITSD) 724-9232

Sarah Espinoza (Calendaring Services) 243-2219

John Gauger (Children & Family Services) 243-2244

Joy Johnson (Detention) 740-4785

Guy McLee (Detention) 243-2252

Ramona Panas (CASA) 740-2069

Lynn Parente (Probation) 740-2066

Mona Ramirez (JAA) 740-4485

Christina Reyna (Finance) 740-4701

Odds & Ends

Upcoming Events

Y.A.R.D.S Graduation — Dec. 7

Trauma Audit — Dec. 16 -Dec. 18

Detention Decoration Event — Dec. 18

Employee Recognition Lunch -Dec. 19

Christmas — Dec. 25



Milestones

Elaine Felix, detention, 5 years

Anne Chamberlin, Child & Family Services — 10 years

Ronald Sereno, probation — 15 years

Mary Anne Nelson — 25 years

Did You Know?

You can order library books online and arrange to pick them up in our detention center library?

Any staff member who works here and has a library card can order up to 15 items - books, DVDs, CDs, electronic books - at a time, said librarian William Bevill. The items are paged from libraries all over Pima County and they can be picked up at the juvenile detention center, which is listed as "JDC" on the library catalogue.

Just be mindful that items are only delivered once a week and you need to call the library at X4565 to make sure William or Gennifer Shafer are available when you want to pick them up.

Don't have a library card? William and Gennifer can help you with that as well!

Sarah Espinoza, who works in Court and Calendaring Services, has been picking up books here for more than six years.

"It's so easy because it's online," Sarah said. "I love, love, love the library."

Here's the link: <http://www.library.pima.gov/>

Voices

Since everyone at the PCJCC is here to help strengthen kids and families, it seems only appropriate that the kids in our Detention Center have a platform from which to speak. We'll be asking them questions periodically and printing some of their answers here.

What is your favorite holiday tradition and why?

"Christmas. All my family gets together and eat honey ham for dinner" - Damien

"I love Christmas. I have a big family. We all get together and open presents and have Christmas dinner" - Alex

"Thanksgiving. We eat good food and be with family. We also have types of pies. My favorite is pecan" - Michael

"Christmas Eve and just being with family. We have Christmas Eve dinner at my girlfriends and then dinner at my house on Christmas" - Roger

"New Years is my favorite. It's a time for new beginnings" - Isaiah

"Christmas because everyone wakes up at midnight to open presents. We also have turkey dinner" - Lee

"Thanksgiving and Christmas". My whole family gets together and has turkey dinner" - Marco

Bring Your Pet to Work Day



Graduations



We had three more kids pass their GED tests while staying in our Detention Center in November. The kids memorialized their accomplishment by placing their handprints on our GED wall. They also were congratulated during a small graduation ceremony.



Judge Jane Butler also saw some success in Youth Recovery Court in November. Three kids graduated from the substance abuse program. Speeches were made, well-wishes extended and goodies were distributed.

Bravo Celebrations



The Bravo team threw two small parties to thank co-workers for all of the hard work they do on a routine basis. The first party was held for detention staff in the detention center and the second was held upstairs for everyone else. The two chocolate fountains were a huge success!



PCJCC suffers some losses

The Pima County Juvenile Court lost three family members in November.

Manny Florez, a probation supervisor, died Nov. 26. He retired from the court after more than 25 years, but re-joined us in July 2012.

Deputy Court Administrator Dodie Ledbetter said Manny was exceptionally good at training young probation officers and empowering parents.

Because he had a knack for finding unique aspects to cases he was always coming up with new ways to promote and encourage positive behavior, Dodie said.

Solid, reliable, positive, considerate and thoughtful were the words Brenda Flynn, probation division director, used to describe Manny.

“He really believed in what the court does,” Brenda said. “He knew kids and families. He was always looking for ways for people to be better.”

Al Shenmen also died last month.

Shenmen was a clinician with the Make a Change program, a detention center program that prepares kids for substance abuse treatment.

The Make a Change program was created in August 2007 and Shenmen was there from the start, Dodie said.

“He had a unique approach to working with the kids and their families. It was all about the heart,” Dodie said. “He grabbed the hearts of the kids and the parents. The kids absolutely loved him.”

The court also mourns the loss of Terry Burke, a long time probation officer who was a placement team coordinator before retiring from the PCJCC several years ago.

Terry was especially good with parents, a supportive supervisor and a woman with a good sense of humor, Dodie said.

She also had a knack for assigning cases to probation officers based on their particular strengths, Dodie said.

Don't forget to check us out on these social media sites:



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For more information about the court, visit our website: <http://www.pcjcc.pima.gov/>