

# INSIDE OUT FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Inside *this* Issue: PUPPIES FOR PAROLE • ENHANCED CARE UNITS • INVESTIGATIONS • OFFENDER CANTEEN PURCHASES • VISITING TIP • DID YOU KNOW? • OFFENDER CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM UPDATE

## Puppies for Parole

The Missouri Department of Corrections and offenders have just celebrated the adoption of 250 dogs that have completed the Puppies for Parole program! Last year in Missouri more than 46,000 homeless canines were euthanized. Through continued work and expansion of the program, Puppies for Parole continues to chip away at that number by producing loving, obedient, adoptable dogs trained by offender handlers in the state's correctional facilities.

Many of these dogs have been abused or severely neglected, and have significant hurdles to surpass. Through gentle guidance and patience, the offenders are able to help the dogs to overcome those issues and to become loving and adoptable pets. During that process, the offenders also gain confidence, develop marketable skills, and are rewarded with the recognition that they made a valuable contribution to society and have enriched the lives of the dogs and those who adopt them. Once the dogs have successfully completed the program and passed the final obedience test, they are returned to their original shelter to be placed for adoption. Many are adopted by staff or offender families who provide

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***"We are grateful for the success this program has had on saving dogs, the impact it has had on offenders and the positive difference it has made in the atmosphere at our prisons. It is our hope to continue to help people in need who can benefit from dog companionship."***

- George A. Lombardi, Director  
Missouri Department of Corrections

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them with a loving home. Puppies for Parole uses no general revenue funds and operates solely on donations from private citizens and entities, staff and offender organizations.

This program has had a profound effect on both the offenders and staff, improving the overall atmosphere of each facility. Ultimately, this has been a very successful opportunity for the department, offenders, and shelters to work together for a very worthy cause. •

## Enhanced Care Units

Over the past several years, the Missouri Department of Corrections has seen an increase in the aging offender population. Clearly incarcerated individuals with moderate medical and mental health issues are in need of services to accommodate their ongoing medical and cognitive needs, physical vulnerabilities, as well as the potential for a diminished lifestyle.

As a result, the department's first "Enhanced Care Unit" (ECU) opened at the Jefferson City Correctional Center on January 1, 2011, to help manage the financial and logistical operations that comes with this population. This 36-bed unit will house aging or disabled offenders in wheelchairs, requiring oxygen or dealing with dementia. Each offender assigned to the ECU will have access to all services, such as canteen items, library, meals, educational, vocational and reentry programs and equal access to religious services and recreation activities. In addition, they will receive assistance, as necessary, with grooming, socialization and daily activities. This enables staff to more closely monitor the individual's medical needs, meals and their health, overall. It is hoped to expand this initiative to other institutions soon. •

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- To receive a copy via mail, call (573) 526-2695 or write to Missouri Department of Corrections, Constituent Services Office, P.O. Box 236, Jefferson City, MO 65102

## Investigations

At times it becomes necessary to place an offender in the segregation unit for investigatory purposes. Although this can be a hardship on the offender and the offender's family and friends, in a correctional environment, it is understandably necessary at times. This temporary assignment is not intended to harass, rather, it is an attempt to identify any potential risk to the individual, the offender population, staff or institutional security. This assignment is sanctioned by statute and department procedures.

An offender can be placed under investigation for a variety of reasons. It should be noted that when an offender is under investigation, staff are not able to release any details about the investigation. Be assured investigations staff attempt to ensure investigations are completed as quickly and efficiently as possible; however, there are times when the complexity of the case requires additional work or other more critical investigations take precedence. Once an offender is placed under investigation, it will not be concluded until staff have thoroughly investigated and resolved the issue at hand.

The best way to obtain information about the situation is to maintain contact with the offender, as they will receive general information and notice about their status, and they will have contact with investigators or institutional staff. The offender should direct any questions to their review committee or to the investigative office. •

## Offender Canteen Purchases

The Offender Finance Office is always looking for ways to improve services to the offender population and to save money and improve operations for the department, too. The most recent innovation not only saves time and money, but offers an improvement to canteen operations for offenders and staff.

Offenders at Jefferson City Correctional Center were the first to pilot the new Canteen Point of Sale system in January. Using a kiosk located in the housing unit wing, offenders are able to pre-order canteen items for their regular weekly or monthly canteen purchases. They can change the order, add items if additional money is received on their account, or delete items as they wish. They are notified if an item is out of stock and allowed to purchase a substitute as well. On spend day, the orders for that unit are submitted to the canteen and filled. The offenders who fill the orders don't have access to the names of the offenders placing the orders, which prevents them from damaging canteen items or adding extra items to the orders, enhancing security. The items are scanned to ensure accuracy, then bagged, sealed, and, at some locations, delivered to the offender in the housing unit.

The Canteen Point of Sale System is scheduled for implementation at all institutions by July 1, 2011. Offenders will receive training on the use of this system via the institution's informational television channel. •

### \*\*\* Update \*\*\*

## Offender Classification System

As some of you may have heard, the Department of Corrections has been conducting research towards developing a new offender external classification instrument. While that work remains underway, a final decision to adopt a new classification instrument and implementation is not yet determined. Updates will be provided in this newsletter, and to the offender population, as they become available. •

## Visiting Tip

Visits are one of the most anticipated events for an offender and their family. It is important to take time to mentally prepare for the visit, as the trip, visitor processing and expectations can be emotionally draining. Arrive for the visit well-rested, relaxed and in a good mood, and make sure you plan ahead to have positive things to discuss. This will help to make your time together a meaningful and memorable experience for everyone. •

## Did You Know?

The Department of Corrections competitively purchases large quantities of food, in bulk, in an effort to save on food costs. Food costs average \$2.19 per offender, per day. Did you know the department serves about 2,621,276 meals per month? To do this, they must purchase, on average, at least ...

76,010 gallons of milk,  
162,611 loaves of bread,  
50,000 lbs of sugar,  
33,000 lbs of ground beef  
or hamburger patties, and  
61,000 lbs of margarine,

Favorite meals: hamburgers and the "truck driver's special," which consists of breakfast food. •