

Lehigh County Juvenile Justice System Community Report

Community Service Edition ■ Spring 2004

Annual Community Alternative Work Service (C.A.W.S.) Program and Volunteer Recognition Luncheon

The Community Alternative Work Service (C.A.W.S.) Program of The Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department held its Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon at the Barristers Club in Allentown. Over 210 non-profit agencies, organizations and municipalities were recognized for serving as worksites for probation youth to complete their court-ordered community service. The dedication and willingness of these groups has enabled the department to hold the youth accountable to their victims and community. Youths within the C.A.W.S. Program have beautified parks, helped renovate non-profit buildings, built foot bridges in parks, cleaned streets, grown vegetables for the needy, shoveled snow for the elderly and served their community in thousands of other ways. We believe that, through completing hours of service, they feel a greater sense of attachment to their community and in turn want to protect it rather than offend it. Each project, even the ones that appear to be mundane, instill responsibility. We have been fortunate to be involved in projects and programs that develop competencies in our youth. This list includes, but is not limited to, our Young Offenders Program for 10- to 12-year-olds, tutoring programs at Lehigh Carbon Community College and Moravian College, LifeLine — an impromptu educational theatre troupe supervised by our department —



Volunteer tutoring program at LCCC

numerous hands-on construction projects as well as Computers for Kids, a non-profit agency which rebuilds computers for children. We are also always looking for ways to tap into the creativity of our youth. This past holiday season a group of clients from the south side of the county created and decorated pine wreaths. Each client created several wreaths in which they could take pride. The \$200 proceeds from their sale benefited St. Mary's Shelter, a facility for pregnant teenage girls.

We routinely assign clients to worksites individually or, at the request of a site, send four to six youths, and a probation work crew supervisor, to tackle larger scale projects. No matter what the assignment, youths are held to a strict set of respectful behavior rules. They are expected to demonstrate a good work ethic and complete quality work for a site.

In the past year, a total of 1,021 youths completed 46,325 hours of community service through the C.A.W.S. Program. At \$5.15 per hour, this is equivalent to over \$238, 573.00 in labor that Lehigh County agencies, organizations and municipalities have received from youths completing community service. During the school year 286 youths completed 3,138 hours of community service at various worksites while serving out-of-school suspensions. During school hours, numerous local agencies and municipalities supervised suspended youths as they completed much needed work at their sites. Their partnership assists our department to hold probation youth accountable and provides them with positive activities to be involved in while out of school. ■



Mission of the Juvenile Justice System

*"Juvenile Justice:
Community Protection,
Victim Restoration,
Youth Redemption."*

Community Protection refers to the right of all Pennsylvania citizens to be and feel safe from crime.

Victim Restoration emphasizes that, in Pennsylvania, a juvenile who commits a crime harms the victim of the crime and the community, and thereby incurs an obligation to repair that harm to the greatest extent possible.

Youth Redemption embodies the belief that juvenile offenders in Pennsylvania have strengths, are capable of change, can earn redemption, and can become responsible and productive members of their community.

Furthermore, all of the services designed and implemented to achieve this mission and all hearings and decisions under the Juvenile Act — indeed all aspects of the juvenile justice system — must be provided in a fair and unbiased manner. The United States and Pennsylvania Constitutions guarantee rights and privileges to all citizens, regardless of race, color, creed, gender, national origin or handicap.

Highlights in C.A.W.S. in 2003

The C.A.W.S. Program of Lehigh County Juvenile Probation was recognized in 2000 as the Pennsylvania Court Operated Program of the Year. It continues to operate as a respected program in both urban and rural communities of the county. The larger scale accomplishments of C.A.W.S. in 2003 can be highlighted through noting some of the many projects completed by our youth, one of which is the national revegetation project in the Little Gap area of Blue Mountain. The C.A.W.S. program partnered with the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor to make this work crew project an environmental success.

September marked the start of a farmhouse renovation on the property of the Beethoven-Waldheim Club. Over 750 hours were completed by our youths in remodeling several of the rooms and updating some of the plumbing. Our youths' involvement in this project benefited the Beethoven-Waldheim Club and at the same time provided them with the opportunity to learn carpentry skills first-hand.

Each year our community gardens, known as "Gardens of Hope," exceed our expectations. Three vegetable gardens located in Allentown, Whitehall and Washington Township are planted with donated plants and seeds from local businesses and greenhouses. A fourth garden, a butterfly garden, is located at Cedar Beach in Allentown. Penn State Master Gardeners have volunteered their time and guidance to make our gardens a "growing success". Our youths are responsible for the planting, maintenance and harvesting of the produce. This year, over 3,500 pounds



"Garden of Hope" tended by youthful offenders

of produce were donated to local food banks. Rodale Press featured our Allentown garden, located on the grounds of the Second Harvest Food Bank, in one of their national publications.

"Grace From the Garden; Changing the World One Garden At a Time," by Deborah Landwehr Engle, included many of the journal entries from youths who spent hours within this first garden. We are honored to have this recognition as one of only twenty-two chosen to be featured in the book.

On any given day you can drive by the Drop-Off Center on Martin Luther King Drive and 15th Street and see probation youth sorting recyclable materials. Over 5,000,000 pounds of cardboard, paperboard, glass, plastic, newspapers, magazines, office paper, aluminum cans, tin and scrap metal

were recycled at the center this year. Not only are the youths working there to pay back the community, but also to raise money for victims. A portion of the revenue goes into our restitution fund. Probationers owing restitution, who are unable to find

employment, are paid to do community service equivalent to what they owe to their victims. After they work off their restitution, checks are sent to their victims. This program holds youths accountable



Work crew working in Upper Macungie Township

as well as ensuring that victims will receive reimbursement. This year, through our restitution program, we have helped 54 victims receive reimbursement for losses they suffered as a result of juvenile crime.

A total of \$25,000 was reimbursed this past year. Since the program's inception in 1985, \$332,000 has been paid to 1,484 victims.

Recently, we examined alternative ways of supporting our restitution program through a fundraising weekend at the Game Preserve and a Golf Tournament. Last Year's golf outing was held in May at Olde Homestead Golf Course in New Tripoli. Almost \$4,000 was raised from sponsor and participation fees. We are planning our next tournament at Olde Homestead on May 21st 2004. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, donating a prize for our raffle, or golfing the day of the event, please contact the Juvenile Probation Office at (610) 782-3143. ■

Youth working on revegetation project in the Little Gap area of Blue Mountain



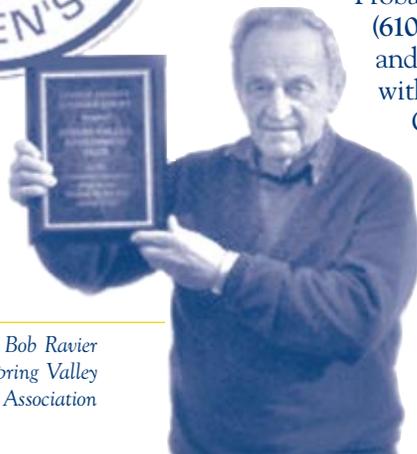
Moments of Special Recognition at the Banquet

Each year we select a site as worksite of the year. This year we honored the Spring Valley Sportsmen's Association. Through the efforts of one of their members, Bob Ravier, youths have completed 587 hours there within the last year. We have completed renovations on their clubhouse, construction on their fish hatchery, work on a stream, and numerous other landscaping projects. Bob and the Spring Valley Sportsmen's Association have been a positive influence on our youth since 1999. Bob has been a dedicated supporter of C.A.W.S. and has been instrumental in recruiting other organizations to join the list of non-profits we serve.

We also recognized Whitehall High School, Upper Macungie Township and the Salvation Army Hospitality House for their participation in our program with certificates of appreciation. Whitehall High School has been very cooperative with accepting many of our youth for projects in the northern part of the County. Upper Macungie Township offered work crews over 600 hours of landscaping work which included building a footbridge in Ricky Park. Salvation Army's Hospitality House supervised independently assigned youths throughout the year and participated in our school suspension program.



Award-winner Bob Ravier of the Spring Valley Sportsmen's Association



Howard Paul, one of our volunteers from our Lehigh Carbon Community College and Moravian College Mentoring/Tutoring Programs, was honored for the leading role he has held within both programs. He has brought valuable experience, motivation and a positive influence to each of the clients he has mentored.

One of our youths who completed his hours in the Washington Township Garden was recognized for his positive work ethic, his sincere interest in seeing the plants thrive and helping our program secure a grant to purchase fruit trees. He achieved goals above and beyond our expectations. For his senior project, he chose to continue to volunteer at the garden after completing his court-ordered hours.

We always look for new projects, unique ways for our youth to benefit the community and educational opportunities for our youths to learn new skills. All of these things are possible when, through our travels, phone calls and meetings, we meet caring and talented community members who volunteer to supervise our youths while they fulfill their community service hours. Whether the project is for only a few hours or one that continues throughout the year, the impact that these volunteers have as role-models lasts much longer than any number of ordered hours.

If you would like to join our department as a volunteer or know of a non-profit agency which could benefit from being involved in our program, please contact Juvenile Probation at (610) 782-3143 and ask to speak with one of the C.A.W.S. staff. ■

C.A.W.S. Worksite of the Year Recipients

- 1989 – Trexler Middle School
- 1990 – Daybreak
- 1991 – Parkland School District
- 1992 – Lehigh Valley Food Bank
- 1993 – Sixth Street Shelter
- 1994 – City of Allentown
- 1995 – Parkland School District
- 1996 – East Penn School District
- 1997 – Northern Lehigh School District
- 1998 – Habitat for Humanity
- 1999 – The Caring Place
- 2000 – Allentown Boys Club
- 2001 – Goodwill Industries
- 2002 – City of Allentown, Office of Recycling
- 2003 – Spring Valley Sportsmen's Association

C.A.W.S. STAFF

- Supervisor - Thomas Ganser
- C.A.W.S. Director - Brian Muschlitz
- Assistant C.A.W.S. Director - Eva Frederick
- Probation Officer Aide - Susan Sedora
- Part-time Work Crew Supervisors
 - Annette Alves
 - Michael Eremus
 - Maribel Garcia
 - Sarah Lichtenwalner
 - Jonathan Lilly
 - Don Martin
 - Jennifer Parrinello
 - Todd Reath
 - Ted Sell
 - Augustin Villegas
 - Todd Werley

Newsletter articles written by Eva Frederick



Lehigh County
Juvenile Probation Department
455 W. Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101

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Community Report

Christmas Party for Children of Mosser Village Family Center

Lehigh County Juvenile Probation was honored to work again with the Mosser Village Family Center and the Allentown Boys and Girls Clubs in bringing Santa to town for over 60 needy families on Allentown's East Side. On December 11, 2003, a holiday party was held at the East Allentown Fire Company. It was an evening of activities and crafts for the families of the Mosser Village Family Center. The children were engaged in creating holiday trinkets with volunteers from Lehigh Carbon Community College as parents socialized. Food and goodies were donated by local restaurants, grocery stores and businesses. The highlight of the evening was Santa's arrival. He took center stage to give each of the children presents



Family holiday party at East Allentown Fire Company hall

which were generously purchased by members of the Bethel Bible Fellowship Church, juvenile probation staff or other county employees. The children were filled with bubbling anticipation as they waited for their turn to be called to sit on Santa's lap. Santa posed for a photo with each of the children before he had to return to the North Pole.

Many of our staff took part in preparing for this party in the weeks prior and/or helped the evening of the event because they wanted to grant these children their special Christmas wishes. Our probation youths assisted prior to the party by making decorations, wrapping presents, and by helping to set up and clean up. No matter what part one had that evening one was bound to be touched by the spirit of the season. The sparkle in the childrens' eyes and the "thank-yous" were more than ample payment for those efforts. ▣

Want a Great Reason to Play Golf?

The Lehigh County Juvenile Probation Department is sponsoring the Second Annual Victim Benefit Open Golf Tournament on May 21, 2004 at Olde Homestead Golf Course in beautiful New Tripoli.

Golfers and sponsors are needed! Cost per golfer is \$80 which includes a chicken and steak dinner. For more information regarding sponsorships and tournament details, please contact the Juvenile Probation Department at **610-782-3143**.

All proceeds
benefit victims
of juvenile crimes.