Arkansas hosts SSCA summer conference

“Thank you for what you do,” said Governor Asa Hutchinson to those gathered for the opening ceremony of the forty-sixth annual summer training conference of the Southern States Correctional Association (SSCA) held in Little Rock last week.

SSCA is a ‘family’ of professionals from 14 states representing corrections agencies. The membership also in-
What serves as a symbol of freedom to you? For many Americans today, it might be the United States flag, the Declaration of Independence, or our service members in uniform. For an inmate, perhaps anything beyond the fence looks like freedom. For the 12 million immigrants who passed through Ellis Island federal immigration processing from 1892 to 1954, the Statue of Liberty was a symbol of freedom.

While visiting Ellis Island last month, I was struck by how difficult it really was for those who had just braved the difficult boat ride. And, how similar our institutions are to the processing of immigrants on that island.

Arrivals were asked over two dozen questions, including name, occupation, and how much money was in their possession. The U.S. government wanted new arrivals to have money to get a new start. An unskilled worker was often rejected due to the possibility of becoming a public charge. Those with observable health problems or diseases were sent home or held in the island's hospital for extended periods of time. It is estimated that over three thousand would-be immigrants died in that hospital. About two percent of the arrivals were completely denied admission and sent back to their home countries. Reasons included chronic contagious disease, criminal background, epilepsy, simple-minded or insanity. Some of the forms of testing included drawing diamond shapes, a difficult task for someone who had never held a pencil.

Likewise, it will be difficult to apply for a job online or know how to treat people in the free world with exposure to computers and examples of professional staff.

The transition to freedom is often a difficult one. After a voyage across an ocean where you are trapped on a ship with strangers in cramped quarters, you are welcomed to the free world. At Ellis Island, there were long lines, housing units, an intake area, medical screenings, examinations, dining halls, recreation and visitation areas. Immigrants were not free to come and go, and those that were detained due to a family member being in the hospital were allowed outside for one hour a day in a recreation yard. Sound familiar?

Welcome, but as on Ellis Island after being greeted with the promise of Lady Liberty on the adjacent Liberty Island, there are conditions. There are conditions of parole, registering or checking in with law enforcement, the need to find employment and housing, transportation, and establishing a support system. Reentry plans are being designed and expanded to minimize that challenge.

The poem written of the Statue of Liberty includes the lines, "give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" (from The New Colossus by Emma Lazarus)

I have not seen many signs or symbols welcoming ex-felons into communities, businesses or neighborhoods. Just as criminals were rejected at Ellis Island and sent back, many felons have returned to ADC; however, there is a concerted effort to stop that cycle. Many areas have established coalitions such as the Central Arkansas Reentry Coalition that meets at the Willie Hinton Center in Little Rock. Businesses such as Goodwill have established training programs to assist offenders with interview skills and job placement. The Governor is hosting a Restore Hope Summit, August 25-26, as a call to action for Faith Leaders on Foster Care and Prison Re-Entry.

Our efforts include the Re-entry tab found on the ADC website. This same material is available in the inmate libraries. It is hoped that this section of the ADC website will serve as a quick reference resource for information to aid both the families of inmates being released from ADC and the inmates as they return to the community. Links are provided to a wide variety of agencies and service providers for many of the immediate concerns that inmates face when they return to the free world. There are Reentry Accountability Coaches at every unit working to assist inmates with a re-entry plan, and outside agencies signing up those nearing release for healthcare coverage.

Here’s a thought: what if our re-entry program was so effective that a former inmate, or even former inmates, did something recognizably positive in society? After all, among those immigrants arriving at Ellis Island and greeted by the Statue of Liberty were Irving Berlin, Max Factor, Rudolph Valentino, and Bob Hope.
rent for their stay at the facility and any existing child support is also taken out. Some inmates are able to save while there, and leave with money in their pocket, according to Center Supervisor Larry Cauley.

Cauley said the facility stays full most of the time. He said their work release program has ventured out into other counties. For instance, a few years ago TRCC inmates worked to clean up the town of Mena after tornado damage. And they recently filled 3,200 sand bags for a flooding river.

“It’s a win/win situation,” said Cauley. “Inmates earn, employers pay less labor and don’t have to cover medical insurance.

“If the inmate takes advantage of it, he can get a new start. That’s what it’s all about.”

He said that in order to get into the program, there has to be a 42-month limit left on their time. Non-eligibility requirements: capital or first degree murder, kidnapping, two or more aggravated robberies, any sex offense, no life sentence, no death sentence, no attempted escape charges, and no detainers filed.

Lt. Robert Morgan has worked for all five wardens the facility has had.

“But this is my last one,” he said with a smile, as he plans to retire soon. And since there are only 30 employees in the building, most of them wear many hats. For instance, Morgan is EP Coordinator, Transportation, Regional Maintenance Lieutenant, Armor, and Phone Monitor.

Pam Adcock has been with TRCC her entire career (since 1985) with ADC, first as an officer. She is presently the Warden’s secretary, but like the others, has many hats - ACA Manager, Unit HR Manager, Timekeeper, Mailroom Clerk, Visitation Clerk, and Unit Grievance Officer.

Clearly, the building is home to much activity. One interesting part of the building is the old intensive care wing of the hospital. It is now the dining area. Meals and maintenance are contracted by the Arkansas Community Correction which has offices in the same building.

All in all, the TRCC seems to be a well-oiled machine with a positive influence.

Searching for an escapee  ADC employees search for an inmate who escaped from a worksite in Pine Bluff. He was captured the following day in Pulaski County.

People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross
includes law enforcement officers and others interested in corrections. SSCA offers the opportunity to train and to network with other corrections personnel.

The Governor said he is thankful for his law enforcement experience because it gives him a particular perspective about the importance of corrections. He gave three of his own observations about the field of corrections.

“First, it ought to be highly recognized,” said Hutchinson, and secondly the public “has little understanding of what you do.”

His third observation is that we are in a time of change, and therefore he has called for a summit. He said we cannot, from a state perspective, reach a 100 percent solution, and he wants to bring the faith-based community in for help.

The conference was the last SSCA hurrah as the acting president for retired ADC Director Ray Hobbs.

“We are all, all states, experiencing challenges,” said Hobbs. “This conference is good for that.”

Corrections Board member Dr. Dubs Byers, keynote speaker for the General Session talked about the changing face of leadership in corrections, in the areas of care and custody, construction, training, technology, and treatment programs. About training, he said when he started his corrections career he had no training, and thankfully that has really changed.

He stressed, however, the importance of taking it upon yourself to train. For instance, read.

“There is no excuse for remaining as you are,” Byers said.

Byers spoke of the incredible growth in technology. "It has been my observation that corrections has gone kicking and screaming into technology," he said. “We still have a challenge, let’s go with it.”

ADC Director Wendy Kelly spoke at the Director’s Panel. She applauded her staff, and was positive about the mission of SSCA.

“We need to stay in communication between agencies,” she said, “because we all have the same goal, that is public safety.”
New assignments

Major Jeffery Deen will be transferring to the East Arkansas Regional Unit to join Warden Gaylon Lay, Deputy Wardens Earl and Warner, and Major Conner. Deen will be transferring to EARU along with her husband.

Major Maxcie Foote will be transferring to the Wrightsville Complex to join a new Superintendent, Deputy Wardens Bradley and Aiken, and Majors James Shipman and Mary Cobbs.

Major Maurice Williams will be transferring to Varner to join Warden Randy Watson, Deputy Wardens Andrews and Inman, and Major Kenneth Bolden.

Major Carl Stout will be transferring to the Maximum Security Unit in Tucker to join Warden Danny Burl, Deputy Warden Steve Outlaw, and Major Danny Crook.

Major LaSaundra Malone will be transferring to the Randall L. Williams Unit to join Warden Mark Cashion, Deputy Wardens John Craig and Antwon Emsweller, and Major Randy Straughn.

These transfers will be effective August 16.

Around ADC

PIP dog a star
Paws in Prison made it to the stage as former PIP dog, Oliver, played Toto in the summer musical at the South Arkansas Arts Center.

Singing
Chaplain Jeff Henig, Varner Chaplain, and his group called First Day, sang the National Anthem at the St. Louis Cardinal vs Atlanta Braves game on July 24.
Stay hydrated, it’s good for your heart

When the temperatures rise, getting enough to drink is important whether you’re playing sports, traveling or just sitting in the sun.

And it’s critical for your heart health.

Keeping the body hydrated helps the heart more easily pump blood through the blood vessels to the muscles. And, it helps the muscles work efficiently.

“If you’re well hydrated, your heart doesn’t have to work as hard,” said John Batson, M.D, a sports medicine physician with Lowcountry Spine & Sport in Hilton Head Island, S.C., and an American Heart Association volunteer.

Dehydration can be a serious condition that can lead to problems ranging from swollen feet or a headache to life-threatening illnesses such as heat stroke.

How much water do you need?

What does being well hydrated mean? The amount of water a person needs depends on climatic conditions, clothing worn and exercise intensity and duration, Batson said.

A person who perspires heavily will need to drink more than someone who doesn’t. Certain medical conditions, such as diabetes or heart disease, may also mean you need to drink more water. People with cystic fibrosis have high concentrations of sodium in their sweat and also need to use caution to avoid dehydration. And some medications can act as diuretics, causing the body to lose more fluid.

Thirst isn’t the best indicator that you need to drink.

“If you get thirsty, you’re already dehydrated,” Batson said.

Batson said the easiest thing to do is pay attention to the color of your urine. Pale and clear means you’re well hydrated. If it’s dark, drink more fluids.

If you want to know exactly how much fluid you need, Batson recommends weighing yourself before and after exercise, to see how much you’ve lost through perspiration. It’s a particular good guide for athletes training in the hot summer months.

“For every pound of sweat you lose, that’s a pint of water you’ll need to replenish,” Batson said, adding that it’s not unusual for a high school football player, wearing pads and running through drills, to lose five pounds or more of sweat during a summer practice.

Not sweating during vigorous physical activity can be a red flag that you’re dehydrated to the point of developing heat exhaustion.

Water is best.

For most people, water is the best thing to drink to stay hydrated. Sources of water also include foods, such fruits and vegetables which contain a high percentage of water. Sports drinks with electrolytes, may be useful for people doing high intensity, vigorous exercise in very hot weather, though they tend to be high in added sugars and calories.

“IT’s healthier to drink water while you’re exercising, and then when you’re done, eat a healthy snack like orange slices, bananas or a small handful of unsalted nut,” Batson said.

He cautioned against fruit juices or sugary drinks, such as soda. “They can be hard on your stomach if you’re dehydrated,” he said.

It’s also best to avoid drinks containing caffeine, which acts as a diuretic and causes you to lose more fluids.

Batson says drinking water before you exercise or go out into the sun is an important first step.

“Drinking water before is much more important,” he said. “Otherwise, you’re playing catch-up and your heart is straining.”

Not just for athletes or exercise.

Hydration isn’t just important during physical activity. Sitting in the sun on a hot or humid day, even if you aren’t exercising, can also cause your body to need more fluids.

People who have a heart condition, are older than 50 or overweight may also have to take extra precautions.

It’s also a good thing to keep tabs on your hydration if you’re traveling.

“You might sweat differently if you’re in a different climate,” Batson said.

Excerpts from www.heart.org
As a reporter, I interviewed countless people suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) – those who survived the Albert Pike flood, those who cut their way out of their houses after Katrina hit New Orleans, victims of crime, war veterans …

In an effort to better understand the people I wrote about, I researched PTSD. And, eventually, I thought I had a pretty good idea as to what it must be like.

I was so very wrong.

Six months after I nearly died in the Chihuahuan Desert, I landed in a psychologist's office.

"PTSD," she said.

"But why?" I asked. "I mean, I survived. My husband survived."

And then I began listing the many people I'd met over the years. Couldn't she see that what had happened to them was far worse than what happened to me? I told her about Candace and Kerri, two mothers who had lost their husbands and young children in the Albert Pike Flood. Certainly, those two women were more "worthy" of PTSD than me.

Not true, my psychologist said. And over the next several months, I started to believe her.

Here's the thing — I always thought of PTSD as a mental or emotional condition. It never occurred to me that it also could be physiological.

It's difficult to explain, but I'll give it shot: When you go through a traumatic experience, the most primitive, reptilian part of your brain catalogues certain elements of that experience. And from then on, it will respond automatically to those elements, even though the "thinking" part of the brain knows that you're not really in danger.

These triggers prompt a surge of adrenaline. Now, if you were actually in danger, that fight-or-flight response would come in handy. But most of the time, these are unnecessary adrenaline surges. Worse, they are sustained, sometimes lasting for days, weeks, or even months.

One of my triggers is the sound of a helicopter. Sounds odd, I know. But while I was alone out there in the desert, the staccato sound of a rotor was constant. And so my brain still perceives helicopters to be an indication of danger.

After two days and two nights in the desert, my husband and I decided to split up. Actually, I ordered him to leave me. He could go on. I couldn't. So on Friday afternoon, Oct. 4, 2013, I crawled under a mesquite tree, where I dozed throughout the evening.

Late that night, I awoke to the sound of a helicopter. All night long, it flew. I scooted out from under the tree, hoping to be seen. But the helicopter's searchlight never illuminated me.

The next day, the chopper went up again. By late afternoon, I had incorporated it into my hallucinations.

On Oct. 6, search teams on the ground found me. Two hours later, they carried me to an area they had cleared for a helicopter. As I drifted in and out of conscious, I listened to the increasingly loud drone of the approaching chopper.

Even now, nearly two years later, the sound of a helicopter floods me with panic. I've tried to desensitize myself. For months, I watched – and listened to – helicopters on YouTube. But as my psychologist pointed out, it's one thing to deliberately listen to that sound. It's entirely another to be caught off-guard by it.

During the winter of 2014, I realized that cold was another trigger. Daytime in the desert was scorching. But at night, temperatures plummeted to the low 50s. My last night out there, the temperature dropped to 37 degrees.

My response to the cold that night was raw and primitive. I clawed and scrabbled at the dirt in an effort to burrow into the ground.

I was hypothermic when searchers found me. It took two days for the bouts of convulsive shivering to stop.

The winter after my rescue, I realized I was now actually afraid of the cold. The thought of leaving my house prompted one panic attack after another. That's when I finally sought help from my doctor and a psychologist.

I know that correctional officers often suffer from PTSD. That's why I wanted to share my own struggle. If you are one of those officers, please know that you're not "weak." And please know that there are cognitive therapies and medications that can help.

For example, I take beta blockers. Beta blockers often are used to treat high blood pressure. But they also are used for people like me because they block adrenaline.

The most important thing, however, is to recognize and acknowledge what's going on, and to seek help. You may grapple with PTSD, true. But you don’t have to let it own you.
Retirements

Capt. D.W. Tate, center seated in group photo, from the Cummins Unit retired after over 30 years with ADC. In right photo, Capt. Tate with Lt. David Kelley, and in bottom photo, Major Anthony Jackson stands beside Capt. Tate as he goes over execution steps.

Jimmy A. Smith is retiring from State employment on August 31. He is a Senior Auditor with the Compliance Division and has worked in the Compliance Division longer than anyone in its history. He has 30 years total with the State.

Three employees retired from Arkansas Correctional Industries. Mike Grimes, in photo bottom left, is presented with an appreciation plaque by Industry Administrator Bob Carter. He retires with more than 40 years with the State. Betty Bitely, middle photo, retires from the Garment Program with 12 years service to the State. And Charles Dalsis, Janitorial Program, is presented a plaque by Carter in the photo on right.
Policy Spotlight

Facts about policy and conduct

Do you have questions about ADC policies and procedures? Then send in your topics to The Advocate, and we’ll be glad to get you the facts. Contact KAT at kathlyn.atkinson@arkansas.gov with questions.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
Benefits (in part)

Health Insurance – The State of Arkansas offers a selection of health plans to all full time and part time employees that work at least 1,000 hours in a calendar year.

As a newly hired employee, you have 30 days from your hire date to enroll in a health insurance plan. Your coverage will then be effective the first day of the month following the date of application. Beginning, January, 2015, failure to complete an enrollment form and enroll in one of the health insurance plans will result in automatic enrollment in the Basic Plan. The State also has an annual enrollment period during the month of October* so that you can make any desired changes to your plan, or enroll in an insurance plan if you did not do so during your 30-day new hire period. The annual enrollment period allows employees to begin or change coverage. Any changes or new enrollments made during open enrollment will not become effective until January 1st of the next year.

COBRA – You may elect to continue medical insurance for yourself and covered dependents, up to 18 months, in the event of termination of employment. In the event of your death, divorce or if a covered child ceases to meet eligibility requirements for coverage, medical insurance coverage may be extended up to 36 months. Please note that continuation of coverage under those circumstances is not automatic – you or your dependents must generally make the election within 60 days of the event that would necessitate continued coverage. Contact the Human Resources Employee Benefits Division in the event that continued coverage is desired.

You may contact The Employee Benefits Division at 1-877-815-1017 to find out the costs of continuing your insurance through COBRA.

* However, it is scheduled in 2015 for September 1-15.

Willis H. Sargent
Outstanding Student Achievement Award

The WHS winner is James Booth, third from left, pictured with Randy Callas, Randy Shores, and Fred Campbell.

Lawrence Allen, Julian Armstrong, David Autrey, Marteisha Batemon, Justin Beck, Derrick Bell, James Booth, Haven Bryant, Michael Bryant, Sherry Canada, Terry Canterbury, Ashaley Clemmer, Mildred Clifton, David Dixon, Brett Dodds, Zachary Ellis, Karmen Flowers, Billy Harding, Rhyus Harris, Demetrus Henderson, Whitney Henderson, Isaiah Holmes, Chastyne Hopkins, Jerald Hopkins, Kendrick Ingram, Kayla Levaul, Rianna Madden, Shelia Murrell, Marquinte Nelson, Tashara Nolden, James Nowden, Kyle Park, Randy Reaves, Elizabeth Sanders, Jasmine Spencer, Barry Swift, Shanell Triplett, Sharell Triplett, Kirkland Warren, Lonnie Warren, Joseph Watson, Emmanuel Welch, and Erica Williams.

A pinning
Officer Eleanor Repper, middle, is pinned to Officer First Class by Cpl. Yolanda Smith, left, and Chief of Security Lt. Stephen Simmons.

A pinning
Captain John Spears, middle, is pinned by Major Maurice Williams, left, and Deputy Warden Steve Outlaw.
### Promotions

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<td>Aaron Chancellor</td>
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### New Hires

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<td>Alfonzo Hill</td>
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<td>Tonya Tate</td>
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<td>Tracy Wood</td>
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<td>Shelia James</td>
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The ADC Advocate newsletter is published monthly by the Communications Office for employees of the Arkansas Department of Correction. The publication strives to enhance communication and provide information on the development and achievements of this agency.

All employees are encouraged to submit articles, comments, ideas, letters and questions. The deadline for submission is tentatively set for the 15th of each month for inclusion in that month’s publication.

Please be aware that all submitted items will be subject to editing. However, every effort will be made to maintain the writer’s essential meaning.

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