

# New governor brings new leaders to DOC



Gov. Bev Perdue, left, greets DOC Secretary **Alvin Keller**, center, after his swearing-in on Jan. 6. Secretary Keller's wife, Ella, left, accompanied him at the ceremony.

RALEIGH | Gov. Beverly Perdue has been sworn in, as have the choices for her cabinet, including **Alvin W. Keller** to succeed the retired Theodis Beck as Secretary of Correction.

Keller has more than 30 years of military, judicial and government experience. Most recently, he was an assistant attorney general in the Criminal Division of the North Carolina Department of Justice.

Prior to his work in the Attorney General's Office, Keller served eight years as chief circuit military judge for the Navy-Marine Corps Trial Judiciary. As chief circuit military judge, Keller presided over 800 criminal trials and in non-jury trials, determined guilt or innocence and handed down sentencing.

From 1985 to 1996, Keller was staff judge advocate and officer-in-charge, responsible for investigating and prosecuting criminal charges.

Among the awards Keller has earned are: Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal and Induction into the Military Hall of

See **Keller**, page 4

## Chief operating officer, 3 deputies chosen for Sec. Alvin Keller's team

RALEIGH | Secretary **Alvin Keller** has established a new structure for his leadership team, involving the appointment of two new deputy secretaries.

The chief deputy secretary position has been replaced with a chief operating officer, to whom three deputy secretaries report.

**Jennie Lancaster** is chief operating officer. The deputy secretaries are **James French**, **Tracy Little** and **Frank Rogers**.

Lancaster has more than 30 years experience in the state corrections system and as a trainer for the National Institute of Corrections, providing expert assistance to various states.

She served 32 years in the N.C. Department of Correction before retiring in September 2004. From 1998 to 2004, she was Central Regional director, and



Upper left, **Jennie Lancaster**, chief operating officer. Deputy secretaries **Tracy Little** (lower left), **James French** (upper right) and **Frank Rogers** (lower right).



See **Deputies**, page 7



**Tim Moose**

### Tim Moose to lead DCC in the interim

RALEIGH | Correction Secretary **Alvin Keller** has named **Tim Moose** acting director of the Division of Community

Corrections.

Moose will oversee the operations of the state's probation and parole system while work begins to find a new leader for the division.

A 25-year probation veteran, Moose began his career in 1984 as a probation officer in Wake County. During his tenure he has managed the division's electronic house arrest program, intensive supervision programs and special operations.

Most recently, Moose was a special assistant, handling the division's legislative and policy issues.

A permanent director will not be named immediately. Secretary Keller and his staff are meeting with officials before deciding on a permanent director.



# Spotlight

## Community Corrections District 3A



Above left, **Mary Lou Sutton**, now-retired judicial district manager, and **Cathy Pittman**, office assistant IV. Above right, **Paige Wade**, probation/parole officer – Unit D; **Terry Basden**, office assistant III; and **Aubrey Wynne**, probation/parole officer – Unit A. Right, **Judy Watson**, office assistant III, and **Jeff Holoman**, chief probation/parole officer – Unit B. Below right, **Brigitte Ham** (standing), office assistant III, and **Kim Williams**, chief probation/parole officer – Unit C.



**Wallace Gibbs Jr.**, probation/parole officer III.



**Amy Clark**, probation/parole officer I.



Left, **Skipper McLawhorn**, and right, **Mary Holland**, surveillance officers.



GREENVILLE | Pitt County, a vital educational, medical, cultural and economic hub in Eastern North Carolina, comprises the Division of Community Corrections' District 3A. Greenville, the county seat, is about 85 miles east of Raleigh.

Until her recent retirement, the judicial district manager was Mary Lou Sutton. The chief probation/parole officers are **Abrey Wynne**, Unit A; **Jeff Holoman**, Unit B; **Kim Williams**, Unit C; and **Paige Wade**, Unit D.

District 3A has 39 staff members and officers who are responsible for the supervision of approximately 2,385 offenders.

They had nearly 2,545 offenders in 2007 and more than 2,740 in 2005.

### Employee of the Year

**Blane Darden**, Sex Offender Control Program officer, was named District 3A's Officer of the Year. Blane provides close supervision and works collaboratively with treatment providers to monitor the sex offender population.

### Other officers

Other offender populations and operations which have officers assigned for special duty are: EHA (electronic house arrest) -- **Wallace Gibbs**; Drug Treatment Court -- **Bill Woolard**; Domestic Violence -- **Tracy Gatling**; School Partnership -- **Kelly Tyner**; and Community Treat Group -- **Robert James**, **Larry Kanniard**, **Kelly Tyner** and **Chris Barnett**.

### No. 1 offense

Probation officers in Pitt County struggle with drug violations as the No. 1 offense for offenders under supervision. During FY 2007-2008, District 3A probation officers administered 6,950 drug screens; 29% (2,013) tested positive for illegal drugs.

Whenever possible, these offenders are referred to local treatment programs and providers of rehabilitation services. Sometimes referrals are refused by the offenders or are not feasible. Officers must report these violations to the courts or to the Parole Commission. County, state and local criminal justice officials work collaboratively searching for better solutions to the issue.

The other leading offenses are driving while impaired, traffic violations, assaults, larcenies, fraud and breaking and entering.



Left, **Jennifer Spicer** and **Tim Grigg**, probation/parole officer I's. Below, **Kelly Tyner**, probation/parole officer II; **Kevin Wade**, probation/parole officer III; and **Bill Woolard**, probation/parole officer II. Right, **Emily Clemmons**, **Erin Boyd** and **Chad Jordan**, all probation/parole officer II's.



**Spotlight**  
More on page 4.



Left, **Evan Everette**, probation/parole officer II.



Above left, **Mike Williams**, probation/parole officer III; **Angie Booker**, probation/parole officer II; **Jereme Blizzard**, probation/parole officer II; **Rick Streeter**, probation/parole officer III; and **Larry Kanniard**, probation/parole officer II. Above, Community Service coordinators **Angela Jones**, **Jill Tunnell** and **Colette Jackson**. Left, **Jim Byrum**, surveillance officer; **Bill White**, probation/parole officer II; and **Shannon Mixon**, probation/parole officer I.



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Above left, **Velvet Smith**, probation/parole officer III; **Jermaine Cromwell**, probation/parole officer I; and **Tracy Gatling**, probation/parole officer II. Above, **Eric Massey**, **Robert James** and **Keith Everette**, probation/parole officer II's. Lower left, **Michelle Isenhour**, **Shirley Mitchell**, **Kathryn Perkins**, **Monica Allsbrook**, probation/parole officer I's. Below, **Blane Darden**, probation/parole officer II; **Elvy Forrest**, probation/parole officer II; and **Chris Barnett**, probation/parole officer II.



*Odessa Gatewood takes probation helm in Person, Caswell*



**Odessa Gatewood**

ROXBORO | **Odessa B. Gatewood** has been named manager of Community Corrections for Person and Caswell counties, which comprise Judicial District 9A. She succeeds *John Lee*, who was named judicial district manager for Durham County.

Gatewood oversees the work of 18 probation officers, who supervise approximately 826 offenders. She also supervises two chief probation parole officers, one community service coordinator, one office assistant IV and other support staff.

The Warren County native began her corrections career as probation/parole officer I in 1996, rising through the ranks to chief probation/parole officer, the position she had held since July 2005.

A graduate of Shaw University, Gatewood has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master of business administration from the University of Phoenix.

Gatewood is the volunteer co-director and crime prevention specialist with the Save Our Little Ones (SOLO) program in Granville County. She also enjoys walking and spiritual literature.

George McGuire named manager of DCC District 16A



**George McGuire**

RAEFORD | **George S. McGuire** is the new manager of the state's probation and parole operations in Hoke and Scotland counties, which comprise Judicial District 16A.

As judicial district manager, McGuire oversees the work of 32 probation/parole officers who supervise approximately 1,400 offenders.

Succeeding *Diane Isaacs*, who was promoted to assistant administrator for Community Corrections' Division 2, McGuire began his career in 1980 as a probation/parole officer in Hoke County. He rose through the ranks to become a chief probation/parole officer in 2002 in Scotland County and in 2006 in Hoke County.

McGuire has a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from UNC-Pembroke. April, his wife, is a teacher in Fayetteville.

He enjoys his church, antique cars, cooking, reading and working in his garage.

**Keller**, from page 1

Fame of the National Bar Association in April 2002

Kelly earned a bachelor of arts degree in history and political science at Jackson State University and his juris doctorate at Southern University School of Law. He also has a master of arts degree in national security and strategic studies from the Naval War College in Newport, R.I.

Keller is married to the former Ella L. Tates, a sociology professor at Fayetteville State University. They have one daughter and one son, Yolanda D. Keller-Bell and Alvin W. Keller III, respectively.

Submit story ideas and information to:  
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## DOC proclaims Ricky Anderson top warden for '08

RALEIGH | **Ricky Anderson**, administrator of Pasquotank Correctional Institution in Elizabeth City, has been named the Department of Correction's 2008-2009 superintendent of the year, qualifying him for consideration for the Warden of Year award given by the North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents.

"Over the past 29 years, Ricky has made a significant impact on the Division of Prisons," said Director **Boyd Bennett**.

"He is an outstanding correctional professional who is highly dedicated to the field of corrections. He has a special skill set that is very difficult to find in one person. He strives to be on the cutting edge of corrections, and is an exceptional corrections administrator."

Anderson has created operational and budget efficiencies and effectiveness in only 16 months

at Pasquotank CI, an 864-bed close-custody prison. Among the numerous improvements at the prison, Anderson named a new management team; increased custody staff efficiency; enhanced electronic communications and security monitoring; and successfully addressed such issues as the implementation of a no-smoking policy.

In less than a year, Anderson readied Pasquotank CI for inspection and accreditation by the American Correctional Association, a historic milestone for the N.C. Division of Prisons.

Confirming the prison's role in the community, Anderson has elevated Pasquotank CI's working relationships with the local law enforcement and the district attorney's office. He also led the development of a training partnership with the College of the Albemarle.

A 29-year DOC vet-

eran, Anderson was administrator at Foothills Correctional Institution in Morganton prior to joining Pasquotank CI. His accomplishments while leading Foothills CI included:

- \* Pioneering the Department of Correction's first Security Threat Group Management Unit (STG-MU). The staff earned a departmental award for its accomplishments and North Carolina has earned an excellent reputation among other states for its approach to gangs within the prison system.
- \* The education section receiving National Correctional Education Association accreditation, a first for the North Carolina Department of Correction.
- \* Annexing a 230-bed minimum custody chronic disease facility.
- \* Improving efficiencies in shift, visitation and inmate feeding.



**Ricky Anderson**, left, receives his award from **Boyd Bennett**, director of the Division of Prisons.

- \* Piloting innovative security improvements. Additionally, the department has named Anderson as its representative to various committees because of his knowledge and professionalism. He is active in the Rotary Club and in the National Association of Wardens.

"Mr. Anderson has been instrumental in the development of programs and initiatives that have resulted in significant changes," Bennett said.

Anderson is married, and has two children and one grandchild.

## Training focuses on fusion of community safety, transition/re-entry

DURHAM | Department of Correction staff who attended the 2008 Training Institute for Managers were given three days of intensive transition and re-entry training in a program titled "Community Safety Through Successful Offender Management and Transition in the State of North Carolina." It was held Dec. 3-5 at a Durham hotel.

Former Secretary **Theodis Beck**, in his opening remarks, urged participants to "imagine what could be" and to concentrate on the process of "breaking the cycle of crime." "I challenge you to commit yourself to his journey, this marathon. It's a team effort," Secretary Beck said of the department's goals to reduce recidivism and to focus on the successful re-entry of offenders back into their communities. The meeting was coordinated with the Center for Effective Public Policy and was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

The Department has embraced successful management and transition as a key strategy in enhancing public safety. It is committed to breaking the cycle of crime by holding offenders accountable for their actions while delivering evidence-based risk reduction interventions and engaging the public and community partners in creating opportunities for offenders to be successful during and following their re-



Among those on the conference panel discussing offender management and transition were, from left, **Bill Stovall**, Central Engineering director; **Dan Stieneke**, retired chief deputy secretary; and **Tracy Little**, deputy secretary.

lease from custody and supervision.

"We need to change course," Beck said. "The time is always right to do what is right."

Guest speakers at the event included corrections administrators and experts from around the country as well as N.C. Department of Correction leadership and staff. The leadership staff explained the agency's reconceptualized vision and mission for offender management and transition and the implications for the new direction.

Attendees were assigned to work group sessions that included:

- \* Evidence-based policy and practice and offender management and transition.
- \* Offender assessment and case management.
- \* Delivering assessment-driven programming and enhancing the offender case planning and management process.

- \* Development of state level interagency partnerships as a key element of successful offender re-entry.
- \* Engaging and sustaining local community support.
- \* Effective offender management and transition: education and outreach to obtain support.
- \* Offender accountability: using incentives and the violation response system to encourage prosocial behavior.

- \* Engaging key community partners in the offender management and transition process.
- \* Supporting staff development and providing staff training.
- \* Improving communication and collaboration; and utilizing technology as an information sharing tool.

On the final day of the conference, work group members reported lessons learned from their participation and gave top priority recommendations related to assessment, programming, case management, community development and staff development and communications goals.

Staff members will review the various recommendations and report to the DOC Offender Management and Transition Council, a body appointed by Beck last summer to develop offender re-entry and transition initiatives and processes.



## Industries group gives Sharon Jones top national honor

**Sharon Jones**, assistant plant manager at Correction Enterprises' Scotland Sewing Plant, was named the National Correctional Industries (CI) Staff Person of the Year.

In October, Ms. Jones was recognized as the Southeast Region CI Staff Person of the Year, and her nomination was sent to the national office, where she competed against the four other region winners.

**Karen Brown**, Correction Enterprises (CE) director, nominated Jones for the award as a result of Jones being named CE's 2008 Employee of the Year. The judging criteria for the National Staff Award include utilization of human resources, effectiveness in meeting goals and objectives and quality of service or contribution.

This is the first CI national honor for CE. **Phil Rowe** of the Nash Print Plant is a past regional winner.

Jones will be recognized on April 7 at the National Correctional Industries Awards Banquet in Dallas, Texas.

"Please join me in congratulating Sharon on her accomplishments," Brown said. "She represents all of us as a symbol of the excellent work we are accomplishing in Correction Enterprises."



## Special Olympics support recognized

Keith Fishburne, above right, and Roy Forrest of the North Carolina Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics presented a plaque on Jan. 5 to Director of Prisons **Boyd Bennett**, left, and **Scott Peele**, center, chief of security.

The plaque was accepted on behalf of the Department of Correction for raising more than \$228,000 in 2008 for Special Olympics. Last year North Carolina Law Enforcement

Torch Run for Special Olympics consisted of police and sheriff's departments, ALE, SBI, Division of Community Corrections and the Division of Prisons. These agencies raised \$1,115,926 in 2008 to provide sports training and competition to children and adults with intellectual disabilities. "This is just another example of the professional staff we have in the Department of Correction who give back to the community and touch the lives of many people, but especially touch the lives of the Special Olympic Athletes and their families," said Peele, who is the DOP coordinator of Special Olympics/Peele, along with several other DOC employees, are participating with the N.C. State University Campus Police in a 5K

Run/Polar Plunge at Lake Raleigh on Feb. 28 to help raise money for Special Olympics. Peele said anyone interested in participating in "Freezin' for a Reason" by jumping into the icy cold water can contact him at 919-838-3568 or email at prs04@doc.state.nc.us.



Standing from left, Ashville-Buncombe Community Technical College instructors at the Craggy CI graduation event were Karen Pauly, John Davis, Michael Flanagan, Steven Wright, Andrew Weatherly, Charles Shanor, Maura Lohman and Greg Spencer.

## Craggy Correctional staff present degrees, certificates to student inmates

Craggy Correctional Center hosted a graduation for inmates who completed and received their GED or certificates in microcomputer applications, facility maintenance and food service technology.

**Bruce Cravener**, coordinator of educational programs and event emcee, said the event was important.

"These men chose to spend their time advancing their education while here, and they deserve to be applauded," he said.

Dr. Betty Young, president of Ashville-Buncombe Technical Community College (AB Tech), gave the keynote address and praised the graduates.

"Being here today is proof you've got what it takes," she said. "You've got the desire and the dedication to make your dream inevitable."

**Cliff Johnson**, Craggy CC superintendent, called the ceremony a milestone.

"You can use what you have done to help the children in your life," he told the inmates. "Take these skills and use them to the benefit of yourself and your family."

The educational pro-

grams at Craggy CI, made possible through a collaborative partnership between the prison and AB Tech, provide the inmates with a valuable opportunity to create positive change in their life while incarcerated.

Craggy staff recognized the contributions of the AB Tech instructors by presenting them with certificates and pins inscribed with "Above and Beyond."

"I believe furthering their education and possibly strengthening any needed recovery from substance abuse are the best possible uses of their time while they are here," said Karen Pauly, a GED instructor recognized as the "Instructor of the Year" during the ceremony.

In addition to diplomas and certificates, several students received special acknowledgment for their achievements. Three GED recipients were noted for achieving overall scores in excess of 3,000 points, and one student was recognized for achieving a perfect score of 800 on his science exam.

## Staff members use training to save inmate's life

Four Craggy Correctional Center staff members have been commended for saving an inmate's life in November.

Sgt. **James Hedrick**, Officers **Michael Jankowski** and **Tony Smith** and nurse **Bob Haggard** were involved in reviving an inmate who collapsed while sitting down for breakfast. They used their training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and

use of a defibrillator while waiting for the arrival of emergency medical technicians to take the inmate to a hospital.

Hospital staff credited the prison staff's actions with saving the inmate's life.

The officers and staff members also received the Heart Savers Hero Award from the American Heart Association.

## Deputies, from page 1

was responsible for supervising 12 major male and female prisons.

From 1988 to 1998, Lancaster developed and managed the Female Command Structure for the five women's prisons and two half-way houses, located from Black Mountain to Wilmington. The Female Command structure was one of only five management operations for the Division of Prisons.

Lancaster also developed the N.C. Department of Commerce Travel and Tourism toll-free phone operation and information distribution services. She started one of five legislatively authorized, privately operated, substance treatment facilities for inmates.

In 1988, Lancaster coordinated with Energy Committed for Offenders, a Charlotte non-profit organization, to open a half-way house for female inmates. It still operates.

From 1982 to 1987 she was warden of the N.C. Correctional Institution for Women, the state's largest prison facility for female inmates.

Among Lancaster's awards and recognition are:

- \* Order of the Long Leaf Pine (2004)
- \* Governor's Award for Excellence (1987)
- \* News & Observer "Tar Heel of the Week" (1982)
- \* N.C. Correctional Officer of the Year (1976)

She has advanced professional certifications:

- \* Government Executive Program, UNC School of Government
- \* N.C. Justice Executive Program, UNC School of Government
- \* Executive Women in Corrections Program, National Institute of Corrections

Lancaster has a bachelor of arts in religion from Meredith College and is a Duke Divinity School Pastoral Counseling Graduate Program.

### J.B. French

French, a native and resident of Sanford, retired as Division of Prisons director in 2001 after 33 years serving DOC.

After service in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, where he received a Purple Heart, French began his DOC career as a correctional officer at Central Prison. He rose through the ranks at Central Prison, where

he became the facility's first African-American warden in 1994. Five years later, French was appointed division director.

The International Association of Correctional Officers named French Superintendent of the Year in 1995. Among his professional certificates are:

- \* Basic Corrections Certificate
- \* Intermediate Correctional Certificate, N.C. Department of Justice
- \* Certificate of Management, National Academy of Corrections
- \* Hostage Negotiations, National Criminal Justice Training Council

French and his wife, Gloria, have two sons and a daughter.

### Tracy Little

Little has been a deputy secretary since May 2001. In the previous administration, she had oversight of the Controller's Office, Human Resources, Research & Planning, Staff Development & Training, Clemency, Federal Legislation and Legislative Affairs.

She joined the department in 1994 as public information officer for the N.C. Parole Commission. Four years later she became director of the Office of Citizen Services, and was named public information director in January 2000.

Little's background also includes experience in the non-profit sector, having worked with the State Employees Association of North Carolina from 1990 to 1994. She began her career as a journalist with the New Bern Sun-Journal, and spent a year as a broadcast journalist in radio.

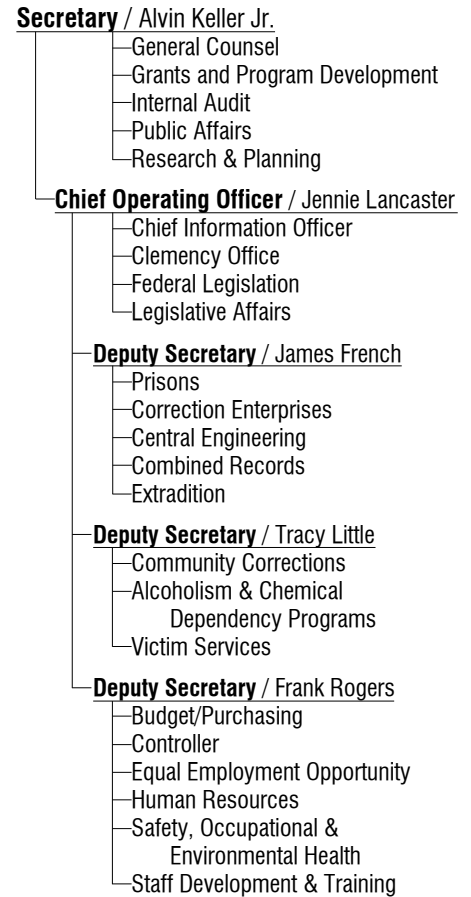
A Goldsboro native, Little has a bachelor's degree in journalism from UNC-Chapel Hill, and a master's degree in public administration from N.C. State University.

### Frank Rogers

Rogers, former Personnel director for the N.C. Department of Revenue, had planned to retire effective Jan. 1 of this year when he was asked to become one of DOC's new deputy secretaries. He had been in the Revenue position since February 2003.

Most of Rogers' 31 years with state government has been in DOC, where he began in 1977 as a probation/parole officer in Bladen and

## Organization



Hoke counties. He was promoted to parole case analyst in 1980 and to personnel analyst I in 1985.

Rogers rose to classification chief in 1987, serving there until 1998 when he was named personnel supervisor I with responsibility for managing both classification and operations in the DOC Personnel Office. In February 2003 he was promoted to Revenue's personnel director.

The Savannah, Ga., native graduated high school in Goldsboro, N.C., and has a bachelor of science degree in correctional services from East Carolina University. His wife, Mary Lu, was a fellow ECU student, and she is auxiliary services chief in the Division of Prisons. They have a daughter, Julia.

## Big heart meant a busy holiday

Victor Taylor's heart kept him quite busy during the recent holiday seasons.

Taylor, a correctional officer at Craven Correctional Institution, is also the founder of two charitable organizations -- Men Empowered for Christ and Vision Forward.

Men Empowered for Christ provided Thanksgiving meals to 50 elderly people in Craven, Jones, Pamlico and Lenoir counties. The group conducted

worship services, which raised \$1,900 for the meals, supplemented by a donation from a local grocery store.

Taylor said he founded Men Empowered for Christ about two years ago because he wanted "to give back to the community." Helping Taylor this year was Guy Whimper, a Havelock native who plays on the New York Giants professional football team.

Vision Forward, founded about three years ago by Taylor, helped children in 10 low-income New Bern and Vanceboro families to have a better Christmas in 2008. The organization collected food, new clothing, toys and gift certificates for the children, whose ages ranged 2 months-13 years.

Taylor said Vision Forward's mission is training young people to be successful adults.



### Community Work Program 'value' appreciated

Marion community leaders, at a Jan. 14 luncheon, appreciatively acknowledged the value of the Community Work Program contributions from Marion Correctional Institution and Minimum Security Unit. The 11th annual Luncheon event, hosted by Keep McDowell Beautiful and the Marion Downtown Business Association, was highlighted by the presentation of a symbolic check for \$741,768, representing the value of 92,721 hours of Community

Work Program labor was presented to McDowell County. This program provides services for the schools, fire departments and many other county agencies. Several agency representatives spoke during the presentation, declaring their appreciation for the Community Work Program and its value to the community. Marion Correctional employees who were commended for dedication and service through the years were, from left, Correctional Officers **Bobby Courtney** and **Donnie Good**; Sgt. **Chris Revis**; Correctional Officers **Rick Tidwell**, **Jamie Brown** and **Gary Rymer**; Unit Manager **Sam Dotson**; and Marion CI Administrator **Sid Harkleroad**.

## News Briefs

### 'Shooter' simulation

Community Corrections District 16B officers participated in a simulation to test UNC-Pembroke's response to an "active shooter on campus." Evaluators declared the test was "excellent" and "conducted professionally." District 16B officers participating were **Hartley Oxendine**, **Warren Purcell** and **Connie Jacobs**, intensive case officers; **Charles Jackson**, sex offender officer; **Randy Freeman**, **James Chavis** and **Richard Kono**, surveillance officers; **Don Chavis**, community threat group officer; and **Sean Graham**, probation/parole officer II. During the exercise, they worked with the Pembroke police and fire departments, the Robeson County Sheriff's Department and its SWAT team, the North Carolina Highway Patrol and the State Bureau of Investigation, Pembroke Township Volunteer Fire Department and the Robeson County Rescue Squad.

### Honor students

Honor students in recent Basic Correctional Officer classes were **Danny Williams Jr.**, Central Prison; **Stephanie Smith**, New Hanover

Correctional Center; and **Jeffrey Colton**, Pender Correctional Institution.

### Certification

**Judy Presnell**, second shift lead nurse (RN) at Avery Mitchell Correctional Institution in Spruce Pine, has earned professional certification in correctional health care. The certification was awarded by the National Commission on Correctional Health Care after Presnell demonstrated her mastery of national standards and the knowledge of leaders working in the field. She has been employed by the Department of Correction for eight years.

### Food drive

Department of Correction employees, during a holiday fund-raising drive, contributed more than \$6,465 to the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina. Food Bank officials estimated that the money would provide 27,476 meals.

### Christmas Food Drive

Community Corrections' District 4B conducted a food drive to help the Onslow County Christmas Cheer Program.

## Community Corrections manager nominated for John Larkins Award

**RALEIGH | Vernon Bryant**, manager of Community Corrections' operations in Halifax County, was one of nine nominees for the 2009 John R. Larkins Award, which seeks to promote racial harmony in state government.

The award ceremony, on Jan. 16 this year, is held as part of state employees' observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The ceremony is attended by most of the state's highest ranking officials, including the governor.

Former Sec. Theodis Beck nominated Bryant, calling him "one of the best probation managers in North Carolina" and noting that Bryant has extraordinary people management skills. Beck also pointed out that, in addition to excelling in his professional life, Bryant "pours his all" into "exposing youths to positive influences, compassion and love."

"His is a relentless quest through coaching youth sports and founding Exodus for Youth Inc. to direct the youths toward a



**Vernon Bryant**, left, and Sec. **Alvin Keller Jr.**, right, share a moment at the 2009 John R. Larkins Award ceremony on Jan. 16.

hope they may have never had otherwise," Beck wrote in the nomination.

"We cannot expect a safe, sane and successful society from young people who are sent alone -- misdirected, misguided, untrained and unsupported -- to be our future. Vernon Bryant has stepped up and effectively claimed a huge responsibility, enjoining diverse resources to ensure just and peaceful lives for this and future generations in Halifax County and beyond.

"Claiming the future begins, not when we are there, but when the hearts of youths envision it."

## Many State Employees Qualify For Free or Low-Cost E-Filing

E-filing is a quick, convenient and secure way to file both your federal and state taxes and receive your refunds weeks ahead of people who paper file.

E-filing offers many benefits:

- \* You get your refund as much as 6-8 weeks faster, especially if you choose to have it direct deposited.
- \* E-filing improves the accuracy of your returns because the e-file software does the math for you.
- \* You receive a notification that your returns have reached their destinations.

You may qualify for free or low-cost e-filing options if you meet certain criteria. Go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

or [www.dornc.com](http://www.dornc.com) and click on the link for e-filing to learn more about e-filing and to check the eligibility requirements for free filing.

You may also want to visit an IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program site, which offers free tax help to people who earn less than \$42,000. The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) Program offers free tax help to taxpayers, focusing on those who are 60 and older.

Go to [www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=107626,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=107626,00.html) for more information on a VITA site near you. Or, you can visit your nearest State Employees Credit Union office.

### Listings resume next issue

Listings of promotions, retirements and deaths for November 2008 through January 2009 will be published in the next edition of Correction News.