

In this issue:

- **President's Message**
- **Introducing Debbie Beltz**
- **MCA Student Services Committee**
- **Amicus Merges with Volunteers of America**
- **Putting Light Back in Eyes: Leaving a Legacy in Good Hands**
- **The Importance of Evidence Based Mental Health Treatments and Services**
- **Tree Trust**
- **Corrections Capitol Day 2013**
- **The Inherent Risks of Corrections Work**
- **Best of the 2013 Consumer Electronics Show**
- **Legislative Update**
- **Judging a Book by its Cover**

president's message

KAREN DETERMAN
MCA President
Wright County Community Corrections



I was at a training the other day facilitated by two retired corrections professionals and it made me think about how important it is for MCA to keep retired members invested in the organization. What a wealth of knowledge and expertise retirees can offer our association; and we can't let that asset just sit idle . . . One of our MCA Board's goals for 2013 is to increase retiree membership; we welcome ideas and suggestions on how to accomplish this goal.

My Dad is the catalyst for an idea that I have. He is a retired engineer and is very active in the Alumni Association and American Society of Mechanical Engineers. I see how much he enjoys participating in these organizations and staying involved. Because of these connections, he is mentoring an engineering student at the University of Minnesota. My Dad talks about how much he enjoys this relationship; I see how it benefits them both. Why not use MCA as a way to link retired corrections professionals and student members? Beware all of you retired corrections professionals — because MCA will be on the lookout for you and encouraging you to stay active.

The Student Services Committee (SCA) is working on ways to engage more students in MCA. Lori Korts, the SCA Chair, has some great ideas on how to increase student membership and involvement in MCA. One thought to accomplish this goal is to increase student attendance at the Annual Fall Institute. Lori has several strategies on how to get students involved and feel welcome at the conference. One plan is to arrange a panel of corrections professionals for a question and answer session with students. What a great way to connect experienced corrections professionals with those who will become a vital part of corrections in the near future.

Let's keep MCA moving forward with innovative ideas on how to improve member benefits. We cannot accomplish this without the help of you and the MCA membership

Sincerely, *Karen Determan*

introducing debbie beltz, mca's administrative manager

Hi. We thought it would be fun for our membership to meet and learn more about Debbie Beltz, MCA's Administrative Manager since 2012. She's the one that "makes everything work" behind the scenes.



Debbie has been an MCA member since 1998. She served on the Fall Institute Committee Member from 1999-2007 and was the Fall Institute Committee Chair 2008-2011.

Work History

I was a stay-at-home mom and day care provider for 10-years, I started working at MCF-Lino Lakes in 1996. I worked in the Office Services/Offender Records Unit until 2004 when I became the Warden's Administrative Assistant. Since 2004, I have had the honor to work with four different wardens.

Family & Interest

I have been married for 31-years and have two wonderful sons. My oldest just moved to Hanover, Pennsylvania for his job a couple of weeks ago and my younger son will be attending the University of New Mexico this fall to get his PHD in Physical Education, Sports and Exercise Science. Needless to say, we are looking forward to doing some traveling to visit both of them over the next few years while they are away.

After being an East-side St. Paulite and graduating from Harding High School, I have kept moving North, living in Circle Pines for 25 years and now near Wyoming, Minnesota for the past 5 years where we love to feed the birds, deer, and pheasants who visit our yard. I enjoy gardening, camping, sewing and all kinds of needle work. During the winter we love to ice fish in our home away from home out on the lake with family and friends.

My MCA Story

I became involved in MCA after attending my first Fall Conference in 1998. Attending the conference was a great opportunity for me. I was chosen to attend the conference after someone from our facility who was registered to attend was unable to go only a few days before the event. After seeing the quality of training that was offered and what a great event MCA put together, I knew this was definitely an organization I wanted to get involved in.

There is so much more to MCA than just the Annual Training Institute, better known as, "The Fall Conference." I had no idea that MCA was such a well-

MCA Sponsors



rounded organization until I was co-chairing the Fall Institute Committee and attended the MCA board meetings. Here's an idea of what MCA is really all about:

- MCA has excellent legislative representation and has become well respected by legislative groups. The Legislative/Adult Justice Committee, as well as the Juvenile Justice Committee bring forth legislative agendas that make a difference to corrections professionals across the state as well as the clients they serve.
- The Education and Training Committee has been working hard to bring you valuable training sessions both low-cost and free.
- Our Student Services Committee continues to look for ways to introduce criminal justice students to all aspects of corrections for networking and job opportunities.
- The Membership Committee chairs are reaching out to members past and present. They continue to look for ways to make your membership not only a good value but also ways to keep all members engaged.
- For the Nomination Committee, they find individuals who would love to serve as a member of the MCA board of directors for a year (or 2-years if it is the treasurer position).
- The Sponsorship Committee was developed a few years ago for those businesses and organizations that not only believe and support the mission of MCA but are also interested in supporting our non-profit organization in a variety of other ways.
- Technology is the newest committee to MCA. Technology in corrections has been up and coming over the years and is ever-changing. The board of directors seen the need to have a committee that would be able to keep our members in the loop on a variety of topics and provide resource information related to technology.
- The Awards Committee, which is chaired by the previous year's past president and is made up of the previous four past presidents, takes nominations to honor persons or programs making significant contributions to the field of corrections each year. These award recipients are honored with an awards ceremony that is held at the Annual Training Institute.
- And last but not least, the executive board of director's. Each year a board of directors is elected who believe in MCA and the mission which is "*to promote the professional development of individuals working in all aspects of the corrections field and to promote ethical and just correctional practices.*"

It's for all these reasons that made me want to become a part of MCA and I am excited to begin my second year as MCA's Administrative Manager and to help the organization continue with its mission. Have I piqued your interest in becoming a little more involved in MCA? Feel free to contact me or one of our executive board members or committee chairpersons. Visit the website and check out the board members and committee pages. See who else you might know is involved in MCA. Becoming a committee member is a great place to start!

Best Regards, Debbie Beltz
mca-mn@hotmail.com
www.mn-ca.org

mca student services committee

LORI KORTS

MCA Student Services Committee Chair

The first week of May is Minnesota "Corrections Officer Week." This time each year, the State of Minnesota recognizes a sector of the population that go largely unnoticed. This is not necessarily a bad thing. In the corrections profession, it is a *good thing* to go unnoticed — that means that the Minnesota Department of Corrections is achieving its goal of public safety. For these men and women, each day can be an adventure, or . . . it can be very dull. Imagine yourself being locked into your workplace with people that have proven that they have the ability to cause harm to others, even those in their family. As you walk into a correctional facility, the sound of the large barred metal door slamming and locking leaves an imprint on any visitor. Whether federal, state or county, these buildings contain small cities within their walls.

A prison workforce is charged with maintaining peace and order in a society of people that have had difficulty following the rules. They must achieve their goals in a respectful, professional manner. The Department of Corrections isn't comprised of only Correctional Officers; there's a host of many people that work in other capacities who got their start "inside the walls."

The MCA Student Services Committee is devoted to develop the future workforce of Corrections by offering a variety of services to current students throughout the State of Minnesota and beyond. We provide a glimpse inside the business of Corrections and deliver the resources for students to gain a basic understanding of the complexity of our career field.

We work with Corrections-related organizations to highlight the assortment of paths available for students interested in working with people and making a difference in the lives of many. The exciting development of the Transitions from Prison to Community Initiative (TPC) is presenting a world of possibilities. Students throughout academia are the resource for the future. As we develop the transition of offenders from prison to the community, we look forward to enhancing the transition of our students from college to the workforce. The continuum of Corrections is constantly expanding. Whether the foundation with the students is laid as a Corrections Officer, Probation Officer, Therapist or any other position, it is important to remember those that work diligently to protect the safety and security of our communities by preparing incarcerated people to become law abiding, productive members of society and good neighbors. The future is ever-evolving; has not yet been defined. Thank you to those that have dedicated their time to this endeavor and welcome to those students that are finding their way.

amicus merges with volunteers of america – minnesota

Almost without exception, the individuals who Amicus and Volunteers of America – Minnesota serve every day are those upon whom society has turned its back.

The Boards of Directors of Amicus and Volunteers of America-Minnesota (VOA-MN) have agreed to merge. The Amicus Board voted unanimously on March 12, 2013 to join the operations of the human services agency with VOA-MN, effective April 1. The VOA-MN Board of Directors also unanimously adopted the merger plan at its March 26 meeting.



Amicus will retain its name but its operations will become part of VOA-MN. Amicus is well known for its work within the Minnesota prison system and helping those reentering society after incarceration to find jobs, housing, and meet other needs. For more than 45 years, the Amicus One to One program has matched trained volunteers with inmates to form lasting friendships and to help them become positive members of the community after release.

“Services like this for people in prison and coming out of prison have been in the DNA of Volunteers of America for 117 years,” said Paula Hart, president and chief executive officer of VOA-MN. “One of our co-founders, Maud Booth, was known as the “Little Mother” and her passionate prison reform leadership throughout the nation. We are honored to carry on that legacy by welcoming Amicus into the VOA-MN family. I am certain that we will be better together.”

While the current Amicus staff of approximately 20 people will remain dedicated to existing services, they will become VOA-MN employees and their programs will be incorporated into VOA-MN’s Rehabilitative and Reentry Services, and Children, Youth and Family Services.

“The first priority of this merger is to those we serve,” said Louise Wolfgramm, the retiring Amicus president. “This agreement will enable us to stabilize our current services while capitalizing on the opportunities offered by working as a single larger agency on behalf of the 2,638 people we served last year.”

The organizations’ stated purpose for the merger is to create a greater reach to help people gain self-reliance, dignity and hope. Through their mutual values of compassion and respect, Amicus and VOA-MN will strengthen quality services for adult prisoners, ex-offenders, and youth with high needs.

“I view it as a win-win situation,” said Paul H. Anderson, associate justice of the Supreme Court of Minnesota, and a member of the Amicus Board of Directors. “Amicus has developed a distinguished legacy of service to prisoners and to those reentering society after a prison sentence. This pairing with Volunteers of America Minnesota is the best way to ensure that legacy will remain intact for many years to come. I look forward to these organizations carrying on the work of instilling hope and transforming lives.”

As part of the agreement, two Amicus Board members will be invited to join the VOA-MN Board of Directors. The merger process was funded by a grant from the Greater Twin Cities United Way.

"We appreciate the due diligence of our two staffs, the dedicated hours of study on behalf of our Boards of Directors, and especially the stewardship of the United Way, without whose support this merger would not have been possible," Hart noted.

putting light back in eyes; leaving a legacy in good hands: louise wolfgramm on retiring from amicus

LOUISE WOLFGRAMM
Past President, Amicus

When I think back over my career with Amicus, my mind drifts back to memories of childhood.

I recall my mother addressing my fears in terms that a six-year old could understand. "Be your best self, do the right thing by other people, help the world be a better place - you won't have to worry about the afterlife if you just do the best that you can in this life."

And my father, a social work trained administrator for the California prison system, told me that people in prison are people too; I saw with my own eyes that this was the case when we were visiting prisons around the country and around the world.

Knowledge comes to a child in sensory ways and I soaked up knowledge about prisoners and prisons that was unusual for a child. I knew there were stories behind all the vacant gazes that I encountered. I felt a kinship with the people that I met in the prisons, whether they were officers, inmates, wardens or psychiatrists. I was aware that my father had on-going relationships with the best and brightest in all of these groups. My father liked to have his colleagues over for dinner - and my mother was the soul of hospitality - conversations at the dinner table were heady and intellectual. I didn't find them particularly interesting and over the years I came to the unhappy conclusion that for all my father's forward thinking ideas, people in prisons were unlikely to find the answers to their problems there. I think my dad would have agreed for the most part. But the question remains. What *can* we do about it?

At age 24 I discovered Amicus and now at age 66, I am retiring. The 42-year interval has been an ongoing opportunity to listen, to try to understand, to build relationships, to think, to develop programs and to witness countless men, women and children struggle to understand themselves, forgive themselves and others who have let them down and try to move on in a punishing world.

Amicus has responded to the needs of the long-term incarcerated, the men and women returning to the community and youth on probation by trying to put some light back in their eyes, letting them see that the community is not a totally inhospitable place. Amicus has responded to people in the community who have a yearning to reconcile with the incarcerated by providing sensible programs in which they can reach out to people that know that they need new friends and associates. Through the caring souls (volunteers and staff) who reach out, we have brought hope and light back to the

eyes of many who thought that, due to past transgressions, the rest of their lives would be doomed to rejection and poverty.

Amicus has adopted the slogan "Real Change Starts on the Inside". Our goal is to treasure the trust that is placed in us by people who volunteer for our programs. We believe that each person we work with has the potential to change and grow and live a responsible life. We know that making big changes requires courage and support. The participant has to provide the courage, but we can provide the support. Courage and support are the essential beginning ingredients but much more is needed: treatment, education, housing, employment, childcare and on and on. Amicus partners with many other organizations that help in these arenas. A corrections official once said Amicus tills the soil, preparing it for the specialized programming others can provide. That's our niche.

"Tilling the soil" is a hard sell in most funding circles. I devoted much of my time to keeping Amicus going by finding funding sources that see the value in what we do. Just like our volunteers, staff and board members, our donors are a very special group of people in the community. They are people who are motivated by a deep compassion and respect for the possibilities that hope can bring forth in a human life. I have been privileged to work closely with some of the finest people in the professions that intersect with our participant base, with passionate staff, dedicated volunteers, clear-eyed leaders on our Board, and donors who are proud to support our work. The real inspiration for forty-some years of work has come from countless men, women and children who keep on trying day after day, believing that their turn for reconciliation will come.

As I think back on my career, the only struggle that is worth mentioning is the continual search for funding. I wondered, as I thought about retirement, who would take on this challenge without compromising the essence of what Amicus stands for in the eyes of the people we serve and in the eyes of the community? Merger was an option, but the questions still remained.

Then I met Paula Hart, the new President and CEO of Volunteers of America - Minnesota and learned of the history of this amazing organization and of her vision for developing the VOA-MN's Rehabilitative and Veteran's Services. I learned that one of the founders of Volunteers of America, Maud Booth, was known as the "Little Mother" of the prisons because she befriended inmates and wardens alike in her effort to bring better conditions and resources to the prison system. I learned that Paula Hart wanted to bring Maud's spirit back to life in expanded services in reentry. I learned that VOA-MN staff and volunteers live their values of respect and compassion in serving the VOA mission to Uplift All Lives.

In learning all of this, I knew that I had found a new home for Amicus, that would respect our "approach" and our culture and that would keep the trust with those we serve. And, at the same time I knew that Amicus would try new ways of doing things and would have opportunities for growth that we could not achieve if we continued to stand alone. I feel good that Amicus will bring strong programs, with excellent outcomes and a dedicated and talented staff to this partnership. Merger is a "win-win" for Amicus and VOA-MN because we have discovered that we are better together.

And now I can retire, knowing that I am leaving Amicus in good hands.

the importance of evidence-based mental health treatments and services

ANNA McLAFFERTY

Criminal Justice Director, NAMI Minnesota

Most of us who work in the criminal justice field have seen many people who live with mental illnesses cycle through the system again and again, despite having gone through programs meant to change their future behavior. For example, how many people have you worked with who live with mental illnesses and have gone through multiple rounds of court-ordered anger management? Or, chemical dependency treatment?

While there can be many reasons for this, a major one is that many traditionally court-ordered programs are not evidence-based practices (EBPs) to address mental illnesses. While programs like anger management and chemical dependency treatment can help some people with mental illnesses, it should come as no surprise that many people with mental illnesses need something different.

Fortunately there is a wealth of information available about appropriate, evidence-based treatments and services for people with mental illnesses and co-occurring substance use disorders. Mental health courts work well largely because they use these EBPs.

To find evidence-based treatment options for specific mental illnesses, check out the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). I recommend searching online for "NIMH and [insert diagnosis here]" (e.g., "NIMH and schizophrenia"). This will give you--and the person you are working with--an in-depth description of the illness, its symptoms, evidence-based treatment and more.

In addition to evidence-based treatments, there is a whole host of evidence-based mental health services. The leading authority on this topic in the U.S. is the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA highlights several EBPs because they work particularly well to help people manage even very serious symptoms of mental illnesses. The longest-standing EBPs include:

- **Permanent Supportive Housing:** Staff offers flexible, voluntary services designed to help people choose housing that meets their needs, obtain and pay for that housing, and keep the housing as long as they choose. Housing is safe and similar to that available to others at similar income levels. Tenants sign a standard lease and typically pay 30% of their income toward rent and basic utilities. Continued tenancy is not tied to special rules or participation in any particular services. [Read more, including the evidence to support this practice.](#)
- **Supported Employment:** In Minnesota, the evidence-based supported employment model available for people with serious mental illnesses is called Individual Placement and Supports (IPS). IPS's features include: no eligibility criteria beyond having a mental illness and wanting to work; employment specialists coordinate closely with other members of the person's treatment and service team; people work in the open labor market in competitive jobs; people receive benefits counseling to understand how any benefits they receive are affected by working; people receive job seeking assistance when they feel ready to work; support continues after the person

is hired; and choices are based on the person's preferences and goals. [Read more, including the evidence to support this practice.](#)

- **Assertive Community Treatment (ACT):** ACT teams are made up of a psychiatrist, mental health professional (e.g., a licensed therapist), chemical dependency specialist, employment specialist, nurse practitioner, and often a certified peer specialist (a mental health practitioner who is living in recovery and working on a peer-to-peer basis). Comprehensive, personalized services are provided where and when they are needed, such as in the person's home or workplace, and they are available 24/7. People with ACT teams can receive ACT services as long as necessary. [Read more, including the evidence to support this practice.](#)
- **Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment (IDDT):** Mental health and substance use treatment are provided in one setting, at one time and by a professional with cross-training in both areas. Services are matched to the person's stage in recovery. Motivational interventions and a cognitive behavioral approach form the basis of IDDT. Services are available in group, family and individual settings, and any medication services are integrated with other services. [Read more, including the evidence to support this practice.](#)
- **Illness Management and Recovery (IMR):** Many mental health practitioners provide IMR. In IMR, people define recovery and goals for themselves, learn about their mental illnesses to help guide their decisions, pursue activities and social networks that promote recovery, learn early crisis warning signs and ways to prevent relapse, and gain new strategies to cope with stress and manage symptoms. [Read more, including the evidence to support this practice.](#)

Many of these services can be located on NAMI Minnesota's website [here](#) (go to www.namihelps.org, click on "Support," and then click on "Mental Health Resources").

Unfortunately, recidivism studies tend to focus only on interventions that involve some kind of corrections response (e.g., mental health courts, probation officers using motivational interviewing, etc.). There simply have not been studies to show whether these non-correctional EBPs impact recidivism for people with mental illnesses. I would go so far as to guess that, if EBPs like supportive housing and supported employment were studied as possible ways to reduce recidivism, they would do well in such studies. I hope I can share studies like that with you someday not too far into the future.

Anna McLafferty is criminal justice director at NAMI Minnesota, or the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and public policy chair on the MCCA board of directors.

tree trust

PAULA VAN AVERY

Youth Development Services Coordinator

Since 1976 Tree Trust has been bringing people together to create positive, lasting changes in their lives and in their communities. From the Twin Cities to the suburbs to rural Minnesota, Tree Trust leaves lasting improvements in parks,



nature areas, schools, neighborhood spaces, community organizations, and backyards. Every day Tree Trust is investing in a better future by working in partnership with young people and adults to improve their lives and transform the landscapes of local communities.

At the time of Tree Trust's founding unemployment was high and urban forests were devastated by Dutch elm disease. Tree Trust began to reforest the Twin Cities while providing paid employment training to individuals with barriers to employment. So arose their dual mission: "to improve the community environment by investing in people."

Tree Trust continues to provide community forestry programs, particularly as emerald ash borer and other tree pests and diseases gain a foothold in the Twin Cities. However the majority of their direct service centers around five programs that integrate education and hands-on employment training for youth and adults with difficulty becoming employed. Tree Trust training programs help participants to take steps toward self-sufficiency. All participants battle a variety of life challenges which may include low income, basic skills deficiency, physical, emotional or learning disabilities, criminal records, unstable home life and limited English proficiency.

Tree Trust employment programs are designed to provide something for everyone: employment training can take place indoors or outside; includes landscaping, construction, customer service, retail, childcare, custodial, and other types of work; and is for people age 14 and up. The majority of participants work with a Tree Trust counselor, case manager, or placement staff and based on their interests, aptitudes and geographic location are placed in the community in businesses, nonprofits, schools, and governmental agencies. These participants are trained by staff at their placement location. They continue to have the support of Tree Trust staff to help them meet their employment and educational goals, and to help them adjust to their new employment experience.

Tree Trust also offers employment training on outdoor sites directly with their staff through Conservation Corps programs, which are mainly provided to youth (ages 14-24) and primarily take place in the summer when students are not in school. Tree Trust also offers a construction-based training program which is designed for youth who attend alternative high schools or GED programs.

Tree Trust served 1,634 individuals last year through all of their employment programs. Most participants were between the ages of 18 and 21, and most programs are provided only in Hennepin County. At Tree Trust youth and adults get an opportunity to further their education while working, set goals and meet them, learn job skills and receive a paycheck. Employment training programs include: Summer Youth Employment, Young Adult Conservation Corps, YouthBuild, Youth Development Services and Community Support.

Find information on eligibility and how to apply for a Tree Trust program on www.treetrust.org or by calling [952-767-3880](tel:952-767-3880).

corrections capitol day – 2013

CAL SAARI
MCA Legislative Liaison

The MCA Board of Directors again requested that we participate in a Capitol Day event to bring legislative concerns to the attention of our members. MCA has annually hosted or co-hosted such an event for several years now. This year we took our effort of correctional collaboration another step forward by getting four other organizations to join us as sponsors and jointly accepting a share of the costs to host such an event.



This year's event was held on February 21, 2013 at the Kelly Inn in St Paul, with MACCAC, MACPO, MCCA and the Volunteers of America joining us as hosts. This was a breakfast buffet meeting that was attended by more than seventy people and featured presentations by Commissioner of Corrections Tom Roy and four Legislators.

Commissioner Roy commented on the important role that each of you plays as Correctional professionals in the delivery of criminal justice programming and how we must continue to enhance our participation in the legislative process as well. There is an abundance of experience and knowledge within our memberships that are extremely valuable to Legislators considering programming and policy issues.

Rep. Deb Hilstrom, Chair of the House Judiciary Finance and Policy Committee, addressed the workshop discussing the work and objectives of this Committee and commented on many of the legislative agenda items we have proposed for this year. She acknowledged the work to prioritize the juvenile justice concerns this year and vowed to see that they get a full and impartial hearing in her Committee this year.



Senator Warren Limmer, the minority party lead this year in the Senate Judiciary Committee talked about his work with us over the past few years and how he would like to stay engaged with our organizations in working on legislation. He is always willing to tackle the big issues and to give his opinion on how to address them. Over the years, he has become an expert on sex offender matters and he acknowledged that he and Commissioner Roy are currently serving on a task force

looking at these issues and should be having some recommendations coming out in the very near future. He reminded us that his door is always open and he looks forward to continuing our working relationship.

Rep. Joe Mullery, Chair of a new committee this year called the House Early Childhood and Youth Development Committee, gave an excellent description of the goals and objectives of this important committee as it will hear all bills related to Juvenile Justice issues. This Committee was a brain child of Rep. Mullery from his work on federal legislative committees and Minnesota is one of only a few states that have now given early childhood concerns a point of focus. Rep. Mullery acknowledged the work that we at MCA and others have had with him in the past and stated he looks forward to our continued involvement in addressing correctional needs.

Senator Ron Latz, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, also took time from his very busy schedule to address our audience and talk about his priorities with the Senate Judiciary Committee. He has very receptive to many of our agenda items and has authored or co-authored several proposals we have advocated for this year.

All of these Legislators commented on the fine non-partisan relationship they have with Commissioner Roy and his hard work on these difficult issues has make him a very well respected leader in our field.

Feedback on this year's Capitol Day has been very positive and I think everyone in attendance came away with something of value from our time with these hard working Legislators. The excellent attendance we had this year is a tribute to the collaborative effort to put this together and we are most grateful for the support given by our co-hosts. If you missed this one, you missed a very good day in Corrections. Thanks to all who participated!

the inherent risks of corrections work

TERRY FAWCETT

Arrowhead Regional Corrections
APPA Certified Trainer



Recently, the Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Corrections was shot and killed in cold blood off of the doorsteps of his own home. While investigators are still piecing together motive, what we know at the time of this article is this: The gun that was used was linked to parolee who served time in Colorado, and who was ultimately shot and killed by law enforcement in Texas shortly following the execution of Tom Clements. How common is this? Do offenders really carry out their threats towards correctional workers? Do they talk about it beforehand? The following is a look into what hopefully isn't a growing problem in America.

- 35 attacks in the past three years (as many as the previous decade) worldwide (Santa Clara County District Attorney's office)(133 attacks, including 41 deaths since 1950 of judges, prosecutors, and other justice officials).
- Recent incident involving former LAPD officer who executed a former co-worker's daughter to avenge his firing.
- 2008- Colorado prosecutor fatally shot as he returned home (unsolved).
- 2001- Federal prosecutor fatally shot by a rifleman while working on his computer at home (unsolved).
- National District Attorney's Association indicates 11 prosecutors have been slain in the last 50 years.
- 1989- Director of Oregon Corrections Department stabbed to death outside of his office.

While I have delivered officer safety training throughout Minnesota, I have heard of other threats, attacks, or "near misses" by probation & parole staff of varying degrees. I have also been told by agents that it isn't always the offender or past offender who concerns them the most, but rather the families of the offender, or the victim's families; for example, in cases such as criminal sexual conduct. Undoubtedly, our prison staffs are at equal to or greater risk for such threats and/or violence.

The common denominator of these incidents has been revenge. Offenders and/or families are upset at what YOU did to their child or brother. Remember, the offender has ZERO accountability in this. It IS YOUR FAULT, not theirs!

What can you do? Quit your job? Live in fear? Hopefully your answer to the latter two is no. Some tips and guidelines are as follows:

- Always be vigilant & aware of your surroundings-while at work and everywhere you go! You are at more risk for violence just by the nature of who you are and what you do! (I'm guessing you don't remember all of your former clients and families, correct?)...chances are they remember YOU!
- Do you lock your doors and windows at home? Do you lock your vehicle doors in your driveway so someone doesn't take your garage door opener or gain access to your garage? Is the door from your garage to your home locked? Do your kids come home before you with this unlocked door? Are your kids bedroom windows unlocked and on the first floor of your house?
- More and more courthouses are becoming more secure; therefore, more violence is occurring in parking lots and at homes, rather than at correctional staff's offices.
- Most offenders that carry out violence DO NOT talk about it. This is why we ALWAYS have to be in a heightened state of awareness. This is why I say that if you wake up every day thinking worst case scenario, you will have a better chance at surviving an attack. Your safety is still not guaranteed!
- Do you discuss safety plans with your families? Or do you maintain that nothing will ever happen to you? Do you tell your kids what to do if ever approached by a vehicle or by a stranger? Do you allow your kids to walk home from school?
- What if an offender approaches you in a mall? Where does your family go? Can you communicate with your family tactically?
- Do you decide when your clients or families' "Give-a-Damn is Busted? Do they?

Bob Thornton from the Community Corrections Institute teaches the "when/then" attitude. Adopt it!

Believe that WHEN something happens, THEN you WILL do this!!

This list is not all-inclusive. Correctional staffs need to take safeguards for themselves and their families. Limit access to your personal information; take your house key off of your key ring when having routine maintenance completed (also take garage door opener out of vehicle). Ask and verify with appliance stores who are coming out by name; talk to your family about the potential dangers of having a stranger of this kind entering your home.

The bottom line is that our jobs are dangerous. You can choose to believe that, or you can increase the risk of an attack or threat against you or your family by ignoring such risk. Safety is a way of life! Stay safe everyone!

best of the 2013 consumer electronics show (CES)

DAVID HEATH

MCA Technical Committee Chair



The Best of the 2013 CES (Consumer Electronics Show) awards were announced January 10th at the annual event in Las Vegas, Nevada. This is the premier show for companies to enter their latest and greatest technology and get recognition for their development efforts.

The winner of the **Best in Show** was, ***The Razer Edge Gaming Tablet*** – This device takes the idea of a tablet PC's running Windows 8 and applies it to gaming. With this device, you could take it on a trip as your full computer, or plug it into someone's TV and play games. The judges felt this product succeeded in showing where the future of computing, tablets and entertainment is heading. This product starts at \$ 999.00 in an i5 model and offers transportable room to room computing, plus gaming in a tablet. Basically, it is a dual purpose tablet. A travel tablet PC and a Game Station built into the same device. That is why it won the best in show.

The **People's Voice Award** was also taken by ***The Razer Edge Gaming Tablet*** in a sweep of both categories. The development concept of this product, won the People's Choice award last year and was called Razer's Project Fiona. The tablet was introduced in 2012 CES and consumer feedback was gathered as to what gamers would like to see in a mobile PC device. With that information, the product was further developed. Apparently they did a good job with the consumer feedback, as everyone seemed to love it. The \$1,299 Edge Pro model will get a bump to Core i7, 8GB of memory, and either a 128GB or 256GB SSD. A \$1,499 bundle includes the game pad case. Both models are available for purchase today from online retailers and Razer's own Web site, but will be available in stores starting Q1 of 2013.

For more information on all the winning categories and video product demonstrations, go to:

<http://ces.cnet.com/best-of-ces/>

Here are rest of the 2013 CES winners and a short recap of each product:

Car Tech: *Chevrolet My Link 2nd Generation*. This infotainment system, will be available in the 2014 Impala. Similar to a smart phone, drivers can move icons around on a touch screen in edit mode. The icons cover everything from navigation to smart phone apps. I am not sure how this will play out in the driving distractions category. It looks to me like you could easily get caught up in staring at the screen instead of the road. There is a video demonstration on the web link.

Emerging Tech: *3D Systems CubeX* – This is actually a machine that makes objects out of plastics. Things you might see in a gift store, like coffee cups and other knick-knacks. A three color plastic 3D model costs 4K. I did not see any specifications on what these objects actually cost to make, but it is pretty interesting. These devices are called 3D printers. Check out the web video to see this in action.

Home Theatre and Audio: *Vizio 5.1 Soundbar* – The Vizio S4251W will have a list price for \$330 and is scheduled to be released in the spring. Many sound bars promise to deliver "virtual surround sound," but you can't get the true surround without actual rear speakers. Vizio has added wireless rear speakers to their sound bar to accomplish this.

Mobile: *Yota Phone* – The Yota is a cross between a high end Smartphone and an E-Reader. The back side of the phone is a monochrome e reader.

Network and Storage - *Seagate Wireless Plus* - The Seagate Wireless Plus is slated to be available immediately at the cost of \$200. This is a small mobile 1 Terabyte hard drive with a built in wireless access point. Using the Seagate Media app you can upload content created by mobile devices back to the Wireless Plus. It can also be plugged into a PC and used as a regular external hard drive.

PCs and Tablets: *Lenovo Idea Centre Horizon 27*- This is basically a giant tablet running Windows 8 with a 27 inch screen and is called a "Table PC". With the computer, you also get a set of sliding air hockey paddles, a set of joysticks, and even a large six-sided die. The joysticks and the paddles turn the Horizon into your own personal arcade, interacting neatly with the games that have been designed with the Horizon's input devices in mind. They also had a four wheeled stand on display and the concept building this system right into a coffee table. Imagine family game night with a players gathering around the coffee table... Check it out on the CES web site.

TV: *Samsung UN85S9 4K/UHD TV* – This is a floor-standing television mounted on what looks like an artist's easel and the TV is designed to tilt up and down. The Samsung UN85S9 will be coming online in 2013, but don't expect it to be cheap. This is an 85-inch 4K LCD screen with many built in smart features and a quad core processor.

Wearable and Health Tech: *FitBit Flex* – The Fitbit Flex device is an activity tracker designed to be worn all day and monitor movement, sleep, and calories burned. It is worn as a soft wristband device and LED lights will glow as you meet your preset fitness goals. The Flex also keeps tabs on your overall activity level and will record the duration and quality of your sleep. It ships this spring for \$99.95.

legislative update

CAL SAARI
MCA Legislative Liaison

This is Easter week-end as I prepare this legislative report article for the April edition of the MCA Forum, so with that in mind, I hope you all enjoyed this holiday week-end. We are finally beginning to see some signs of Spring in the air so let's hope this weather trend continues so we can look forward to green grass and flowers in bloom by mid-May.

We are now about half way through the 2013 Session of the Minnesota Legislature. Both chambers are currently on their "Spring Break" this week and will return to a full schedule again on Tuesday, April 2nd. This means about six weeks to go for this Session as they plan to adjourn on May 20th.

The game plan changes a little now as the Legislators return to sessions this first week in April. The first two deadlines for new proposals has passed so they will now focus on those bills that made it through the Committee hearings prior to deadline, and these bills will now be debated on the floor of each chamber and voted upon, or in some cases be written into the final draft of an Omnibus bill which is expected from each of the major Committees. Bills will also be passed by both the House and Senate, but contain somewhat different language; in these cases, the bills are sent to a Conference Committee, made up of a few select legislators from each chamber who will attempt to mediate the differences and draft consensual language, which then requires re-passage by the full House and Senate. In addition to this challenge, and a far greater priority, is the adoption of the annual budget.

Even though we have a Democratic Governor with the DFL also in charge of both the House and the Senate, the approval of a budget is a daunting task. All three have now revealed their budget priorities and all are different and vary in priorities and in the budget cap, varying by about \$100 million. It appears the budget goal is somewhere in the area of \$38 billion. Raising revenue to meet this budget cap is also a topic of debate, and yet to be agreed upon is how you handle the anticipated shortfall and how and when they restore the money borrowed from the education funds. Whether or not to have a bonding bill this year is also on the agenda, and if so, how much should they authorize. So, essentially, this is what's on the table for the remainder of this Session.

We have been very pleased with the progress that many of our agenda items for this year have seen. It still appears that juvenile policy items are high on many agendas and we remain optimistic that our agenda items this year can become law. Once Legislators return to their daily tasks the first week in April, we'll have a better profile of what we can expect, so I'll be submitting another legislative tracker report to our members around April 8th.

On a different note, the *Capitol Report*, March 21st edition, contains a full two page article on Commissioner Tom Roy, entitled "The Reformer," and spells out in detail his commitment to restorative justice and hope for all offenders. Those quoted in the article are very supportive of Commissioner Roy and his work in heading the DOC. He is earning a great reputation for his hard work and commitment to being the best that we can be in our work in the field of criminal justice. It's a great tribute to Tom and I'm proud to call him a friend and colleague.

SISUwithSAARI@aol.com

judging a book by its cover

SETH WALTON

"So. . . What kind of music do you listen to?"

Whoa, hold on there. We just met. That's a pretty personal question.

"No it's not. What does it matter? I'm not going to judge you."

Oh yes you are. One of the shallowest levels we judge other people on is the choices we make in entertainment. Music exists to put furniture in your mind, because life is so cruel and TV is so mean. Maybe taste should be kept as a personal thing. Hey, did you know different types of music stimulate different areas of the brain? Maybe I don't want to define myself solely on what makes my synapses dance.

"I don't care about that. I'm just trying to make conversation."

(Sigh) Alright, I like country music. My favorite performer is Alan Jackson.

"Oh."

So what does that mean?

"I'm just surprised. You don't seem like the type."

That's because I'm not. I can't stand country.

"Ugh, me neither. Bunch 'of dumb rednecks and their backward, twangy, flag-waving faux patriotic, all-American baloney."

See there? I just got you to say what you really mean. That's a pretty nasty judgment call. And you didn't want to say it at first. But you *were* thinking it. If I like country, I must be a redneck. If I'm passionate about classic rock, I'm likely a pot-smoking hippie. If I get into techno I'm probably a pill-popping raver. Heavy metal or hip-hop? I must be an emotionally stunted juvenile. What about the so-called "higher" forms of music? Jazz? Blues? C'mon, I'm too young to be a snob yet. Anyone my age who regularly listens to say, Romantic era opera can't possibly be any fun at parties. And they're probably a secret Nazi-sympathizer. Right?

"Alright, I get it. I shouldn't judge a book by its cover, right? And I shouldn't make shallow assumptions based on your preferences. But you still didn't tell me what music you like. What if we're into the same things?"

I don't know man, that's almost worse. I want to get to know the real you, not what gets blasted from your car speakers. Sure we could high-five each other over our similar tastes, and it's cool we have some common ground, but how deep does it really go? I think we could stand to do away with genre classification altogether. We've already established that you can't 'read' someone based on the contents of his or her record collection. All we can do is speculate on what that person's crafted-cultural-identity is.

"But doesn't a person choose their cultural identity based on what they believe in and what they're passionate about? Shouldn't that speak volumes about who they are as a person?"

Hardly. Hey, you're not your Nike shoes or your Old Navy pants. You're not your Porsche or your Lexus or your Mustang (you're not even a Honda). You stacked your record collection on a shelf that you got at Ikea. Did Ikea write the manifesto that defines your passions and personal beliefs?

"You're changing the subject. Those are just brand names. They're not meant to convey any sort of authentic, cultural, emotional or artistic statement. They don't touch the soul or spark inspiration the way music does. They can't be compared."

I think they can. Brand names, band names. At the end of the day it's all the same. And it's perfectly understandable. Brands have taken the place of things like totems, icons and idols. They help fill a basic human need. Let's put art, culture and emotional statements aside for a moment. One thing I think we can agree on is that everyone wears a mask. Everyone has some sort of 'costume' they put on to present him or herself to the outside world in. And I mean *everyone*. Some are definitely subtler than others. Look at me.

"Yeah, you don't look like you're trying to make any kind of statement."

Nowadays, there are so many identities to choose from, so many cultures represented. I want to be a universal statement. I want to wear my heart on my sleeve and accept everyone. In a world where everyone has something to say, I want to be the one listening.

"You can't just like everyone and everything. You're full of it if you think you do."

I think I'm giving it my best shot. It's a new thing I'm trying out. Believe it or not, there once was a time when I wore a 'costume' meant to shut out the whole world.

"What sort of 'costume' would that be?"

Man, you wouldn't even recognize me. My hair was down to my waist. It always covered my face, like a curtain. I liked to shroud the rest of my body in a floor-length duster coat, thing was easily long enough to hide a shotgun. And I was mean, too. I never let anyone close enough to really get to know me. Not that many wanted to.

"Oh, I see where this is going. You were a loser in high school. So what? Lots of kids go through the 'Goth' phase; I knew some of them myself. Seems like you grew out of it. What does it matter now?"

There you go with the quick judgments and easy labeling again. See, I never saw myself as a 'Goth' or anything. Sure, I took a path to my identity that was sort-of informed by the music I liked, but it revolved less around any artistic statement and more around my attempt to cultivate a look that I hoped might make people think that I'm 'artistic' and 'deep.' The truth is I was neither; at heart, I was a shy, socially awkward kid that just really *wanted* to be special. But you're right about one thing. I *was* a loser. What I didn't understand was that my choice of music and the outfit I wore didn't say anything positive to the average person. My classmates and co-workers just saw someone who was trying to alienate others. When I came to accept that about myself I found a different costume to wear.

"Well, I'm glad I never met you back then. I can't imagine you with long hair. You seem alright now, though."

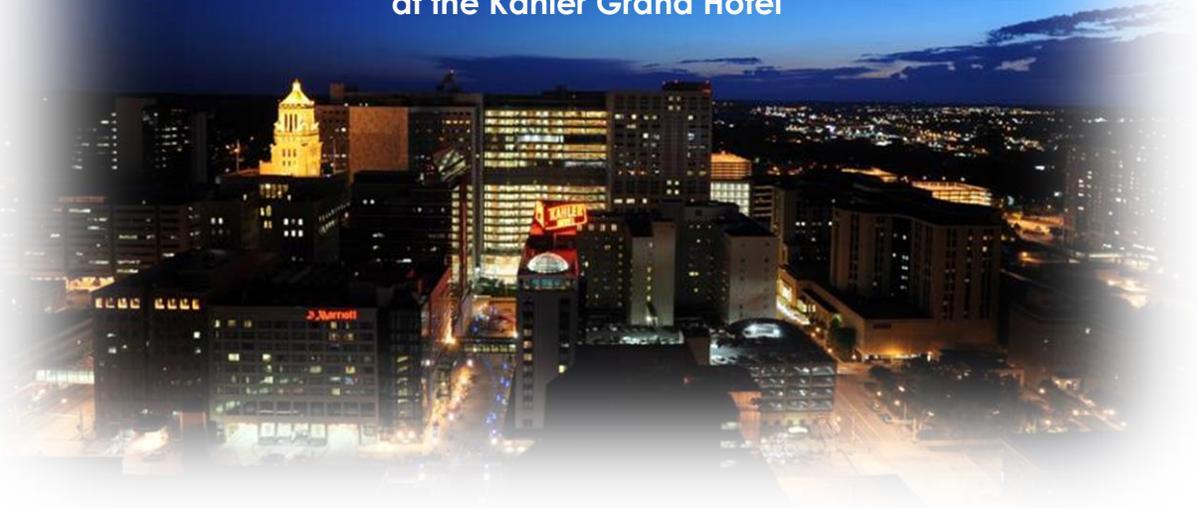
Thanks. So now that we've gotten to know each other better, would you like to hear a song by my favorite artist?

"Sure!"

All right, here, take my headphones.

". . . Let's pretend we never had this conversation."

"Save the Date"
Annual Training Institute
October 23-24, 2013
Rochester Civic Center
Overnight Accommodations
at the Kahler Grand Hotel





about the *MCA FORUM*

FORUM is published six times a year by the Minnesota Corrections Association, a nonprofit professional association incorporated in Minnesota. Articles submitted by our membership do not express the views of MCA or the board of directors.

Articles may be submitted to the 2013 *FORUM* editor [Mark Groves](#) at mark.groves@voamn.org. Articles should not be of the nature of a commercial solicitation of products or services; rather, they should be informative on topics of interest to MCA membership at large.

Minnesota Corrections Association

PO Box 261 • Wyoming, MN 55092-0261
651-462-8320 • mca-mn@hotmail.com • www.mn-ca.org