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Contents

VOL. 3, NO. 3 ■ Winter 1994

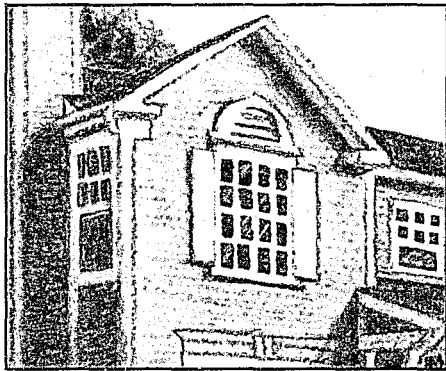
ACQUISITIONS

3 The Log
Correctional notes and comments

Working With Congress

A Day in the Life

Working in the Central Office:
Two Views



11 The Sources of Excellence
Paul W. Keve 149733

A leading historian of corrections discusses six major innovations that have shaped the Federal Bureau of Prisons since its founding in 1930.

15 Federal Partnerships at Work
Chrystal Pitts 149734

How Federal inmates are providing much-needed labor to the U.S. Forest Service in Pennsylvania.

19 Women as High-Security Officers
Richard H. Rison 149735

Why gender neutrality has become the norm in correctional officer employment—even in penitentiaries.

24 Information as a Management Tool
Sharla P. Rausch 149736

How the Bureau of Prisons has developed an "information-oriented" approach to management.

29 Grand Designs, Small Details
John W. Roberts 149737

James V. Bennett ran the Federal Bureau of Prisons for 27 years—and his legacies still inform the Bureau's approach to prison management.

40 Responding to Disaster
F.P. Sam Samples 149738

Hurricane Andrew devastated south Florida—but Bureau emergency response preparations paid off.

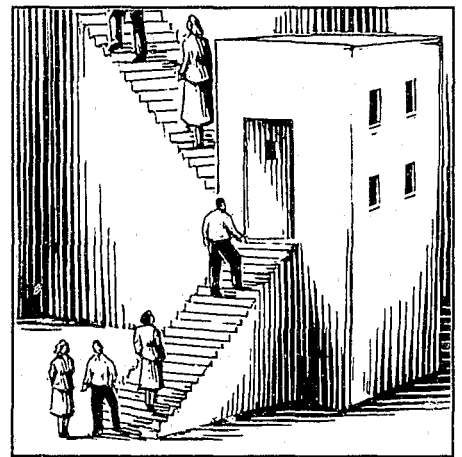
46 News at Eleven
Charles Turnbo 149739

Corrections workers can help the media do a better job of reporting prison issues.



51 Building Leaders
Michael D. Markiewicz and John M. Vanyur

Developmental assignments, training, and feedback are the three critical building blocks.



55 Holistic Health Comes to Prison *149740*
Tracy Thompson

Bringing a new model of health promotion and disease prevention to incarcerated women.

60 "5270.7 Tells the Tale"
John J. Dilulio, Jr. 149741

An excerpt from a forthcoming book focuses on the Bureau's management of disciplinary cases.

66 Myrl E. Alexander
John W. Roberts

A remembrance of the Bureau's third director—and a previously unpublished memoir.

149734

Federal Partnerships at Work

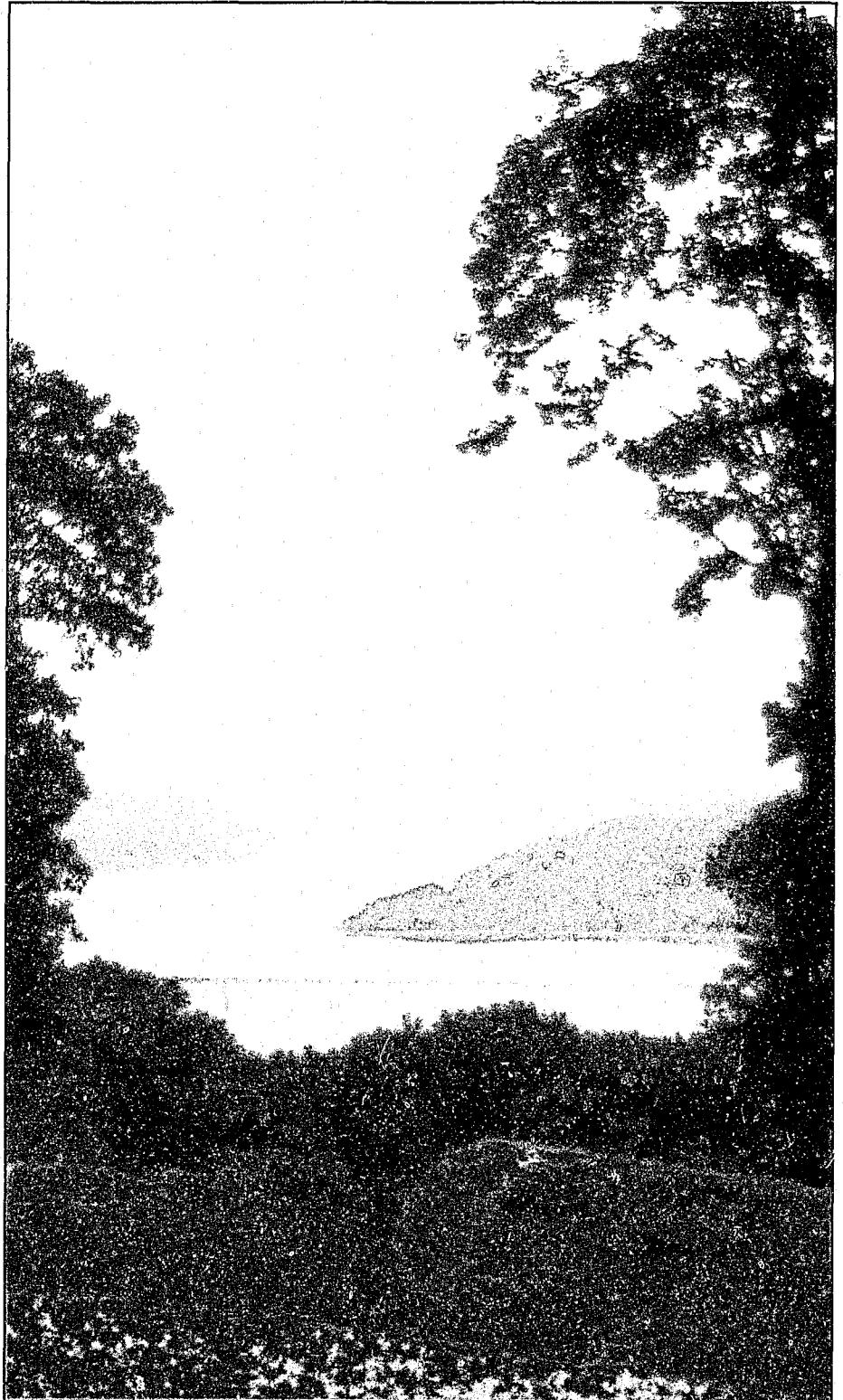
Chrystal Pitts

The Allegheny Plateau, located in northwestern Pennsylvania, is home to the Allegheny National Forest, Lewis Run, and many of Pennsylvania's other rich natural resources, as well as the Federal Correctional Institution, McKean County.

In our high-tech world, it is increasingly apparent that all of us—including Federal agencies—must take a proactive approach to maintaining the tenuous balance between humans and their environment. Thus, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Federal Correctional Institution, McKean, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, Allegheny National Forest (ANF), was signed in July 1989 by Warden Dennis M. Luther and David J. Wright, Forest Supervisor. While relationships between the U.S. Forest Service and prison systems were not a new idea, such a working partnership with a Bureau facility was unprecedented.

This unique program began with two eight-man crews that left McKean's minimum-security Federal Prison Camp daily to work in the forest. In 1991, two new five-man crews were added. Currently, the program has three work crews, with a total of 21 inmates. Shortly, we will be adding a fourth crew, bringing the total to 30 inmates. Crews are paid a modest wage; they participate in various forest maintenance projects, trail construction, and wildlife projects, including pruning and fence construction.

FCI McKean, with the concurrence of the Forest Service, selects inmates incarcerated at the Federal Prison Camp on the basis of their "custody level, their mental



and physical competence, and suitability for work programs with the Allegheny National Forest Service." In other words, inmates assigned to the work crews exhibit a high degree of responsibility, as shown by their prior institutional work performance, and are suitable candidates for this rare opportunity. Their criminal histories must be free of serious violence, escape attempts, and sexual offenses.

McKean provides sack lunches and standard work uniforms, including steel-toed safety boots. The prison also ensures that immediate medical care is available if any injuries occur on the job site. The Forest Service supervisors provide work supervision to the inmates. Monday through Friday; the Forest Service provides tools, safety equipment, and transportation to and from work sites. According to one crew supervisor, "Forest Service work provides a respite from the routine of the Camp, but, more importantly, the inmates gain a sense of community. With the completion of each project, the inmates feel they are returning or giving something back to the local area."

The accompanying pictures, showing projects completed through the teamwork of FCI McKean and the U.S. Forest Service, exemplify the work ethic and community spirit being developed among participating Federal inmates.

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Providing snowmobile parking, fishing access to the south branch of the Kinzua Creek, and a gateway to the Kinzua Wetlands Area, the Long House parking lot is a versatile resource. The 1-acre lot



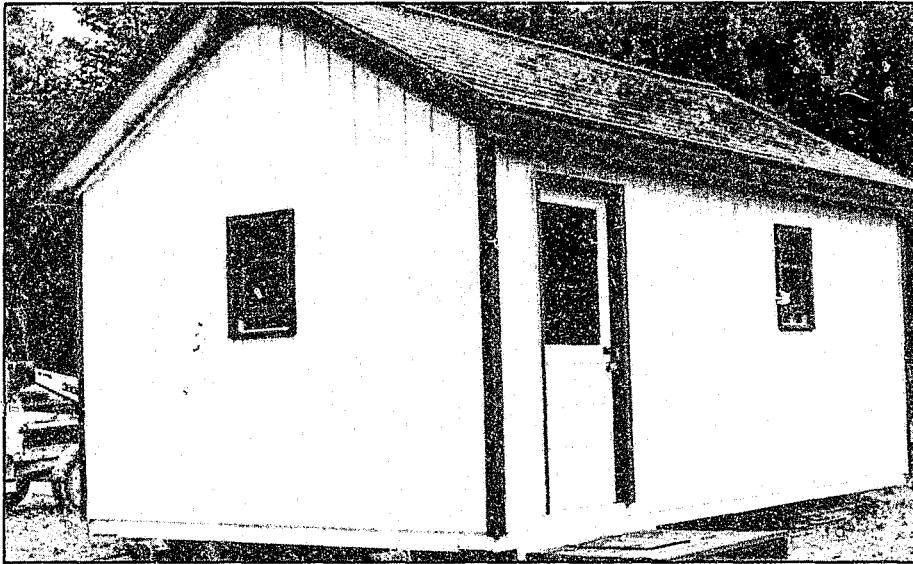
Photos by Crystal Pitts

is located off of Pennsylvania Route 321, south of the Scenic Byway. The McKean inmates cleared trees and brush for the lot; grading, seeding, mulching, and limestone surfacing were completed by outside contractors. ◀

The Kinzua Wetlands boardwalk was completed within 2 weeks during autumn 1990 by one inmate crew. Using a Forest Service design and \$3,000 in materials, the inmates constructed the 145-foot expanse, used as a winter crossing for snowmobilers. Plans are underway for making the picturesque setting part of an interpretive wetlands trail.

A 2.1-mile stretch of trail intersects the Long House parking lot and the Kinzua Wetlands boardwalk. On one of their first projects, the inmates cleared roots and brush from the trail and placed signs. Recreationists and naturalists enjoy the scenic beauty as they stroll through the forest. ▼



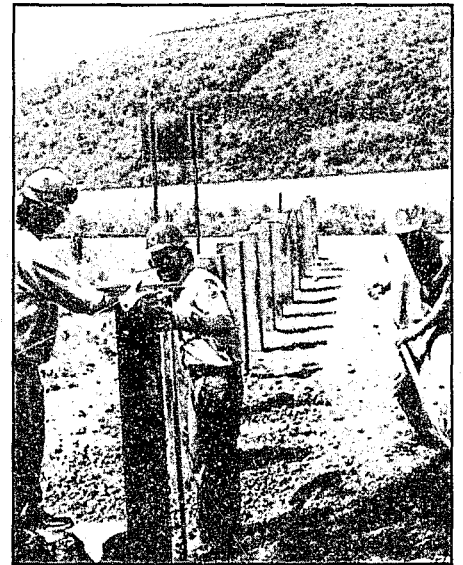


In addition to building, expanding, and enhancing trails, the inmate crews constructed a tool and storage shed adjacent to the Bradford Ranger District office during summer 1991. The inmates designed and constructed the mobile shed within 1 month. The crews house supplies and equipment in the 10- by 20-foot shed, which was recently equipped with electricity. ▲

FCI McKean staff members, in conjunction with the ANF, coordinated an Earth Day celebration on April 22, 1992. Fourth through sixth graders from the Bradford and Kane Schools gathered to plant shrubs and wildlife habitat in the Old State Road area, off Pennsylvania Route 59. The inmate crews assisted the children in planting the native viburnums. This timber stand, heavily defoliated by gypsy moths and further stressed by a drought, became an oak salvage area. Lunch was served by members of the Allegheny Hardwood Utilization Group, Inc., a wood-products industry trade association. ►



Bent Run, the only waterfall along Route 59 (adjacent to Kinzua Dam), has been the centerpiece of a recent project. A cooperative effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the ANF, and FCI McKean, the objective is to provide improved accessibility to the waterfall and to heighten the visibility of this natural wonder. The parking area has been enlarged to accommodate tourists, and wood railings are being placed to define the vehicular area. A path to the waterfall has been cleared, and brush removed for easier walking. ▼



The focal point of the convergence of the Allegheny and Conewango rivers is Point Park, Warren, Pennsylvania. Coordinated by the PennSoil Resource Conservation and Development District, Soil Conservation Service, this project was begun in December 1991. Since this project enhanced resource management efforts, funding for administrative costs for supervising and transporting the inmate crews was procured through the USDA Rural Initiative Program, State and

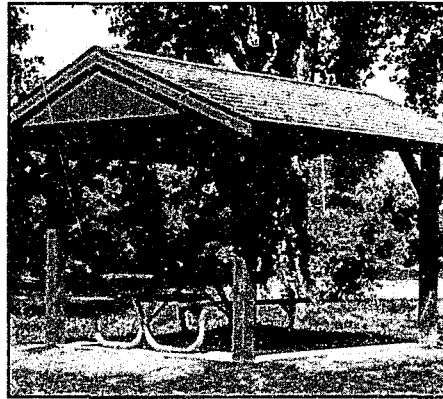
Private Forestry, USDA Forest Service. The park was designed by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry. Materials were supplied by the City of Warren. Finally, the inmate crew brought the project to life by clearing trees, brush, and rubbish from the area. In June 1992 the crew returned to the site to construct picnic tables, benches, and a pavilion. Residents and visitors enjoy fishing, watching waterfowl, and relaxing on the benches in the shade of the willows along the shoreline. ▶

▶ Twenty-six picnic tables manufactured by FCI McKean's Vocational Technical-Carpentry Program adorn the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. Trees from each State will be the backdrop for this unique park. The Forest Service provided the materials in March 1992, and the inmates constructed the tables in April. The tables are shown here being assembled by Forest Service personnel.

While the ANF spends about \$160,000 for administration, supervision, and transportation of inmate crews, the value derived from these projects is three or four times the investment. Not only does the program provide invaluable work opportunities for minimum-security inmates, it also allows completion of labor-intensive environmental work that would not otherwise be accomplished due to the lack of funding and workforce availability.

□ □ □

Because of the many successes of the McKean work crews, a National Inter-agency Agreement between the USDA Forest Service and the Federal Bureau of Prisons was signed in June 1991, by F. Dale Robertson, Chief of the Forest



Service, and J. Michael Quinlan, then-director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. This agreement officially recognized the value of the program and allowed for nationwide expansion.

FCI McKean's motto, "Setting the Standard," blends nicely with that of the USDA Forest Service: "Caring for the Land and Serving People." Through this cooperative effort, our Nation's forests will be enhanced for appreciation by tomorrow's generations. ■

Chrystal Pitts is an Employee Development Specialist at the Federal Correctional Institution, McKean, Pennsylvania.

Bureau of Prisons Public Work Projects

As of December 1993, more than 650 male and female Federal inmates, from both institutions and Community Corrections Centers, were employed in 45 public works projects with other Federal agencies.

Most worked either on National Forest Service or National Park Service projects similar to that performed by the inmates from FPC McKean, or on military bases performing facilities or grounds maintenance. A few of the larger project sites are listed below:

Federal Prison Camp inmates:

- Bryan, Texas
Sam Houston National Forest
- Lompoc, California
Vandenberg Air Force Base
- Morgantown, West Virginia
Camp Dawson
- Petersburg, Virginia
Fort Lee
- Sheridan, Oregon
Siuslaw National Forest

Community Corrections Center residents:

- Spokane, Washington
Fairchild Air Force Base
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Defense Personnel Support Center
- Dallas, Texas
Veterans Hospital
- San Antonio, Texas
Kelly Air Force Base
- San Diego, California
North Island Naval Air Station