

AROUND THE STATE: MRF COs PREVENT ESCAPE

Macomb staff thwarted an escape attempt after a vigilant tower officer spotted two inmates headed for a perimeter fence.

The Level IV prisoners had been walking to dinner Jan. 5 when the pair broke off from other inmates. They walked around the side of Housing Unit 5 and toward the perimeter fence. The officer made a radio call to staff in the unit and the inmates were stopped. In the prisoners' beds, staff found dummies made from bundles of clothes.

This story is another reminder of the importance of staffing watch towers. Thankfully, the towers were staffed at the time of the escape attempt. They're often unstaffed due to budget cuts.

Also last weekend, two visitors brought in suspected drugs at Macomb.

Congratulations to the alert officers who prevented this escape and detected this contraband.

A Baraga inmate tried to stab an officer with a sharpened outlet cover Dec. 26.

The CO was picking up food trays in Unit 2 (Level V) when an inmate pulled his arm through the food slot. The officer wasn't injured.

This prisoner has a history of attempting to harm staff, an officer said. He has been transferred.

A Marquette inmate with a history of assaulting staff spit on an officer on Christmas Day. The officer was seen at a hospital and released.

This prisoner has spit on staff numerous times in the last two months, a CO estimated.

Marquette officers also responded to several fights during the last week of December. At least 14 prisoners, many of them Level V, received tickets related

to the fights. Many of these inmates weren't taken to segregation because it was full, officers said. Instead, they were placed on top lock, meaning they stayed in a general population housing unit but were only removed from their cells for showers.

Great work to the MBP staff who had to deal with these incidents over the holidays.

MTU officers have found cell phones, Suboxone, and other contraband over the last few weeks.

In late December, a CO found 18 strips of Suboxone on a Level II inmate during a shakedown. A cell phone was found on another inmate in a separate shakedown. Around the same day, a CO in the perimeter security vehicle spotted a package lying on the ground outside the perimeter fence. Inside were eight cell phones.

Earlier this month, officers uncovered a weapon made from a metal can lid hidden in a Level II prisoner's shoe. They also found a syringe in another Level II inmate's mattress. Officers found Suboxone again on an inmate after seeing a suspicious transaction on the yard.

Great work to the dedicated staff at MTU who catch contraband and keep their facility safe.

A Carson City officer found 20 shanks in 1200 building (Level IV) Jan. 2. The weapons were made of metal and plastic and appeared to be in different stages of completion. They were found in inmates' cells.

A Level IV inmate dressed out an officer with urine at Cotton last week. This prisoner was Security Threat Group 1, meaning he is a known gang member.

MDOC WELLNESS SURVEY ENDS FRIDAY

This is your last chance to take the important MDOC Wellness Assessment before it closes Friday, Jan. 11. MDOC emailed a reminder with the survey link to all staff Monday.

This survey is our chance to tell MDOC administration what we need. MCO members have raised this important topic for years and have worked hard to get to this point – we conducted an assessment that backed up our claims about PTSD, worked with the legislature to explain the problem, and pushed the MDOC to do more for their employees. Let's keep up the momentum. Please fill out the survey so MDOC can understand what you are dealing with and what resources you need.

More info about the survey was emailed to you, or you can read about it on the [MCO website](#).

Thanks, members, for raising your voice.



IN MEMORIAM

WCC Member Claude Priebe passed away Dec. 29.

CMO Priebe had been an MDOC employee for 37 years, according to MCO records. He leaves behind his wife, son, mother, and other family and friends.

Services were last week.

[Carl Horn](#), who retired from WHV, passed away Jan. 3.

Horn started his MDOC career in 1985 and retired in 2011.

Visitation is 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Jan. 10 at Kemp Funeral Home, 24585 Evergreen Rd., Southfield, MI 48075. A funeral will be at 11 a.m. Jan. 11 at the same location.

Rest in peace, Officer Priebe and Officer Horn.

TWO RGC OFFICERS INJURED IN SERIOUS ASSAULT

An RGC inmate punched an officer Monday, breaking his jaw, and another CO was injured while responding.

The officers were taken by ambulance to an emergency room. The assaulted officer suffered a concussion and multiple jaw fractures. He had surgery to wire his jaw shut and was released from the hospital Wednesday. The responding officer needed three staples for a gash in his head.

The prisoner punched the officer Monday morning after he told him to lockup. An officer came to respond and hit his head while trying to stop the assault. The prisoner

was transferred, and Michigan State Police are investigating.

TISM (Traumatic Incident Stress Management) team members visited the facility the following day.

Please continue to keep these officers in your thoughts and wish them a speedy recovery.

This situation underscores the fact that corrections officers have dangerous jobs, where anything can happen at any moment. They must be vigilant at all times. They deserve the public's gratitude and respect for the sacrifices they make every day. Stay safe.

MCO PROVIDING UPDATES ON DIRECTOR'S MEMOS

The MDOC administration has recently issued Director's Office Memorandums outlining how overtime assignments, annual leave scheduling, and other important issues will be handled in 2019.

The Michigan Civil Service Commission [prohibited these subjects from being bargained](#) and put them under the authority of the employer.

MCO has been answering members' questions and asking for clarification on the DOMs. You can read updates from MCO President Byron Osborn on our [website](#) and in our members-only [Facebook group](#). Last week, MCO met with Director Heidi Washington to express members' concerns.

All members are encouraged to read these updates so they understand the new processes and can report any violations to their chapter leadership.

Remember, when MCSC took these rights out of our contract, it was part of a strategic political attack on state employees and their unions. It's time to stand up, and stand together. Thanks, members, for standing together in solidarity during this time.

RUO/CMUO LAWSUIT HEARING SCHEDULED NEXT WEEK

The Michigan Supreme Court will hear arguments Jan. 23 in our RUO/CMUO lawsuit. The case is the last item on the Court's morning agenda, meaning it could be heard any time from roughly 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. The hearing is open to the public, so members may attend, although we expect the hearing will be short and

no decision will be made that day.

The purpose of this hearing will be for the Court to decide if they want to fully examine the case and then rule on the issue.

MCO has been fighting the elimination of the RUO/CMUO classifications since 2012. [Read a timeline of our actions.](#)

Brand new MCO website coming soon to better serve members and tell our story

In these trying times, we know that MCO leaders and staff must do everything possible to tell the stories of corrections officers and make information easy to access. **We're committed to updating our technology and communications this year, starting with a brand-new website.**

If you go to [MCO's website](#) often, you know there's a ton of great information on everything from legislative wins to discounts.

But you've probably noticed that

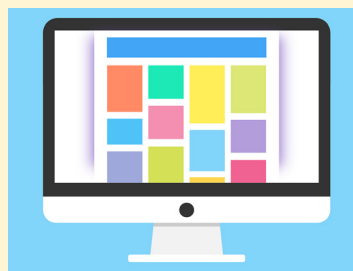
our site is out-of-date, and, what's worse, it's difficult to use on a phone or tablet. Our website could also do a better job of showing the world who corrections officers are – professionals who work dangerous, stressful jobs to protect the public.

Our hope is to have an exciting new site ready

to reveal to members in the coming months. When the new site rolls out, we'll share tips for how to navigate it so members can find what they need.

Many tips will be posted on our social media accounts, so now would be a good time to join MCO's members-only [Facebook group](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), and subscribe to us on [YouTube](#).

Stay tuned!



SUPREME COURT NOW CONSIDERING RUO/CMUO DISPUTE

MCO and the Attorney General's office were called before the Michigan Supreme Court Jan. 23 on the abolishment of the RUO and CMUO positions.

Essentially, the Court asked the parties to argue their respective positions as to the Michigan Court of Appeals decision released last year, which favored the state. The Court of Appeals reversed a circuit court decision which favored MCO.

Specifically, the Supreme Court zeroed in on the legal standard "authorized by law," and asked whether it was the appropriate standard in this case, and if the

Court of Appeals applied it correctly?

The crux of the case deals with: 1) whether this standard allows a higher court to review evidence in the record (as the circuit court did), or 2) whether the reviewing court is barred from reviewing the evidence (as the Court of Appeals determined), and 3) ruling on whether the Civil Service Commission's abolishment of the positions was appropriate because of powers granted to it.

MCO's position is, of course, the appellate court must review the evidence; otherwise there is no meaningful review.

The Attorney General's position is that the appellate court cannot look at the evidence, and can only determine if the action was authorized by law.

We now await the Supreme Court's decision. The Court could: 1) decline to hear the matter further, thereby allowing the Court of Appeal's decision to stand; or 2) decide to take the case and rule on the merits of the original issue. The Court is under no time constraints.

MCO has been fighting the elimination of the RUO/CMUO classifications since 2012. [Read a timeline of our actions.](#)

MCO MAKES PROGRESS FOR MEMBERS IN LAME DUCK SESSION, PLANS FOR '19-20

As this year's legislative session gets into swing, let's reflect on the historic 2018 lame duck session and the wins MCO achieved through partnerships in the legislature.

MCO was able to successfully utilize the lame duck session to beat back anti-union proposals and pass seven pieces of pro-officer legislation that improve the safety and security of correctional officers and increase recognition for a profession that is often misunderstood and misrepresented. These successes are a stark contrast to the lame ducks of years past, which brought anti-union legislation like Right-To-Work and Expansion of Private Prisons (See "[2012- Lame Duck wrap up, plus how your legislator voted](#)").

Among the [MCO backed legislation](#) that was signed by Governor Snyder was a five bill drone package, a bill that renames a portion of Interstate 94 as the "Corrections Officers Jack Budd and Josephine McCallum Memorial Highway" and a bill that returns certain Absconder Recovery Unit officers to covered retirement after a state audit unjustly removed them.

But these legislative victories would not be possible if it weren't for the [hard work and dedication of MCO members](#). Through town halls, legislative coffee hours, district meetings and the [Move](#)

[Forward campaign](#), members created a culture of engagement and championed an intensive effort to raise corrections issues. You may not see it every day at your facility, but it's true. For example, **members signed Move Forward posters, and now several legislators have these posters displayed in their offices. After seeing these posters and reading about the values on our website, several legislators approached MCO to get the officers' perspective on mandates, staffing shortages, and other issues that they used to only ask MDOC about.** We can't overstate the importance of these relationships.

"To see this many pro-officer corrections bills signed into law shows the growing attention and respect corrections officers have at the state Capitol," said Jeremy Tripp, MCO-Director of Government Affairs.

In 2019, MCO plans to keep the momentum rolling and has already begun legislative outreach on important corrections topics. Outstanding on our list of priorities that did not pass due to time limits in the previous legislative cycle are: the creation of, and appointment to, a suicide prevention commission; the ability for corrections officers to carry and administer opioid antagonists; and bills that

would acknowledge and penalize criminals for the targeting of officers based on their perceived or actual employment.

These legislative gains are the kind of work we can achieve if we commit to changing corrections through programs like Move Forward. It takes hard work from all of us – all members, not just leaders and staff in Lansing – to engage and change public opinion. We won't get there overnight, but we are well on our way to changing the narrative and making corrections safer for all.

[HB 5923](#) (Memorial Highway)

[HB 5494](#) (Drones)

[HB 5495](#) (Drones)

[HB 5496](#) (Drones)

[SB 917](#) (Drones)

[SB 922](#) (Drones)

[HB 5411](#) (CSR classification)



IN MEMORIAM: CO PERDUE

Cotton Officer Michael Perdue passed away Jan. 18.

Perdue started with the MDOC in 1994. He was well-respected by all staff.

The Traumatic Incident Stress Management team (TISM) was at the facility to meet with staff the day of his death.

Rest in peace, CO Perdue.

MCO AND COLLEGE TEAM UP TO OFFER FREE CLASSES

Here at MCO, we often talk about all the benefits of membership. Now we can add free college to that list. Yes, you read that right: **free college**.

MCO does not pay for this benefit. It is offered by a college to union members.

MCO and SEIU have partnered with Eastern Gateway Community College in Ohio to offer free online classes to dues-paying members and their families. [Read our full announcement for details.](#)

You don't have to wait for September to start – classes begin every 8 weeks. The next start date is March 18. There are a few steps to apply and verify your union

membership, so if you want to start classes March 18, start the process today.

A union is more than just a contract. A strong union can help members and their families with the things that matter most, as this free program illustrates. Through collaboration and partnerships, we can develop programs that will make a deep impact on members' and families' lives. All of us should be rethinking what a union is and what it should mean for each of us.

MCO [announced the free college benefit](#) Friday in an email to members' home email. Did you miss it? [Subscribe to our emails](#) with your personal – not .gov – email now.



[Click to view/print the flyer.](#)

WHAT MCO MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FENTANYL EXPOSURE AT WORK

If a corrections officer or forensic security assistant is exposed to fentanyl or another harmful opioid on the job, is that exposure covered under current Michigan workers compensation laws?

The answer, according to the Workers Compensation Agency and the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), is that "[for] an injury to be compensable (covered) under the Workers' Disability Compensation Act, [it] must arise out of and in the course of employment. Thus, if an employee is exposed to any foreign substance that causes injury meeting this criteria, it would be covered."

MCO asked for clarification on this important issue after dozens of staff at an Ohio prison were exposed to a

mixture of heroine and fentanyl. [According to a news story](#), the exposure raised questions about whether Ohio workers compensation laws covered the testing, diagnosis, and hospital treatment of impacted staff.

Fearing this indecisiveness could be a problem in Michigan, MCO Director of Government Affairs Jeremy Tripp reached out to State Representative Sarah Anthony to tackle the issue and determine if legislation was needed to protect MCO members. Through back and forth emails with the representative's office and LARA officials, the consensus was that this type of exposure on the job would be covered by current state law. Keep in mind, all worker's compensation cases are examined on a

case-by-case basis.

While legislation for this issue seems unnecessary at this time, staff safety has been and remains MCO's number one priority. During the 2019-2020 legislative session, MCO will continue to push for the introduction of a bill that allows COs to carry and administer opioid antagonists like naloxone, also known as Narcan. This is vital not only for inmate safety, but for officer safety in case of an exposure. Legislators considered a bill during the last session, but it didn't pass due to time limits.

MCO will continue to stay up to date with corrections trends and news around the country and ask how we can be proactive in Michigan to protect the safety and security of our prisons.

MARQUETTE OFFICER, NURSE ASSAULTED BY INMATES

A Marquette inmate punched an officer in the face Feb. 4.

The Level V prisoner in G-unit approached the CO's desk and started swinging. Staff from that unit and other units immediately responded. The officer went to a local emergency room and returned to work. The inmate went to segregation.

A nurse was also assaulted by an inmate Feb. 11. The prisoner, who was in a medical observation area, punched her through his bars. She was taken to a hospital for a concussion, staff said.

On Feb. 10, three officers were dressed out by prisoners in D-unit, which is segregation.

Stay safe.

In Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's first State of the State address Feb. 12, she said state workers need more support. MCO President Byron Osborn gave a state employee's perspective on the State of the State to the Lansing State Journal.

[Read the article now.](#)

NOW YOU CAN BECOME AN MCO MEMBER ONLINE!

MCO is making it easier than ever to become a member. Now you can [go to our website to fill out a form](#) to send your information to MCO. Next, the form will take you to HRMN, the HR self-service portal. In the portal, you can search for dues. Where you see “opt into one of the deduction codes listed below,” select EC01. On the next screen, click authorize.

If you don't have HRMN credentials, or are having problems logging in, don't worry. You can still fill out the form on the MCO website and report the problem to us. We'll follow up with you to make sure you can sign up and get all the [benefits of membership](#). You can also call the HR service center at 877-766-6447.

We're stronger together. Thank you, COs and FSAs, for your support!



This flyer details the steps you should take to become an MCO member. [View a larger, printable version.](#)

APPLY BY JUNE 1 FOR THE MCO SCHOLARSHIP

In addition to the [free college program](#) announced earlier this month, MCO is still offering a scholarship for members' children.

MCO will award 20 scholarships of \$750 each. Previous MCO scholarship winners are not eligible.

Mailed applications must be postmarked by June 1. [Print an application from our website](#). Online applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. June 1. [Complete the online application](#). Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The MCO scholarship program is a longstanding benefit of membership beyond anything in the contract. It shows that unions support families and can have a meaningful impact on the things that matter most.

Keep your eyes peeled for more announcements about how MCO is supporting members and their families achieve their educational goals.

Good luck!

The Hugh Wolfenbarger class recently started with more than 200 recruits. They are training in the UP, Lansing, and Ann Arbor. Wish them luck!



Jeremy Tripp, MCO's director of government and political affairs, speaks to WHV trainees.

OFFICER OF THE YEAR SELECTION COMING NEXT WEEK

The five CO of the Year finalists have been selected. The training council will interview the finalists Tuesday and select the 2019 MDOC Officer of the Year. Watch for an announcement that day.

Last year, MCO stepped up efforts to recognize every facility officer of the year, aside from the

MDOC. Again this year, facility award winners will receive a customized wooden box, engraved with the MCO logo. We're doing this because [we must recognize](#) our achievements and lift each other up. Thank you, officers, for the work you do every day to keep prisons and communities safe.

GUS HARRISON INMATE PASSES AWAY AFTER SERIOUS ASSAULT

A Gus Harrison inmate died Feb. 6 from injuries sustained when his cellmate assaulted him weeks earlier.

Shortly after midnight Jan. 14, a Level II inmate in 3-block approached the officers' desk and told COs he just beat up his bunkie. Staff immediately responded and found the inmate bleeding and unconscious. He was taken by ambulance

to a hospital and later passed away.

The assailant had previously been in a Level IV Residential Treatment Program for mental health issues. A classification panel waived him down to a lower security level, even though he had another assault on his record before the January assault, officers say.

Stay safe behind the walls.



BULLETIN

FEB. 26, 2019

INVESTIGATOR COOKLIN HONORED AS MDOC 2019 OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Stephen Cooklin, an Absconder Recovery Unit investigator based in Macomb County, has been named the 2019 Corrections Officer of the Year.

Investigator Cooklin, who is also a Task Force Officer with the U.S. Marshals Service, keeps communities safe by apprehending dangerous parole absconders. Cooklin handles a demanding caseload but is always willing to help other investigators and other law enforcement agencies.

Cooklin said he loves his job.

"All absconders are on a path in the wrong direction, and it's our duty to redirect them," Cooklin said. "It's challenging work, but I can't imagine doing anything else. If you do what you love, you never work a day in your life."

According to one of his reference letters, "the professionalism he displays in the community with offenders, their families, and other community partners often under tenuous circumstances is to be modeled."

Cooklin started with the MDOC in 1994 as a corrections officer. He has been an ARU investigator since 2011. He also spent 22 years serving in the U.S. military. Last year, he received the MDOC's Meritorious Service Award.

He has volunteered with the Cub Scouts, Hampton Elementary in Bay City, and local little league organizations.

Cooklin is married and has two children.

Finalists for officer of the year:

CTO Peter Formolo, Kinross Cadre

CTO Formolo started his MDOC career in 1989 and became a corrections transportation officer in 2008. As a CTO, he has dealt with inmate medical emergencies and transported prisoners out of KCF after the 2016 riot.

Formolo was also on the Kinross-area Emergency Response Team (ERT), and in that role, helped find escaped prisoners and missing civilians.

His nominating committee called him a "constant professional" who is always willing to train new CTOs.

This isn't his first time to be a candidate for MDOC officer of the year. In 1997, he was his facility's officer of the year at Chipewa.

Formolo has volunteered as a football coach with Sault area middle and high schools.

He is married and has three adult children.

CO Jeramie Mangus, Carson City

CO Mangus has gone above and beyond during his MDOC career, working as a Field Training Officer (FTO) at the academy and serving on his facility's Effective Process Improvement Communication (EPIC) Team and his facility's staff recruitment team. Mangus also represents MDOC at job fairs and speaks about criminal justice careers at colleges.



From left: ARU Investigator Stephen Cooklin, CTO Peter Formolo, CO Jeramie Mangus, and CMO Trent Myles. Not pictured: CO Thomas Goodreau, AMF.

"He has volunteered as a mentor to new staff and his peers look up to him as someone they can go to for help," his nominating committee said.

Mangus received the MDOC's Lifesaving Award in 2014 and the Michigan National Guard's American Patriotism Award in 2009.

Mangus started with the MDOC in 2001. He is working on a bachelor's degree in integrated leadership.

CMO Trent Myles, Woodland

CMO Myles "is the officer that you want and need with you in every critical situa-

tion," his nominating committee said. He is able to "calm most incidents" and "teaches others that communication is a key to positive outcomes."

Myles trains other trainers in CPR, restraining inmates, and other skills.

He volunteers through All For One, a men's group that provides food donations and clothes to the homeless.

Myles started his career as a Forensic Security Assistant at the old Huron Valley Center. He became a CO at Huron Valley Men's and then a Corrections Medical Officer at Woodland. He is married and has four children.

CO Thomas Goodreau, Baraga

CO Goodreau takes an active role in making his facility safer. He helps identify Security Threat Groups, place prisoners

in jobs, and monitor J-Pay transactions. He has worked to enhance tool control and is trained to lead Thinking for a Change. Last year, he received a Good Government Excellence Coin for his dedication. Recently, he found an unresponsive officer at work and immediately secured the area and called for help.

Goodreau, a U.S. Navy veteran, is very involved in the Baraga community. He is the girls' varsity basketball

coach and assists with elementary basketball. After a flood last summer, he coordinated a fundraiser for the community and volunteer cleanup efforts. He is also a member of the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community.

Goodreau started his career with the MDOC in 1994 and has worked at four correctional facilities and camps. He is married and has five children.

Congratulations to all Officers of the Year! Read a list of all facility COs of the year on [our website](#).

MDOC HOPES TO FILL MORE THAN 800 CO VACANCIES WITH NEW ACADEMIES

MDOC is now more than 800 officers short, and COs earned more than \$78 million in overtime in fiscal year 2018.

The updated numbers were released in a presentation MDOC gave last week to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Corrections.

There are 828 vacancies, but 229 recruits are currently training to fill those positions, according to the MDOC. The department will run four academies this year with hopes to hire 820 officers. The department expects to continue to lose 50 or more COs every month.

In light of the staffing crisis, MCO has been requesting from the governor, the House, and the Senate more funding for hiring recruits and enhancing technology at the training academy.

In her budget proposal announced this week, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer asked for \$10.5 million for the correc-

tions academy for the 2020 fiscal year, which runs October 2019 through September 2020. If approved by the legislature, this means hiring would continue well into 2020.

Also at the hearing, MDOC showed departures by seniority, which indicated that of the COs who left their positions in fiscal year 2018, 27 percent had fewer than three years with the department. This is similar to numbers MCO introduced at impasse in bargaining last year. MDOC claims these COs left because they were mandated often and couldn't take off holidays. But without a survey instrument or other data or metrics to support that stance, it's just one possible reason among many others, including the phase out of retirement benefits and an increase in constant, trivial discipline.

We have asked MDOC to partner with us to draft a non-biased survey to collect data from employees so they can

tell us in their own words their reasons for leaving. This is the latest example of MCO reaching out and offering to be a resource in fixing the staffing crisis. Watch your emails and communications from MCO for updates.

MCO met with more than 180 recruits this week who are training in Lansing.

We are proud to say 94 percent of them chose to join MCO. Because the Civil Service Commission no longer accepts paper membership cards, MCO handed out tablets and new recruits signed up on our website. [You, too, can join or rejoin MCO now!](#)



AROUND THE STATE: IBC, URF OFFICERS ASSAULTED

A Bellamy Creek officer has not returned to work after an inmate punched him Feb. 17.

The assault happened in housing unit 5, a Level IV unit.

The officer approached an inmate who was loitering in the dayroom area, where he wasn't supposed to be at the time, and told him to leave. The prisoner turned and punched the CO several times in the head.

The officer had a concussion and was taken to a hospital. Another CO hurt his knee while responding. The prisoner has been transferred.

Please wish these officers a quick recovery. Stay safe.

A Chippewa inmate punched an officer Feb. 26 while he was making rounds.

The Level II prisoner came out of his cell swinging and hit the CO twice in the face. Officers quickly responded.

The inmate was taken to segregation and then transferred to another prison.

Marquette COs responded to at least three separate fights Feb. 22.

At least 10 Level V prisoners were involved in the fights.

Great job to the staff who immediately responded to these altercations. Officers must always be vigilant and ready to respond.

2019-2021 CONTRACT POSTED ONLINE

The MCO contract that took effect Jan. 1, 2019 is online now.

[Read the 2019-2021 contract here.](#)

Remember, this contract only includes one year of wages and benefits. We will be back at the table this summer to negotiate those items.

The parties noted areas where changes to Michigan Civil Service Commission rules resulted in removed language. These articles usually state that the topic "is a prohibited subject of bargaining and, as such, is governed by Civil Service Rules and Regulations."

Members will also receive a copy of the contract in the mail this spring.



BULLETIN

MARCH 15, 2019

MCO NOT SUCCESSFUL IN RUO/CMUO CHALLENGE

The Michigan Supreme Court has decided not to rule on the RUO/CMUO case. This means the Court of Appeals ruling, which sided against MCO, will stand.

The 4-3 ruling was released this morning.

The Supreme Court determined that the state Constitution gives the Civil Service Commission authority in this area, and that other concerns, like whether the commission thoroughly examined and weighed evidence, are secondary.

In 2017, a circuit court sided with MCO, but the Supreme Court found that court “erred in manner by failing to afford the Civil Service Commission proper deference.”

[Read the full decision here.](#)

“It is important to note that the three democratic (justices) agreed with MCO’s position that the case should have been reviewed under an arbitrary and capricious standard – allowing review of the evidence,” said MCO’s attorney who litigated the case.

The Michigan Supreme Court has final jurisdiction in this matter. The case cannot be appealed.

MCO has been challenging the RUO/CMUO abolishment since 2012. [Read a timeline of our actions.](#)

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IN MEMORIAM: JOSEPHINE McCALLUM AND GEORGE HAIGHT

In late March, we remember two Michigan corrections officers who made the ultimate sacrifice this month years ago.

Josephine McCallum was murdered at the former State Prison of Southern Michigan in Jackson on March 24, 1987. McCallum was the only officer in the activities building when she was brutally attacked and left to die. She left behind a husband and son.

George Haight, a gatekeeper, was poisoned by an inmate March 27, 1893 at the Michigan State Penitentiary in Jackson. Haight ate tainted food prepared by an inmate. Haight was survived by a wife and five

children.

McCallum, Haight, and two other Michigan corrections officers who have died in the line of duty – Earl DeMarse in September 1973 and Jack Budd in December 1987 – are honored on MCO's Fallen Officers' Memorial. A portion of I-94 in Jackson near the prisons [will be renamed](#) in honor of McCallum and Budd. MCO worked hard to move a bill through the legislature to rename the highway and ensure their sacrifice is not forgotten. [Read more about Michigan's fallen corrections officers.](#) May all our fallen officers rest in peace.

ICF COs INJURED WHILE RESPONDING TO LARGE YARD FIGHT

Two ICF officers were injured while breaking up a fight March 19 that involved six prisoners.

It started with a fight between two inmates on the Unit 3 (Level V) yard. Two officers intervened, and one prisoner ran and threw something over the fence. The inmate turned around and ran back toward the other prisoner and officers. Staff were able to restrain him.

Then two more inmates ran toward

responding officers in an attempt to fight one of the prisoners. They were eventually detained.

One CO suffered a shoulder injury and another officer hurt his knee.

After the fight, an officer found the item thrown over the fence. It was a sharpened piece of metal wrapped in a sheet.

Great work to the officers who responded to this dangerous fight.

HURRY! APPLY FOR CLOSER TO HOME TRANSFER LIST BEFORE MARCH 31

Officers may apply for the closer-to-home transfer list by March 31. **We apologize for the late notice. The Director's Office Memorandums (DOMs) issued March 14 state that the closer to home list will remain in effect, and that the deadline for this year's list is March 31.**

To apply, [email](#), mail or fax a letter to MCO, attention: Karen Mazzolini. MCO's mailing address is 421 W. Kalamazoo St., Lansing, MI 48933. MCO's fax number is (517)485-3319.

Include your name, employee ID, address, phone number, current work location, desired work location, and how far you currently travel for work. Your letter or fax must be received at the MCO Central Office by March 31 for consideration. If you submit information after that date, your application is invalid.

[Please go to our website for more important information about the Closer to Home list.](#)

Benefits for Life open enrollment going on now

The 2019 Benefits for Life open enrollment is going on now through March 29. Benefits for Life plans are optional benefits in which employees pay 100% of the cost of coverage.

Trustmark Universal Life Insurance with Long-Term Care (LTC) benefits have improved this year! The updated offer includes coverage up to \$75,000, without medical questions, for employees up to age 64 and an LTC coverage solution. Those who previously applied or have current coverage will require underwriting. Employees already enrolled in Universal Life Insurance must make changes to their existing plans via a telephone conference

with a Benefits for Life Representative. [More details are in this flyer.](#)

Eligible employees are encouraged to visit www.BenefitsforLife.org to review existing coverage, make changes, or enroll. Remember to select Register instead of Login when visiting the enrollment site as usernames and passwords from prior years are no longer valid. If you would like further information or prefer to enroll by phone, call the Benefits for Life call center at 888-825-8395, Monday-Friday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Please note, you cannot access these benefits through HRMN.

- Information provided by Michigan Civil Service Commission.

RUO/CMUO UPDATE

As announced March 15, the Michigan Supreme Court will not hear the RUO/CMUO case. This means the Court of Appeals ruling, which sided against MCO, will stand. [Read more in this bulletin.](#)

Thank you members for standing together throughout this seven-year fight.



BULLETIN

APRIL 2, 2019

BROOKS MEMBERSHIP MEETING THURSDAY ON MENINGITIS

MCO is holding a meeting for Brooks members to discuss the recent cases of meningitis and death of a corrections officer.

WHAT: Brooks membership meeting regarding meningitis

WHERE: Northway Lanes, 1751 Evanston Ave., Muskegon

WHEN: 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. Thursday, April 4

MCO encouraged MDOC to hold an informational meeting last week, after the department announced an officer had died from meningitis and an inmate was hospitalized. They shared information about how to protect yourself from contracting meningitis and answered questions about how the bacteria spreads.

Now MCO is holding meetings to hear about officers' experiences related to the meningitis illness at the facility. Your experiences will help inform a plan of action that we can take to the MDOC. **We want to do everything possible to help MDOC educate staff and alleviate stress and uncertainty if meningitis should strike again. To do that, we need input from all Brooks officers. Safety is our number one priority, and that includes safety from disease and infection as well.**

More about the officer who passed away will be in the next KYI. Our hearts are with Brooks staff and the officer's family and friends who have been grieving this loss. May he rest in peace.

MCO will keep members updated on any developments. Please watch our [website](#), emails, and our [members-only Facebook group](#).

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IN MEMORIAM: BROOKS OFFICER WILLIE JONES

Willie Jones, a Brooks officer with more than 20 years in the MDOC, passed away Monday, March 25.

Jones had worked at the two Muskegon prisons and West Shoreline, which closed last year. He was well-known among Muskegon corrections officers

“He was always thought of really positively,” LRF Chapter President Jameson

Clark said. “He loved football and working out. He was a really good guy. He was helpful and outgoing.”

Jones leaves behind a son, girlfriend, and other family and friends, officers said. Services were last week.

Please join us in praying for peace for Jones’ survivors and LRF staff. Rest in peace, Officer Jones.

AROUND THE STATE: MENINGITIS AT LRF; ARU-INVOLVED SHOOTING

A Brooks officer has died of meningitis. An inmate has also fallen sick.

The officer last worked March 18. He stayed home sick with flu-like symptoms, but was taken to the hospital after suffering a seizure, [according to media reports](#).

MCO Board members and staff met with LRF members Thursday. Many of them expressed concerns about how this serious illness was handled. MCO will take their feedback to MDOC and urge the Department to create a meningitis protocol that addresses staff concerns and keeps everyone safe.

As announced in the April 2 bulletin, MCO encouraged MDOC to hold an informational meeting last week. They shared information about how to protect yourself from contracting meningitis and answered questions about how the bacteria spreads.

We’ll keep members updated on meningitis and work to combat it.

Also at Brooks, a prisoner hit an officer nine times with a fan motor inside a laundry bag.

The CO was making rounds in Al-egan unit (Level II) March 21 when the inmate struck her. She was taken by ambulance to a hospital.

She suffered cuts and bruising on her

head. She has been released from the hospital but is not back to work.

Officers said she had recently fired the inmate from his job doing laundry.

Please wish this CO a quick recovery.

The MDOC Absconder Recovery Unit and several other law enforcement agencies were involved in a shooting Thursday while trying to apprehend a parole violator in Kalamazoo.

According to media reports, law enforcement tracked the absconder to a home. He claimed to have a weapon and made threats. Several law enforcement officers on scene fired weapons, and the suspect was later pronounced dead. MSP is investigating.

ICF officers responded to three fights in two days.

The first two happened March 23, one in the Unit 5 (Level V) and one on the Unit 4 (Level V) yard. In both incidents, two prisoners punched each other. The next day, another two-inmate fight broke out in Unit 5. Staff say the fights were gang related.

The six inmates involved in the fights were sent to segregation. No staff were injured.

MCO SCHOLARSHIP REMINDER AND TIPS

Remember, MCO scholarship applications are due June 1. Get a [paper application](#) or fill out the [online application](#) now.

Please be aware, you cannot save your place in the online application and return to it later. You must complete the application in one sitting. We recommend you scroll through the entire application and gather the required documentation before you start the application. Also, we have received many incomplete applications online. Incomplete applications will not be considered. If you have a question about whether your application was incomplete, contact [Tara Nichol](#).

Through SEIU, MCO also offers [free online community college](#).

Later this week, we will have an important announcement about other ways MCO is working to make college affordable for members and their families. Stay tuned.

Congratulations to Hugh Wolfenbarger class recruits! Those training downstate graduated last week. Recruits training in the UP graduated March 22. Good luck as you begin your corrections career! More photos are in our [members-only Facebook group](#) and [Instagram](#).





MCO NOW OFFERS A TOTAL OF FOUR PROGRAMS TO ASSIST WITH COLLEGE COSTS

Union stepping up to address the challenges weighing on members and their families, like college affordability

Last week, MCO announced two more programs to help members and their families afford the cost of higher education: the Academy Debt Assistance Program and a general Student Debt Assistance Program.

The **Academy Debt Assistance Program** will disperse 20 awards of \$500 each to current MCO members who paid out of pocket or got into debt to get their corrections training at a community college in 2014 or 2015. Switching to community colleges for training was a failed experiment, and MDOC returned to the paid academies in 2015.

The **Student Debt Assistance Program** will award 20 grants of \$500 each to current MCO members who have student loans from earning an undergraduate

degree.

The deadline to apply for either program is June 15. Award winners will be selected by random drawing. **These programs will run on a trial basis this year.** After we assess their value to members and effectiveness, MCO may or may not offer them in future years. Full details on both, including how to apply, are on our [website](#).

With the addition of these two programs, MCO now offers members four different avenues for help with college costs:

[Academy Debt Assistance](#)
[Student Debt Assistance](#)
[Free Online College](#)
[MCO Scholarship](#)

We aren't offering a "one-size-fits-all" approach; instead, we are providing members and their families the reassurance of knowing there is assistance available from MCO, no matter what approach they decide to take toward higher education.

The cost of college was one of the most-discussed topics at MCO's member listening sessions over the past few years. Members said the strain caused by college and other financial burdens worries them and their families. MCO leaders have decided to try these programs this year because we need to do something to address the challenges of our time. All of us should be rethinking what a union is and what it can do for each of us.

Thanks, members, for your support.

AROUND THE STATE: SRF INMATE KILLED IN VICIOUS ATTACK

A Saginaw inmate died April 8 after a brutal assault in a Level IV unit.

A prisoner appeared to have hit the inmate several times with a blunt object and stuck a sharp object in his ear, staff said. Officers responded and found blood pooling under the cell door.

TISM (Traumatic Incident Stress Management) team members visited the prison more than once and met with dozens of staff.

Michigan State Police are investigating. The suspect has been transferred to another facility.

A Baraga inmate was stabbed 22 times, including twice in the eye, while walking to the school building.

The assault happened last Friday on a walkway. Officers said the attacker was chatting with the other inmate like everything was fine before stabbing him, which prisoners call "lullabying." Staff also said the assaulted prisoner owed a gambling debt to other prisoners. He suffered a broken orbital bone. Both inmates are Level V. The assailant went to segregation.

Later that day, there was a fight in the school between two other Level V inmates. One prisoner stabbed another inmate in the neck with a pencil. Both prisoners were sent to segregation.

There were at least two other fights last Friday. No staff were injured.

Good work to AMF staff who had to respond to these dangerous situations.

IN MEMORIAM: DENNY CRAYCRAFT



Retired CO Dennis (Denny)

Craycraft passed away April 10.

Craycraft worked at MTU before retiring in 2007 after almost

30 years with the department. He was a dedicated union supporter, serving as a chapter leader and on the MCO State Executive Board. He volunteered every summer at the MCO Crisis Fund Golf Outing.

Craycraft was a veteran and a 50-year member of VFW Post 4406 and a Michigan VFW director. He was a huge part of making the Michigan Vietnam Memorial Wall for Fallen Heroes.

Services were last week.

Rest in peace, Officer Craycraft.



Executive Board member Cary Johnson was recently interviewed on Stateside, a public radio show broadcast

around the state, for a piece about corrections officer suicide and PTSD.

This story was heard by thousands of people around Michigan. When we

tell our stories and talk openly about our jobs, our genuineness can earn public trust and understanding.

[Listen to the story now.](#)



MCO-BACKED BILLS ON SUICIDE, NARCAN PROGRESS IN LEGISLATURE THIS WEEK

Over the last few years, MCO has worked diligently to educate the public and legislature about the severity of post-traumatic stress and the resulting risk of suicide within the Department of Corrections. MCO has continued advocating for the membership and we're now getting some results at the legislature.

Senate Bill No. 228 would create a 25-member suicide prevention commission. The commission would work with state departments, agencies, and non-profits on researching the causes of suicide in Michigan. The commission would be divided into subcommittees that would focus on specific demographics, such as first responders and veterans. **If the bill passes and becomes law, one member of the commission will be chosen from a list of officers submitted by MCO.** The bill's sponsor, Sen. Jim Runestad (R-15th district), supports corrections officers, and we are grateful to him for taking a stand for front-line staff.

The first report of the suicide commission's research would be presented by January 1, 2020. The report would include possible reasons why suicide rates have

increased, as well as recommendations for prevention. The report would be updated and presented to the legislature each year after until 2027, but the commission would provide recommendations for continued state efforts to reduce risk factors leading to suicide.

This bill is already making progress. It passed out of the Senate Health Policy and Services Committee April 25. Next it will go to the full Senate.

At a committee hearing earlier this month, Sen. Runestad said Michigan has more deaths by suicide each year than all deaths resulting from traffic accidents and guns combined. The senator also said that half of the people who die from suicide have no known history of mental health conditions. Citing the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, Sen. Runestad revealed that suicides have risen by more than 33 percent in Michigan since 1999.

Also at the hearing, Sen. Ruth Johnson (R-14th district) recommended that a researcher that focuses on the chemicals and structure of the brain be added to the commission. That suggestion was added to the version of the bill that will go to the full

Senate. Other suggestions by committee members included adding staggered terms and consideration of programs other states have implemented. MCO issued a card of support at the committee meeting.

We got to this point thanks to union leaders' and officers' tireless advocacy over the past few years. In addition to our visible efforts, like media interviews and the PTSD assessment in 2016, we have had countless conversations with the MDOC administration and legislators about the reality of PTSD and suicide among prison staff. Progress doesn't always come quickly, but if we keep up a steady effort, we can achieve success.

The legislature also took action this week on [HB 4056](#), which would classify COs as first responders and allow them to carry and administer opioid antagonists like Naloxone, also known as Narcan. This is vital not only for inmate safety, but for officer safety in case of an exposure. The bill was read before the entire House and referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

MCO will keep members updated on these bills.

- Report by Mikaela Bliven

AROUND THE STATE: OFFICERS AT DDC, ARF ASSAULTED

A detainee at the Detroit Detention Center punched an officer several times as he was being released from jail April 22.

The officer was sent to urgent care for treatment. The detainee was charged with assault but released pending an investigation.

DDC could benefit from a psychiatrist or counselor to help staff handle inmates who may have a mental health problem, officers said. DDC is also dealing with the same low staffing levels that are affecting other MDOC-operated facilities throughout the state.

An inmate with mental health issues hit an officer who was scanning inmates' IDs in the chow hall April 17.

The CO suffered a ruptured eardrum. He has not returned to work.

After the assault, the prisoner immediately laid down on the floor and placed his hands behind his back so officers could restrain him.

The prisoner was housed in the Level IV Residential Treatment Program unit, which is for inmates with mental health disorders.

Please join us in wishing for a quick recovery for both officers.

New website coming soon!

MCO's new website is tentatively scheduled to launch next week! Members can see a sneak peak of it in our [members-only Facebook group](#). The site will still be [mco-seiu.org](#).

The new site will still have all the resources members use frequently, like the contract and discounts, but will also help us change the narrative of corrections staff. The new site shows anyone who visits it that you are law enforcement professionals who make sacrifices everyday to keep the public safe.

Read more about why we're updating our website [in this KYI](#).

Check out MCO's new
website!

mco-seiu.org



MAY 14, 2019

MDOC INITIATES NEW WELLNESS UNIT TO HELP STAFF GRAPPLING WITH STRESS

The Michigan Department of Corrections is creating a new employee Wellness Unit, to be spearheaded by the former leader of a wellness program at the Michigan State Police.

The new Wellness Unit was discussed May 7 at a joint hearing of the Senate Oversight Committee and Judiciary & Public Safety Committee. MDOC Director Heidi Washington, as well as the new head of the Wellness Unit, Lynn Gorski, testified on what the unit will entail. Gorski said it best: "Wellness is not a perk (for this occupation). It is a necessity."

Washington said the Wellness Unit would include a peer support program and a staff chaplain program. Traumatic Incident Stress Management (TISM) would also be improved and operate under the Wellness Unit. MDOC is still waiting on the results of a survey they commissioned on employee stress, but creating a wellness program is necessary now because of the highly volatile environment that COs work in every day, Washington said. Last year, MDOC put together an EPIC committee, including five COs, that designed the wellness program.

The peer support program will provide a way for MDOC employees to talk about their problems with trained volunteers who will help clarify issues and explore options on how to fix them. Washington noted that, in some cases, peer support

members will not have to follow the employee handbook rule that requires employees to report work rule violations. The program is confidential unless someone reports, or reports the threat of, child abuse, elder abuse, or a felony. The chaplain program would provide MDOC employees and their families with the support of a chaplain during times of crisis and need. MDOC already has a chaplain program for prisoners but realizes the necessity of having one available for staff as well.

MCO Recording Secretary Cary Johnson and Executive Director Andy Potter testified at the hearing. Johnson described the struggles that frontline staff face from the viewpoint of a CO and spoke about the friends and colleagues that she has lost to suicide in the last four years. Johnson said that short-staffing, mandated overtime, and low morale due to excessive, petty discipline are some reasons why stress is so prevalent among COs. Johnson said these issues may impede MDOC's ability to get officers' buy in for the Wellness Unit, but said she'd encourage COs to give it a chance. She also commended MDOC's work on the Wellness Unit and the decision to hire Gorski. During MCO's stress research, union leaders had met Gorski and were impressed by the wellness work she did for

MSP, she said.

Although it can be hard to see in the moment, we are making progress. Four years ago, no one was talking about corrections PTSD, except MCO leaders and members. Now, MDOC administration acknowledges the problem and is taking steps to address it. The legislature is holding hearings to ask MDOC leaders how they plan to meet staff members' needs. The media is paying attention – there have been half a dozen radio interviews, print articles, and TV news stories just in the last few months, with more in the works. **Culture doesn't change overnight – it is often a long and difficult process.** We are well on our way. MCO will continue to weigh in on PTSD and resources staff need.

This story was edited for space.

[Read the full version with more on testimony from MCO on our website.](#)

-Article by Mikaela Bliven.

Congratulations to all of the officers recognized last week at the 2019 MDOC Employee Appreciation Banquet!

MCO President Byron Osborn handed out custom awards from MCO to all COs of the year, in addition to awards received from the MDOC. We should recognize our successes and congratulate our brothers and sisters on the front lines for their achievements.

More photos are in our [Facebook group](#) and [Instagram](#).



MDOC CO of the Year Stephen Cooklin (left) with MCO President Byron Osborn.

SUPPORT THE MCO CRISIS FUND THIS SUMMER

Join us for the downstate or UP Crisis Fund Golf Outing this summer!

The UP outing will be Friday, Aug. 2 at Pictured Rocks Golf Course in Munising.

The downstate outing will be Friday, Aug. 16 at Ledge Meadows Golf Course near Lansing.

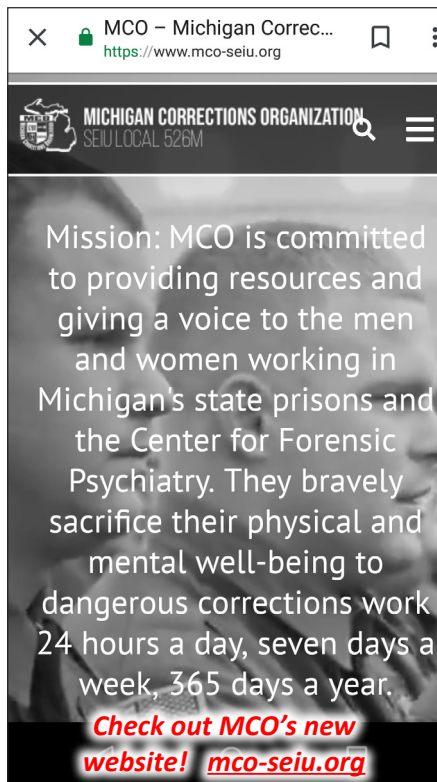
Pricing, signup, and sponsorship

information for both outings is [on the MCO website](#). If you don't golf, please consider sponsoring a tee or a cart.

The crisis fund supports members facing a catastrophe, whether it's an on-the-job injury, house fire, sudden illness, or other disaster. To those who support the fund, we thank you!



MCO'S REDESIGNED WEBSITE SHOWS OUR SOLIDARITY AND PROFESSIONALISM



Have you checked out MCO's new website? We redesigned the site from top to bottom to better represent COs and FSAs as professionals and part of law enforcement.

This website features photos and video clips of members at work keeping Michigan safe. It might seem minor, but these images help us change the narrative of corrections staff and show legislators, community leaders, and all who visit our website that you are corrections experts and professionals. We strive to show your dedicated service to your community and your state in all our publications and communications, including this new site.

All the great content on our old site is on the new site. The daily resources members access routinely, like the contract, discounts, and KYI are under the [Member Resources](#) tab. Info about MCO's core advocacy issues and legislative work is under [the Fight](#) tab. If you can't find something, try the search

button at top right.

Unlike our old website, the new website's home page is static, meaning new posts won't be prominent at the top. Instead, scroll down and you'll see a box that says Member News and Media. New posts will be there. New posts are also categorized under the Fight and Member Resources tabs.

You'll notice the new site is screen-size responsive, meaning it's easy to access resources and news on a tablet, cell phone, or desktop computer.

Also, take note of the Join Now button on the homepage and in the footer of every page. This is for those in our bargaining unit who never joined MCO or who dropped out and want to rejoin. After you fill out a quick form, you'll be taken to the HRMN website, where you can log in and start dues deduction EC01 to finish sign up.

What do you think of the new site? [Let us know!](#)

DON'T DELAY, MCO SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE IS JUNE 1

Don't forget, the deadline for MCO Scholarship applications is June 1.

Mailed applications must be post-marked by that day. [Print an application from our website](#). Online applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. June 1. [Complete the online application](#). Incomplete applications will not be considered.

If you fill out the online application, please note that you cannot save your work and return to it later. That's why we recommend you review the [PDF version](#) of the application first so you can gather

all of the materials you will need when you sit down to submit the online application.

MCO offers scholarships for members' children who will enter or return to college this fall. Twenty scholarships of \$750 each will be awarded. Previous MCO scholarship winners are not eligible.

The deadline to apply for MCO's Academy Debt and Student Debt Assistance programs is June 15. Read more on those programs [on our website](#).

Good luck!

DDC COs FIND GUN ON DETAINEE

A detainee made it to the housing unit at Detroit Detention Center May 14 while holding a pistol in his hand, officers said.

At DDC, Detroit police department staff bring detainees to 100 Building, an intake area where police department staff are supposed to shake them down before escorting them through a metal detector and then to 500 Building, the housing unit staffed with MDOC officers.

An officer said COs found a .22 pistol on a detainee when he was brought over to the housing unit. COs asked him to open his hand and found the weapon.

This isn't the first time a detainee has made it to the housing unit with a piece of metal, COs said.

Stay safe.

IN MEMORIAM: EGELER OFFICER RICHARD LANGLEY



RGC Officer Richard Langley passed away Tuesday.

Langley had been an officer for 25 years and was well-regarded by all staff. He had been looking forward to retiring in a few years. "From peers, administration and

prisoners, he was truly the most respected officer I have ever met," RGC Chaplain Dirschell, a friend and former CO, said of Langley. "His positive attitude was a badge he wore every day." Read more about Langley in our [Facebook group](#) or in [this obituary](#). Rest in peace, CO Langley.



URF PROPERTY OFFICER ASSAULTED BY PRISONER

A Chippewa prisoner punched an officer several times in the head and neck and knocked his radio out of his hand when he tried to call for help.

The assault happened May 25 in the property room. The prisoner swung on the officer. He attempted to defend himself with chemical agent and man-

aged to get around the prisoner and out of the property room, where other staff responded to assist him.

The officer is still off work, but should make a full recovery, staff said.

Since the assault, plans are under way to make the property room more secure. Stay safe.

DID YOU GET YOUR 2019-2021 MCO CONTRACT?

The 2019-2021 contract was mailed to the home address of everyone in the bargaining unit last month.

If you did not get your copy, it may be because your address is slightly off in our records. Please email [Mikaela Bliven](#) or call her at (517)485-3310 to get your copy. You can also access the contract [on our website](#).

The parties noted areas where

changes to Michigan Civil Service Commission rules resulted in removed language. These articles usually state that the topic "is a prohibited subject of bargaining and, as such, is governed by Civil Service Rules and Regulations."

Remember, this contract only includes one year of wages and benefits. We will be back at the table this summer to negotiate those items.

APPLY FOR ACADEMY REIMBURSEMENT, STUDENT DEBT PROGRAMS

Applications for MCO's [Academy Assistance Program and Student Debt Assistance Program](#) must be post-marked by June 15.

The Academy Assistance Program is for current members who paid out of pocket for the MDOC training academy in 2014 or 2015. The Student Debt Assistance Program is for MCO members carrying debt from college. Each program will award 20 grants of \$500 each.

These programs will run on a trial

basis this year. After we assess their value to members, MCO may or may not offer them in future years.

MCO leaders have decided to try these programs this year because we need to do something to address the challenges of our time. If we don't do it, no one else will. We can and should provide programs that have a positive impact on members and their families.

[Read more about why MCO developed these assistance programs.](#)

Good luck!

IN MEMORIAM: NCF OFFICER DAVID PAVEY



Newberry Officer David Pavey passed away unexpectedly May 24.

Pavey had worked at NCF since 2001, his entire MDOC career. He is also a veteran of the U.S. Army. Pavey is survived by his wife,

children, mother and other family.

A memorial service was held Sunday. You can read his obituary and express your condolences on the [funeral home's website](#). Rest in peace, CO Pavey.

House Rep. pens article supporting COs

Rep. Thomas Albert, chair of the House appropriations subcommittee on corrections, makes a strong case for corrections officers and their professionalism in an [opinion piece published last week](#) in the Ionia Sentinel-Standard. Albert specifically says he's dedicated to addressing low staffing and PTSD. He makes some bold proposals, such as a dedicated MDOC training facility and \$1 million in funding for COs who need help with PTSD.

This article shows the power of MCO's advocacy and that, with members' help, we're making huge gains at the legislature. We have been meeting with Rep. Albert (among other legislators) and telling him COs are part of law enforcement and need more resources and support. This proves when we stick together in a union, we can influence the conversations happening around corrections. Our union is our venue to raise our voices and collectively work with the legislature to bring about positive change.

Thanks, members, for your support.

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HOUSE BUDGET PROPOSAL FOCUSES ON STAFFING, PTSD, AND TRAINING

The House passed its version of the MDOC budget for fiscal year 2020 this week. A budget still needs to pass in the Senate and by the governor before being final.

The \$2 billion House budget includes \$1 million to be used for PTSD outreach for staff and employee wellness programming. The House budget requires MDOC to work with MCO and department employees from every job category in brainstorming strategies for addressing mental health needs and executing mental health programs for employees. By September 2020, MDOC would have to submit a report specifying what programs were implemented, the number of employees involved in strategizing, and what strategies were used. The department must also report on the pervasiveness of PTSD and other psychological disorders among corrections staff and how symptoms of those disorders are exacerbated because of the corrections environment.

Another focus of the budget is in-

creasing staffing. Representatives know mandated overtime has been a longstanding issue and that a focus on decreasing vacancies is imperative for a safer work environment and for employee morale. The House budget proposal allocates \$7.4 million for training new custody staff. It also requires the MDOC to report on a quarterly basis all vacant positions within the department; all correction officer positions and vacancies at each facility; all vacancies that are health care-related; and all vacant positions that are being held for temporarily inactive employees.

The House budget proposal allocates funding for the replacement of the recruit academy's officer training binders with tablets or laptops. If passed, the House budget also requires MDOC to conduct a study to find the best location for a corrections officer training academy. At least four locations would be studied, two of which must be the former Riverside Correctional Facility and the former Ojibway Correctional Facility. The academy must

have classrooms, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, an outdoor training area, a firearm range, and administrative offices.

Keep in mind, the Senate, governor, and House will have to agree to a budget plan before anything is final. The House version isn't the final budget, but MCO leaders think its focus on PTSD, staffing and training illustrates that we are making progress in drawing legislator's attention to challenges facing members. Although it can sometimes be frustrating, there has been momentum in bringing attention to PTSD, mental illness, and CO burnout. Legislators know how imperative it is that more research is done and treatments be available for our officers with PTSD or mental health disorders. Thanks to MCO's tireless advocacy, legislators are also aware of how important it is that MDOC decrease vacancies to lower the risk of burnout and to lessen the amount of mandates.

MCO will continue to educate legislators on the issues corrections officers face and will continue to work alongside MDOC to strategize the best way to support officers.

- Article by Mikaela Bliven

MCO offers great discounts for summer fun!

Are you looking for fun things to do this summer? If you're planning a trip to an amusement park, Michigan Speedway, or even Florida, check out [MCO's member-only discounts](#).

Through MCO's partnership with Tickets at Work, members can save up to 30 percent at Cedar Point and Michigan's Adventure. You can also get food and parking vouchers in advance so you can focus on fun the day of your visit.

MCO members have access to exclusive pricing for the upcoming race weekend at Michigan International Speedway August 9-11. For \$120, members get a ticket for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday's races.

In addition, MCO provides dis-

counts to Great Wolf Lodge, Kalahari, Soaring Eagle Waterpark and Hotel, and more.

Also, Ford Motor Company is offering first responders, including COs, \$1,000 bonus cash through the end of June on new car purchases and leases.

Info on all of these discounts is on [our website](#). Contact [Tara Nichol](#) with Member Benefits for more information by email or at (517)485-3310 ext. 150.

Please note, discounts MCO negotiates are for dues-paying members only. Your membership status will be verified before discount codes are provided.

IN MEMORIAM: MBP OFFICER ADAM HILBERG



A Marquette officer died Saturday after a tragic boating accident.

Adam Hilberg started with the MDOC in Sept. 2017. He started at Baraga and transferred to MBP.

A visitation and funeral will be Saturday, June 22 at the Fortune Lake Bible Camp near Crystal Falls. Visitation is from 9 a.m. to noon. The funeral service will start at noon. The MDOC Honor Guard will be at the service.

Rest in peace, CO Hilberg.

CHANGES COMING TO LETTER OF AGREEMENT ON GAS MASK EXEMPTIONS

The Letter of Agreement that authorizes the 10% gas mask exemption lists will be renegotiated soon. The current letter will expire July 31. MCO and MDOC will meet before then to write a new letter that keeps the 10% seniority-based exemption lists.

MDOC had a concern with the

process that allows COs to get a medical exemption from the list. Originally, they wanted the current letter to expire at the end of this month. But after meeting with MCO, they agreed to let the current letter stand until the end of July to allow us time to negotiate a new letter.

Current medical exemptions will not carry over to the new list. In order to have MDOC consider your exemption for the new list, you must submit documentation to your personnel office by July 31.

MCO will release more info as it's available.

MCO LEADERS MEET WITH NEW MANAGER OF EMPLOYEE WELLNESS UNIT

The new head of the MDOC Wellness Unit met with the MCO Executive Board this month.

Board members told Wellness Manager Lynn Gorski about the unique stressors COs face, including vacancies, mandated overtime, and the general negativity that can come with working in a prison.

Gorski has a solid track record of working with law enforcement and first responders. Before joining MDOC, she worked nine years with the Michigan State Police Behavioral Science Unit and focused on employee wellness.

"Wellness has always been a passion of mine, but as I progressed in my field ... I had the honor of working with first responders and individuals in the corrections field," Gorski said on the MDOC [Field Days Podcast](#). "I have a true respect for them,

the responsibilities they have, and the task that they've taken on. Also the high dedication and sacrifice that they have to be in this field." Go to the podcast to hear more about the wellness unit or read about it in this [KYI](#).

MCO leaders encourage members to keep an open mind about the wellness unit and recognize it signals positive that changes are occurring in the MDOC. Four years ago, no one was talking about corrections PTSD, except MCO leaders and members. Now, MDOC administration acknowledges PTSD among the ranks and has established a wellness unit to address it. There have been [legislative hearings](#) and several [media interviews](#) over the last few months about the stressors COs face. Just like the military changed their culture, we can change ours. MCO will continue to weigh in on PTSD and resources staff need.

Congratulations to the Tony

Trierweiler class! 196 recruits training in Lansing graduated today. Additional recruits training in the UP graduated earlier this month.

Good luck as you start your MDOC career!



Join us for COPS Day at the Ionia Free Fair!

COPS Day at the Ionia Free Fair is Wednesday, July 17.

Corrections officers and other law enforcement officers are welcome to come out and get free snacks, MCO gear, and discounted ride wristbands. The fun starts at 1 p.m. at the hospitality center in the Administration Building. The fairgrounds are located at 317 South Dexter Street in Ionia.

See you there.

IN MEMORIAM: CO PHILLIP ABBOTT



Baraga Officer Phillip Abbott passed away June 21.

Abbott had four years with the MDOC and worked at Baraga during his entire time as a CO. Officers say he was a great work

partner who was always upbeat and smiling.

Abbott leaves behind two young sons and a wife.

Services were held Thursday.

Rest in peace, Officer Abbott.



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT IMPORTANT CHANGES TO CHAPTER ELECTIONS

As of Jan. 1, 2019, the Michigan Civil Service Commission took away administrative leave from all state employee unions. Because we no longer have administrative leave for chapter election committees, **this year's chapter elections will be held by mail. To allow time for ballots to be sent to members in the mail and for votes to be returned by mail, the chapter elections will be held on a different timeframe than in past years.**

The nomination period will be July 15, 2019 through Aug. 15, 2019. A nomination announcement will be posted on your union bulletin board by July 15.

This timeframe will still allow 31 days for nominations. After that, MCO staff must prepare each chapter's unique ballot; ballots must be sent to members in the mail; members will vote and return bal-

lots by mail; and ballots must be counted. This new nomination window period will provide time for all of these steps to occur and ensure certain new officials may attend Central Conference in October. Please note, if there is no contested race at your facility, you will not receive a ballot. Instead, a message announcing your new chapter leaders will be posted to your union bulletin board.

The election count day is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 1, 2019 at the MCO Central Office in Lansing. This timeframe is being moved back from September to allow for time for the mail election. If there is an unforeseen delay with printing ballots or mailing, the Executive Board may further postpone the election count to allow members adequate time to vote by mail.

Since this year's chapter elections will be done by mail, chapter election com-

mittees' sole function will be to collect nominations and submit them to the MCO Central Office.

Article 19 of the [MCO Bylaws](#) govern how chapter officers are elected. Section 5(a) specifies that these elections may be conducted by mail at the discretion of the State Executive Board.

A letter should be posted to your union bulletin board that explains all chapter election changes this year in more detail. You can also [read the letter here](#).

If you have recently moved, now is the time to update your home address to make sure you get a ballot when it's time to vote. [Update your contact information on our website](#) or call the MCO Central Office at (517)485-3310. If you have questions, please contact MCO Member Engagement Associate Jim McHenry at (517)485-3310 ext. 155 or jim@mco-seiu.org.

DDC STAFF DEAL WITH SECOND GUN INCIDENT

For the second time in less than two months, a detainee made it into the Detroit Detention Center with a gun.

The latest incident happened Friday morning. A Detroit police officer brought a person who had just been arrested into the lobby and uncuffed him. The arrestee then reached for his waistband, where he had a gun, a corrections officer said. Police were able to take the gun, which made the man combative.

At DDC, MDOC corrections officers staff the jail. COs didn't know why the

man was uncuffed. They also ask why this weapon wasn't found in the field.

In May, a detainee passed through the metal detector and in to the jail housing unit [with a small pistol](#). COs found it when they asked the man to open his clenched hand.

MDOC staff are worried for their safety and for the safety of Detroit police staff at the facility. MDOC staff say they haven't heard any announcements or guidance from administration about these incidents.

UP GOLF SOCIAL JULY 23

UP members are welcome to come to an informal golf social Tuesday, July 23 at Pictured Rocks Golf Course in Munising.

Instead of a formal golf outing fundraiser, this will be a casual event where MCO members from UP facilities can golf and visit with each other. MCO President Byron Osborn and Vice President Ray Sholtz will be at the event to meet with members, too.

To play, be at the golf course before 3 p.m. July 23. A round of 9 holes with cart is \$17.50 after a buy one, get one free discount. Bring a friend, or we will do our best to pair you with another golfer for the discount.

No pre-registration is required, but if you plan on coming, email Tim Fleury at timfleury@outlook.com.

Please note, this event will replace the UP Golf Outing, which was scheduled for Aug. 2. If you have questions, please contact Tim. See you there!

IN MEMORIAM: OFFICER JIM WRIGHT



Gus Harrison Officer Jim Wright passed away June 25 after a battle with an illness.

CO Wright had been an officer since 2013. Before joining MDOC, he was a U.S. Marine. He was also an avid Nebraska Cornhuskers fan.

ARF staff came together to hold several fundraisers for CO Wright and his family, including a luncheon and raffle. The MCO Crisis Fund also contributed.

Services were June 29. Read more about Wright in [this obituary](#). Rest in peace, CO Wright.



MDOC RELEASES FINDINGS OF WELLNESS SURVEY WHILE MCO'S PTSD WORK CONTINUES

MDOC recently released results of their [wellness survey](#) of all staff and some of the results were startling:

- 139 MDOC employees may actively be planning suicide.
- 16 percent were estimated to have a major depressive disorder.
- 25 percent suffer from PTSD.
- 19 percent may abuse alcohol.
- Just under half have anxiety.

These numbers are based on weighted survey statistics, meaning they are estimates of all MDOC staff.

MCO leaders examined the results and [talked to the media](#) about the findings. MCO welcomes recent steps taken by the department to address this mental health crisis. We know that it was bold for them to publicly release these findings.

"Administrators and legislators

shouldn't be afraid of reports like this. They should be afraid of not acting on them," MCO Executive Director Andy Potter said.

One action MCO is telling administrators they should take immediately is to listen intently to frontline staff.

They should also support a provision in the [House version of the budget](#) which designates \$1 million for PTSD training and wellness support. The House budget would require MDOC to work with MCO and department employees from every job category in brainstorming strategies for addressing mental health needs and carrying out mental health programs for employees. MCO backs that proposal, in addition to [Senate Bill 228](#), which would create a suicide prevention commission that includes one person selected from a

list of nominees submitted by MCO.

Remember, MCO started raising awareness of corrections PTSD in 2015. [We surveyed members](#) that year and realized thousands of MDOC staff suffer from PTSD or depression. Last year, MCO lobbied the legislature to include \$50,000 in the MDOC budget for a study to examine PTSD. That money was the funding source for the recently-released MDOC study.

After years of relentlessly pushing this issue, MDOC administrators and legislators acknowledge there's a mental health crisis among corrections staff and are taking concrete steps to address it. Although it can be hard to see when there's so much work left to be done, we are making progress. We won't rest until MDOC staff have the mental health resources they need.

HEALTH CARE OPEN ENROLLMENT GOING ON NOW

Insurance Open Enrollment (IOE) runs from Aug. 1 through Aug. 23 this year and eligible State of Michigan employees will want to be aware of upcoming changes. This year's big news is an update to dental and vision dependent eligibility guidelines, a new Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse administrator for the State Health Plan (SHP) PPO, and other changes to health and vision benefits going into effect for the 2019-2020 plan year.

Dental and vision insurance coverage will be offered to dependent children under the same guidelines that health insurance is currently offered, meaning adult children will be eligible to remain on coverage through the end of the month in which they turn age 26 regardless of student or marital status or economic support provided. You can add eligible dependent children to your dental and vision coverage during IOE if they are not currently enrolled.

Effective Oct. 1, 2019, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, in partnership with

New Directions, will be replacing Magellan Health as the SHP PPO Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse administrator. Current SHP PPO enrollees will be automatically transitioned with no gap or changes in coverage. New SHP PPO membership ID cards will be mailed in September.

A handful of vision plan and health plan changes will be occurring as well. Visit the [Insurance Plans page](#) for a plan summary and more information. Lastly, be sure to review the [insurance rates](#) as nearly all have changed.

IOE is your once-a-year opportunity to change, enroll in, drop or add individuals to your benefits without a qualifying life event.

Visit [mi.gov/selfserv](#) to enroll online through HR Self-Service or call the MI HR Service Center at 877-766-6447, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

- Info provided by OSE. This article was edited for space. [Read the full article.](#)

CHAPTER ELECTIONS REMINDER

Chapter election nominations are being accepted now through Aug. 15.

All members in good standing for the last two years are automatically nominated to run for MCO chapter office. If you would like to accept your nomination and get your name on your chapter's ballot, write a letter to your chapter election committee or email Member Engagement Associate [Jim McHenry](#) at jim@mco-seiu.org.

Chapter elections will be held by mail-in ballot this year. Read more about this change in the [July 9 KYI](#) and [in this letter](#). Information should also be on your facility's MCO bulletin board.



The MCO Children's Day Picnic is Aug. 17!

[View details in this flyer.](#)



LIKE MCO ON FACEBOOK!

MCO now has a public Facebook page, in addition to a private, members-only group. Retirees, legislators, or anyone else who isn't a member but wants to stay up to date with MCO is welcome to like our new page.

Visit and like the **public page at [fb.me/MichiganCorrectionsOrg](https://www.facebook.com/fb.me/MichiganCorrectionsOrg)**.

Dues-paying members are invited to join our **private members-only group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MichiganCorrec->**

tionsOrga- nization.

Having a closed group allows us to post communications that are only relevant to members. We will post some content in both the page and the group, if it's something we think both the public and members should know about.

Thanks for your support as we try out new ways to connect with the public and members!



ALGER STAFF RESPOND TO FIGHTS

There were at least eight fights and assaults at Alger over four days last week.

On Aug. 1, a two-prisoner fight started on the yard and another inmate-on-inmate scuffle broke out later in Maple Unit. The prisoners involved were Level IV.

The next day, there were multiple fights involving seven more Level IV inmates. Maple Unit was placed on lockdown.

Officers responded to an inmate-on-inmate assault on Aug. 3, and there were two more prisoner fights the next day.

On Aug. 4, a porter was found trying to smuggle two flex cuffs while working in the administration building. The cuffs were found in the trash.

Great job to all staff who responded to these incidents.

Crisis Fund Golf Outing and Children's Day Picnic are next week – don't miss them!

Don't forget, the 23rd annual Crisis Fund Golf Outing is Friday, Aug. 16. This is your absolute last chance to sign up!

Spots for four-person teams are still available. The cost is \$70 per person, and includes a cart, 18 holes, brats and dogs at the turn, a luncheon, drinks, and a free driving range. The event will be at Ledge Meadows Golf Course in Grand Ledge.

We are also looking for sponsors. The deadline to sponsor a tee or cart sign is **4 p.m. today.** Anyone who sponsors by the deadline

will have their name or company name included on a special donor banner that will be prominently displayed at the outing.

[Registration and sponsorship info is on our website.](#) **If you want to reserve your spot, send in your registration with payment as soon as possible.**



The 2018 MCO Children's Day Picnic.

The MCO Children's Day Picnic will be Saturday, Aug. 17 at Lower Huron Metropark (Woods Creek sec-

tion that brings together corrections employees for a day of family fun! All COs and staff at prisons in the Detroit area are invited.

The picnic will include a bounce house, rock climbing, video game truck, lots of great food, and more.

The fun starts at 11 a.m. and lasts until dusk. Volunteers are needed for set up starting at 7 a.m.

[View this info in a flyer](#) on our website.

See you there!

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tion) in Belleville.

The picnic is a long-standing tra-

DON'T PITCH THAT MAIL! MCO CHAPTER ELECTION BALLOTS ARRIVING MID-SEPT.

Chapter election ballots are now in the process of being printed and mailed to dues-paying members eligible to vote for chapters that have a contested election.

Ballots are tentatively scheduled to be mailed next week. Look for yours to arrive the following week.

Ballots must be received at the address on the return envelope before Tuesday, Oct. 1. On the morning of

Oct. 1, the ballots will be retrieved, and the count will begin. Any ballots returned after that time will not be counted.

If there is no contested race for any chapter office at your facility, you will not receive a ballot. Instead, those who nominated themselves will automatically take office Oct. 2. See your union bulletin board for more information.

As a reminder, you must be a dues-

paying member for at least 180 days (as of count day) to vote, according to [MCO bylaws](#). If you have not paid dues for 180 days, you will not receive a ballot. New recruits who join within 60 days of hire are exempt from this rule and will receive ballots.

If you have any questions, contact MCO Member Engagement Associate Jim McHenry at jim@mco-seiu.org.

MBP INMATES PROTEST SHORTENED YARD TIME

Almost 30 Marquette inmates refused to leave the yard and received tickets in a non-violent protest Aug. 17.

Officers told inmates the yard would be closing early because staff had to move a problematic inmate who had dressed out a nurse to another cell.

Twenty-nine inmates from B-block (Level V) refused to leave. They were

mad about yard often being cut short for construction, move teams, and other issues, an officer said.

A facility administrator and an officer talked to the prisoners and they eventually returned to their cells. The prisoners received tickets and some of them were transferred.

No injuries or damage were reported. Great work to the staff who kept this situation under control.



JONOVAN LUCKEY JOINS MCO STAFF

Please join us in welcoming MCO's new Director of Government and Political Affairs, Jonovan Luckey.

Jonovan joins us after working as the

Political Field Director for Metro Detroit AFL-CIO. He also worked for the Michigan House of Representatives, SEIU Local 1, and a senate campaign. He holds B.A. degrees in Social Policy and Relations and Economics from James Madison College and the Social Science College at Michigan State University.

"It's an honor to be able to represent the brave and selfless COs and FSAs who make up our membership," he said. "I look forward to working with our rank and file members and leadership to strengthen our political and legislative programs so that we can build on the wins that MCO has already achieved, and have continued success advocating for the rights, safety, and well-being of our members."

Feel free to contact Jonovan Luckey at jonovan@mco-seiu.org.

This fall, take advantage of MCO's free college program

Now that the kids are back to school, are you thinking about returning to school yourself? Dues-paying MCO members and their immediate families can take online classes totally free – tuition, fees, and books included! [Full details are on our website.](#)

This is a great opportunity for new recruits who still need to get their required college credit to stay employed with MDOC. **Recruits, remember you only have 18 months to get your 15 credits. This time will fly by – look into taking classes now.**

Audra Walter, daughter of CO Pam Basal, said her employer offers

some college assistance, but "none of the programs are as good as this," she said.

"It is fully funded, which takes away the financial stress, and it is completely online so I can take these classes anytime and anywhere," Walter said. "My job requires me to travel on a frequent basis. It's nice being able to do homework from the hotels in the evenings or while flying across the country."

If you or your family are using MCO's free college program, let us know. Email your story to Communications Director Anita Lloyd at anita@mco-seiu.org.



AROUND THE STATE: CTOs AND CITIZEN THWART ESCAPE; 3 OFFICERS ASSAULTED AT LRF

A Bellamy Creek inmate tried to grab a transportation officer's handgun and escape at a rest stop Wednesday.

Two CTOs were taking him to court in Macomb County, and they stopped so one of the officers could use the restroom. While one CTO was inside, the prisoner said he needed to use the restroom. As the officer was handing the inmate a portable urinal (instead of going inside the restroom, as required by MDOC policy), the prisoner jumped at the CTO and reached for his gun.

A citizen stepped in to help the officer until the other CTO came out of the bathroom and the prisoner, who was alone in the van, could be restrained.

Great work to the CTOs and the citizen. This situation shows how officers protect communities, not just near prisons, but around the state.

Three Brooks officers were punched and kicked by six inmates Tuesday in what staff say was a retaliatory attack for a shakedown the previous day.

One of the COs has two nose fractures and a broken orbital bone. Another suffered a shoulder injury, and the third CO has serious bruising. The prisoners involved are gang members, an officer said.

Earlier in the week, an officer stopped a Level IV inmate for a routine shakedown as the prisoner was returning to his unit from the chow hall. (Staff are required to do a certain number of shakedowns every day, and yard staff often do them as prisoners go to or return from chow.) The prisoner spun around and put his arms down during the search, which led to the officer restraining him.

The next day, the CO performed another routine shakedown on a different Level IV inmate returning from

chow. This prisoner elbowed and punched the officer in the head. Five other inmates had been watching and jumped in. Two officers came to assist and were punched and kicked.

"It was a totally planned retaliation," an officer said.

The Level IV East Lake unit was locked down.

COs say Brooks is at least 25 officers short, which is hurting staff morale.

Please keep these three officers in your thoughts and join us in wishing them fast recoveries.

Stay safe.

Carson City staff caught a visitor trying to smuggle 65 strips of Suboxone to a Level I inmate Saturday. Michigan State Police arrested the visitor.

Great job to the Carson City staff who spotted this.

'This job changes someone.' Watch a special interview with MCO on corrections stress

MCO Executive Board Member Cary Johnson sat down with a Detroit TV station to talk about the stress corrections staff face and what's being done to help MDOC staff. [Watch the interview.](#)

It's part of a larger look this week by NBC News at our country's criminal justice system. A few

years ago, a national news network would have overlooked the struggles of staff when reporting on criminal justice and prisons. But we are



changing the conversation. We have come a long way in the last few years, but we know so much more needs to be done.

Right now, we're working with the legislature to get [\\$1 million in funding](#) for corrections PTSD re-

search and resources included in the final budget bill. We are also continuing to [advocate for a bill](#) that would create a suicide prevention task force

that would include one person who represents MCO. More plans are in the works. Stay tuned.

We don't want to lose one more life. If you are struggling, remember you can call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255 any time.

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BRIEFLY: MI SHUTDOWN POSSIBLE; RETURN BALLOTS NOW

As you have probably heard, the legislature and governor have not agreed on a budget for the next fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1.

That means a government shutdown is possible. Legislators sent a budget to the governor late Tuesday, which she now has less than a week to review.

Corrections officers would continue working in a shutdown, according to [media coverage](#). A spokesman for the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget said employees required to work in a shutdown would be paid on time. Forensic Security Assistants are also considered essential staff and would

not be laid off, according to MD-HHS administration.

MCO leaders have reached out to the Office of the State Employer to ask about possible impacts of a shutdown on our members. We are waiting for a response.

Make sure your vote is counted – return your chapter election ballot now.

Ballots must be in Lansing before Oct. 1. That morning, all returned ballots will be gathered and the count will begin. If you have questions, contact MCO Member Engagement Associate Jim McHenry at jim@mco-seiu.org or call (517)485-3310.

BARGAINED PAYMENTS COMING TO CHECKS SOON

Attendance and physical fitness incentives, dry cleaning allowances, and longevity payments will appear on paychecks in October. See scheduled payment dates below.

MCO bargains these payments in the contract. According to MCO's contract, members are entitled to longevity pay if they have five years of service.

Additionally, the 2% wage increase will take effect Oct. 1 and will be seen on paychecks starting Oct. 17. The 2% lump sum will be on paychecks received Oct. 31.

For more details, see articles 22, 27, and 37 of the [contract](#).

Payment	Amount	Date
Lump sum	2%	Oct. 31
Uniform allowance	\$575	Oct. 17
Sick/physical fitness incentive	varies by amount of sick time used	Oct. 31
Longevity	varies by years of service	Oct. 31

MTU PROBATIONARY CO FINDS SUBOXONE IN WIG

A probationary officer at MTU found 65 strips of Suboxone on a visitor between the gates Sept. 7.

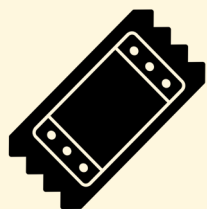
The drugs were found in a wig. MSP came to the facility and interviewed the woman.

This is another reminder that

COs must always be vigilant. Even the most harmless-seeming item like a wig can be used to hide dangerous contraband.

Great work to the probationary CO who stopped these drugs from entering the facility.

MCO Crisis Fund raffle tickets on sale now



Interested in buying tickets for this year's Crisis Fund Gun Raffle? MCO chapter leaders have raffle tickets for sale now.

The top prize is \$1,000 cash. Other prizes include hunting rifles, a TV, and a stay at Kalahari. [See a full list of prizes.](#)

The drawing will be at the MCO Central Conference Oct. 29 in Lansing. You don't need to be present to win.

Tickets are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. Get your tickets now – see your chapter officials.

The Gun Raffle supports the MCO [Crisis Fund](#), which helps members facing catastrophe. To those who support the fund, we thank you.

REST IN PEACE, CO DeMARSE



Marquette Officer Earl DeMarse died at the hands of an inmate on this date in 1973. Read about DeMarse [on our website](#).

As you go about your day, please take a few moments to remember DeMarse and the sacrifice he made. Thank you for your service in Michigan's toughest job.



BULLETIN

OCT. 11, 2019

MCO REACHES BARGAINING AGREEMENT THAT INCLUDES RAISES, PRE-SHIFT, AND HEALTHCARE ENHANCEMENTS

MCO has been successful in negotiating a base pay wage increase of 6% over the next two years and the return of pre-shift meetings.

MCO negotiated the raises, the return of the pre-shift meetings, and health care enhancements with the Office of the State Employer (OSE). The parties reached a Tentative Agreement (TA) this afternoon. The TA must still be approved by members and the Civil Service Commission. Wages and healthcare are the only two contract items being negotiated for fiscal years 2021 and 2022.

Wages:

The TA calls for:

- a 2% increase in October 2020.
- a 1% increase in April 2021.
- a 2% increase in October 2021.
- a 1% increase in April 2022.

Remember, these raises are in addition to the 2% wage increase that will be on next week's paychecks and a 2% lump sum coming Oct. 31. **This means that in total, from 2019 through April 2022, bargaining unit members will get 8% in raises, plus a 2% lump sum.**

Pre-shift:

Pre-shift meetings will start in October 2020 and be six minutes long before every shift. Staff will be paid straight time for the meetings (no comp time).

Pre-shift meetings were a vital time for officers and supervisors to discuss face-to-face the dangerous situations and other stressors that may arise in the shift.

Healthcare:

The TA has no increases to healthcare deductibles or copays, but would include enhancements, including a \$1,000 benefit toward Lasik and an increase in the cap on the annual State Dental Plan maximum. There are additional enhancements that will be explained in a bargaining summary soon.

The agreement is subject to approval by MCO members who are eligible to vote and by the Civil Service Commission.

Please be aware that this year, the contract vote will be electronic. MCO leaders hope this is an easier process and that an electronic vote will solicit more participation. Generally, only 30% of the membership votes. **The contract voting ballot will be emailed to your state email address in the next few days. Watch for it.** If you don't see a ballot by Tuesday, check your junk folder, and then contact the MCO Central Office to confirm your eligibility to vote. Voter eligibility requirements can be found in Article 7, Section 10 of MCO Bylaws.

Thank you, members, for your support.



OCT. 18, 2019

MEMBERS, VOTE NOW ON TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

As announced last week, MCO and the Office of the State Employer (OSE) have reached a Tentative Agreement (TA) that calls for 6% in total wage increases over two years, the return of pre-shift meetings, and enhancements to health care. Get more details in the [Collective Bargaining Review](#).

The TA covers fiscal years 2021 and 2022. Non-economic contract items were negotiated in fall 2018 and run through December 2021.

The agreement is subject to approval by members who are eligible to

vote and by the Civil Service Commission. **The bargaining team, which is the MCO Executive Board, strongly supports ratification.**

On Saturday, Oct. 12, those eligible to vote should have received an invitation to vote. This was sent to your .gov email. If you do not see an invitation, first check your junk or spam folder, then call us at (517)485-3310 to request an invitation. **You must vote on non-work time, like before or after work, on breaks or employee lunch periods. Voting closes at 8 a.m. Oct. 23.**

NEW CHAPTER LEADERS NOTICE

New MCO chapter leaders took office Oct. 2.

Ballots were counted at the MCO central office Oct. 1. Thank you to all members who voted.

Your new chapter leaders should be posted on your union board. They are also [on our website](#).

Congratulations to all of our MCO chapter leaders. The Board and staff look forward to working with you.

SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION NOW FOR THE CLOSER TO HOME TRANSFER LIST

Closer to Home Transfer applications are being accepted now through Oct. 31.

To be eligible to apply for a Closer to Home Transfer, employees must:

- Have status.
- Have not voluntarily transferred during the 12-month period prior to the application date.
- Have no record of disciplinary action or unsatisfactory service rating

during the two years preceding the date of the filling of position.

If you qualify, [go to our website to learn how to apply](#).

Please note:

- Not everyone who applies will be chosen. There are only 40 spots on the list.
- If you make it onto the list and subsequently refuse to transfer, no other applicant will be given your spot

on the list. This means you deprived someone else of a transfer.

- October is only the window period for applying. If you are granted a transfer, it will not happen until sometime in the following calendar year when vacancies occur.

If you have questions, contact [Stephanie Short](#) at (517)485-3310 ext. 115.

MDOC FY 2019-2020 BUDGET UPDATE

Last week, [MCO posted an update](#) on the MDOC budget for fiscal year 2020.

Here's the latest: Governor Whitmer and Republican legislative leaders have come to a stalemate. Talks broke down after the governor met with House and Senate leadership Tuesday to discuss supplemental funding priorities for restoring and allocating the vetoed funds.

Last week, Senator Curtis Hertel, D-East Lansing, introduced two supplemental budget bills that would

place \$475 million into a mixture of the governor's priorities, items the governor vetoed, and things the Whitmer administration sees as not being adequately funded, like the Michigan Department of Corrections budget. Currently, the corrections budget allocates \$9.5 million for hiring and training COs; one of Hertel's bills would provide an additional \$10.46 million.

We'll keep members updated as supplemental budget negotiations continue.

CMU honors first responders with Heroes Game Nov. 2

Central Michigan University Football is hosting its annual Heroes Day Saturday, Nov. 2. This game will offer discounted tickets to all law enforcement, fire fighters, and first responders. CMU reached out to MCO leaders and asked us to share this info with all members.

Get more info and a link where you can buy tickets in [this flyer on our website](#).

See you there!



BULLETIN

OCT. 25, 2019

MCO MEMBERS OVERWHELMINGLY APPROVE PROPOSED CONTRACT

The 2020-2021 collective bargaining agreement has been ratified!

The members of MCO overwhelmingly voted “Yes” to the bargaining team’s Tentative Agreement (TA). The contract for healthcare and wages was approved by a vote of 3,188 to 206. In MCO’s first electronic voting, we had a 63% membership participation which is the largest ever. [View the summary of changes.](#)

MCO leaders said this TA gives some recognition for the conditions COs have been working under for years.

“We appreciate that the unique con-

ditions we face, like understaffing and mandates, were considered by the state at the bargaining table,” MCO Executive Director and Chief Negotiator Andy Potter said. “MCO leaders will continue to have conversations with the governor’s office, legislators, MDOC leaders and others about the realities members face on the job. This is only the start.”

MCO President Byron Osborn said the high voter turnout shows the strength of our solidarity and of this TA.

“The MCO bargaining team worked hard to secure a Tentative Agreement on

wages and healthcare that was fair and impactful to our entire membership. We felt that the proposed contract met that goal and we are pleased with the ratification results. We will continue to fight for safe and fair working conditions for our members.”

Next the Civil Service Commission (MCSC) must approve the contract. The commission’s next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 11.

To the members who took the time to vote, thank you.

See how your facility voted below.

FACILITY	YES VOTES	NO VOTES	SPOILED BALLOTS	TOTAL VOTES CAST
Alger	98	5	0	103
Baraga	101	15	1	117
Bellamy Creek	98	8	3	109
Brooks	70	4	3	77
Carson City	102	12	3	117
Central Michigan	175	5	3	183
Chippewa	175	5	4	184
Cooper Street	72	0	0	72
Cotton	161	6	0	167
Detroit Detention Center	24	0	0	24
Detroit Reentry Center	77	2	2	81
Egeler	116	12	3	131
FOA	6	1	0	7
Forensic Center	118	1	6	125
Gus Harrison	141	12	3	156
Huron Valley Women’s	150	10	6	166
Ionia (IMAX)	100	3	3	106
Kinross	98	1	2	101
Lakeland	89	7	2	98
Macomb	106	7	0	113
Marquette	69	48	1	118
Michigan Reformatory	65	1	2	68
Michigan Training Unit	88	8	0	96
Muskegon	81	0	1	82
Newberry	57	4	1	62
Oaks	124	8	3	135
Parnall	71	1	1	73
Saginaw	108	1	0	109
SAI	30	1	1	32
St. Louis	145	3	1	149
Thumb	138	9	0	147
Woodland	112	5	2	119
Other	23	1	0	24
TOTAL	3,188	206	57	3,451



Inmate stabs officer in the neck at ARF

On Oct. 24 an officer was assaulted by a Level 2 prisoner who was angry over a sudden change in cell standards enforcement implemented by a unit supervisor.

The officer was stabbed in the neck, just missing his spine by less than an inch and also suffered lacerations to his head. The prisoner used a shank whittled from a metal fastener that connects fencing to poles.

Last week, prisoners conducted a non-violent protest in another Level 2 unit at ARF over the sudden change in cell standards. Unit officers warned supervision that a sudden change in practice could result in backlash. The prisoner that committed the assault was problematic the day before and was taken to segregation for a brief time and released.

The officer was treated at a local hospital and released. Please join us in wishing him a quick recovery.



Tis the season...almost! Get Christmas gifts from MCO

Wondering what to get an MCO member for Christmas? Why not get them something from our online store?

You can order T-shirts, polo shirts, hats and mugs with the MCO logo. It's all online at mcowebstore.com. All merchandise is made in the U.S. and will be shipped right to your door.

Order now to make sure items are in stock and that your gift ships in plenty of time for the holidays.

The store has limited inventory. If there's something you'd like to see added to our store, please let us know.

Email Cindy Kogut at cindy@mco-seiu.org or leave a message when you check out.

Thanks for showing your support for MCO!

Raffle winners announced

Thank you to everyone who supported the MCO Crisis Fund by buying tickets for the gun raffle. The drawing was Tuesday at the MCO Central Conference. A list of winners is [on our website](#).

The MCO Crisis Fund supports members facing a catastrophe. More than \$22,000 was disbursed to members from the fund over the last year.

To those who support the fund, thank you.

PLEASE NOTE: The Sept. 25 KYI article "Bargained payments coming to checks soon" contained an error.

The correct info is that sick leave/physical fitness incentive will be added to Nov. 14 paychecks.