

TITLE : VOLUNTEERS

Friday, May 4, 2012

Hello world!

Finally get to share something a little more uplifting. I've included a copy of the schedule we handed out to the "Volunteers" who came to the Banquet.

This is a fun part of my "clerk" duties at the Chapel. To create simple fliers and other documents. I'm really grateful that even in prison I can exercise and use my computer skills and do a job that actually helps men to improve and get healthy.

Monday, May 14, 2012

HERE IS A GREAT SNAPSHOT OF HOW SOME DECISIONS IN POLICY LEAVE EVERYONE SCRATCHING THEIR HEADS. OFFICERS AND STAFF INCLUDED.

EVERY 6-8 MONTHS THERE IS A BIG SHAKE UP WITH THE DIFFERENT INMATE JOB DEPARTMENTS. IT USUALLY STARTS IN ONE DEPARTMENT AND THEN RIPPLES INTO 2 OR 3 OTHERS. THEN EVERYTHING SETTLES DOWN AFTER A FEW WEEKS OF GENERAL CONFUSION AND HARASSMENT.

ROUGHLY 350 MEN HAVE JOBS, 200 GO TO COLLEGE OR G.E.D. FULL TIME AND 250 ARE INVOLVED IN FULL TIME ADDICTION TREATMENT PROGRAMS. THAT'S NEARLY 50% OF THIS FACILITIES POPULATION.

IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT A HANDFUL OF

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MEN WILL STRIVE TO STEAL AND LIE FOR THEIR OWN SELFISH GAIN. OF COURSE IT IS PRISON AND EXPECTED BEHAVIOR TO SOME DEGREE.

SO DURING A RECENT INVENTORY IN THE COMMISSARY OVER A HUNDRED DOLLARS WAS MISSING IN MERCHANDISE. WHEN THE AXE FINISHED 3 MEN WENT TO SEG (THE HOLE - OR - SEGREGATION) AND 4 LOST THEIR JOBS. ALL THE WORKERS LOST THEIR EXTRA SHOPPING PRIVILEGES. WHO WAS ACTUALLY GUILTY, PROBABLY ONE PERSON, MAYBE TWO.

THE THEORY I'VE HEARD IS, "THAT A PERSON STAYING IN THE SAME JOB FOR ONE YEAR BECOMES COMFORTABLE WITH THE STAFF AND KNOWLEDGEABLE WITH THE ROUTINE". "THUS CREATING THE LIKELIHOOD OF THEFT OR OTHER CRIMINAL ACTIVITY." THAT IS A RISK IN ONE OUT OF 50 OR 100 PEOPLE. ^{DO?} MOST MEN WANT TO DO A GOOD JOB AND WANT TO KEEP A GOOD JOB, SO THEIR BEHAVIOR IS PROFESSIONAL.

SUDDENLY A SOLUTION IS HANDED DOWN FROM THE HIGHEST LEVELS : ALL JOBS ARE LIMITED TO ONLY 6 MONTHS! BRILLIANT!! THIS FORCES AN ALREADY SHORT HANDED STAFF TO BE MORE "TASK-MASTER" ORIENTED. TRAINING AND KNOWLEDGE WILL BE LOST. INMATES WILL BE STRESSED OUT AND INJURED. A MONTH AGO ONE GUY STUCK HIS HAND UNDER A POWERED LAWN MOWER. FORTUNATELY FOR HIM HE ONLY LOST THE TIP OF HIS FINGER. BESIDES BEING ^V AN IDIOT (BECAUSE

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HE PUSHED AWAY THE INMATES TRYING TO TRAIN HIM) THE SUPERVISORS DIDN'T QUALIFY HIM BEFORE ALLOWING HIM TO USE A POWER TOOL. OFTEN NEW WORKERS WILL BREAK THE \$500.00 LARGE WALL SIZED WINDOWS WITH ROCKS THROWN BY TRACTORS, MOWERS AND WEED WACKERS. THIS IS AVOIDED THROUGH "EXPERIENCE".

NOW, NEW COMMISSARY, KITCHEN AND WAREHOUSE WORKERS WILL GO IN THE DOOR LOOKING TO STEAL AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. THEY KNOW THEIR TIME IS LIMITED. THERE'S NO INCENTIVE TO DO WELL. THE STAFF WILL BE SO BUSY TASK-MASTERING EVERYTHING, THEY WON'T SEE THE REAL CRIMINALS. NO TRUST OR TEAM WORK WILL DEVELOP AMONG THE INMATES. NO INMATE WILL DARE BECOME THE "SNITCH" EVEN IF THEY SEE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. NOW THE GANGS WILL HAVE MORE CONTROL AND COMMUNICATION OPTIONS BETWEEN WORK GROUPS AND HOUSES.

THE ONLY POSSIBLE SAVING IN THIS (THAT I CAN ENVISION) IS IF THEY TAG ON SOME OPTION TO EARN GOOD TIME AND REDUCE A PERSONS SENTENCE FROM A SUCCESSFUL 6-MONTH WORK TOUR.

IF THEY DON'T DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS WE ARE ABOUT TO SEE PROBLEMS, INJURIES AND THEFT SKYROCKET.

THE GENIUS OF BUREAUCRACY IN ACTION.

ANYWAY BACK TO THE BANQUET ...

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IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE FOR ALL PRESENT. EVEN WITH VERY LITTLE TIME TO PREPARE AND REHEARSE (2-2 HOUR MEETINGS) IT WAS AMAZING HOW SMOOTHLY EACH SEPERATE ACTIVITY FIT TOGETHER.

THERE WERE 3 SOLO SONGS THAT COULD HAVE MADE IT INTO THE AMERICAN IDOL TOP-12. I WISH YOU COULD HEAR ALL THE STORIES AND TESTIMONIES ABOUT THE WORK OVER 40 VOLUNTEERS DO HERE AT THE PRISON.

NOT TO BORE YOU, BUT I DID INCLUDE THE NOTES I USED TO PRESENT ANDY'S AWARD. MAYBE IT GIVES A SMALL PICTURE OF HOW THE SACRIFICE AND LOVE SHOWN BY VOLUNTEERS IS APPRECIATED.

NEXT WEEK IS A 3-DAY RETREAT SPONSORED BY KOINONIA MINISTRY. IN PRISON, RETREATS ARE A LITTLE DIFFERENT. AT THE START YOU GO EXPECTING A GREAT SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE AND CHANGED HEARTS. AS MEN COME FACE TO FACE WITH THEIR OWN WRONGS IN THE PRESENCE OF A VERY REAL, LOVING, FORGIVING GOD. ON THE OTHERHAND YOU MUST BE MENTALLY PREPARED FOR A RIOT TO BREAK OUT.

MY PLAN IS TO REPORT GOOD NEWS.

SEE YA,

Tom D. Cinsley