

**April, 2003  
Issue3**

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**MARIETTA MUNICIPAL  
COURT**

**Community Corrections Newsletter**

**Editor Rosanne Buell**

## *The View From the Bench*

The Marietta Municipal Court in partnership with our CCA Board members is making a major impact on our Washington County community. Much of the impact may not be apparent to our partner board members. I want to take this opportunity to highlight some of the good things that are happening. I will start by reminding you of where we started.

We formed the Community Corrections Board to stave off the inevitable overcrowding of our county jail when Senate Bill 2 was enacted. That legislation placed the burden of incarcerating many felons who would otherwise be housed in state penal institutions, in our local county jail. The CCA Board convened and agreed that diversion of misdemeanor offenders from the county jail to probationary sanctions would be most appropriate. Look at the statistics for 2002. Over 1000 people were placed on probation performing such things as community service, making restitution, receiving counseling or remaining at home and monitored with technology. The list of

possible sanctions is lengthy. They can be tailored to fit the appropriated parameters for each offense and each offender.

The grant we receive from the Office of Criminal Justice Services enable us to employ the probation staff. The funds are augmented by the City General Fund. Additionally the probationers pay a moderate fee for receiving probation services. Those on electronically monitored house arrest pay for that as well.

We have been able to use the fees we collect to properly equip the staff. These fees allow some budgetary flexibility to implement new programs.

We have been able to use money designated for treatment of indigent offenders with drug and alcohol problems to help Washington County Recovery Alternatives solve their budgetary problems. This assured that trained treatment professionals are available to treat those indigent offenders who need their help.

We have the staff to write new grant applications. Byrne Memorial Funds

were made available to us to start the drug court program. That would not be a reality today if the CCA Board had not had the foresight to create probation services in this court several years ago.

Today we have a staff for the Drug Court. We are able to equip it and pay for counseling services for its clientele without using city general funds money. In a sense, the drug court is a natural extension of the community corrections system our CCA Board helped us create.

The drug court offers many exciting opportunities for us to solve problems. It has been a rewarding challenge to start the program. I am pleased that we have a nice facility in a convenient location for its operation. We must continue to work on the new Justice Center in order to permanently resolve the problem we face in providing adequate facilities for all of our programs.

The future looks promising. We have a good staff of intelligent, talented and dedicated professionals who will continue to help us seek funding opportunities to enhance our existing programs and create

new ones to meet the challenges we know we will face.



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LifeLink Drug Court Office  
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Marietta, OH 45750  
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## *News From Our Drug Court Administrator*



Aimee Meadows, Drug Court Administrator  
Chris Spencer, Drug Court Case Manager

### **WHO SUPPORTED THIS GRANT?**

The Byrne Memorial Grant was written and submitted in June of 2002. We received confirmation in December 2002 that our grant had been funded. The following people were instrumental in obtaining the grant: Judge Nuzum, Mayor Matthews, Annette Zide, and Steve Summers. Members of the community who endorsed the program and will be active participants on the Drug Court Team are: Roland Riggs III, Janet McKim, and Sheriff Schlicher. Members of

government that wrote letters of support were: Senator Jim Carnes, Luceille Fleming (Director of ODADAS), and Representative Nancy Hollister. Members of our community who wrote a letter of support were Judge Boyer, and Ron Rees. Without the support of those individuals listed above, the Drug Court would not have become a reality.

### **WHAT IS A DRUG COURT?**

Taken from the University of Cincinnati's outcome evaluation findings of the model the Ohio Supreme Court wanted to use to evaluate the effectiveness of Ohio drug Courts:

*“Throughout the last few decades, courts that deal specifically with drug and alcohol offenders have emerged as an alternative to traditional courts. The drug court model is designed to address the needs of drug-involved offenders through frequent judicial monitoring and community-based treatment services. Within the last decade, the increase in the number of drug courts is staggering. As of 1998, there were a total of 275 drug court programs in operation, serving an estimated 90,000 offenders (Drug*

*Court Activity, 1998). Moreover, the Drug Court Programs Office (1998) reported that another 155 were in the planning process. The U.S. Department of Justice has also placed a high priority on drug courts; since 1995, the Drug Courts Programs Office has provided \$56 million in funding for development and research (Belenko, 1998). Given the degree of support for the drug court model as well as the fiscal commitment, it is likely that its implementation will continue to increase.”*

### IS A DRUG COURT “SOFT ON CRIME”?

Absolutely not. Drug courts are a way to hold offenders personally accountable while recognizing that they have a problem best addressed by treatment with judicial oversight. The goal of drug courts is to reduce recidivism, thereby making communities safer, through a holistic approach to treatment. The court recognizes that drug problems do not exist in a vacuum; therefore, drug problems cannot be treated in a vacuum.

### Who will benefit from a Drug Court?

Everyone! Both ordinary citizens as well as offenders who have a drug problem. Research indicates that young males between the ages of 18-26 have the most significant problem in this region, but people who are eligible for the Drug Court program will be able to participate as long as there are slots available. We are hoping to have up to 20 slots available per year.

### Why does our community need a Drug Court?

Every community could benefit from a Drug Court. In our community, drug use has been on the rise. There are more people than ever before committing drug related crimes and people dying from illegal substance abuse. In addition to reducing recidivism, drug court helps people who have substance abuse issues to get treatment. The Byrne Memorial Grant will put 75,000 additional treatment dollars into the community. The grant also provides the funds to hire two people to assist the client's of the Drug Court in all venues of their lives. Research shows

that neither treatment nor court alone can address all of the barriers to a successful outcome for this particular population. These two entities, bridged by the Drug Court employees, will form a partnership that, with hope, will knock down the barriers that our client's face. Citizens who are free from drugs promote a healthier and safer community for everyone.

Aimee Meadows  
Drug Court Administrator

### *News From the Probation*

#### *Department*

A total of 1,016 persons were placed on probation in 2002. Of those placed under supervision, 47% of the charges were drug or alcohol related. 32% of all persons placed in the program were repeat offenders (individuals who were on probation within the last three years). Of all persons, 38% were between the ages of 18 and 25. Electronically monitored house arrest increased by 53% last year and continues

to be a successful alternative to incarceration in Washington county.

Space continues to be a problem and has been for several years. We currently have four probation officers and a deputy clerk in an area that measures 12' x 28'. The average minimum of clients per day is about 16. This figure only includes those persons ordered to appear. Including walk-ins, the number would be twice over the 16 previously mentioned. Privacy continues to be a problem and many times the officer must take the client to a more secluded area. Judge Nuzum continues to push forward on a new justice center that would alleviate this problem.

Joseph N. Perry  
Chief Probation Officer