

National accolades for top dog team

1 Junee Correctional Centre's Passive Alert Drug Detection (PADD) dog Gypsy and handler Chontel Barber have won the detection section in the 2013 Australian Service Dog Trials.

Chontel and Gypsy competed against approximately 40 other 'K9' teams from law enforcement, emergency and military agencies throughout Australia.

Staged at Kirkconnell Correctional Centre, the event is hosted by Corrective Services NSW and the Australian Service Dog Association (ASDA).

"This is a show of discipline, agility and ability and the handlers who are best able to demonstrate K9-human teamwork are awarded prizes in four different categories — making them national champions in that category," said ASDA secretary Andrew Clark.

The judges described Chontel as "the epitome of what a dog handler should be" and said her first place was well deserved.

The K9 teams included German shepherds, labradors, springer spaniels and border collies and each demonstrated their ability to detect drugs and explosives, track offenders and search buildings, vehicles and open fields.

Chontel had to choose three out of five categories being assessed in the detection section — person, box, room, vehicle and field. Each search is scored out of 100 and most handlers competed in substance detection, ranging from narcotics to accelerant, explosives and cadaver (a corpse).

The first search comprised three rows of 10 boxes with Gypsy locating the odour on the first pass, scoring the maximum 100 points.

The second test was based on searching two cells in a five-minute period. Gypsy searched the first room with no indications in 30 seconds and located the odour immediately in the next cell to score 93 out of 100.



Chontel and Gypsy after their national championship victory.

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On the final search along a line-up Gypsy stopped at the fifth person and indicated. This was rewarded with another score of 100 and gave the pair an overall tally of 293 out of 300.

Chontel and Gypsy were awarded a perpetual trophy as well as a trophy for their category and a certificate for their outstanding efforts. The combination was the only GEO team participating in the annual event.

In other news, Chontel and her pet border collie Tiernan recently graced the red carpet at the world premier of the movie *Backyard Ashes*. Just released, the comedy is about a game of cricket between Australian and English neighbours. Tiernan is the canine star in the movie with Chontel's dog-training skills put to the test by directors over eight days of filming.

GEO Consortium to bid for new prison

2 The Victorian Government has announced that the GEO Consortium is one of two consortia shortlisted to tender for the new Ravenhall Prison Project in Melbourne's west.

A medium security male prison, Ravenhall will accommodate 1000 prisoners.

The project is being delivered as a public private partnership, with the private sector responsible for design, construction, maintenance and operations.

Construction of the prison will begin in 2015 and will be completed in late 2017.

The two consortia were shortlisted following rigorous evaluations of the expressions of interest received from an international field.

The GEO Consortium comprises The GEO Group Australia, John Holland, Honeywell and Capella Capital.

MD'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the last edition of *GEO Insights* for 2013.

I would like to highlight the very significant and welcome news that Junee Correctional Centre recently had the first of its two possible contract extension terms confirmed.

Junee's current contract allows for Corrective Services NSW (CSNSW) to order two five-year extensions in addition to the initial five-year term. With the contract ending in March 2014, this first extension ensures that Junee will be GEO-managed until March 2019.

Junee continues to deliver excellence across

its services, is an engine of innovation and continually strives to better its already high standards. This contract extension is testament to the confidence CSNSW has in Junee and has been achieved by the hard work and dedication of every member of the Junee team.

In other significant news, the Victorian Government announced in October that the GEO Consortium is one of two consortia shortlisted to tender for the new Ravenhall Prison Project. Over the next few months the consortium will be busy preparing a strong proposal with a focus on innovation and value for money.

Individually, two GEO employees recently had their excellence recognised.

Greg Farnsworth has won GEO's inaugural Trainer and Assessor Award. Greg's work in implementing Risk Wizard and his passion for increasing staff learning reflects the best of GEO.

Secondly, Junee's Chontel Barber and Gypsy triumphed at the Australian Service Dog Trials,

beating competitors from state corrections departments, armed services, police forces and fire and rescue organisations. This team's dedication to their job exemplifies how better corrections delivers safer communities.

Across all jurisdictions GEO continues to support the communities we work in. In this edition of *GEO Insights* we look at a number of community partnerships our centres have fostered as well as sponsorship activities. I am sure you will find these stories inspirational.

Finally, it's that time of year again when we celebrate the artistic endeavours of our employees' children through the annual GEO Christmas Card Competition. I am delighted to report that eight-year-old Sophie Griffith from Junee is this year's winner.

I wish you all a happy and safe festive season.

Pieter Bezuidenhout - Managing Director



Goodna Special School principal Michael Brett and staff member Rebecca Green accept handmade toys from Arthur Gorrie's Sidd Mehta (left) and Andy Rocks (right).

Giving back to the community

3 Prisoners working in the Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre's industries area have made toys for the Goodna Special School in the eastern suburbs of Ipswich.

The stuffed toys will be used in the school's annual Christmas fundraising raffle and as Christmas presents for less fortunate students.

Goodna Special School provides high quality educational programs for students with

intellectual impairment and other disabilities. It has approximately 120 students from Prep through to Year 12.

Arthur Gorrie has supported the school for a number of years and given its limited resources the staff and families of the students are always very appreciative.

Prisoners at Arthur Gorrie also make toys and furniture for a number of other local community groups.

Inmates put the cycle in recycling

4 Parklea Correctional Centre is playing a major role in a bicycle recycling program developed by the Blacktown City Council. Initiated by a council worker, the program sees bicycles that would otherwise be destined for landfill being restored by inmates.

In a move that encourages waste reduction within the community, the council collects old and broken bikes from residents. Once they are restored the bicycles are given to children within the Blacktown area to use on the city's cycle ways.

As the bikes are being restored individually it allows them to be custom designed. Since the commencement of the program at least three bikes have been tailored for disabled residents.

Being a part of this initiative keeps inmates active in local community programs and provides an opportunity for them to give something back to society. The inmates take great pride in restoring the bikes, knowing that local children will have many years of enjoyment from them.



A Parklea inmate works on a bicycle as part of the recycling program.

Junee farm is 'most successful'

5 Farm staff and inmates at Junee Correctional Centre have taken out the 'Most Successful Exhibitor' award in sections J18 to J34 at the 2013 Junee Show.

More than 150 acres of land surrounding the centre is devoted to farming with sheep and poultry bred, vegetables grown and crops such as barley and wheat harvested.

The farm supports the education of a number of inmates who are able to study a range of skills through TAFE courses in agriculture and horticulture.

Through their practical work on the farm and tertiary education the inmates learn skills in

agribusiness, pest control, broadacre cropping, use of chemicals, managing livestock, machinery operation and maintenance, plant cultivation and landscaping.

At the Junee Show the centre received first prize in the following categories: peas in the pod, three onions and bunch of eschalots. The centre also landed second place for bunch of silverbeet, bunch of eschalots, collection of homegrown vegetables and a dozen white eggs.

The farm provides the centre's kitchen with a variety of vegetables, eggs and herbs each week for use in inmate and staff meals. This reduces the cost of purchasing frozen vegetables and other food items by about \$1000 a week.



Farm officers Peter Kingwill (left) and Jarrod Smith hold certificates awarded by produce judges at the 2013 Junee Show.

Greg Farnsworth wins training award

7 Greg Farnsworth — an employee at GEO for 15 years — has won the inaugural GEO Trainer and Assessor Award.

Greg has been the company's lead staff trainer, assessor and employee mentor for a number of years, delivering pre-service and other training across all GEO locations.

Instrumental to the success of training Parklea Correctional Centre's initial GEO employees, Greg has selflessly volunteered his services to a number of centres.

He is currently seconded to Fulham Correctional Centre where he is managing a review of custodial training and the pre-service program. Greg also manages special projects including training personnel across the company in the use of GEO's Risk Wizard Incident Management Program.

"Greg's work in the training environment is exemplary and he is a very deserving recipient of this award," said Pierre Langford, The GEO Group Australia's director, employee and industrial relations.

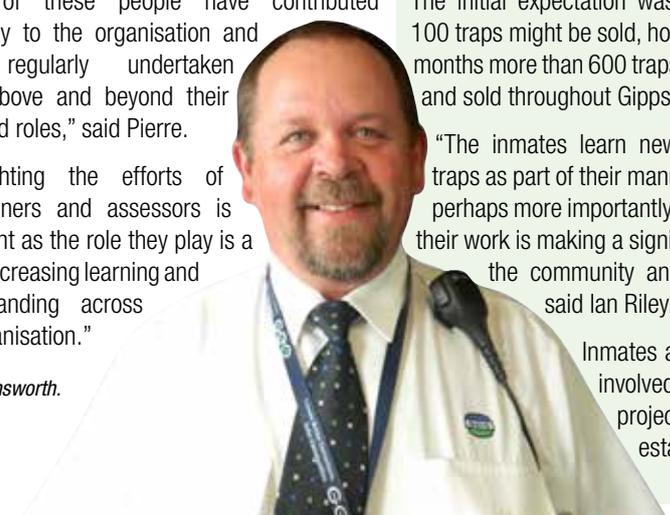
"His enthusiasm and ongoing commitment to improving training delivery and increasing staff knowledge is recognised throughout GEO."

All centres submitted applicants for the award with GEO also acknowledging Craig McCormack (Junee), Francis Apikotoa (Parklea) and John Beerman (Arthur Gorrie).

"Each of these people have contributed positively to the organisation and have regularly undertaken tasks above and beyond their allocated roles," said Pierre.

"Highlighting the efforts of our trainers and assessors is important as the role they play is a key to increasing learning and understanding across the organisation."

Greg Farnsworth.



Avon Landcare Group secretary Harry Hof (left) and Fulham industry manager Ian Riley with an Indian Myna bird trap made by prisoners.

Building bird traps

6 Efforts to eradicate a bird that won an Australian public opinion title of 'most hated pest' have been extremely successful through the use of traps made by prisoners at Fulham Correctional Centre.

The Indian Myna is an aggressive species that competes with native wildlife for habitat and food. Humans are also at risk from birds building nests in roof spaces, which can present a fire risk and an entry point for bird mites.

The trap building program at Fulham commenced over 18 months ago, after industry manager Ian Riley met with Avon Landcare secretary Harry Hof.

Harry had been experimenting with traps specifically designed to capture the birds and after 12 months had developed a design that was economical to manufacture, relatively easy to transport and very effective.

The initial expectation was that around 50 to 100 traps might be sold, however in just over 12 months more than 600 traps were manufactured and sold throughout Gippsland and beyond.

"The inmates learn new skills building the traps as part of their manual skills training and perhaps more importantly, they appreciate that their work is making a significant contribution to the community and the environment," said Ian Riley.

Inmates at Fulham have been involved in many Landcare projects since the centre's establishment in 1997.



From left: Junee inmates Paul Stewart, Stephen Hughes and Geoffrey Mason with the goanna.

Goanna grows at Junee

An impressive piece of artwork produced by inmates at Junee Correctional Centre has taken pride of place at the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) in Wagga Wagga.

When the CSO was exploring ways of expressing its commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, local contacts led them to a discussion with Junee’s offender services manager Trevor Coles.

Aboriginal prisoners worked with Ricky Whybro of TAFE NSW Riverina Institute to create a large metal goanna — the totem of the local Wiradjuri people. Originally planned to measure 30cm², the goanna project took six weeks to complete and finally measured 1.3m².

The Catholic diocese has since committed a further \$1000 to allow inmates to create smaller goannas for its schools throughout the area.

Sanctuary’s new roo feeders

Prisoners working in the metal workshop at Arthur Gorrie Correctional Centre recently took the initiative of using scrap metal and timber to manufacture kangaroo feeders.

The feeders were donated to Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, a not-for-profit organisation that is dedicated to conservation-based research, caring for sick and injured wildlife and public education.

The centre has an ongoing horticultural program in place with the sanctuary that involves growing plants used to provide habitat or food for various animal and bird species.

Parklea helps PCYC

For generations Police-Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC) have been recognised by local communities for the extraordinary work they do with young people across Australia. With over 85,000 members, PCYC plays a significant role in changing many young people’s lives.

In New South Wales there are 57 PCYC clubs and many require significant refurbishment work to their clubrooms to make them functional and comfortable. The GEO Group Australia saw an opportunity to assist through the Industries

Division at Parklea Correctional Centre.

Parklea’s general manager Peter Ma’a, a strong advocate of PCYC, was delighted to offer the services of the centre’s cabinet shop to assist with refurbishment of Blacktown, Mt Druitt, Parramatta and Cowra PCYC facilities.

Projects such as this allow inmates employed in the centre’s workshop and engaged in vocational training to develop their skills and contribute to community initiatives.

Support for high achiever

A mild learning disability has not stopped Skye Nielsen-Vold, 20, from achieving her goals.

Skye’s latest accomplishment is being selected to represent Australia in basketball at the Special Olympics 2013 Asia Pacific Games being staged in Newcastle from 1-7 December. She joins 1700 athletes from more than 30 countries at the event.

Possessing a strong determination to succeed in life, this year Skye has completed tertiary qualifications, worked part-time as a waitress, fund-raised for the Special Olympics and played basketball for the Victorian Country team.

The high cost of being part of the national team didn’t deter Skye who wrote to Fulham Correctional Centre asking for assistance in raising the \$3000 she needed. The centre contributed \$500.



Skye Nielson-Vold accepts a \$500 cheque from members of Fulham’s senior management team.

Top artist selected

A panel of judges has selected a drawing (pictured) by 8-year-old Sophie Griffith to adorn the front of the 2013 GEO Christmas card. Sophie is the daughter of Junee Correctional Centre employee Jeremy Griffith.

The annual GEO Christmas Card Competition is always hotly contested by budding artists within the GEO family and this year was no exception.

Prizes of \$100 are also awarded to a finalist in each of two categories (5-10 years and 11-16 years) from each GEO centre.



Today’s correctional officer

The success of modern day correctional facilities relies heavily on the effectiveness of individuals coming together to operate multidisciplinary teams. Traditional roles have evolved and none more so than that of a correctional officer.

Charged with maintaining security and order, the modern correctional officer also has to build rapport with the prisoners in their custody. Increasingly, the role demands that officers mentor offenders and become actively involved in prisoner rehabilitation to reduce reoffending.



The modern correctional officer is actively involved in prisoner mentoring and rehabilitation.

This focus on mentoring and rehabilitation and the complexity of the role is a comparatively recent development. Throughout correctional history the majority of jurisdictions adopted a model of strict demarcation between officer and prisoner. Male officers worked in male prisons only and female officers in female prisons. Interaction with inmates other than by direct order was discouraged as prisoners were to reflect on their crimes through penitence — hence the term penitentiary.

Officer recruitment reflected these conditions and favoured candidates from the other uniformed services, particularly those with strong physical attributes.

The model started to change in the latter half of the 20th century, with more women becoming officers and people entering the service at a younger age. New recruits also came from a variety of backgrounds, bringing new approaches, cultures and ideas.

Correctional centres are now expected to achieve what is implied in the name — they are to correct. This is no longer achieved solely through the denial of liberty and the deterrent effect this may have. Correction is achieved through an increasing range of programs and activities based on careful analysis of offender’s risks and needs.

This has clear implications for the modern officer and so good interpersonal skills, flexibility of approach and an understanding of the rehabilitative process are some of the key attributes that GEO looks for in new recruits.