

Genesee County Probation Department Newsletter



County Building #1, 15 Main Street, Batavia, New York 14020

(585) 344-2550 x2255

probation@co.genesee.ny.us



Wishing our Long-Time Supervisor a Fond Farewell Jason Mindler, Probation Supervisor

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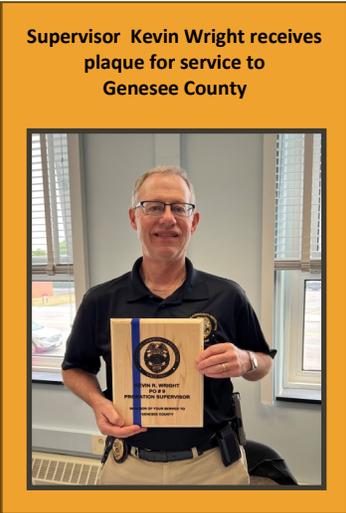
In August of 2022, our Department bid a fond farewell to Kevin Wright, who retired as a Probation Supervisor. I took his place shortly thereafter, with big shoes to fill.

My first contact with Kevin was when I called him for some information as a caseworker at Social Services. He was kind and helpful, easily answering my questions and exuding an air of genuineness that left an impression on me. At that time, somewhere in 2009 or so, I had no idea I would be stepping into his role over a decade later. What I did know was that I admired the professionalism he extended, and it led me to learn more about the agency with which I would soon become employed.

When I was first on the job at the Probation Department, and learned that Kevin would be my supervisor, I was somewhat relieved. Kevin is akin to a walking Encyclopedia of Probation in New York State, and can effortlessly recall case law and legislation that informed our practice going back decades. While learning the job, he could not only tell you why we did something, but every person involved in the decision-making. He has a hawkish eye for detail that forced me as a trainee to sharpen my focus and apply nuance to many situations, skills greatly undervalued in both law enforcement and case management.

Kevin would talk often about his love for being a probation officer. He can regale you with the adventures of his time in the Intensive Supervi-

sion Program. Through his lens, you would feel like you were hearing a good old-fashioned cops-and-robbers tale, riding solo with nothing but a revolver and a handful of spare cartridges, scooping up wayward probationers and bringing them to answer for their dalliances in front of a Town Justice.



Supervisor Kevin Wright receives plaque for service to Genesee County

Kevin was a paper-and-pencil kind of law enforcement officer. To a generation of officers that live in front of a screen, Kevin's stories of hastily hand-writing Violation of Probation petitions while the probationer was sitting in the holding cell seemed like a different world. However, Kevin's love for the work shone through, especially his passionate monologues about the importance of probation officers doing the right thing.

Kevin's moral compass points true north, and he made sure we applied ethics in our decision making. He knows the line between the law and criminal behavior is narrow and blurry at times, but his commitment to the public was that his officers would never cross that line under his watch.

Kevin has taught and continues to teach me much about being a probation officer and supervisor. He has earned his retirement after 37 years in probation, and I only hope my enthusiasm for this profession affects future generations of probation officers as his did.

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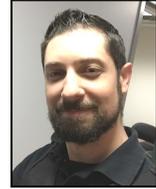
Staff Directory 2023



Timothy Michalak
Probation Director
Ext. 2270



Rachel Sanfratello
Probation Supervisor
Ext. 2252



Jason Mindler
Probation Supervisor
Ext. 2254



Michele Tucci
Senior Probation Officer
Ext. 2262



Jeremy Barber
Senior Probation Officer
Ext. 2259



Traci Russo
Senior Probation Officer



William Bogan II
Probation Officer
Ext. 2309



Carly Luttrell
Probation Officer
Ext. 2272



Terri Buchholz
Probation Officer
Ext. 2216



Benjamin Heale
Probation Officer
Ext. 2263



Jeffrey Hyde
Probation Officer
Ext. 2266



Bryan Pike
Probation Officer
Ext. 2283



Jessica Turman
Probation Officer
Ext. 2273



Brianne Paganello
Probation Officer
Ext. 2271



Dakota Nicholson
Probation Officer
Ext. 2274

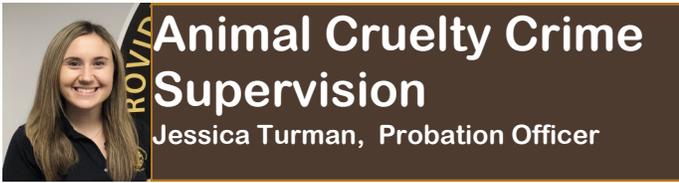


Vicki Athoe
Principal Clerk
Ext. 2257



Jennifer Russ
Principal Financial Clerk
Ext. 2255

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Animal Cruelty is often a sensitive topic, as most people have a beloved animal of their own at home. Local newspapers will often follow current cases that involve abused animals, but what happens after the offender is convicted?

A probation sentence is one option that is often used by the court. Probation supervision comes with a set of conditions ordered by the court that the offender will need to abide by. Some of those conditions will be specific to the offender's conviction. With an animal abuse conviction, usually the offender is not allowed to have any pets while serving their probation sentence and they may have to seek specific treatment such as drug or mental health treatment. Probation officers assist in making sure the offender abides by these terms. Officers will do random home checks to make sure the offender does not have any animals in their possession and

make sure they are seeking the appropriate treatment.

Animal cruelty does not just pertain to physical abuse to an animal, but also neglect caused by poor living conditions, depriving necessary sustenance, abandonment, appropriate shelter, confinement in vehicles, and much more. Why does animal cruelty happen? The Humane Society indicates that studies show 71 percent of domestic violence victims reported that their abuser also targeted pets. This suggests that animal cruelty is often used as a tool of power and control over the victim, targeting a pet that is loved as a means of leverage in domestic violence cases.

The Humane Society also reports that hoarding behavior can also cause neglect to animals. That can be an indicator that a person may be in need of social services and/or mental health treatment. Probation will assist in getting the right agencies involved for the offender.

Dog and cock fighting are other forms of animal cruelty. According to the Humane Society, both go hand in hand with other crimes. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency has prosecuted several cases where drug cartels were running narcotics through dog-fighting and cock-fighting events in the United States.

If you suspect animal abuse or neglect is occurring, contact your local law enforcement or Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) so they can look further into the matter for you.

For more information, please visit the Humane Society's website: <https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/animal-cruelty-facts-and-stats>



CURRENTLY AVAILABLE: Mr Peanut is an adult male Pit Bull Terrier/Lab Mix. He weighs about 80 lbs. This guy LOVES people so he would do best with someone that will be around a lot. He is an active, high energy dog that seems housebroken and okay with other dogs.

PROBATION'S MOST WANTED

If you have any information regarding the whereabouts of these individuals, please call
Genesee County Probation Department
(585) 344-2550 x 2255



Jeffrey Balk



Gerardo Carrera-Sanchez



Duty Caswell



Jason Duffina



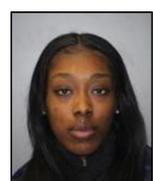
Carolina Frias



Janet Grossman



Deavin Herman



Najah Dunston



David Renteria



Brittany Scott



Anthony Welch



Jeanine Fuller

Genesee County Probation Department Newsletter

Probation — 75 Years Later

Vicki Athoe, Principal Clerk

As we celebrate 75 years of Probation in Genesee County, we look back on Probation from its beginnings in 1947 to the present day. There is a world of difference from its humble start as a one-man operation with its first probation officer, Nicholas Figlow, to the current Probation Department with 17 staff members, increased technology, and New York State Probation case-management software.

Genesee County's 12 probation officers are the face of the Department. Officers today undergo extensive training in their first year of service starting with weeks of Fundamentals and Peace Officer training. Our officers are trained with firearms, pepper spray and baton and must requalify each year. They are also required to complete 21 hours of training annually.

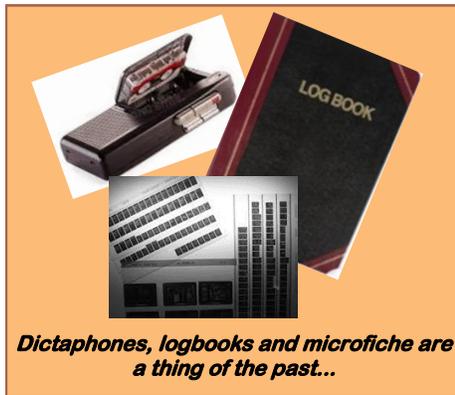
Probation officers meet probationers in their office, at work, at home and sometimes, where the probationers are *not* supposed to be. Officers today are focused on working with probationers to help them make changes for a better life. Working flexible hours and special details, officers are now out in the field more than ever. Our officers maintain a community presence at events such as Stop DWI Night at the Ballpark, Community Night Out, Trunk or Treat and Stuff the Cruiser and are always willing to interact with the community providing information about probation. Who knows, they might inspire the next generation of probation officers!

If the probation officers are the face of our Department, administration is the backbone. The Director is responsible for many things including policy and budget and sets the tone for the Department requiring high standards with an emphasis on teamwork and maintaining regulations set by New York State. Two probation supervisors, provide guidance and oversight to our 12 officers in addition to other duties.

Lastly, the heart of the Department is the clerical staff. Starting with a staff of one way back when, growing to a staff of five at one point and now down to two, the clerical staff is a model of efficiency. Handling the public, maintaining records, collecting and disbursing monies, the clerical staff keeps it all running smoothly.

For 75 years, the Department has expanded, contracted and morphed into an efficient, high-tech office. Probation officers today are supplied with cell phones, radios, and mobile data terminals. Part of this development allowed us to conduct virtual contacts with our probationers via our NYS Caseload Explorer software ensuring community safety even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Dictaphones, logbooks and microfiche are a thing of the past. Cases are now scanned into our Docuware electronic records system for easy access to historical data.

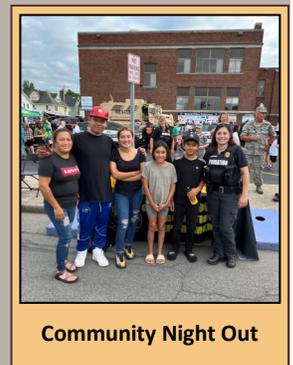
There have been big changes over 75 years and as time goes on, more changes will come: business practice changes, New York State law changes and staff changes. The Probation Department and staff will continue to adapt to these changes always remembering that community protection along with probationer accountability and rehabilitation are our greatest responsibilities.



Stuff the Cruiser

In the Community

- The Probation Department coordinated the annual “**Stuff the Cruiser**” event with the Genesee County Sheriff’s Office, the Batavia City Police, and the Genesee County Department of Social Services, providing for over 450 Genesee County children in need!
- Probation Officers participated in the **Stop DWI Night at the Ballpark**, **Grace Baptist Trunk or Treat** and the **Community Night Out**
- The Probation Department collected money for a donation to the Genesee County **Holiday Tote Project**, this year benefitting senior citizens in Genesee County.
- Probation staff dressed in Buffalo Bills apparel during the NFL playoffs this year, donating money to a variety of causes.



Community Night Out

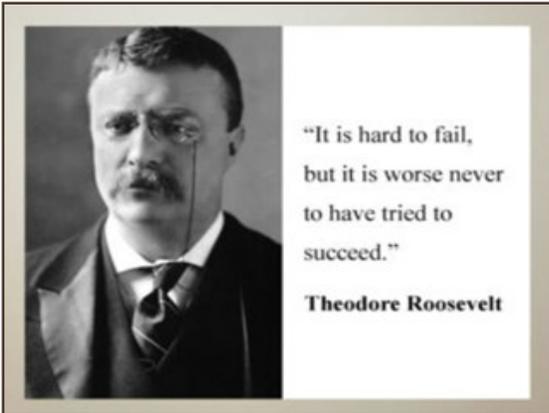
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Director's Corner

By Timothy Michalak
Probation Director

Let me start off by saying thank you to all of the professionals and volunteers that selflessly serve the youth and citizens in any capacity in our communities. We, as people, seem to be facing some difficult challenges. Many are still readjusting from the grips of the pandemic and the fallout from it. Many are anxious and depressed. There is civil unrest, and with the abundance of information accessible, it is not always easy for people to tell the difference between truth, lies and irresponsible manipulation. We also seem to be living in a society where people are quick to point the finger and criticize others, sometimes even hiding behind the anonymity of the internet. In recent years, there has seemingly been an increase in self-centered behavior and people being far more conscious of their rights, rather than their duties as human beings and citizens.



However, history illustrates that we have endured challenges in the past, and we can all do better. President Theodore Roosevelt gave his iconic "The Main in the Arena" speech where, in part, he called for the cultivation of virtue and the importance of action.

The most renowned part of that speech reads, "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

Roosevelt's call to action was not a call to activism, but a call to embrace challenges, the lessons learned through failure, and the importance of productive engagement for all members of society. None of us are perfect. We all have faults. However, it is important for each of us to productively contribute, not only for the benefit of society, but for our own self-actualization, allowing us to exist outside ourselves and discover the deeper satisfaction of sacrifice. For those of us that have chosen to serve our communities, states or country, now, more than ever, we must continue doing so with character, truth and integrity.

Welcome to Our New Staff Members!



Brianne P. Paganello
Probation Officer



Jennifer M. Russ
Principal Financial Clerk



Dakota J. Nicholson
Probation Officer

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2022



The Mission of the Genesee County Probation Department is to enhance the safety of victims and communities through the fair and effective supervision of community-based offenders, community partnerships, and results-driven management practices.

Contact Information:

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