

Pro-active bi-county probation department offering lots of new programs

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always there. It has been there for decades and will always be a problem, although alcohol abuse has come down some.

"It seems drugs take waves. What we're struggling with most now in the district is the abuse of prescription drugs," he said. "It has become very significant, which is typical of what is happening across the country. That may have started with adolescents stealing medications from their parents' medicine cabinet. Now it has spread to adults and even mid-range aging adults."

Cocaine abuse continues to permeate this area and has been over the past 10 years after the cheaper crack instead of powdered cocaine became more easily accessible and affordable, Fay said. But when it comes to the latest designer drugs of choice, Fay said the district is usually four to five years behind national and big city trends.

He said meth use has gone down a bit here, possibly because of the probation and law enforcement departments' more aggressive prosecution-prevention approach and new precursor laws making it much more difficult to purchase meth ingredients over the counter, like Sudafed. "Now you have to give a lot of identification to get it from a pharmacy."

Fay said there are a lot fewer methamphetamine producers in the community now than five or six years ago. "Now, it's coming across the border from Mexico rather than them making it themselves. That's a big improvement because it's safer for our officers and myself when we go into the users' homes all the time and for the neighbors, too. It still is a horrible drug to be addicted to."

The department is taking a more aggressive approach to those arrested for meth abuse who have tested positive for the drug. They are seeking to increase their treatment level through an in-patient program that may involve the Department of Human Services if children are living in the abuser's home.

"Our treatment programs are successful for a lot of people," said Fay. "We have graduated treatment and regular out-patient programs, including a program related to regular criminal thinking for people who have been active in criminal activities."

The department's cognitive education program class seeks to determine what the arrested abuser's philosophy is on their life and what gets them into such a bad situation and methods the department can use to change that type of thinking, he said. "We have an excellent probation officer in Pat Fletcher, who runs a victim empathy class for adults and juveniles. Fay said selected probationers take the class so they can better see how their vandalism, graffiti, drug dealing or other destructive crime activities have adversely affected the community.

Fletcher brings crime victims into the class so a crime defendant sees first hand how their crime has impacted the victim, as well as knowing that their after-hours activities, while they're on probation, are being closely monitored by their probation officers and law enforcement. "They have the chance to change their thinking that got them into probation in the first place," Fay said.

The department also has a very active drug-testing program (saliva, not urine testing) called the Intermediate Incentive and Sanction Program for drug abuse probationers who have to call in every week-day and who are randomly selected for a drug test. Positive drug tests can lead to an arrest or department sanctions, Fay said. The department offers different lengths of in-patient programs to assist people who relapse back into doing drugs.

The \$600 to \$800 cost to keep someone on probation contrasts with the \$24,000 to \$28,000 it costs taxpayers to

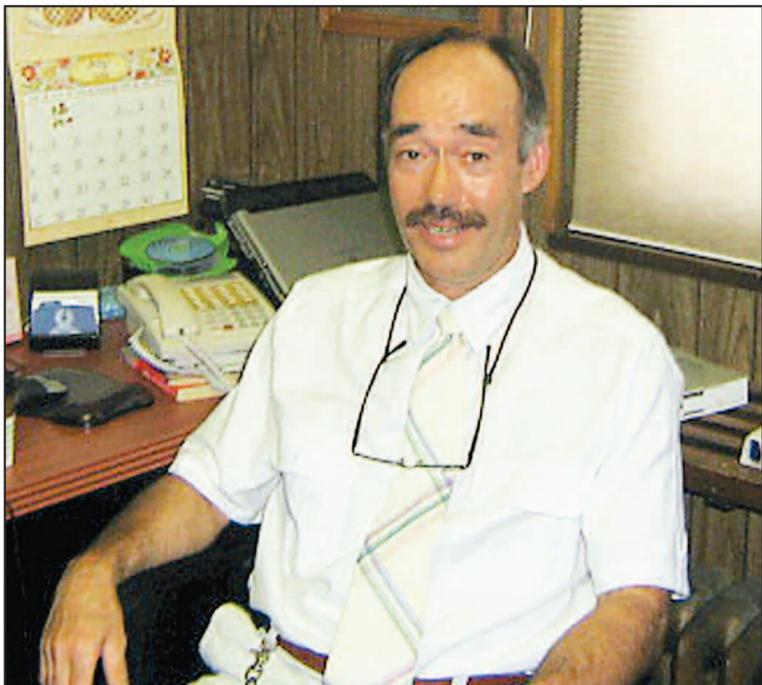


Photo by Mike Garrett

Bi-County 3rd Judicial District Chief Probation Officer Bernie Fay discusses many of the department's new pro-active programs seeking to keep probationers from re-entering the judicial system

keep someone in the Department of Corrections, he said. The drug-testing program also stipulates that the probationer pays \$50 a month to remain on probation. "We use the offender treatment funds - \$65,000 last year - for their treatment. So the probation department helps many probationers pay for their DUI or domestic violence classes through that approach, Fay said.

The department launched an active domestic violence program with Crossroads Turning Points two years ago to start training domestic violence counselors, with many program participants also involved in substance abuse issues. A probation officer attends the weekly classes to monitor progress of the 42 current probationary participants. "Our recidivism rate has been remarkable. We only have 10 percent of the people who have been in the program who have recommitted a domestic violence offense. We feel it has been pretty successful so far."

Sheriff Jim Casias also transports domestic violence program participants to and from the class if they are already incarcerated for another offense. Judge Bruce Billings and Judge Gary Stork handle most of the domestic violence cases in their respective county courts, with offenders coming under monthly review by the judge and a probation officer on what progress or lack thereof is being made in their cases and if they are attending their classes.

Probation officers also regularly appear in Judge Leslie Gerbracht's and Judge Claude Appel's district review courts on juvenile cases, with Judge Gerbracht stressing the need for juveniles to earn their GEDs. "We have our own monthly reviews for GED, so probation officers have to review the progress of our probationers whose condition is to complete their GED as part of their probation," said Fay. "We've seen much more success since the probation department began monitoring that closer."

The district also offers two diversionary programs in each county for first-time juvenile offenders.

The department is also in the process of developing a drug court to more closely monitor non-violent offenders to help reduce the overall prison population. Fay feels some of the above-discussed programs have been responsible for recent inmate prison reductions. The drug court will include people involved in both criminal and civil actions.

A Division of Criminal Justice four-year grant has also allowed the department to address mental health issues in the bi-county area through a dual-diagnosis program. It will seek to deal with people experiencing mental health issues like bi-polar disorders, reoccurring depression problems or post-traumatic stress disorder. A part-time person has been hired to manage the program and refer afflicted people for

treatment in regional mental health programs with many of those with mental issues also experiencing substance abuse problems, Fay said.

Finally, Fay noted that Judge Gerbracht challenged the probation department to come up with a community graffiti-removal program in partnership with Trinidad Police Chief Charles Glorioso and Sheriff Casias. Meeting on a monthly basis, participants look at all the graffiti prevalent throughout the community and use probationers who have been ordered into useful public service to remove the offending graffiti as part of a supervised work crew. Most recently, the crew cleaned up 24 of 26 graffiti spots at Kit Carson Park, Fay said, noting the many public and private agencies that have con-

tributed funding to what has become a very expensive removal proposition.

"We feel a real responsibility to protect the community from any further victimization," he said. "We try to make the offenders as accountable as possible while also trying to develop their skills and (life) competency so they are much less likely to be on probation again." An increased number of probationary home visits is building accountability into that program.

The department is trying to meet all its goals despite being named as the state's most understaffed probation department with its six officers, a fulltime probation supervisor and 2 1/2 fulltime equivalent employees (FTE) support staff. The department has two current probation officer job openings, open until Aug. 6, Fay said.

Barbara Farrar is no common fool

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Farrar and Evans spent their summers in Staunton, Va., with the Shenandoah Valley International Playwrights Retreat. "The only thing we did was work with playwrights to develop new plays," Farrar explains. It was there that they helped develop what has become a signature piece for Farrar, Tom Ziegler's Grace & Glorie.

"I performed that play in three productions before it went to New York," she recalls. She performed it opposite Lucie Arnaz on Times Square; the play continued its success on Broadway. Farrar is often called to take her signature role as Grace; in fact, she came to Raton expecting to do the part at the Shuler; only to be disappointed when it was canceled and replaced with a musical.

Seeking opportunity, Farrar moved to New York City in 1991, often joined by Evans - "for flings" - on weekends. She already had her actors equity card; she earned that with Bill Fegan in 1957 when he came through Mississippi producing plays. It was Fegan who called Farrar and Evans to Raton, beginning in 1968. "Oh, those were glory years, from 1968-1978; we had so much fun!" she recalls. Then professional theatre ended in Raton, until Fegan resurrected his Kaleidoscope Players professional summer repertory company in 2004. He again called on Farrar and Evans, who have returned every summer.

"When we first came to Raton, in the 1960s, there was a lot of coal dust on the Shuler Theater," Farrar remembers. "When we returned in 2004, they had renovated the theater. It's much more beautiful now. We love it."

She describes her role in Fools as "mugging and running. It's very easy to be dumb! I love the audience response to this show. They become childlike, so full of laughter. They seem to regenerate their childhood experiences of 'anything goes' and they just play along with us. Judging by the laughter, I'll say it's a very successful production."

Farrar can be seen in Fools at the Shuler Theater through July 24. Information is available at shulrtheater.com. Extensive additional information on Barbara Farrar is available at stagevans.com.

Udall representatives visit Trinidad

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munication, but all three ended the meeting confident that full communication can and will be restored.

Contacted in her Pueblo office later in the day, Gutierrez said that they met with about a half-dozen area residents during their two hours in Trinidad. Topics ranged from pancreatic cancer and research funding, to obtaining a visa for a coach at Trinidad State Junior College, to the local oil and gas industry.

"Anytime we can try to help constituents with their concerns, it's a success for us," Gutierrez said. "We will follow up on those things and then get back to them."

Next Tuesday, July 27, Gutierrez and Kennedy plan to be at the Walsenburg Library from 4-6 p.m. to meet with local residents.

Monthly county furlough days to begin Friday

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ing paycheck to paycheck like the county employees are. The budget is set and we should give them time the rest of the year to prepare for the cuts coming up next year. Give them time to get ahead on bills, save up and look at all options," Montoya said.

"It was the hardest thing I've done to cut jobs. I just think the county could have waited so the workers had more time to save up and prepare. I know growing up how hard it was to do without and how every little bit helps."

NOTICE OF ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A PRIMARY ELECTION WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2010.

PURSUANT TO C.R.S. 1-5-205, A PRIMARY ELECTION WILL BE HELD FOR THE FOLLOWING: FEDERAL, STATE AND COUNTY OFFICES

APPLICATIONS FOR MAIL-IN BALLOTS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER. PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU ARE ALREADY ON OUR PERMANENT MAIL-IN LIST, THERE IS NO NEED TO REQUEST A BALLOT AGAIN. YOU MAY VERIFY YOUR PERMANENT MAIL-IN STATUS BY CALLING 719 846 3314.

MONDAY, JULY 12, 2010

LAST DAY TO REGISTER TO VOTE
C.R.S. 1-2-201(3); 1-2-209(2)

MONDAY, AUGUST 2, 2010

EARLY VOTING BEGINS IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER - 200 E. FIRST STREET, ROOM #205
C.R.S. 1-8-202; 1-1-106(4)

TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2010

LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR A MAIL-IN BALLOT IF THE BALLOT IS TO BE MAILED
C.R.S. 1-8-104(3)

FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 2010

LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR A MAIL-IN BALLOT IF THE BALLOT IS TO BE PICKED UP IN PERSON
C.R.S. 1-8-104(3)

FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 2010

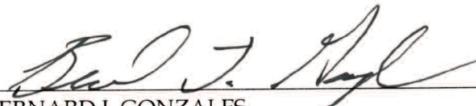
LAST DAY FOR EARLY VOTING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10, 2010
ELECTION DAY

POLLS WILL BE OPEN FROM 7:00 AM UNTIL 7:00 PM

ALL MAIL-IN BALLOTS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE OFFICE OF THE LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CLERK, 200 E. FIRST STREET, #205, IN TRINIDAD, BY 7:00 PM ON ELECTION DAY. POSTMARKS DO NOT COUNT AS DELIVERY OR RECEIPT.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE ELECTIONS DIVISION OF THE LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER'S OFFICE AT 719 846 3314.


BERNARD J. GONZALES
LAS ANIMAS COUNTY CLERK AND RECORDER

