

## Our Mission

The Department of Correction shall strive to be a global leader in progressive correctional practices and partnered re-entry initiatives to support responsive evidence-based practices aligned to law-abiding and accountable behaviors. Safety and security shall be a priority component of this responsibility as it pertains to staff, victims, citizens and offenders.

## From the Commissioner



After more than 20 years, the much anticipated transfer of the day-to-day medical care of the offender population is once again the responsibility of The Department of Correction employees. I want to take this opportunity to publically welcome the Agency's more than 600 "new" healthcare employees.

I am fully aware that the announcement of the proposed transition of healthcare services from UCONN Health

Correctional Managed Health Care elicited a wide range of emotions from anxiety, to trepidation, to even excitement.

Now that we are approximately one month into this new chapter of correctional healthcare in Connecticut, it is my sincere hope that some of the concerns you may have had, have been alleviated.

Significant changes to the manner in which medical services are provided to the approximately 13,500 offenders will not happen overnight – it will understandably take some time.

see [Welcome Healthcare Staff/page 6](#)

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## Class 269 Graduates

The Graduation Ceremony of Class 269 held July 5, 2018, at Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development in Cheshire featured an old friend of the Department of Correction, Connecticut's Undersecretary for Criminal Justice Reform, Michael Lawlor.

Noting that this would be his last time addressing a Pre-service Graduation Class as Undersecretary, Mr. Lawlor imparted three primary points of wisdom with the graduates. First was that, "this is not your father's Department of Correction," – meaning that the Department has evolved significantly since its inception and will continue to evolve. The second point Undersecretary Lawlor made was that, in part due to the aforementioned evolution, working for the agency was not simply a job, it was their career. He encouraged them to continue to learn and educate themselves on a personal, as well as professional basis.

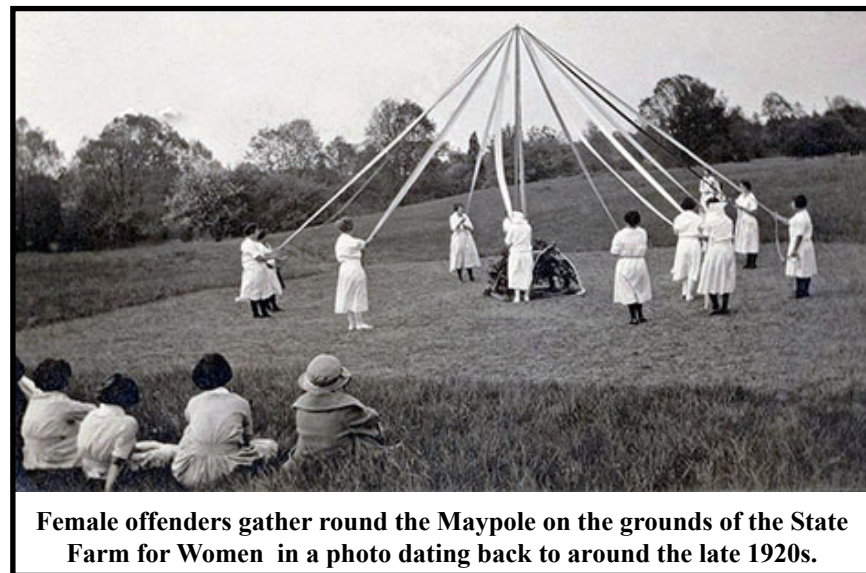
see [Counting on You /page 8](#)

# Connecticut State Farm for Women Opened 100 years ago in Niantic

*The following story first published in The Day Newspaper, written by staff writer Kimberly Drelich, and is reprinted here with permission. For more photos: <https://www.theday.com/local-news/20180715/connecticut-state-farm-for-women-opened-100-years-ago-in-niantic>*

In historical black-and-white photos, women at what is now York Correctional Institution pour milk into glass bottles and tend crops in the field, gather near a horse-drawn carriage and dance around a Maypole. The photos offer a glimpse of what life was like at the Connecticut State Farm for Women in Niantic, which opened 100 years ago and today is the York prison.

The East Lyme Public Library is holding a series of events, including a historical photo exhibit in



Female offenders gather round the Maypole on the grounds of the State Farm for Women in a photo dating back to around the late 1920s.

the lobby of the community center through July, to mark the prison's 100th anniversary this month and present a variety of perspectives on the institution, library Director Lisabeth Timothy said. "100 Years at The Farm" features events, book discussions, a historical talk, and a presentation by the Judy Dworin Performance Project Inc.

"The prison has an incredible history that has really not been looked at, and the history of the town is very tied in with the founding of the prison," Timothy said.

## Founding the State Farm for Women

As part of the library's program, Paul Harrison, a former correctional officer at York and a town resident, will present a talk at 7 p.m. Wednesday evening on the research he has compiled on the history of the women's prison, focusing on its founding in 1918 to when the State Department of Correction took over in 1968.

The institution's founding has its roots in the suffrage movement, Harrison said.

Following several unsuccessful legislative pushes and attempts by groups to start a facility for women in Connecticut, William B. Bailey, a Yale University professor, became the president of the Connecticut Prison Association and worked with a group that included suffragettes and members of the Daughters of the American Revolution to start the endeavor, according to Harrison.

In 1917, the General Assembly approved a law that would start the "institution for the correction of delinquent women," according to the first report by the Board of Directors of the Connecticut State Farm for Women. The law stipulated the site had to be at least 200 acres, have woodland, tillable pasture, a natural water supply and "be located reasonably near a railroad," the report stated. Harrison said the intent was to train the women and help them.

"The key to it was they wanted to make homes for these girls," he said. "They didn't want to warehouse them." Anne Rogers Minor, who grew up in East Lyme and became the president general of the Daughters of the American Revolution, was in charge of site selection, Harrison said. She proposed farms by Bride Lake in her hometown.

# The Women's Farm turns 100 from page 2

"She would feel comfortable enough to walk up, knock on their door and make them an offer, because they were the townspeople," Harrison said. "She knew these people. She lived right down the street."

On July 10, 1918, the Connecticut State Farm opened, with the first inmate arriving on the 13th, according to the initial report from the board of directors.

Women were sent to the institution for a variety of reasons, from alcoholism to having committed crimes that included "Manifest Danger of falling into habits of vice," "lascivious carriage," prostitution, intoxication, delinquency, vagrancy, theft, forgery, neglect of children and impairing the morals of a minor, according to Harrison's manuscript.

Some of the women were going in and out of the court system, he said. A women's hospital later was built on the site, prompted by concerns over venereal disease during World War I, Timothy and Harrison said.

In 1926, Elizabeth Munger, who would serve for 21 years as superintendent, instituted a classification system for the women that would earn the institution renown, they said.

Munger «practiced the study of offenders as individuals, thus accomplishing significant rehabilitation goals, which won her national and international fame,» according to a 1963 article in The Day, when a plaque was installed in her honor.

In the 1930s, women who had been held at the Wethersfield State Prison after committing crimes were sent to the Niantic site, according to the State Department of Correction's website. Prior to moving to Niantic, the women had been in the same state prison as men but in separate quarters, Harrison said. An addition was built and the site was now called the Niantic Correctional Institution, according to the DOC, but people continued to refer to it as the State Farm.

The community had opportunities to visit the site, often called "the Farm." One such event was a fair

held in August 1935 to celebrate Connecticut's tercentenary that drew a crowd of people. In the early evening, cars "were parked on both sides of the state road for half a mile," according to The Day's reports. The fair included a dance floor, a sale of merchandise, wheels of fortune, and displays of livestock and vegetables and some women from the farm, donning colonial attire, were waitresses at the event.

The State Farm became self-sufficient by the early 1940s and started selling milk, butter and cheeses to Seaside, Mystic Oral School and Norwich State Hospital, Harrison said.

"It was a fully functional farm," Timothy said. "They grew all the food they needed to feed the women and the staff there, with more to spare."

Women had long run the institution, though five to six male farmhands worked on the property. In the 1950s and 1960s, "society changed" and women were committing higher-level crimes, and male correctional officers were hired, according to Harrison's research.

## The Women's Farm Timeline

**1917** - General Assembly approves a law to start the institution

**1918** - Connecticut State Farm opens in Niantic

**1926** - Elizabeth Munger becomes superintendent and institutes classification system

**1930s** - Site named Niantic Correctional Institution. Women who had been held at the Wethersfield State Prison sent to the Niantic site

**1968** - Newly formed Department of Correction takes over running the facility.

**1994** - Site expands with the addition of a new high-security facility, named the Janet S. York Correctional Institution after longtime superintendent. Two facilities later combined under the York name.

# In Memoriam Larry Meachum

Former Department of Correction Commissioner Larry Meachum passed away on Friday, July 13, 2018. Commissioner Meachum was born on September 11, 1938 and was a resident of Palmetto, Florida at the time of passing. Meachum was the fourth Commissioner of the Department of Correction, and served in that capacity from 1987 to 1994.

According to a 1993 article in the New York Times, Meachum was a graduate of Piedmont Bible College in Winston-Salem, N.C., and had grown up in rural poverty. Crippled by a calcium deficiency as an infant,



he said he never forgot the people at the local Exchange Club who sponsored him and bought him specially made brace shoes. From them, he said, he learned that you have to give back to society; from his faith, he said he drew the hard moral conclusion that people must bear responsibility for their own actions.

His began his career as a Line Correctional Employee in North Carolina in 1965, Mr. Meachum went on to serve as Commissioner of Corrections in the States of Massachusetts, Oklahoma, and Connecticut. Under his leadership, Oklahoma became the first system in the United States to be fully accredited, one of the Nation's first boot camp programs

was initiated, and the house arrest (home detention) program was created. In Connecticut, the late 1980's and early 1990's saw a massive increase in prison construction of approximately \$1-billion to meet the requirements of the growing offender population. In all 12 new prisons were built with renovations to 13 others, which increased bed capacity by 50%. These projects included the new section of Brooklyn CI 1991, MacDougall-Walker CI 1992-1993, Northern CI 1995, Willard-Cybulski CI 1990-1993, Corrigan-Radgowski CC 1991-1994, Garner CI 1992, Webster CI 1990, and York CI 1994.

As Connecticut's Correction's Commissioner, Meachum was committed to hiring and promoting women -- a policy he said he started during his seven years as Commissioner in Oklahoma.

After his time as Commissioner in Connecticut, he later went on to work for the U.S. Department of Justice as the Director of Corrections Programs for the Office of Justice Programs.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, July 21, at First Baptist Church of Palmetto, Florida. As a sign of respect, representatives from the Department's Honor Guard attended the service.

# Around the Cell Block



**NEW YORK** - New York City may be the first jurisdiction in the country to make telephone calls from its prisons and jails free. The city will not only give up the commission it currently makes on phone calls - it is going a step further and making the phone calls themselves free. This change will save the poorest families in the City of New York more than \$8 million a year.

**TENNESSEE** - Police in Memphis say a man stole his date's car and drove it to a date with another woman. Police say a woman reported her car stolen after Kelton Griffin went to her house to take her on a date. Griffin stopped at a gas station and asked the woman to get him some cigars. While she was gone, he drove off . That same evening, another woman contacted the victim and told her that Griffin had taken her on a date.

***Total  
Supervised  
Population  
on  
July 31, 2018  
18,170  
On July 31, 2017  
the population was  
18,800***

## Showing Gratitude

On May 5, 1984, President Ronald Reagan signed Proclamation 5187 creating “National Correctional Officers Week”. Since then the first full week in May has been marked to recognize and to honor the work of Correctional



Officers and Correctional Personnel nationwide. The same week acknowledges the contributions of both nurses and teachers as well.

The facility administrators throughout the agency took the

opportunity to acknowledge their hardworking staffs in a variety of ways including cooking breakfast, organizing cookouts, or having facility awards ceremonies for their staff members across all three work shifts.



L to R: Deputy Warden Gerald Wood, Warden Allison Black and Correction Officer Scott Cheezie enjoying the Hartford CC cookout.

## Cheshire Cup Recap



The 14th Annual Cheshire Cup was held at the Southington Country Club on May 18. This year there were very generous sponsors like Delta Arsenal, Tactical Police Gear, Bakery on Main, CSP Credit Union, Osprey Fishing Charter, and many others. The event organizers wish to thank everyone who came out to support the charity golf tournament. With the top raffle prize of a donated Walther Pistol, \$2,100 was raised. The proceeds from the raffle were donated to retired Department of Correction Lieutenant Mike Frasier for use towards the purchase of an accessible van. The organizers of the Cheshire Cup donated proceeds from additional raffle items to the Department’s K9 Unit, in memory of Brad Emmelmann, for a down payment on a custom stab vest. Donations were also made to the Cheshire CI and Manson Youth Institution’s QWL Committees; as well as to Connecticut Special Olympics. Thank you to all participants, supporters, and volunteers in making this year’s tournament such a success - we hope to see you again next year.

## Welcome to Healthcare Staff from page 1

I suggest that this transition period is best viewed as a process, rather than an instantaneous event.

The argument can easily be made that today's health care needs are decidedly more complex today, when compared to the last time the agency administered healthcare to offenders more than two decades ago. With the advance of technology, treatment requirements, licensing requirements, and metrics analysis, coupled with the current substance abuse and behavioral health trends that we have experienced, you can get a flavor of some of the challenges we face moving forward.

It is my firm belief that we will have developed a solid foundation, from which further progress can be built upon by year's end.

I ask everyone to exercise patience and to remain optimistic, not just for yourself, but for your coworkers and for those in your care as well.

I also encourage you all to strive to work cohesively. A team approach to comprehensive healthcare supports positive reentry, and perhaps even more importantly has a direct impact of the environment we oversee.

Although every healthcare professional has clearly defined roles and responsibilities, without working together as a team, the medical needs of the offenders may not be met, and the quality of treatment will be affected.

It should go without saying that the physical well-being of the offenders under our care is the concern of everyone working for this agency.

We will succeed as long as we remain mutually supportive and prioritize our efforts to be responsive to those we oversee. Again, welcome to the Department of Correction, and thank you for your commitment and dedication – we are glad to have you as part of the team.



## York CI @ 100 from page 3

In the 1960s, the state stopped the farming operations on the site in an attempt to save money. After the farming ended, the facility instead focused more on educational programs for women, said Janet S. York, the superintendent at the time.

In July 1968, the newly formed Department of Correction took over running the facility, Harrison said. Decades later, in 1994, the site expanded with the addition of a new high-security facility, named the Janet S. York Correctional Institution, in honor of the Superintendent from 1960 to 1975 and Deputy Commissioner for the state Council of Corrections, according to The Day.

The dedication service noted York's time at the prison "was stamped with a growth of services for women and national recognition that had not been seen since the retirement of Elizabeth Munger," author and former history teacher James Littlefield noted in writing about York, his stepmother.

The two facilities were combined under the York name in 1996, according to the DOC.

In 2016, the DOC shuttered a men's unit, the Niantic Annex, that opened at York five years earlier when the J.B. Gates Correctional Institution closed, according to the DOC.

Timothy said that while the women's prison mirrors the history of prisons in the United States as they moved to an era of mass incarceration, she sees the institution coming "full circle" back to its progressive roots, with programs like a recent mentoring program for young women at York.

The library's programs include events that feature the voices of women at York, through a presentation by the Judy Dworin Performance Project and a book discussion of "Couldn't Keep it to Myself: Testimonies from our Imprisoned Sisters," written by Wally Lamb and the women at York, as well as book discussions of "The Farm: Life Inside a Women's Prison," written by Andi Rierden and "The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness," written by Michelle Alexander.

# A Warden's Appeal

*Warden Scott Erfe reflects on his recent trip to the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation's conference*

I recently had the honor of being selected to attend the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation's (CPOF) annual Project 2000 ceremony, held in Houston, Texas, June 14-17. The purpose of the annual ceremony is to honor those staff fallen during the line of duty across the nation, recognize staff that were victims of serious assaults, and also staff who have gone above and beyond in a heroic manner. I would like to share with you my experience, in the hopes of conveying what this organization is about.

During the ceremony that honored fallen staff members, I was taken aback by the amount of individuals who had passed away from heart attacks suffered while performing their duties. There were also many staff members that had been killed by inmates. Although tragic in itself, however, the number of staff members that passed due to heart related conditions as a result of responding to a code and/or subduing an inmate was alarming. While many things in our profession are reactive and not controllable ahead of time, some things, such as our health can be dealt with proactively. We all - myself being at the top of the list - should make a concerted effort to take better care of ourselves and our health. The thought of leaving family and friends behind too soon, when it could be prevented by taking an hour each day to exercise, should be unacceptable.

Another memorable event at the CPOF Memorial Ceremony was a luncheon in which survivors of serious inmate assaults were honored. There were many staff members, men and woman alike, several of whom were stabbed multiple times by their attackers – fortunately, none were from Connecticut. Following the luncheon, I came away feeling thankful to work for and be a part of this agency. I know firsthand, having been around for the riots in the 90's, that we work in a very dangerous environment. Ours is a progressive Agency, with staff safety always a top priority. If you ever get a chance to go to any trainings or conferences with other correctional entities, ask them about how their agencies run, staffing levels, etc. While we as an agency may have our issues - I can assure you we are ahead of the curve.

There were additional events throughout the conference that were specifically geared to the children of fallen officers, and assault survivors; with age appropriate gifts purchased for each child. This is one of CPOF's goals, to ensure the families of fallen staff are not forgotten.

As you may or may not be aware, the CPOF is an organization for us, correctional staff - formed by us, correctional staff. This organization will, and has, donated monies to both their members, and to non- members as well. They were there for the staff members of Texas who lost their houses and cars due to flooding.

CPOF has been there for us in Connecticut as well. Many staff members across the state have received monetary support from the organization when an immediate family member has passed away, become stricken with illness and out of work, and injured in the line of duty. The CPOF has assisted 61 families in our state alone, issuing \$33,800 in support to our staff, members and non-members alike.

We all work hard for our piece of the pie, and many of us donate to various organizations either on our own, or via the state's Charitable Giving Campaign. Perhaps when asked to donate to the Charitable Campaign, you could keep this organization that helps our own, your correctional family, in mind.

For more information about the Correctional Peace Officer's Foundation go to: <http://cpof.org/>



**Warden Scott Erfe (C) with members of the Department of Correction's Honor Guard at the CPOF conference in Houston, Texas.**

# Counting on You

from page 1

The final message that the Undersecretary shared with Class 269 was that, “we are counting on you.” He stressed the importance of their work in not only protecting the public, but also in helping to prepare the offenders for their return to society.



**Commissioner Semple Salutes the Department's newest members.**

Following the Undersecretary's comments, the next order of business was the presentation of awards. The members of Class 269 recognized Lt. Marcin Domitrz of the Cheshire Correctional Institution as the recipient of the Victor E. Harris, Jr. award. The Victor E. Harris, Jr. award, named for a deceased officer whose enthusiastic dedication and commitment to correctional education and training still lives on in the memory of DoC staff.

In addition to the Victor E. Harris Jr. Award, the PRIDE Award recipients were also acknowledged during the ceremony. The PRIDE Award is presented to a trainee from each pre-service group who best represents the Department of Correction's motto of PRIDE by demonstrating the values of: Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dignity, and Excellence. Trainees receiving the PRIDE Award were nominated by their peers with the blessing of their Class Manager. The recipients of the PRIDE award for Class 269 were: Alpha Group, State School Teacher, Jennifer Blake; Bravo Group, Correction Officer Jesse Drinkwine; Charlie Group, Correction Officer Lindsey McDermott; Delta Group, Correctional Counselor Jewell Cody; Echo Group, Correction Officer Humberto Baez-Melendez; Foxtrot Group, Correction Officer James O'Donnell; Golf Group, Correction Officer Richard Filipek.

Shortly afterwards Commissioner Semple swore in the members of Class 269 to officially mark the start of their correctional careers.

A total of 151 correctional trainees graduated after successfully completing the pre-service training program. The composition of the class included 97 Correction Officers, 20 Correctional Counselor Trainees, 8 Correctional Counselors, 3 Correctional Treatment Officers, 1 Substance Abuse Counselor, 8 School Teachers, 4 Vocational Instructors, 3 Instructional Assistants, 2 Pupil Services Specialists, 1 General Maintenance Officer, 1 Steamfitter, 2 Store Supervisors, and 1 Food Service Supervisor.



**Members of Pre-service Class 269 being sworn in during the graduation ceremony on July 5.**



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# Carrying a Torch



**The York CI Torch Run contingent**



**The Bridgeport CC torch bearers**

Once again this year, staff members from several of the agency’s correctional facilities participated in the Law Enforcement Torch Run to benefit Connecticut Special Olympics. This year’s Torch Run took place June 6, 7, and 8th.

The Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Connecticut is one of the movement’s largest fundraisers. This year-round program involves law enforcement officers from across the state who volunteer their time to raise awareness and funds through events they host including Tip-a-Cops, Cop-on-Tops, and Jail N’ Bail fundraisers. In addition, each year in June, over 1,500 officers and athletes carry the Special Olympics torch, with its “Flame of Hope,” through hundreds of cities and towns across the state, covering over 530 miles in three days. Officers run the “Final Leg” and light the ceremonial cauldron during Opening Ceremonies for the Special Olympics Connecticut Summer Games.



**Staff members from the Brooklyn Correctional Institution just prior to their leg of the Torch Run**