



GEORGIA PAROLE REVIEW



Winter/Spring 2012

State Board of Pardons and Paroles



New Board Member James W. Mills and Governor Nathan Deal at Mills' November 14, 2011 swearing-in.

Mills Joins Parole Board

James W. Mills joined the five member State Board of Pardons and Paroles November 14, 2011, filling the vacancy left when Gale Buckner ended her term early to become commissioner of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). It had already been announced by the Deal Administration that Mills of Hall County (Gainesville) would join the Parole Board as a new member in January 2012.

Mills left his seat in the State House of Representatives in order to join the

Board. He served nineteen years and was a member of the Appropriations, Ways and Means, Banks and Banking and Rules committees. He previously served as chairman of the Banks and Banking Committee. Mills represented the 25th district. Mills says he's honored to continue serving Georgia as a member of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. "I accept these responsibilities knowing how important the Board's work is to protecting our citizens. I am excited and I desire to help those that want to be helped and protect us from those that desire to hurt us," stated Mills.

Governor Deal announced in September that Mills would be appointed to the Parole Board. "Rep. Mills has served the people of Georgia in the State House of Representatives for nearly 20 years and has been closely involved in the most difficult and important matters our state faces," Deal said. "The duties of the Pardons and Paroles Board involve equally important and difficult decisions. James Mills is a man of strong faith, who will ably balance our hopes for rehabilitation with our need for community safety. He is a small businessman, husband, father, church volunteer and community leader; he'll bring all these perspectives to his work on this board."

Chairman's Message



Parole Board Chairman
General James E. Donald

2012 is expected to be another banner year for the Georgia Parole Board. How do we know? The effort put forth by staff in 2011, that's how!

On behalf of Board staff and the other members, I want to welcome James Mills. He is already adding to the quality leadership of this agency and we look forward to his contributions and guidance on the day to day issues that this agency faces.

The leadership at our director's level is top notch and as a Board we appreciate your continued support of Michael Nail and his senior management team.

As Board Chairman I speak for your agency leadership when I say, "I know we will all make 2012 are best year!"

Buckner Leaves Board to Run Juvenile Agency

Former Parole Board member Gale Buckner has taken her leadership skills to the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

Buckner was named commissioner of DJJ by Governor Nathan Deal in November, taking the oath of office November 14, 2011, the same day new board member James Mills was sworn in.

Buckner received a rousing send-off by Parole Board staff on November 30th.

The Parole Board presented Gale Buckner with a proclamation that detailed her nearly seven years of Board Service. (l-r) Board Member James Mills, Chairman James Donald, Buckner, Vice Chairman Albert Murray, Board Members Terry Barnard and Robert Keller



(l-r) Parole Field Operations Director Jay Lacienski, GACP Executive Director Frank Rotondo and Parole Executive Director Michael Nail

Parole Director Michael Nail at GACP Conference

Executive Director Michael Nail spoke to the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police February 7, 2012, in Atlanta.

Nail told the state's top police officers that "Parole" is their partner in public safety and that the local parole officers are there to assist them whenever they need to be called on.

Nail explained the agency's website link for law enforcement enables local authorities to see the names and addresses of parolees released and living in their areas.

Parole Joins December Atlanta Metro Operation



Georgia parole officers assist in serving warrants in Atlanta, Georgia, during "Operation Neighborhood Sweep."

The State Board of Pardons and Paroles Metro Region participated in Operation Neighborhood Sweep, December 14-16, 2011. The operation had a two-tier approach; to help reduce criminal activity and to ensure compliance of the parolee population. The area of focus was the City of Atlanta and North and South Fulton County. Parole officers from South Metro, North Fulton, DeKalb, Jonesboro and Marietta participated.

Also participating was the Department of Corrections, the Fulton County Sheriff's Department, the Atlanta Police Department's Fugitive Unit and the U.S. Marshals Service.

Twenty-one parole warrants were attempted resulting in five arrests over the three days. Thirty-eight sex offender compliance checks were also conducted during the operation.

53rd Basic Parole Officer Training Course



Front row (l-r): Vicky Rollins, parole training staff; Parole Officer (PO) Rhonda Daniel; PO Lagina Shanks; PO Heather Williams; PO Violancia Harrell; Chris Washington, Training staff

Back row (l-r): Bert Flewellen, Director of Training, Compliance and Investigations; PO Norris Howard; PO Robin Reese; PO Derek Glasco; PO Thomas Green; PO Brandon Williams; PO Claude Byers

Firearms Awards: 1st - Claude Byers; 2nd - Thomas Green; 3rd - Robin Reese.

Performance Award: Claude Byers

Academic Award: Brandon Williams

Top Student Award: Thomas Green

Leveraging Technology to Improve Public Safety

Video Conferencing

The Parole Board is implementing the use of video conferencing to conduct preliminary probable cause hearings, business and training meetings. The benefit of the web-based video conferencing is reducing travel costs while increasing safety for staff and the general public.

Without video conferencing, preliminary hearing participants travel long distances. Parole violators, some of whom have violent new charges, must be transported in parole vehicles endangering officer and public safety. The current process is also expensive because parole violators have previously remained in crowded county jails awaiting the process, sometimes at state expense. By expediting the probable cause hearing process, final hearings can occur in less time reducing the cost to the state and county.



Field Operations Officers Chris Barnett (left) and Napoleon Robinson (seated) describe the video conferencing process and benefits to Board Member James Mills and Board Vice Chairman Albert Murray.

As a result of video conferencing, the final hearing process is expected to be cut down from 60-plus days to 30 days or less from the time the parolee is arrested and the final hearing is held.

Voice Recognition Supervision



Board Chairman James Donald, Vice Chairman Albert Murray and Executive Director Michael Nail are among parole staff being briefed on AnyTrax.

The Parole Board is piloting a voice recognition monitoring system for high performing parolees.

AnyTrax is a 100% offender funded web-based service system, in which lower risk/lower need offenders are enrolled after performing well while under parole supervision. It is a self reporting program, requiring participants to call AnyTrax at least once a month to verify or update their status (address, place of employment, etc.). The parolee's identity is confirmed through advanced voice recognition software, which has proven over 99% accurate. Some parole officers have seen their caseload reduced by 10 to 20 parolees.

As a result, parole officers will have more time to focus on higher risk parolees to ensure compliance and promote better public safety.

Corrections Partners in Offender Transition and Reentry

Day Reporting Centers



New Board Member James Mills (2nd from left) attends his first Day Reporting Center graduation in his hometown of Gainesville. (l-r) Parole Chief Matthew Ellis, Mills, Board Chairman James Donald, Regional Director David Tibbitts and Parole Reentry Director Anita Cloud

Day Reporting Centers (DRC) and Transition Centers (TC) are Department of Corrections' facilities but they are important components of the offender reentry process in Georgia and therefore important to the State Board of Pardons and Paroles.

Board staff including the Board Members attend DRC graduations. The Department of Corrections now allows parolees who would otherwise have their parole revoked and be returned to prison to go through a DRC program. The DRCs provide substance abuse treatment among their programs.

Transition Centers

The Parole Board routinely requests placement of some offenders in a Department of Corrections Transition Center (TC) as a condition or final step before parole. The Department of Corrections authorizes the placement of an offender in a TC.

The TCs or work release centers, allow offenders to work free world jobs but return to the center following their work hours. Many offenders are placed within their final year before being paroled. The TC gives offenders the opportunity to achieve financial responsibility by paying for room and board and being able to pay fines and restitution.



Board Vice Chairman Albert Murray recently toured the Clayton and Metro Transition Centers. At the Metro TC, Department of Corrections' staff (l-r) are; Assistant Metro TC Superintendent Melvin Hinton, Sgt. Brenda Fowler, Statewide TC Coordinator Jamie Anderson, Vice Chairman Murray, Metro TC Superintendent Alfreta Dunn-Logan and Counselor Carol Calvert.

Lifer Doing Well: A Parole Success Story

“He’s responsible, dependable, and loyal,” says Pastor Edward Grant. Grant is talking about parolee Willie Alexander, who stays and works at Good News at Noon, a community center and shelter operating in Gainesville. Grant is the executive director of the center.

It is not the manner in which you could always describe Alexander. Not when he was serving prison time for murder, armed robbery or for violating his parole. Not the way you describe him when he was paroled in February 2008 and arrived at Good News at Noon and certainly not the way you would describe him when he ran by the name of “Miami” in South Carolina, or another alias, “Taboo” which he picked up in prison.

Alexander’s parole officer, Dale Williams says when he came out on parole, he couldn’t identify with the outside world and the changes that had occurred while he was incarcerated. He had difficulty, but his story is enlightening, she says.

Up until February 2008, Alexander had spent most of his life in prison since his first conviction in 1971 for armed robbery. He got life for the murder he committed in 1980 in Georgia. Yes, he was given chances. Paroled in 1989, more criminal activity, and back in by 1992. Out again, but right back in. Parole revoked, and back serving the life sentence.

Perhaps it is simply maturity, but he will tell you, it is more than that. He says, “I work for the Lord, I serve the Lord.”

Alexander says, “I changed my life. My life consists of serving God. It took me 58 years to get here.”

Good News at Noon distributes food, clothing and many other necessities to the needy in Gainesville and the surrounding community. Its founder is “Mr. B” as he’s affectionately called. Gene Beckstein has helped

Alexander since his arrival at Good News. He has provided the opportunities for Alexander who has taken advantage and is now working at the center as a program manager. Among his responsibilities is managing offenders who come to Good News to complete community service. Their responsibilities include getting together the donations to the shelter and they clean up, mop and do garbage detail.

Alexander utilizes his past experiences and mentors those he manages, those he comes into contact with that are younger, as most everyone is, and who have come in contact with the criminal justice system, as he did at their age.

Alexander freely gives his testimony and tells about himself as he speaks to youth in church group settings, in schools and elsewhere. He has attempted to reach gang members telling them their lives, if pursued, will have repercussions.

He says what he does, makes him stronger and is granted through prayer.



Willie Alexander (center) talks about his role at Good News during a Great Day of Service, part of Governor Elect Deal’s inaugural activities. First Lady Sandra Deal (to his right) listens



Lt. Governor Casey Cagle and his wife, Nita, with Alexander at Good News during the Great Day of Service event.

Parole Success Story continued.....

He says it makes him feel good and it's worthwhile and gives him a measure of redemption. He says, "What I've done (his past) is not in vain."

He says he knows he's done wrong; now he's doing right. How does a 60 plus year old aging criminal relate to today's youth? Alexander answers, "They love to relate to me. They don't see age, they see the truth and I'm straight up with them."

He admits to them doing drugs; "weed and cocaine," he tells me. He admits participating in gangs. He sees the respect the youth have for him and says these youth know they can talk in confidence with him.

Alexander freely admits, when he came to Good News in February 2008, he came without the Lord. He gives "Mr. B" the credit and says he was instrumental in getting him on the right track.

"He showed me love," says Alexander. Alexander credits Mr. B with his success and says Mr. B reintroduced him to love and reminded him to let God show you love and you show others. Alexander says he tells Mr. B, "You can depend on me."

Supervision:

Officer Dale Williams says Alexander is among her top parolees. She says he would say that, "freedom is precious, he's made mistakes and he helps others."

Williams says Alexander meets all conditions and he shares his insights with parolees, students, clubs and church groups. She says he's earned the respect of those at Good News and the community supporters who volunteer and give there.

She emphasizes there have been no problems with his supervision. "He's made a change," she says. She adds, "Others say they've changed, but they don't live it." She says she hasn't seen any example that he's not doing what he says. She says Alexander seems, "earnest and humble."

She views his change (since his parole) as part maturity and change. "He is older and wiser, but also he gives all credit to God," says Williams.

As a parole officer, "It's hard to be a trusting soul, I want to believe him," she adds.

Williams closes her part by saying that, "Alexander is an inspiration. I hope I'm not fooled," and she finishes, that Alexander says, "freedom is precious."

Alexander's future plans:

He has none, but admits he would, as a goal, like to get off of the lifetime parole supervision. He says that would be an accomplishment. He says his only plans are to continue what he's doing; serve the Lord and doing the right thing. Alexander says he's not leaving; he has nothing to run to, no family.

He says he spends too much time helping people for him to get into trouble. He reiterates, "I know right from wrong."

He thinks back to his early age, and his convictions; "I was hotheaded, I was into a negative life." He says he thinks about the life he took, the situation and what he could have done differently. "I think of what I could have done, not killing him, not shooting him."

He admits maturity has a great deal to do with it, "absolutely. Experience in life gives you the knowledge."



First Lady Sandra Deal, Alexander, Pastor Grant with Mr. Beckstein (seated)

Drug Policy Roundtable Discussion

Parole Board Chairman James Donald was asked to take part in a roundtable discussion last November concerning the impact of substance abuse and drug policies on local communities. The event was hosted by National Drug Policy Director, Gil Kerlikowske. Georgia Congressman John Lewis' office put the meeting together at Georgia State University.

Discussion included the need for directing more resources to treatment alternatives for offenders including aftercare and treatment.

Chairman Donald told the group that communities naturally don't embrace offenders returning to communities, and as a result there are many resources and opportunities missed by offenders. He said offenders need to be able to embrace all available opportunities.

Participants ranged from government and law enforcement officials, to clergy and non-profit organizations. The group has met twice since the November meeting.



Parole Board Chairman James Donald and George Braucht, Program Specialist, attend the roundtable discussion in November.

Addiction Recovery Awareness Day 2012

The Parole Board again fully supported Addiction Recovery Awareness Day January 9, 2012, an annual event organized by prevention, treatment and recovery service providers including the Georgia Council on Substance Abuse.



Chairman James Donald addresses addiction recovery supporters at the State Capitol.

Among those speaking to the hundreds of supporters was Governor Nathan Deal, Parole Board Chairman James Donald and Department of Corrections Commissioner Brian Owens.

The event included people in recovery, their families, friends and allies as well as providers.



Marta Daniell, Transitional Support Services, and Chairman James Donald

Employee Career Development Program Underway



The Georgia Parole Board is interested in preparing its employees for advancement.

In January 2012, Atlanta Metropolitan College (AMC) began offering courses in the Floyd Veterans Memorial Building, bringing the opportunity for post-secondary degrees to the employees working in the government office building. AMC is working with the Parole Board and State Personnel to make earning an associate and undergraduate degree easier for interested employees. Mercer University is also a partner but currently is not offering classes in the building.

The first class of students held their first class February 6, 2012. Five Parole employees are in the first class being offered.

Interested employees may contact the Parole Board's Human Resources office for more information. The next semester class will start in June.

Top photo: employees learn more at the lunch-n-learn kickoff event

Photos left: class sign up is held with AMC staff assisting with applications and financial aid information



Bottom left: Parole HR Director Jesse Johnson and AMC's Dr. Mark Cunningham

Bottom: Mercer University's Dr. Stephen Ruegger and Cindy Baumgardner with Jesse Johnson at a December informational session.



Parole Association of Georgia

The Parole Association of Georgia (PAOG) is the professional organization representing the staff of the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. Membership is currently 243 strong. Last August the PAOG was invited to join the Georgia Probation Association at its 54th Annual Summer Conference held at Jekyll Island, Georgia, August 17 - 19, 2011. Plans are underway for the PAOG to again join their Department of Corrections counterparts at the Spring Conference this March. PAOG (past) President Geoff Rohrs says by joining Probation's conference it allows staff training and professional development opportunities that due to the economy, "we haven't been able to provide our members, these last few years."

Rohrs says there are common areas in community supervision whether the offenders are on probation or parole, and attending the conference is very helpful.

"Attending the conference allows us to continue existing professional relationships and start new ones. Often a conversation with one of our counterparts in probation will result in our staff being able to add to our professional experience and I believe they benefit just as much," says Rohrs.

Michael Nail, Executive Director of Parole, began his career with state probation under the Department of Corrections.

"Perfecting what we do is the goal, but even if unrealistic, each organization can learn from the other, resulting in better community supervision and improved public safety."

"This is just another excellent example of our two agencies, although separate, working together to improve our operations," added Stan Cooper, Director of State Probation for the Department of Corrections.

Cooper and Nail both addressed the group as did Judge Michael Boggs, former Superior Court Judge for the six-county Waycross Judicial Circuit. Boggs, who Governor Nathan Deal recently appointed to the Court of Appeals, is also serving on the State's Criminal Justice Reform Council.



Parole Association of Georgia attends the Georgia Probation Association's 54th Annual Summer Conference. PAOG Executive Board (front row): Ronnie Mays, Kitty Ulmer-Schultz, Natalie Sellers, Amanda Cannady and Terry Ricker; (back row): Shane Sasser, past PAOG President Geoff Rohrs, Traci Watson and Larry Morgan.



Parole's Executive Director Michael Nail, Superior Court Judge Michael Boggs, Board Member Terry Barnard and State Probation Director Stan Cooper at the Probation Conference in Jekyll Island.

Parole Association of Georgia



Parole Board Chairman James Donald presents Brandon Bell with the PAOG's Parole Officer of the Year Award. Bell is the Assistant Chief at the Dalton Parole Office.

The Parole Association of Georgia (PAOG) held its annual awards December 2, 2011, in Forsyth.

The following were recognized:

Distinguished Service Award (Non Post Certified): Kim Hopps of Central Office

Distinguished Service Award (Post Certified): Brannon Turner, Griffin Parole Office and Katie Turner, South Metro Parole Office

Innovations Award: Field Operations Officer Chris Barnett, Central Office and Clemency Hearing Examiner Tabetha Rand, Central Office

Central Office Employee of the Year: Marta Daniell

Metro Region Employee of the Year: Gerard Armorer, South Metro Parole Office

Northeast Region Employee of the Year: Bob Crosby, Athens Parole Office

Northwest Region Employee of the Year: Chad Scroggins, Rome Parole Office

Southeast Region Employee of the Year: Jaron Guess,

Waycross Parole Office

Southwest Region Employee of the Year: Mark Smith, Cairo Parole Office

Parole Officer of the Year: Brandon Bell, Dalton Parole Office

Presidents Award: Brandon Sellers, Alma Police Chief



Parole Board Chairman James Donald, Board Member Robert Keller, Board Member James Mills and Vice Chairman Albert Murray, as well as, Judge Jason Deal, pose with the recipients of 2011 Parole Association of Georgia awards. Judge Deal delivered keynote remarks at the PAOG ceremony.



Board Member Robert Keller with recipients Tabetha Rand and Chris Barnett

Employees Honored at Agency's Quarterly Recognition Ceremony



Parole Board staff received deserved honors at the agency's quarterly recognition service in November.

The Board recognized staff from the Field Operations Division, Clemency Division and Central Office.

Each employee recognized received a certificate naming them "Employee of the Quarter."



Lisa Markley (center top photo) is recognized from the Field Operations Division; Senior Parole Officer Andrew Jerram, Marietta Office (center 2nd photo on left); Daphane Evans-Huff, Budget Services (above right photo); Parole Investigator Cissy Bauders, Lawrenceville Parole Office and Kitty Ulmer-Shultz, Medical Reprieve Coordinator, Clemency (3rd photo on left); and Senior Parole Officer Tammy Evans, Thomson Parole Office (bottom photo) Not shown, Latisha Wilkins, Clemency Division.

Parole's Toys for Tots and Canned Food Drive 2011

Santa's identity is unknown, well of course, he's just SANTA! At least the younger staff believed so.

As part of the holiday charitable drives, parole staff used their lunch hour to go caroling around the office. The talent was lacking but the hard working parole staff enjoyed the effort.



From left, Budget Director Beth Oxford, Victim Services Director Shalandra Robertson, Field Operations Director Jay Lacienski, Confidential Assistant Bea Blankenship, Director of Operations Support Scott Maurer, Santa, Director of Investigations Barb Stayton, Field Operations Officer Chris Glover, HR Director Jesse Jonson, Assistant IT Director Tony Mazza, Reentry Director Anita Cloud, Assistant Clemency Director Thurman Henderson and Legislative Liaison Rita Rocker. In front: Lauren Glover (Chris's elf (daughter) and Tyler Pace, Julia Richard's Granddaughter)



Pick out the Board Members. There are four of the five in this photo including Parole's Executive Director (chimney hat)

(l-r) Back row: HR's Sherry Givens, Victim Services' Destiny Brown, Clemency's Eydie Callan, Vice Chairman Albert Murray, Confidential Assistant Teresa Lee, Board Chairman James Donald, Board Member James Mills, Confidential Assistants Mattie Robinson and Susan Ruthven. Front Row: Board Member Robert Keller, Reentry Director Anita Cloud, Confidential Assistant Carolyn Brown, Investigations Director Barb Stayton and Santa! Oops, I mean Director Michael Nail.

Parole's Toys for Tots and Charitable Food Drive was again very successful as hundreds of toys were delivered through the U.S. Marine Corp's Toys for Tots program.

The canned food drive resulted in 208 pounds of non-perishable food items being collected. The food was delivered December 4, 2011, to the Atlanta Community Food Bank (ACFB).

Over 700 nonprofit community based partners in 38 countries receive food items from ACFB.

In their thank you letter to the Parole Board, ACFB says, "Your contribution of 208 pounds will help make a difference in someone's life."

THANKS EVERYBODY!!

State Board of Pardons and Paroles

Our Mission

To serve the citizens of Georgia as an integral component of the Criminal Justice System by making informed release considerations and protecting the public through effective offender supervision.

Our Vision

To be the most efficient and effective paroling agency in the nation.

Our Core Values

We value Ethics, Integrity, Fairness and Honesty.

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PAROLE PROMOTIONS

Central Office and Support Services promotions:

Bert Flewellen promoted to Director of Training, Investigations and Compliance

Joje Wilson-Gibbs appointed to Statewide Investigations Manager, Clemency

Lori Massengale promoted to In-Service Training Coordinator, Training

Lisa Lance appointed to Director of Training

Elizabeth Langford promoted to Social Services Program Manager, Victim Services

Chris Kimner promoted to Field Operations Officer, Field Operations

Scott Maurer promoted to Director of Operations Support, Central Office

Phil Sellers appointed to Director of Information Technology

Jan Moss, promoted to Pardon Coordinator, Clemency

Debbie Timms, promoted to Assistant Division Director, Clemency

James (Bubba) Williams promoted to Northeast Regional Director

Master Chief Parole Officer promotions:

Richard Manes, Savannah Office

Felicia Holloway, South Metro Office

Benjamin Gadson, DeKalb Office

Derek Singleton, Augusta Office

Chief Parole Officer promotions:

Michael Bobo, Jesup Office

Paula O'Neal, Statesboro Office

Napoleon Robinson, North Fulton Office

Matthew Ellis, Gainesville Office

Assistant Chief Parole Officer promotions:

Phillip Richardson, Monroe Office

Brandon Bell, Dalton Office

Patrick Freightman, Savannah Office

Terry Proctor, Lyons Office

Laura Fountain, Valdosta Office

Senior Parole Officer promotions:

Stephanie Edge, Wayne Palmer, Michael Austin, Robert Britt, Shekevia Thomas, JoAnn Sanchez-Cotto, Krystle Hunter, Gerard Armorer, Ransom McArthur, Blair Carson

Specialized Parole Officer promotions:

Victoria Carter, Joseph Black, Casey Lutz, Jason Hall, Mandy Malinofsky, Joseph Obermeyer, Michelle Jordan-Vidal, Amanda Cannady, Linda Irvin, April Adams, Gayla Howard, Andrew Jerram, Nina Burgess, Karen Still, Katherine Turner, Shane Sasser, David McBrayer, John Aziz, Courtney Kendrick, Amy Reynolds, Shekevia Hawkins