

# Gila County Sheriff's Sentinel

*The United States of America: "One Nation Under God"*

John R. Armer, Sheriff    Issue 32 – December 2005    Lu DuBois, Editor

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**

*(Editor's note: When I decided to undertake this project of dedicating an issue to the Gila County Jail and all the people who make it run smoothly, I had no idea what I was getting into. There are so many entities within those walls it quickly became clear that one issue would not be enough. I would like to thank all the folks who allowed me into their little corner of the jail world and for letting me ask questions and follow them around. And a special thanks goes to Major Jim Eskew for his support and encouragement during this project. I hope all the Sentinel readers will gain some insight into how our detention system is operated. It was really quite a fascinating experience. This is for the unsung hero's of the justice system. All those who take charge of and manage the inmates once they have been arrested. Those folks you very seldom hear about. I'm thrilled with the opportunity to share it with you.)*

## Dedicated to Detention

Jail Commander, Major Jim Eskew has an awesome responsibility when it comes to housing and managing the Gila County jail inmate population. He oversees all detention facilities in Globe as well as Payson and he's responsible for insuring there are adequate staffing, supervision and training for the officers who perform the day-to-day operations. He is the final authority on anything that happens within the walls of the detention center.

Jim works closely with the Sheriff, other jail commanders and all area law enforcement, including their command staff (mostly DPS, Forest LEO's, AZ Game and Fish enforcement and local police departments). He meets periodically with judges to keep up on any changes in the judicial system. He also meets regularly with the County Attorney and probation officers to review

any high profile cases, as part of the detention services include making sure there is adequate court room security in place. Jim also periodically interacts with other community and governmental leaders as well as various support services.



Major Jim Eskew and Lt. Gloria Stuhmer confer on paperwork.

The Major recently met with other jail commanders from around the state. They presented the Sheriff's Association with a copy of a proposal for all Arizona jails to adopt a set of standards so that all jails would operate with a standardized set of policies and procedures. These standards are aimed at improving the overall operations and management as well as enhancing and reinforcing staff professionalism. Each standard is based on legal, constitutional and statutory requirements. They are, however, not a substitute for professional judgment or common sense and they are not to be used for establishing legal authority. These standards will also help keep the County Sheriff better informed on how the jail systems are run.

Before being elevated to Major, Jim was the jail Captain. That position was similar in responsibility, but with less liability attached; however there was just as much of a workload. Jim has worked for six different jail commanders and has seen the gamut run from bad to excellent. He has been with Gila County for nine years with five of those in the Payson Jail. He currently relies on two Lt's to make sure all operational schedules are adhered to. " I work hard at what I do. And I feel like I'm making progress. I work 8 to 10 hours everyday."

In his previous life, Jim was with United Artist in the Bay area, but decided to 'semi-retire' and move to Payson, where he thought first about going into law enforcement (since he's had considerable training in that area dating to June of 1961) with the goal of eventually joining the FBI. The only position open with Gila County in 1992 was in the Payson Jail; and the rest, as they say, is history. He did have other opportunities to get post certified, but chose to stay in custody and detention.

The detention system in the United States has to offer anyone over 18 the opportunity to get a GED. That is state and federally mandated. So, Jim has to arrange for and supply the instructors. He works through the County School Superintendent to get the programs and curriculum set up. Gila County recently received a \$7500 grant to purchase new computers for the jail-learning center. "Up until the last few years we as jail managers managed operations and developed policy and procedures, we were not educators. But, we learned there were state monies set aside and available to develop these areas. So now we are accessing them to develop inmate educational opportunities. Laws are continually changing in this area and we have to keep up with them."

Another task the Major has to address is keeping the facility safe, secure and clean for the inmates. "We have to make sure we can pass inspections from the U. S. Marshal's Office and the Justice System as well as the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP's), if the jail is housing, or may be housing, federal inmates."

When Gila County first started keeping track of bookings, the average was approximately 1800 a year. Now it's over 5000. The detention system has mushroomed. About one out of every 10 arrests gets booked. Unfortunately, the Gila County jail facility, along with most others across the country, has not increased in size to keep up with the inmate population. While Gila County has 152 beds available, the jail has housed as many as 200 on occasion. Housing is now and will continue to be a challenge. The biggest problem facing all detention facilities (especially jails) today is the excessive number of females being incarcerated. Most county facilities were not built to house a large female population, but currently women make up 20% to 25% of the total. Gila County has two small pods that are used for the women and they are usually

full. Most female arrests these days are based on drug or alcohol abuse and the various related crimes that escalate from that problem.

Jim has to make sure the jail provides a place for inmates to meet with family, attorneys and religious leaders from the community. He has to be aware of and concerned with any and all liability issues that affect the Sheriff, staff and inmates. That is one of the many reasons Jim likes to see procedures and operations performed correctly. He is a strong advocate for staff training. He also instills a strong belief in professionalism, honesty and integrity in his staff and feels these characteristics are essential on the job. (He references Sheriff Armer as epitomizing these traits.) "If I see someone not fulfilling these values or making silly mistakes, it bothers me a great deal." Part of his philosophy is to keep 'staying the course' and keep everyone focused on the values and professional attitude this job requires. "That's what keeps me coming into the office everyday." Jim is pleased that he's had a part in changing attitudes and seeing a rise in the moral of his current staff. "My goal is to maintain a 'happy atmosphere' in a tough job setting. It's not necessarily a pleasant job, but it's important to make the environment as pleasant as possible. I feel we are making progress on that issue."

Unfortunately there is constant turnover in staff due to the stressful working conditions. It's rare for new employees to last thru probation. Out of 14 recent applicants, only four came through the testing and background checks. The county doesn't have a very large potential employee pool to pull from. And too many of those who do apply aren't familiar with what detention really entails. Once an officer does make it through though, they usually stick around for a while or go into other areas of the justice system. Sgt. Linda Hedges (transport coordinator) has been around Gila County the longest with 10 years in Globe. Sgt. 'Swede' Carlson has the most time in Payson with six years.

In order to keep his staff current on changes in policies, procedures, or the system in general, Jim schedules in-house training once a month. The topic may cover how to deal with a difficult inmate or proper techniques in restraint (cuffs) application.

If anyone is interested in applying for a detention position, Jim feels it would be a good career choice. He's not sure he could have made that

recommendation a few years ago, but with new technology and competitive salaries, he feels it could be a good move for the right person. "The jail always needs good officers and supervisors." When he entered the field several years ago, he started as a regular-line detention officer and has advanced through the ranks. Promotion and advancement potential is certainly available. "If I can do it, anyone can. At this point I would match up any of my supervisors with any jail in the state." Over the last few months those who have made the hiring list are excellent candidates and Jim feels they will make great supervisors in the future.

### Do Not Pass Go.....

The day-to-day operations of the Gila County Jail are supervised by Lt.'s Gloria Stuhmer and Vi Johnson under the direction of Jail Commander, Major Jim Eskew. Their main responsibility is to be the 'parent' as they supervise all activities within the jail to keep it running smoothly and appropriately.

If all goes well it's a good day. However, if something goes wrong it's the Lt.'s job to find out what it is, get it corrected and make sure it doesn't happen again. The position requires lots of patience, compassion, empathy and understanding. The Lt. on duty keeps the Major informed on all that happens. There is constant activity.

If someone does do a procedure wrong its usually from lack of knowledge, so the Lt. figures out what is needed and trains the Detention Officer on correct form. "We're human (and subject to error) we have to work with each individual." Officers are constantly trained to make sure each one knows what to do and how to do it right. The Lt. also is the one who takes the blame if something does go wrong.

She (both) spends a lot of time putting out fires, there's tons of paperwork and an almost constantly ringing phone.



Lt. Vi Johnson is constantly on her phone answering questions and putting out fires.

It is the Lt.'s job to remain calm to keep her staff calm. It can get very hectic and chaotic in a hurry. Everyone is spread thin right now. Control could use two people on duty at all times, but currently there is only one; however the county is working on that problem. Court Officers and Transportation Officers are the most at risk and vulnerable. One person, sometimes two, has responsibility for several inmates at one time. "The officers are all good people and they work very hard. They are a pleasure to work with."

The Lt.'s oversee administration of all paperwork. So naturally another major influence on daily life at the jail involves interpretation of court papers. "It isn't always easy to decipher what the justice system actually wants us to do. Sometimes the instructions aren't as explicit as they could be."

One accomplishment Lt. Vi Johnson is proud of is the GED completion rate. "There are more GED's earned in Gila County than any other county in the state."

Though there have been no bad officer incidents in the jail since she started working eight years ago, there was one incident with a male inmate she won't soon forget. One of the inmates in South tank, who was usually very docile all of a sudden, became violent with a staff member. He didn't hurt anyone, including the officer, but something had happened that caused a total change in personality.

Sometimes inmates are here for a long period of time before being sentenced. It's sad to see this happen. That's why jails are meant for a year or less. Inmates actually have more freedom in DOC than they do in a jail situation. Those residing in DOC are already sentenced while 75% to 80% of the jail's population is 'accused' and awaiting trial, court action and/or sentencing. That atmosphere is more stressful and more restrictive on movement. Inmates who are not sentenced have different rights than those who have been. Once they are actually sentenced the jail has more control and power over their actions and behavior. Only inmates

who have been convicted and sentenced to one year or less can be classified as a 'trusty' or working inmate. Because of the issues detention Officer's have to deal with, they tend to have a very high rate of depression. They also have to deal with lawyer, family and religious visits.

One of the most rewarding experiences Lt. Johnson has had was with a female inmate. The woman was in really bad shape, barely acting human. She'd just had a baby and didn't care about anything. She had a lot of medical problems, was snotty and hateful to everyone around her. "But I watched her turn her life around." The inmate attributed her 'new' life to the care and concern shown to her by the detention Officers. They made her feel human again. She's now married, got all her kids back and hasn't been back in jail for over three years. "We made a difference in her life. That's the type of outcome that makes it all worthwhile."

**Booking:** This area is responsible for assessing people when they are brought into the jail. This is the roughest part of a detention Officer's job - and the most volatile. Those under arrest are most often drunk, angry, possibly high on drugs; essentially they are not happy campers. Deputies/Officers bring in people and then turn over custody to the DO's at that point the arresting officer relinquishes control and is out of the picture.

A routine day is busy enough, then, all of a sudden it is wall-to-wall people on the bench across from booking. Transports come in and officers who've made arrests all seem to come at the same time. "I sit here in the Lt.'s office and watch it happen. It gets crazy around 2:30 to 3:00 nearly everyday."

This same area takes care of all the fingerprints for county jobs and other jobs that require a background check. Sometimes in the middle of all this chaos someone will call to get a subject fingerprinted ASAP. "It tends to all happen at once. Piles of property start appearing." Monday's are the worst as about half of the jail population goes to court. In addition, Medical has to have their patients ready to see the Dr. It's constant motion.

**Control:** Is responsible for opening and closing all doors, cells and gates in the SO compound. This person 'controls' all movement within the jail.. who leaves, who comes in, who visits. They also pass messages back and forth between floor officers and other areas. Only one door is allowed to be open at a time. The control person keeps an eye on several monitors at the same time and can see into the kitchen,

hallways, parking lots and entry gates. Control also watches what all goes on in the cell pods and keeps track of how many each pod houses. If he/she observes questionable activity, he/she reports it to the floor officers at once. Control's primary concern is officer safety in the pods.

Control monitors the visitation schedule. A visitor must have a photo ID and must sign in. A copy of the visitation log is put in the inmate file as each inmate is allowed only three visitors per week.

In addition Control is responsible for keeping the inmate board up-to-date for each shift. They are given photos by Booking and the board is updated regularly as new inmates come in and others are released or returned to their 'home' facility. Control keeps a timer and reminds floor officers when they need to do a 'walk-around' for each pod, which is done every so many minutes. Inmate count is verified at least three times per shift. West and South pods can hold as many as 42 prisoners.

Whoever is in Control has to be very careful each time they open a door. They also control all the phones and TV's used by the inmates. Television is often used as an attitude-subduing device. It helps keep them from getting bored and into mischief.

It is Control's responsibility to know where all inmates as well as floor officers are at any given time. It is an awesome responsibility and is currently being handled by one person per shift. The person in Control has to be able to multitask every second as officers, deputies, other staff and the public demand attention, sometimes all at once.

**Commissary:** *Officer Linda Carnahan is in charge of anything that deals with inmates and money. Through a software system called 'Cobra Banker' she is able to order necessary hygiene and optional food items for those incarcerated in the Gila County jail. The orders are filled via Internet once a week so the inmates can have things such as candy, chips, cookies, soups as well as toiletry and personal care items.*



**Commissary officer Linda Carnahan holds up the order sheet used by inmates.**

Linda monitors each inmate account to insure there is money available for medical bills and commissary items. Since there is no room in the jail to stockpile these things, she is usually able to order them as requested. Inmates are given order sheets to fill out weekly. Some of the items available on the commissary list include: AM-FM radio costs \$22.20; thermal under ware (for those who work outside or tend to get cold easily) tops are \$7.92 while bottoms are \$8.28; a small toothbrush is .23 and a safety (golf) pencil is .40; candy bars are .88 and a 4oz bag of coffee is \$6.34. There are three pages of commissary items inmates can order as long as they have the funds to pay.

She also makes sure booking Officers correctly, and accurately, handle opening and closing of accounts when an inmate arrives or leaves. Linda has held this position for four years. She balances three drawers each day, one for Globe, one for Payson and one for the jail. As with other positions in the jail, this one has a huge amount of responsibility attached to it.

Linda is in charge of work release funds. An inmate has to pay for the privilege of being on work release, which is \$59.50 per week. They all have to pay with time or money. There is no free ride. If an inmate is being housed in Gila County for another agency, the cost is \$54.63 per night. If an inmate is sentenced from another county, but wants to be housed in Gila for whatever reason, they are also required to pay \$53.63 per night. Those sentenced from Gila County courts do not pay any additional fee (unless they are on work release). As well as the duties mentioned, Linda keeps track of any bonds an inmate might have, this includes making sure the bonding agency is currently certified by the state.

Linda Carnahan and Sgt. Linda Hedges share an office inside the 'Control' area. They help each other when one or the other is not working. Along with all the other duties commissary entails, Linda is the notary for the jail and the Sheriff's Office.

**Kitchen:** The Gila County Jail kitchen is managed by Hazel Young and her very competent and capable staff. Hazel actually works for ARA, a food service provider, who also handles a variety of agencies and institutions. Because the population fluctuates daily (actually from meal to meal) the staff has to be prepared for anything. Meals are scheduled on a 4-week rotating menu. Once lunch is served, the staff begins getting ready for the next days meals. The jail kitchen also prepares meals for the juvenile D-Home and frozen dinners for the Payson facility. They can handle special diets for diabetics as well as those who require extra helpings as requested by Medical. D-Home residents get a little extra because of their ages. The kitchen generally prepares 15% over what the latest head count is. Anything left over is made into "TV" like dinners and frozen to be shipped to Payson for use later. Payson picks them up and will warm them in a microwave to be served to their inmates. They will also get a 'cold' tray with bread, fruits and vegetables.

**Everything** is kept under lock and key.



Male inmates prepare trays for the pods.



Female inmates prepare trays to be frozen for the Payson jail.

Trustees help prepare and serve the meals. Sometimes females are used and sometimes males, but never together. Hazel likes to have at least five inmates help, any less and it takes longer to get the meal trays out to the pods. Females come in to help with the baking and cooking. Males usually fill the trays and clean up the kitchen.

Each meal has a sample plate, called a "dead man", prepared. It is time stamped and dated then kept for three days. If an inmate gets sick and food is suspected the sample tray is sent to the lab for examination and investigation. All inmates who work in the kitchen have to read and sign a

food safety and sanitation manual as well as a document on how to properly wash their hands. (Not exactly like how it's portrayed on television.)

It takes an average of three hours to prepare a meal depending on what's being served. It usually takes about 20 minutes to get trays ready. If an inmate is 'outside' working and doesn't make it back in time for a hot meal he will get a sack lunch because trays can be held for only 20 minutes. Sack lunches are also put together by inmates and are usually kept ahead in case someone is booked in and hasn't had an opportunity to eat. No one goes hungry and Gila County does not serve green bologna.

The kitchen opens every morning at 0400 hours and breakfast is served around 0515, lunch around 1030 and dinner at 1530. By 1800 the kitchen should be cleaned and ready for the next days activity. This year's Thanksgiving menu will include: Breakfast - homemade cinnamon rolls, sausage patties, hash browns, and cereal. Dinner - turkey, mashed potatoes & gravy, cranberry sauce, vegetable, homemade rolls and pumpkin pie.



Nina is conferring with Hazel via phone about next day's meals.

The inmates in Gila County are fed very well. Those who've been housed in other counties will tell you Gila has the best food. The refrigerator, freezer and pantry are well stocked.

*(Editor's note: Nina tells me that Hazel is terrific to work for and I for one don't doubt that a bit. She does a lot of cooking from scratch and puts in a lot of extra time and effort for the jail as well as the entire Sheriff's Office. "There's not a day goes by I'm not happy to be here and work for Hazel." A special thanks goes to Nina for showing me around the kitchen and explaining how the meal system works and to Hazel for allowing this view into her world. The SO is fortunate to have both of you on staff.)*

**Laundry:** It's not too surprising, but this area also comes under the kitchen's umbrella. Lanis Baker is the laundress and is in charge of washing inmate uniforms (solid orange jump suits for most and orange and white stripes for the working inmates), towels, sheets and blankets. She also does repair work on the uniforms. Inmates do not work in the laundry room. There is a large commercial washer and dryer, and a small one for smaller loads. She also has a sewing machine and worktable in her busy little nook.



The laundry is a continuously busy part of the jail.

**Medical:** Kathy Tavares is an RN and in charge of the medical portion of the jail, she is assisted by: Carrie Tavares, Terri Childers and Noreen Prater. These four are responsible for addressing all medical problems for any inmate in the facility. They do inmate physicals as well as all pre-hire physicals on Gila County SO jail employees. They distribute prescribed medications to the inmates and are on call 24/7, 365 days a year. The jail medical office is open every day and even though they usually leave around 1800 they could be called back at any time.

Medical clinic is held 4 times a week – twice with Dr. Ruesh and twice with Physicians Assistant Certified, Richard Hobson. The medical staff assists with evaluations and diagnosis, and are responsible for keeping all charts up to date and to state codes and standards. They do any necessary blood draws for inmates as well as any requested by Gila County SO, DPS, and area PD's for DUI determination. They provide hepatitis B vaccinations to all employees and try to hold a health clinic every year where they check blood pressure, blood sugar, administer TB tests and take temps.



RN Kathy Tavares and MA Terri Childers look over an inmate's medical chart.

If an inmate is incarcerated for over 5 days he/she gets a TB test and if they are there for over 10, they get a complete physical. Medical does all the scheduling for doctor's appointments and passes out information on health related issues.

The staff is also responsible for the Payson facility and the D-Home, any injuries that take place in the jail, and monitoring of pregnant female inmates. They schedule OB appointments if that inmate is in longer than a couple of weeks.

As far as Kathy knows that has always been some sort of medical services available in the jail facility. Approximately 50% of the jail population takes some type of medication depending on who is in and the number of inmates being housed. Occasionally they have a serious incident, but in general, the medical staff is passing medications the inmates are already taking. Once in a while an inmate will catch a cold or get the flu.

While Medical provides services similar to a 'clinic', it is not on demand like in a hospital. They are responsible for ordering all necessary medicines and medical supplies while keeping their department within budget.

They schedule all outside medical appointments and monitor any diabetic inmates to insure they are getting a proper diet and taking their insulin pills or shots. Medical usually administers the shots, but at the least makes sure the inmate is getting the correct dosage.

If an inmate is 'restrained', Medical does an assessment every two hours. Once in a while they have to administer a sedative to calm the person in custody. Each inmate is treated individually. They can't 'assume' anything and situations change on a daily

basis. Whoever is on call could be called back two to three times a night. "It goes with the territory."

**Promotions:** Several long-time deserved promotions recently occurred in Jail staff. Congratulations to Sgt. **Christine Duarte** (Globe), Sgt. **William "Swede" Carlson** (Payson), Corporal **Blair River** (Payson), Corporal **Erich Kenney** (Globe) and Corporal **Lee Alexander** (Globe).

Next month's issue will feature jail transport, court and the Payson jail system.

## Features:

December Birthday's –

7 <sup>th</sup> - Bianca DalMolin	25 <sup>th</sup> – Jennifer Stout
12 <sup>th</sup> - Jared Arney	26 <sup>th</sup> – Yvette Cons
17 <sup>th</sup> - Lisa Hicks	27 <sup>th</sup> – Keith Johnson
Leonard "Ski" Kerszykowski	29 <sup>th</sup> – Vi Johnson
18 <sup>th</sup> - Kathy Tavares	30 <sup>th</sup> – Glen Links
21 <sup>st</sup> – Darrel Davalos	Dan Evans
Anna Cruz	

## Recipe of the Month

Rum Cake courtesy of Deputy Craig and Diana Jones (Thank You)

### Ingredients:

1c. chopped walnuts (or sliced almonds)  
1 package yellow cake mix  
½ c. dark rum (Diana uses Captain Morgan's Spiced Dark Rum)  
4 eggs  
½ c. water  
1 (3.4 oz) package instant vanilla pudding mix (or French vanilla is good, too.)  
½ c. oil

### Glaze:

¼ c. butter  
¾ c. white sugar  
¼ c. water  
½ c. dark rum (Diana likes to use a little more.)

## **Directions:**

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Grease and flour one 12 oz Bundt cake pan. Sprinkle nuts over the bottom of the pan.

Mix together cake mix, ½ c. dark rum, eggs, ½ c. water, cooking oil and instant pudding. Pour batter over nuts.

Bake at 325 for one hour or less. Cool, invert on a serving plate and prick the top of the cake for glaze to penetrate.

Make glaze. Melt butter in a saucepan. Stir in water and sugar. Boil for five minutes. Stirring constantly. Should be starting to get thick. Remove from heat and stir in ½ c. dark rum. (Diana makes two batches of glaze, one for the bottom of the cake before inverting on the serving plate so it gets soaked up, and one for the top.)

Drizzle and smooth the glaze evenly over the top and sides, allowing the cake to absorb it. Repeat until glaze is used up.

*(If you have a recipe you are willing to share send it to Globe to be placed in the Roosevelt folder. Need some to choose from for future issues.)*

## **This and That:**

**Globe** - Congratulations to CI **Mark Guemes** for his being named "Deputy of the Year" by the Trinity Baptist Church. And, unfortunately, good-bye as Mark has left Gila Country and taken employment with the Pinal County SO. Good luck, we will miss you.

Congratulations to Sgt. **Dan Voelker** on the birth of his daughter on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>. He is also leaving us and going to DPS in February.

Congratulations to Corporal **Erich Kenny** on the birth of his son on Dec. 20<sup>th</sup> and to Officer **Jonathan Bestea** on the birth of his daughter on Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Payson** - Congratulations to new Lt. **Tim Scott**.

