
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

Another week gone by. Has y'all's week been as fast as mine? Seems like I get to work on Monday morning, I blink and it's Friday afternoon.

We have had a lot to do this week. One of the highlights of the week was the trip I took to visit Ware Youth Center and Swanson. Two of our JJIC members, **Senator Sharon Weston-Broome** and **Tammy Wood**, were able to travel with **Asst. Sec. Sean Hamilton** and me on the State Police helicopter to visit north Louisiana. We were supposed to leave around 9 a.m. but we had to wait for the fog to clear, and which put us an hour behind schedule. But the pilots must have stepped on the gas - we made up that time and arrived right on schedule at Ware Youth Center. I did not know that helicopters could go that fast – or that high. We were as high up as an airplane! We were actually up to 7500 feet. We were all a little taken aback by how high up we were, as if that would have mattered if anything had gone wrong. Down is down. I guess it would have been a shorter ride down if we had gone to the ground. A few less seconds of terror. We all agreed that it was a little unnerving to be that high up and we felt better when we were just a little above the trees. Anyway, we particularly wanted to see Ware, where the secure care girls are, as well as Swanson. It was really a great day. The tours went well and the kids were very well behaved and respectful. **Food Service Director Zelma Jones** prepared a terrific lunch at Swanson, and we were joined by **State Rep. Katrina Jackson** and **State Senator Walsworth**. We appreciate them taking the time out of their busy schedules to spend some time at our facilities. Then it was back home, in just an hour's time. That chopper can zip. My thanks to Col. Mike Edmondson and the State Police for accommodating our use of the helicopter.

We also had The Moss Group here this week, doing a safety assessment at the AMI residential facility and Jetson. I was not able to attend the debriefing, however, it was reported that overall we got mostly good reviews. The Moss Group will continue their assessments in north Louisiana, starting in Alexandria next week. We look forward to their feedback.

Yesterday and today we hosted training for key DPS staff to provide them with an understanding of what our agency is all about. Many thanks to **Beauregard Parish DA David Burton** and **EBR Juvenile Judge Kathleen Richey**, who gave excellent presentations. Our staff who presented included **Undersecretary Connie Percell**, **RD Susan Miller**, **Chief of Operations Elyn Toney**, **Accreditation Manager Angela Arabie**, **Interstate Compact Administrator Angela Bridgewater**, **Director of Education Kim Mims**, **Asst. Sec. Sean Hamilton**, **Food Service Director Zelma Jones**, **Director of Treatment Annette Arthur**, **CSOC Liaison Jacqueline Page**, **Baton Rouge RM Michelle Thomas**, **Grants Administrator Paul Graham**, **Engineer Curtis Badon**, **DAS Karen Stubbs** and **Director of Staff Development Fran Martin**. We brought a youth from Jetson, **Kyle L.**, to address the group and he was very well received. Comments from the DPS staff included “dedicated, passionate staff... OJJ is doing great things to rehabilitate youth...impressive coordination of service provided to the youth...how different the juvenile system is from adult...how different the role of the JJS is from adult correctional officers...” Most of the participants rated the training “valuable, enjoyable, helpful and well organized.” Thanks to **DAS Karen Stubbs** for organizing and implementing the training session.

Well, that about wraps it up for this week. I'll close, with my thanks to each and every one of you, in every office and facility, for all you do, every week and every day, to meet the mission.

Sincerely, “Doc” *Dr. Mary Livers*

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary

Office of Juvenile Justice • PO Box 66458 • Baton Rouge, LA 70896 • e: Whatsupdoc?OJJ@la.gov • www.ojd.louisiana.gov