



GRAPEVINE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NAAWS



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT.....	2	2019 NAAWS CONFERENCE.....	4
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.....	3	2019 CONFERENCE PHOTOS.....	5

WARDEN OF THE YEAR BANQUET

by: Mel Williams, Executive Director, NAAWS

The annual NAAWS Warden of the Year Banquet was held on Monday August 5th at the Marriott hotel in Boston. It was a gala event with Wardens, Superintendents, Directors, spouses, and friends attending. The meal was great with salmon, chicken, and a great desert all arranged by Deb Shuman.

Our Warden of the Year, Warden Robert Herrera, was supported by a large contingency from Texas. His wife and son were unable to come so one of his co-workers faceted the event to his family. Mrs. Williamson joined her husband Adam and Nicolas Wilson to help in presenting them with Medals of Valor.

Robert Welch, NAAWS President, welcomed everyone and thanked them for supporting the event and the awardees. Peter LeGrande gave the prayer.

Todd Thomas, past NAAWS President, spoke about the history of the Medal of Valor award and how Pat Koehane was instrumental in it's founding. Rusty Washburn, NAAWS 1st Vice President, told us about the courage of Adam Williamson and Nicolas Wilson, CoreCivic Maintenance workers, in stopping the attack of an inmate upon a Correction Officer

and being stabbed themselves. Adam and Nicolas do not look upon themselves as heroes, but we know better.

Jeff Crawford, NAAWS 2nd Vice President, spoke about the history of the NAAWS Warden of the Year Award, comparing it to highest athletes in the NFL. He spoke about recognizing the top Warden, the one that we all look up to.

Oscar Mendoza, Executive Deputy Commissioner of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, gave the background and presentation remarks on Warden Herrera, espousing upon his 39 year plus career. Warden Herrera was selected due to his exceptional leadership in the administration of a correctional facility, his prudent stewardship, his personal concern for staff and inmates, and his creative approach to problem solving. You could tell how highly he is thought of by the large contingency of fellow Texans who made the long journey to Boston to help celebrate in his recognition.

Warden Herrera was humble in his remarks in accepting this great honor. He spoke about his career, his co-workers, and most importantly his family.



Don Murray CoreCivic Vice President of Quality Assurance, Mrs. Williamson, Adam Williamson, Warden Rusty Washburn, Nicolas Wilson, Patrick Swindle CoreCivic Chief Correctional Officer, Mel Williams Executive Director NAAWS



Warden Robert Herrera (on left) is receiving the WOY Award from NAAWS President Robert Welch

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

by: Mel Williams, Executive Director, NAAWS

I am pleased to report that we had a great conference in Niagara Falls. There were outstanding relevant presentations and excellent learning opportunities. There were Wardens and Correction Administrators from many states. New York's Acting Commissioner Anthony Annucci was all in and Michigan's Director Heidi Washington brought eight Wardens. Wardens came from as far away as Minnesota and from next door in Ohio were in attendance. In addition, we had representation from Canada. The Commissioner of Correctional Service of Canada brought two Wardens. We hope that this will be a start of a long and fruitful relationship. We also had an evening out when we went over the border to Canada and had a great dinner at the Skylon Tower. The tour of Attica Correctional Facility on the last day was the highlight for some attendees.

We also tried something new this year with having our vendor booths in the same room as the presentations. Not only did

our business partners have great contact with attendees but they were also able to hear and learn from the presentations. This may allow them to better respond to facility needs.

Next year's conference will be in San Antonio, May 26-29, at the Riverwalk Holiday Inn. Save the date. More information can be found on the NAAWS website, naawsonline.org.

ACA held its summer congress in Boston August 1-6. NAAWS opened its suite on Saturday, Sunday and Monday. NAAWS annual Warden of the Year Banquet was a big hit with Warden Robert Herrera from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice being honored as the Warden of the Year. Adam Williamson and Nicolas Wilson from CoreCivic received Medals of Valor.

The NAAWS business meeting was conducted on Monday, **continued on page 6**

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NAAWS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by: Robert Welch, President, NAAWS

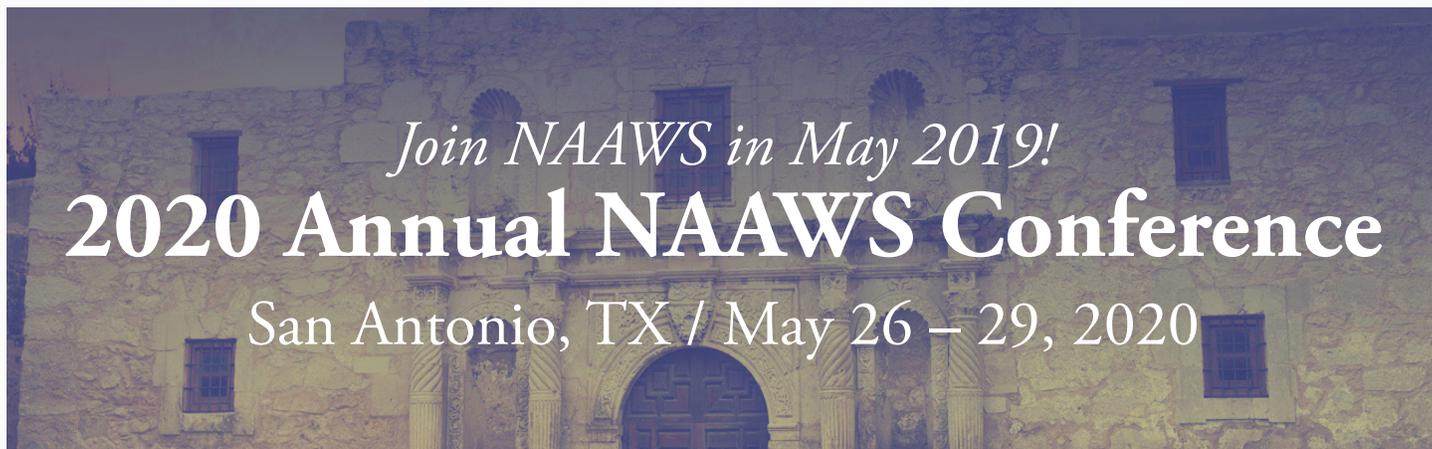
I hope everyone is having a great summer. It was an outstanding time for all who attended the North America Association of Warden and Superintendents (NAAWS) Conference in Niagara Falls, New York. The workshops received high marks from participants and our business partners (vendors). The bar has been set high for our next conference, which will be held in San Antonio, Texas in May of 2020. Executive Director Mel Williams and his team are in the planning process and are committed to putting together another fantastic agenda. To follow up the NAAWS Conference, the Warden of the Year and the Medals of Valor were awarded at the American Correctional Association (ACA) 149th Congress of Corrections in Boston, Massachusetts. Warden Robert Herrera from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice received the 2019 Warden of the Year for his exceptional leadership in the administration of a correctional facility, his prudent stewardship, his personal concern for staff and inmates, and his creative approach to problem solving. The Medal of Valor recipients were Adam Williamson and Nicolas Wilson of CoreCivic. Both individuals worked in maintenance and received the award for their bravery and courage in coming to the aid of a fellow employee and putting their own lives at risk. NAAWS is extremely proud of the courageous acts of bravery.

During the NAAWS business meeting, which was held on August 5, 2019, Warden Brandeshawn Harris of Trumbull Correctional Institution in Leavittsburg, Ohio, was recommended and approved by the membership as a Sergeant of Arms. Warden Harris was a participant of the Wardens Peer Interaction Program put on by the Correctional Management Institute of Texas in partnership with NAAWS. During the

meeting, Warden Harris expressed how the program positively influenced her career and recommended the program to her peers. The next business meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2020, in San Diego, CA and we invite all members to attend.

It is important for corrections staff to support one another especially on our darkest days. Let us always remember Debra Johnson, a 38-year veteran employee of the Tennessee Department of Corrections (TDOC) who was found dead in her home on the prison grounds on August 7, 2019. That same day Curtis Ray Watson, an inmate from the West Tennessee State Penitentiary, escaped. He is considered a suspect in Ms. Johnson's death. As 1st Vice President Russell Washburn said so eloquently at the Warden of the Year Banquet, it is the call that each Commissioner and Warden prays they never receive. During this tragic time, let us keep Tennessee Commissioner Tony Parker and our entire TDOC family in our thoughts and prayers as they deal with this horrific event. We are reminded that each employee who lives or works inside the wire does so at great personal risk. Despite the danger, we will continue to show up and to help those who will be returning to our cities, towns, and neighborhoods.

In closing, I left Boston excited about the future of NAAWS and it has never been more important than it is today. We are entering challenging times with budgets becoming tighter and increased expectations. We must remain committed to NAAWS being an important voice for corrections. Enjoy the rest of your summer and I look forward to seeing everyone in San Diego in January 2020.



2019 NAAWS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

by: Mel Williams, Executive Director, NAAWS

NAAWS held its annual Training Conference on June 3-6 at the Doubletree Inn at Niagara Falls, New York. It was right on the Niagara River, and there was only a 10-minute walk to the Falls. There were over 150 participants.

On Monday morning, June 3, some NAAWS members ventured out to golf at Whirlpool Golf on the Canadian side, sponsored by Nakamoto. Our Business Partners set up their booths, while others went to registration. That evening Envisage Technologies sponsored a hospitality reception.

On Tuesday morning, there was a flurry of activity with a light breakfast, registration, set up, seeing old friends, and making new ones. Our First Vice President, Rusty Washburn, opened the program with a welcome explaining that our President, Robert Welch, could not be there as a tornado had struck his home. Thankfully he was not hurt but his house had sustained damage and he was dealing with the arduous task of negotiating with the insurance adjuster. Following the welcome there was a prayer by Peter Grande and the Canadian and United States anthems were sung by a local vocalist. The color guards from Attica Correctional Facility and the Niagara County Sheriff's Office presented and posted the colors.

Our opening presenter was a great motivational speaker, Chef Jeff, sponsored by Creative Corrections. Chef Jeff is a former inmate who is now a renowned Chef, author and presenter.

The next presenter was Anne Kelly, Commissioner of Correctional Service for Canada, with Warden Robert Bonnefoy and

Warden Crystal Thompson on issues in the Correctional Service of Canada. Then the New York Department of Corrections and Community Services presented a review of the well documented escape from its maximum security Dannemora Correctional Facility. The Directors Panel followed up with Anne Kelly of Canada, Anthony Annucci from New York DOCCS, Heidi Washington from Michigan DOC, and Dr. Derrick Schofield from GEO discussing issues in their respective agencies.

Wednesday saw another great day of presentations with former Director of Michigan DOC Pat Caruso and Michigan Warden Noah Nagy presenting The Crossroads of Vision and Culture. This was followed by Minnesota Warden Ed Miles who spoke about leading a facility while grieving the on-site murder of a Correction Officer. New York State Police Investigators, Michael Bruggman and Jordan Bonafede gave a very interesting presentation on synthetic drugs, what these drugs are, and the dangers that they pose. The last presentation of the day was done by the Delaware Department of Corrections on their initiative of eliminating restrictive housing. A hospitality reception that evening was sponsored by Axon.

After a great day of presentations, the evening brought a dinner trip to the Skylon Tower in Niagara Falls Canada overlooking the Falls. The view and the food were outstanding. Buses were provided by Motor Coach Industries (MCI), and the evening was co-sponsored by Union Supply and Envisage Technologies.



DIRECTORS PANEL



Canadian Commissioner Anne Kelly With Wardens Bonnefoy And Thompson Presenting



Conference Opening With New York DOCCS Attica C.F. And Niagara County Sheriff's Color Guards Presenting Colors



Mary Carr With Make A Smile Booth



Chef Jeff Addresses The Audience



View Of Niagara Falls From Skylon Tower



NAAWS Golfers at Whirlpool Golf Course



Attica Correctional Facility



Ryan Callan From Nakamoto Congratulates Winning Golf Team

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

with much discussion about the NAAWS Suite, Warden of the Year Banquet, finances, and NAAWS dues. We may have to look at new ways of doing business in order to service our members better and hold down our costs. We can certainly use your input.

Membership is growing with the new Secretary of Florida DOC, Mark Inch, encouraging all Wardens and administrators to become members. CoreCivic's Wardens are becoming members and we are pleased to see that Ohio Wardens are members thanks to their Wardens and Superintendents Association. A reminder that you do not have to be a Warden to become a member, only to hold office.

There has been a lot of work on finances and future looks bright, although there is still much work to be done. We have attracted new business partners and revitalized our relationship with the previous ones.

As Wardens, Superintendents, and Correctional Professional representing all facets of corrections we need your help. We need your voice to speak for our field and the issues that you face every day. NAAWS can be the channel for your voice through our strong membership, newsletters, website, training conferences, advocacy, and networking.

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The Correctional Management Institute of Texas in partnership with NAAWS



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Upcoming Sessions

April 27-May 1, 2020
Huntsville, Texas

October 5-9, 2020
Huntsville, Texas

HAVE NEWS FOR THE GRAPEVINE?

Any announcements that would be of interest to wardens or superintendents are gladly accepted for consideration!

Contact **CHUCK ALBINO** for questions or for submission consideration.

Contact Ashley Koonce at koonce@shsu.edu or 936-294-1706
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