



# Innovations in Corrections

## Perry Correctional Institution



**Apiary & Beekeeping | Sustainable Garden | Edible Landscape | Character-Based Unit | Beautification Project**  
**Culinary Arts | SMU Renovation Project | Ovarian Cancer Drive | Mural Project**



Larry Cartledge, *Warden*  
Florence Mauney, *A/W of Operations*  
Stephen R. Claytor, *A/W of Programs*  
Dennis Bush, *Major*  
N. Andy Cooper, *Senior Chaplain*



### A Working Prison

As a Warden, I believe that of all places the penitentiary should be a positive, productive place. This makes for good correctional management and for effective corrections. It should be a place where broken lives and families are being rebuilt. For this to occur, the correctional environment or





prison culture must be constructive, redemptive, and restorative.

At Perry, these three goals are achieved by creating a working and living environment that is *positive* and *productive*. Through projects and labor we learn many rewarding lessons about life. By keeping inmates inspired with positive and constructive projects, laboring with their own hands, they learn skills and attitudes for life and they are kept busy. A positive and productive environment is good for my inmates and it's good for my institution.

At Perry, we are modeling and leading a trend of "correctional balance." This balance involves an emphasis on security on the one hand and rehabilitation on the other. Corrections by any other name is no corrections at all. These two emphases have long been thought to be mutually exclusive. We have proven that a balance between *tough security* and *aggressive rehabilitation* can coexist.

There is a lot of discussion in rehabilitation circles about "what works" or focusing on "inmate outcomes." At Perry, the prison "works." Perry is a working prison. Those who work and live at Perry have worked hard to make a positive and productive place and they have a lot to be proud of.

-former Warden Michael McCall

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*"It has long been acknowledged by insiders that rehabilitation is done most effectively by volunteers and non-profit organizations. The state does security well and volunteers do rehabilitation well. The challenge has always been their cooperation and willingness on the part of officials to make room for the volunteers. McCall has built a bridge between the private and public sectors. As an Agency official, he found the balance between tough security and aggressive rehabilitation."*

from [Upstate Warden Bucks](#)

[Trend](#) article

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# Perry Apiary/Beekeeping Project

## Discovering Life Lessons in Nature

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### About this Project

Almost three years ago Warden Michael McCall of Perry Correctional Institution, located in Southern Greenville County, decided to turn an abandoned softball field into an acre and a half vegetable garden. Initially, his vision would provide restless inmates a constructive way to spend their days.



Inmates tilled the rocky top soil, seeded the rows, and in a matter of months the garden yielded a small harvest of cabbage, squash, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, cantaloupe/melons, and a variety of greens to be used in recipes by the prison's kitchen staff under senior supervisor Bob Olsen.



Warden McCall's vision had become a reality but it wasn't yet complete. He proposed an idea to Cal Bell, Perry's Vocational Carpentry Instructor, and shortly thereafter Mack Flake, an avid sideling beekeeper from



Chapin, S.C., donated two hives to be placed in the pavilion at PCI's outer perimeter.

In addition, Mr. Bell began teaching an Introduction to Beekeeping Basics for inmates selected from the horticulture department and vocational carpentry program. The 16-week class offered the fundamentals of beekeeping and theoretical colony management, and provided a platform for Mr. Bell to mentor inmates James Chitwood, Christopher Ramsey, and Maxwell Sipes.



Fortunately for them, one of the outer perimeter hives lost its queen. The two hives needed to be combined and kept under close supervision, thus began what became known as the Perry Apiary.



Incidentally, the combined hive survived, and Mr. Flake brought two more, which made a total of three for Mr. Bell and his pupils to care for.



That April, when his original hive swarmed, the queen and half the colony were gone, so Mr. Bell showed his students an on-the-spot method of queen rearing called "Notching." He instructed Mr. Ramsey to press his hive tool—a small metal bar used to pry frames out of the hive body—into the drawn comb just below a row of recently laid worker eggs- He noted that the bees would instinctually draw the comb downward to form queen cells.



Three to four weeks later, after the virgin queen had taken her mating voyage from the hive, there was a laying queen again.

The early summer garden harvest was three-fold since the summer past, and the hard work was celebrated by





collecting 31/2 gallons of honey from hive frames using Mr. Bell's honey extractor.

Between the months of September and January, Mr. Flake commissioned inmates in Mr. Bell's Vocational Carpentry class to make complete hive bodies, some which were used to increase Perry's 3 hives to 12 colonies total.



With cooperation from Warden McCall, Associate Warden Stephen Claytor, and support from Mr. Bell and Mr. Flake, Chitwood, Ramsey and Sipes offered the Introduction to Beekeeping Basics to inmates in the *Character-Based Unit (CBU)*.



Late in 2011, Dr. Mike Hood, head entomologist from Clemson University, visited to observe and test these three inmates on what they have learned for the purposes of certifying them with the South Carolina Beekeeper's Association.



Since then, the Palmetto United School District has taken notice of Warden McCall's vision and students whom successfully complete the CBU Beekeeping Class. They now have the opportunity to be granted certification through Mr. Bell's new class, as well as hands-on experience working with the bees. This year there are 16 men enrolled in the PUSD Beekeeping Program.

Warden McCall's Beekeeping and Re-entry Program has encouraged environmental responsibility, promoted sustainability in a prison culture accustomed to over expenditures, and has provided an exciting and viable experience prisoners can take back to society upon their release.





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## Perry Sustainable Garden Project

Meaning & Fulfillment Through Subsistence

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Working the land with your hands, being able to see plants mature from seed, gives a sense of pride and accomplishment. Working outside the dorm in a non- oppressive environment gives a sense of freedom within the fences. Job skills learned can be transferred to a career upon





release- horticulturist, botanist, and landscape designer, etc.

Prior to creating our own garden, our Institution was ordering some of the largest amounts of food from Headquarters. We now order the least. The four acres of vegetables and herbs at Perry provide inmates with healthier food and eases the economic burden on the Agency and taxpayers.



The quality and taste of our fresh vegetables has been a benefit from the yard to lock-up, and the herbs greatly enhance the flavor of each meal.



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## Perry Edible Landscape Project



In March 2012, members of the CBU partnered with Perry's Horticulture department to design, create, cultivate, and maintain the *Edible Landscape Project*, a project that saw immediate results, setting a fast pace for its long-term vision.





The project's obvious benefit---better tasting food for Perry's inmate population--is realized each week as numerous herbs are harvested for use in the cafeteria. Basil, thyme, calendula, stevia, rosemary, parsley, oregano, peppermint, cilantro, sage, dill, and chives--all supply much-needed nutrients and flavor for the inmates' meals.



A mere three months after the project's inception, it is already expanding; the goal is to use all available space to grow and maintain herbs, supplying them to the cafeteria year-round.



Beginning in July 2012, the Edible Landscape Project will begin an extensive herb processing operation-cultivating, maintaining, harvesting, drying, and storing. Additionally, two CBU members who are employed in the Horticulture department will begin training cafeteria cooks in optimizing herb use. Class topics will include: herb recognition, harvesting, drying, storing, and which herbs go best with which foods.



Part of the project's long-term vision involves a partnership with First Baptist Church Simpsonville. Herbs will be donated to the church for fund-raising events, providing funds for the church's many outreach missions.



The CBU Edible Landscape Project was part of a more local outreach. Because of the limited number of jobs available for high-risk inmates, the project offers job opportunities for those willing to abide by a contract, act responsibly,

and conduct themselves in a respectful manner.  
Overall, the project offers opportunities for  
inmates to contribute to the community in  
which they live.

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**Character-Based Unit  
Rehabilitation Program**

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**Beautification Project**

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Generally speaking, the word *prison* carries a negative connotation, eliciting thoughts of fences and razor wire, a world dark and desolate. For Perry Correctional, however, the opposite is true, and this difference is noted even before one enters the facility. Starting from the main gate and moving throughout the institution, one is met with vibrant colors from a wide variety of plants, as well as numerous design schemes. This stems from year-round labor and a commitment from the inmates to improve Perry's aesthetic charms.



The CBU, partnered with Perry's Horticulture department, contributes daily to its commitment of improving life at the institution. Investing in the institution benefits both inmates and staff and serves to promote positivity, ownership, and institutional pride.



CBU residents working in the Horticulture department have been trained in the art of arranging and enriching outdoor spaces by creating pleasing and functional relationships with plants and structures and the natural environment. Some of these workers have earned Master Gardener certificates from Clemson University and have an understanding of the environmental conditions of particular sites by using basic landscaping techniques—unity, simplicity,





balance, repetition, rhythm, proportion, and harmony.



Numerous CBU residents volunteer to assist in various areas—grass-cutting, window-washing, pressure-washing, cleaning designated areas, and harvesting herbs from the Edible Landscape Project. Their efforts help to maintain the beauty of the institution.



From neatly swept sidewalks to manicured lawns, colorful annuals to attractive perennials, washed windows to pressure-washed buildings, the institution exudes beauty, providing a picturesque environment for inmates to live and for staff to work.



In a February 2012 airing of *Making It Grow* on ETV, the show's host, Rowland Alston, stated that the grounds at Perry were so immaculate they reminded him of a 5-star hotel. Perry is a maximum security prison and the inmates don't think it's a hotel but those who live and work here do take pride in their labors and the institution.



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## Culinary Arts Project



The Culinary Arts Program taking place at Perry Correctional Institution began its first class in January 2012, and was established as part of a larger move towards rehabilitation that was initiated under former Warden Michael McCall and his executive staff. Their vision was to answer the need for positive, and constructive change within the prison system. Food Service Directors Bob Olson and Ramona Kirk organized and teach this course.



A need was seen for classroom training, as well as hands on experience. Similar programs available at other institutions focus on short-order cooking, where as this program focuses on the full range of skills used in the food service industry. Food service vendors, and churches have given support in the form of supplies, and food stock to use as teaching aids. Students who successfully complete this course will be trained and qualified in all areas of the Food Service Industry. Graduates will receive a DHEC sanitation certification.



It is the hope of the food service directors that people who leave this program and return to society, will not only be able to find employment, but also be motivated to continue in the food service industry and





make it a career.



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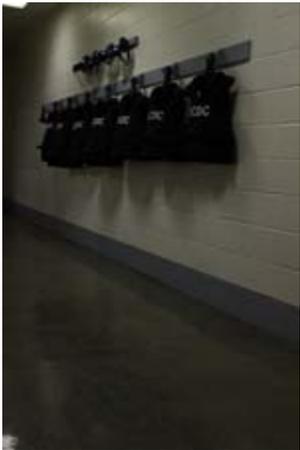
## SMU Renovation Project

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## Ovarian Cancer Drive

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