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In this issue:

- **President's Message**
- **Legislative Affairs**
- **Techie Talk**
- **MCA Fall Institute**

MCA

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President's Message
Michelle Smith
2015 MCA President

Dear MCA Members –

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each and every volunteer committee chair and committee member. It is all of you that make MCA successful for the rest of us! I have thoroughly enjoyed the year serving this great organization as your President. I learn so much from this group and have met so many wonderful Correctional friends. Over the year each committee dedicated themselves to strengthen the organization by recruiting new members, offering outstanding training opportunities, having our voice heard at the Capital, researching technology and preparing our youth to one day serve on these committees, plus so much more. You are all awesome!!

This is a time of year to reflect on all that we accomplished, push ourselves into the New Year with challenges that still need attention and set goals that will drive us into the future.

I have been a member of MCA for over twenty five years and look forward to many more!!

Wishing everyone the best during the holidays and the New Year!

Michelle Smith
President
MCA 2015

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Legislative Affairs

CAL SAARI

MCA Legislative Liaison



As I prepare this report to you regarding legislative affairs, we enter the Holiday Season, so please accept Holiday Greetings from my family to yours! May you all have a joyous and peaceful Christmas with time for rest and relaxation with your loved ones!

2015 and again in 2016, we'll experience an extremely unusual environment in the State Legislature. The building renovations and new construction around the Capitol and legislative offices has definitely put a damper on the way we're accustomed to doing business. The 2016 Session doesn't officially open until the first week in March, although it is expected that a lot of Committee hearings will be conducted between now and the start. Several legislators have resigned from their elected positions during the past few months so we'll have new legislators to meet, in addition to our plan to again reach out to all the members of the Public Safety and Judiciary Committees with our new 2016 legislative agenda. This agenda is being presented to the MCA Board of Directors on December 10th for approval and will establish our priorities for the Session.

Frankly, I don't expect a lot to be accomplished this year with the real short Session, its total lack of space this year for meetings and hearings in order to get feedback from constituents, and the fact that it's another election year coming up right after adjournment for 2016. This doesn't allow for much time Committee Chairs to move many proposals through the process. And finally, don't expect any progress on any proposal that may be in any way controversial, to get any serious attention. With every legislator facing re-election, they'll want to minimize any controversy unless it is part of a major party platform.

There are a couple of items that have been receiving significant press these past few weeks. Last week it was announced that there appears to be a budget surplus of \$ 1.87 billion, which is good news for the Minnesota economy, and under normal circumstances would be a real boost for new legislative initiatives. We must remember however, that about half of that surplus is owed to previously dedicated funds, and it is expected that the new revenues are going to spiral downward with a declining work production. A specific example is obvious in Northern Minnesota on the Iron Range where three of the six major iron ore Companies are in shutdown because of the glut of foreign steel being allowed in the United States. These shutdowns not only have an enormous impact on the Iron Range, but will result in an estimated \$ 400 m. loss in tax revenues during 2016. Nevertheless, there is reason for optimism and it is so positive for the Legislature to start without facing another serious deficit before they even begin their deliberations.

The other newsworthy item revolves around the Court orders of Federal Judge Donovan Frank, pertaining to the state's Sex Offender Programming. As you know, the all the State officials are appealing the Judge's position, but if the Judge prevails, there will be an enormous cost to address the issue. So this is where I think we'll see a lot of legislative effort in this short Session.

As we begin the New Year, I will do everything we can to advocate for our legislative agenda, and at this point at least, we intend to prioritize work on the juvenile justice package several of our organizations promoted last year, hoping we can convince legislative leaders that these proposals are progressive and best correctional practice initiatives. We'll also join our partners again in an effort to get the Voting Restoration bill passed and t the Governor's desk.

Advocating for our organization at the Legislature is a very fluid business from week to week and priorities often suddenly change. I also believe that it's never too late to start work on new initiatives so we encourage all our members to keep in touch with me or any of the members of the MCA Legislative Committee with your suggestions or recommendations. I commit to you that I will make every effort to keep our membership apprised of new developments as the Session progresses. Again, Happy Holidays! I'd love to hear from you!

Calvin Saari
Legislative Liaison
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Drones – No Fly Zones



By David Heath - Technical Committee Chair

As aerial drones become more common in society we are hearing about them more often in the news. Most of us have probably heard stories about the creeping neighbor who flies a drone into someone's backyard to spy on them. There has been much talk about who owns the airspace over a piece of property, and what can be done about it.

Well, one alternative to shooting it down, which is many people's initial thought, there now is a less violent alternative that might work. That would be to register the air space over your property at <https://www.noflyzone.org/>

This is a site which quite a few drone manufacturers are starting to recognize as a solution to the problem. You register your address at the site and they input the GPS coordinates of your address. Then the GPS database is shared with all drone and software companies that are onboard with this website. They will download the database into their drone code, basically creating sort of an invisible fence around your property, so their drones can't enter those GPS coordinates.

In theory, this might work, however, some of the biggest drone companies in America are not on board yet. Essentially, the people behind No Fly Zone hope to make money on their database and offer premium services to customers. For example, if you want certain types of drone deliveries to your house they would open it up for a fee. Currently, basic registration on the site is free.

Here are some frequently asked questions from the website which explains the potential future of this company and where this may all be heading.

<https://www.noflyzone.org/faq>

I'm not certain if this business will "take off" so to speak, however, it is an interesting concept to a looming privacy problem. Right now, many drones have No Fly Zone database technology built in for Airports and other Government facilities.

Success of a business offering private protected air space will depend on how popular drones actually become. In big cities, if suddenly drones are everywhere, it could get very annoying as they hover over fenced back yards and private property. I don't think anyone wants an unknown camera on them in their backyard. As to actually registering at the website, I did not find any bad press in doing so.

I ran this by the MCA Technology Committee for more input. The consensus among our group was that it is safe to register. The biggest downside is that some of the biggest

drone manufacturers are not on board yet. So think of this as something that might reduce future drone traffic, but will never eliminate it. There will always be ways for people to manipulate drones to get around the GPS Coordinates or drone companies that never sign up.

Good luck if you ever encounter any privacy issues in your own personal airspace. How much we will really need registration remains to be seen. If they get cheap enough where almost every household owns a drone, registration might be needed. Think of what happened with the propagation of cell phones, computers, and TVs over the years.

If suddenly a drone becomes every kid's favorite toy, we might have a problem Houston...

No doubt somebody will figure out effective control methods and get rich off it. Probably some techno kid out there tinkering with a drone for fun will discover some simple solution nobody else even considered. That's how these perplexing technical problems are solved sometimes....

MCA Fall Training Institute

Jason Mereness

Jeffrey Hilliard

Fall Institute Resource Fair Sub-Committee Co-Chairs

On behalf of the Minnesota Corrections Association and the Fall Training Institute Committee, we want to thank all the exhibitors for attending the Fall Training Institute and Resource Fair at the Verizon Wireless Center. We also want to thank the exhibitors sponsoring the Fall Training Institute and providing hospitality at the Hospitality Event at the City Center Hotel.

Also a special thanks to conference sponsors:

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Sincerely,

Jason Mereness & Jeffrey Hilliard

Resource Fair Sub-Committee Co-Chairs

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2016 MCA Annual Training Institute
Grand View Lodge
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About the MCA FORUM

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Articles may be submitted to the 2016 *FORUM* editor Connie Hartwig connie.hartwig@state.mn.us
Articles should not be of the nature of a commercial solicitation of products or services; rather, they should be informative on topics of interest to MCA membership at large.

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