



The Commissioner's Commentary

JANUARY 2010

Alcohol, Drugs and Motor Vehicles Are a Potentially Lethal Mix



Commissioner George Hayman

Each day, 36 people in the United States die, and 700 men, women and children are injured, in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol-impaired driver. Think about that for a moment: Every two hours, three people lose their lives because of a drunk driver.

In 2008, the last full year for which data is available, alcohol-impaired drivers were involved in incidents that led to 154 fatalities on New Jersey roadways, accounting for 26 percent of all motor vehicle-related casualties.

Many citizens view alcohol-impaired driving simply as a traffic violation. Do not be fooled. Drunk driving is a serious crime.

Everyone supports law enforcement efforts to protect our communities from assault, burglary and other crimes that ultimately land perpetrators in New Jersey Department of Corrections facilities. Oddly, however, many citizens view alcohol-impaired driving simply as a traffic violation. Do not be fooled. Drunk driving is a serious crime that routinely places each of us, as well as our families and friends, at risk.

I am pleased to report that our Office of Victim Services (OVS) always can be counted on to draw as much attention as possible to National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month, which has been commemorated each December since 1981. The OVS actively seeks to raise awareness among the offender population about the dangers of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The OVS has forged what has proven to be a mutually rewarding collaborative relationship with the New Jersey chapter of Mothers Against Drink Driving (MADD), which has referred guest speakers to the OVS Focus on the Victim Program. As many of you know, Focus on the Victim is designed to educate inmates in comprehending the harm they have inflicted on others while also examining ways to make amends for their actions through restorative justice principles.

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I'd like to recognize the following men and women who served as guest speakers for Focus on the Victim throughout last month's commemoration of National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month: Trudy Piatt, Dominick Pizzo, Joye and Charles Jones, Robert Nulman, Pat Russo Maria Esteves and John Giovanni. The importance of their contributions cannot be overstated.

Not only does everyone need to realize that alcohol, drugs and driving do not mix, but we also must be aware of the consequences for driving while under the influence. If you drive impaired, law enforcement will arrest you. Violators can lose their driver's license, receive substantial fines and face imprisonment for repeat offenses, assault and vehicular manslaughter.

If you aren't sure whether or not you've had too much to drink, don't risk it. Period.



Losing Proposition

Bayside Staff Member Fondly Recalls Touring with Harlem Globetrotters

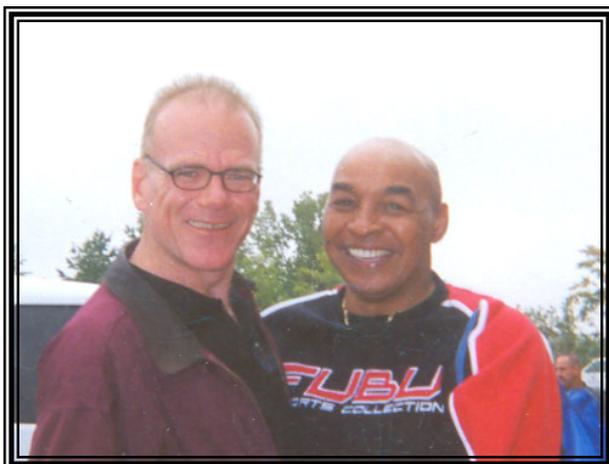
He traveled all over the world, performed his craft in front of thousands of men, women and children on a daily basis, and routinely interacted with living legends.

That was the job description for Kevin Smith, who spent his first eight post-college years working as a professional basketball player. In many ways, it was the perfect job. In many ways, but not in every way.

The problem was the losses – nearly 2,000 of them, without a single victory. Such is the life of a member of the Washington Generals, the designated opponent for the Harlem Globetrotters.

“I always used to say that after the first 500 or so losses, you get used to it,” said Smith, the assistant supervisor of recreation at Bayside State Prison. “The constant losing really bothered some of the guys, but you have to realize that it’s basically entertainment.”

Smith, a Millville native, starred at Sacred Heart High School in Vineland, then attended Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. One of his teammates at Hamilton was offered a try-out with the Generals by a Hamilton alumnus who himself had been a member of the Generals. When the teammate declined the invitation, Smith came forward and pursued it.



Kevin Smith and Curly Neal renew acquaintances during the Harlem Globetrotters' 2002 induction into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts.

After a tryout in Margate supervised by Generals player, coach and owner Red Klotz, Smith was offered a contract.

“As a member of the Washington Generals, you get to play some real basketball, but you have to go into the comedy routines when it’s that time of the show,” said Smith, a 6-foot, 2-inch guard. “The Globetrotters call out when they’re going to do a routine. After a couple years, I used to tell the rookie Globetrotters, ‘Okay, now we’re doing this routine or that routine.’ It was all part of the performance.”

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Losing Proposition

Truth be told, Smith grew to enjoy serving as the foil during the Globetrotters vaunted comedy routines.

"Some people might say I was a ham," he confessed, chuckling. "Maybe it was because I'd done some acting, but I used to be pretty involved in a lot of the routines. I was the guy who would chase Curly Neal during his dribbling routines. I was the one who would get the ball stuck up the back of my shirt, or one of the Globetrotters would grab me and start dancing with me. I almost looked at it like a vaudeville performance."

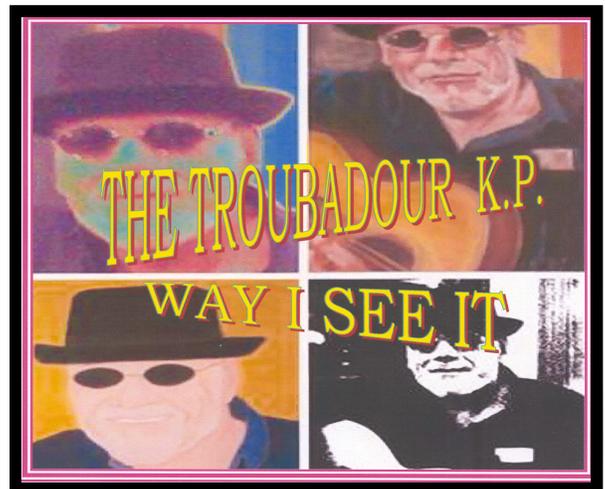
The Globetrotters would tour eight months per year, which usually included eight or nine games each week: one game on Monday through Friday, and doubleheaders on weekends. The first six months of the tour included venues throughout the United States, mostly small towns during the week and larger cities on Saturday and Sunday. The final two months of the tour consisted of overseas games.

The schedule – approximately 240 games, roughly three times the number of games in a National Basketball Association regular season – could be grueling, but Smith only missed two games in eight years, both times due to illness.

"It was a bit of a grind, but looking back, I can honestly say I loved it," he said. "How many guys get to play basketball professionally? I wasn't making much money, but I got to see 49 states – every state except Alaska – and 38 countries. I played in South America, Asia, Australia and all over Europe.

"I became a pretty good traveler, and when the tour would end, I'd stay in Europe," added Smith, whose top annual salary was \$20,000. "I found out that the best way to explore a city isn't by going to the places where all of the tourists go. I'd try to meet some locals and take my direction from them."

On the court, meanwhile, he was playing against and performing with such acclaimed showmen as Meadowlark Lemon, Geese Ausbie and Sweet Lou Dunbar as well as ball-handling wizards Curly Neal and Gator Rivers.



"Way I See It" is one of two CDs Kevin Smith has recorded under the name The Troubadour K.P.

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Losing Proposition

"Geese, Curly and a lot of the others were wonderful people, just a pleasure to be around," Smith recalled. "I remember Geese telling me that I was the best 'dribbler chaser' of all time. I was flattered, because that's such a huge part of the show. I know I did it to the best of my ability, night after night, complete with the double-takes and all of the other gestures at the appropriate times."

From the beginning, however, Smith knew his time with the Washington Generals would not be a long-term proposition.

"My game plan was to continue until I was 30," he said, "and that's exactly what I did."

After the Generals, Smith worked as a bartender and later as a car salesman. Then, in 2000, he became part of the staff at Bayside. He's been there ever since.

"When I went off tour with the Globetrotters, I was playing in a number of leagues in the area," Smith, now 54, related. "Anyway, I was approached about organizing a team that would play against a team of inmates. That was my introduction to the recreation program at Bayside."

Back and knee problems prevent Smith from playing much basketball anymore. Yet nearly a decade ago, he discovered a new passion in music.

"When I was about 45 or so, I picked up my girlfriend's guitar," he said. "I knew some chords from a college roommate who was a musician, so I started playing."

"Eventually, once I realized I couldn't sing Neil Young songs like Neil Young, I started writing my own songs."

Smith, whose musical influences include Tom Waits, John Prine and Warren Zevon, has recorded two CDs under the name The Troubadour K.P., which incidentally, stands for Kevin Patrick, his first and middle names. He regularly performs a combination of cover songs and original material in the Millville area.

"I've sold some CDs and t-shirts," he said, "but the music is mostly a hobby, something I do for fun."

He didn't have to add that it's far more enjoyable than a 2,000-game losing streak.



Labor of Love

CRAF Employee Lends a Helping Hand to Those in Need

When it comes to reaching out to others less fortunate, many people “talk the talk,” but Dora Fralin “walks the walk.”

For Fralin, a senior clerk typist at the Central Reception and Assignment Facility, service is about turning one’s intentions to help into tangible acts of help.

The nine-year veteran of the New Jersey Department of Corrections is committed to making a difference in the lives of people in need whenever an opportunity comes her way.

This desire is what prompted her to establish Helping Hand Outreach and Awareness Program, Inc.

The non-profit organization was founded in August 2005 by Fralin; her mother, Rev. Shirley Smalls; and her husband, Minister Tony Fralin. The program was created with one purpose in mind – to meet individuals of all ages at their physical, social and spiritual points of need.

“We provide food, clothes, emergency assistance and whatever else we can to those in the community who are struggling in some way,” said Fralin. “We help people with transportation to school, doctor appointments and the hospital.”

The program is based in Trenton, out of Lion of Judah Faith Center, pastored by Fralin’s mother. While many clients are from the Trenton community, Helping Hand Outreach and Awareness Program extends services to those in neighboring areas as well.

One of several awareness initiatives presently sponsored by Fralin’s program is the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services’ Project Rebuild. The 12-week program, which promotes a community discussion of HIV and reducing risk behaviors, is held at the church every Wednesday. Meals are provided to those in attendance.



Dora Fralin makes the needs of others a priority in her life.

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Labor of Love

Helping Hand Outreach and Awareness Program also sponsors a number of social activities for the youth in the community.

"We take the young people roller-skating, bowling and to the movies," Fralin related.

In addition to meeting the physical and social needs of those less fortunate, the outreach program offers spiritual and emotional guidance.

"At least twice a year, we take a group of kids up to Blue Mountain Christian Retreat Center in Eastern Pennsylvania," stated Fralin. "For just a few days, this gets them away from any negative influences they are exposed to on a daily basis. Some of the young people we take to Pennsylvania are members of the church, and some are part of the community. The most kids we've taken at one time are around 22. I recently took quite a few girls up to Blue Mountain for a tambourine conference that they really enjoyed.

"Another favorite program with the youth is the [New Jersey Department of Corrections] Project PRIDE program," Fralin continued. "We sponsor about three or four Project PRIDE presentations a year. The inmates come out and share how they ended up in prison by making bad choices during their younger years. They let our kids know that the decisions they make not only affect them, but their families. At each presentation, we usually have hundreds of youth and adults, who come from all over.

"Our main goal with the young people we work with is to help them stay on the right track, or if they have strayed off course, to help them get back on track."

In an effort to combat the issues of alcoholism and substance abuse, Helping Hand Outreach and Awareness Program invites recovering alcoholics and addicts to youth forums in an effort to encourage young people to abstain from alcohol and drugs. Programs addressing sexual and physical abuse are also offered.

Since its inception, Fralin noted that Helping Hand Outreach and Awareness Program has assisted hundreds of people.

"The community is very familiar with the program," said Fralin. "People are either referred to us or come to us directly. There are some people you never see again and that's okay, but many people that we help do maintain ties with our church. Everyone is appreciative of our assistance. It's a great feeling to see the difference our outreach has made in the lives of others."

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Labor of Love

Fralin's program is truly a labor of love, as the outreach and awareness program receives no government funding.

"The program is not grant funded and never has been," she related. "The monies come from my husband, my mother and me. At times, we receive donations from our church or people who are interested in helping us help others. In four years, we have never turned away anyone seeking our assistance. We find the resources we need to help people.

"I always think about the old gospel song that says, 'May the Life I've Lived Speak for Me.' I may not have hundreds or thousands of dollars, and my salary may not be way up there, but whatever I have, I don't mind sharing with and helping somebody who doesn't have." 



Family Affair

Innovative Program Aims to Assist Max-Out Offenders and Their Loved Ones

Social worker Cynthia Smith-Jackson has a sobering message for inmates who successfully complete a course offered by the New Jersey Department of Corrections' Office of Drug Programs known as "Engaging the Family in the Recovery Process – An Innovative Approach for the Max-Out Offender."

"I let them know that this is a beginning, not an ending," said Smith-Jackson, who has been facilitating the course at Northern State Prison since its inception in 2007. "I tell them the real work begins once your feet hit the pavement."

Engaging the Family is designed to strengthen an inmate's family relationships as he prepares to make the transition from incarceration to freedom. The program is funded through a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services grant.

In addition to Northern State Prison, Engaging the Family has been made available to offenders at Mid-State Correctional Facility, Garden State Youth Correctional Facility and South Woods State Prison. In all, nearly 200 inmates have taken part.

"By strengthening relationships, we're trying to improve an offender's chances of success upon release. Our ultimate goal is not only to help inmates and their families, it's to reduce recidivism rates."

Participants in the program must be married or in a committed relationship, must be a parent and must be approximately six to nine months from the completion of their maximum sentence. Engaging the Family operates on cycles of roughly 12 weeks and focuses on relationship strengthening (five weeks), parenting (three weeks)

and financial planning (three to five weeks). Spouses and committed partners of inmates are encouraged to attend the weekly sessions, which last two hours or more.

"By strengthening relationships, we're trying to improve an offender's chances of success upon release," explained Ruth Steinruck, project coordinator. "Our ultimate goal is not only to help inmates and their families, it's to reduce recidivism rates."

Statistics are encouraging. As of August 2009, of the 49 offenders who had completed the

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Family Affair

program and been released, only five were rearrested. Most had found jobs and were drug free. However, the rearrest rate for those who had failed to complete the program during the same time period was 45 percent.

"As an inmate works his way through the program, you can see his outlook improving," said Thurman Miller, who began facilitating the course at South Woods in 2007 and has since moved to Mid-State and Garden State. "We try to provide them with structure in their lives by giving them another way of thinking. We tell them they have to understand the responsibility they have to their family, that they have to show discipline when it's time to make a decision.

"I've had inmates tell me they'd never really considered their future and their family's future," he continued. "If we're able to get them thinking about the long term, we've accomplished something."

Smith-Jackson's favorite aspect of the program is that it's up to the inmate whether or not he chooses to participate.

"The fact that it's strictly voluntary makes a huge difference," she said. "Almost everything an offender does while he's incarcerated is mandated. This is different. It's about making a conscious decision to make things better for yourself and your family."

Steinruck noted that the participation of a spouse or committed partner is often the first step in repairing the strain on the family unit that was caused by incarceration as well as the behavior that led to incarceration.

"Some of the partners who agreed to take part in the program hadn't been to the facility for a visit in a long period of time," she related, "but they understood the potential for improvement that this program represents."

Once an Engaging the Family participant completes his sentence and is released, he is expected to maintain regular contact with his case manager.

"We're able to help find resources in the community," Smith-Jackson said. "I recently got a call from a former inmate who needed a winter coat and who also had transportation issues. We were able to address those issues and meet his needs. Another couple needed marriage counseling. I located an appropriate non-profit agency in their area. I'm always hearing about job openings or job fairs.

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Family Affair

"We can help in so many different ways."

Miller also regularly fields calls from ex-offenders. On occasion, those calls have an unusual twist.

"Sometimes," he said, "an ex-inmate will find out about a helpful community resource, and he'll ask me to share that information with the current participants in the program."

That kind of selfless behavior should make the ex-offender's family proud.



Repeat Performance

Eighteen Years After Apprehending Escapee, Randolph Does It Again

Timing is everything, according to Principal Investigator Leonard Randolph. After what he's experienced, he should know.

Back in 1991, Randolph was driving past East Jersey State Prison on his day off when he saw an inmate attempting to escape. A few minutes later, the inmate was staring down the barrel of Randolph's gun, and the escape was foiled.

Afterwards, Randolph remembers telling co-workers how his role in the apprehension was simply a matter of timing.

Last month, nearly two decades after the incident at East Jersey, it happened again.

On December 3, Randolph was conducting an investigation at Talbot Hall, a residential community release program in Kearny, when a resident attempted to escape. Mere minutes later, Randolph was placing his handcuffs on the escapee.

"It was another instance where I happened to be in the right place at the right time," said Randolph, whose career with the New Jersey Department of Corrections began 30 years ago.

"During the incident at Talbot Hall, I basically was reacting to what was happening. But once the resident was captured and everything was said and done, I thought back to what happened at East Jersey 18 years earlier. How could I not think back?"

The episode at Talbot Hall began to unfold with Randolph at work in an office by the main reception area. A resident had committed an infraction and was about to be placed in a holding cell when he broke away from a counselor and dove out a window.



"Timing," Leonard Randolph explains, "is everything."

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Repeat Performance

"I ran out of the office and saw several staff people going out the door, so I more or less went along with everyone else," Randolph related. "In a split second, I saw an individual in khakis running through the parking lot. I knew he had to cross the highway, so I jumped into a car along with one of the counselors (Robert Callahan)."

Almost immediately, the two saw the escapee running toward a tractor trailer. Talbot Hall staff member Dr. Scott Cone, who was chasing the resident on foot, was in close pursuit.

"We cut in front of the tractor trailer and got out of the car," Randolph said. "All of us – Mr. Callahan, Dr. Cone, the escapee and me – kind of came together behind the tractor trailer, and the inmate started saying he didn't know why he tried to run away. I cuffed him and put him in the car."

While Randolph's involvement in the Talbot Hall incident ended in a vehicle, his involvement in the 1991 escape at East Jersey began in his vehicle.

"I was off from work and on my way to a police convention in Newark," he recalled. "As I drove by the prison, I saw an officer running alongside the ad seg building. Then I saw an inmate climbing through the barbed wire on the inner fence. If he was able to climb over the outer fence, he would have been on the road.

"My girlfriend was with me at the time, so I pulled the car over and directed her to the internal affairs building," he continued. "When I reached the inmate, I drew my gun and told him to move away from the fence. He tried to climb anyway, but I kicked the fence to get him off of it. At that point, several other people arrived to subdue to inmate."

As one of the five original members of the NJDOC's Fugitive Unit, Randolph is more aware than most of the odds of apprehending an escapee due largely to the right set of circumstances – not once, but twice.

"Like I said," he stated yet again, "timing is everything."



Starting Over

Edna Mahan Officer to Launch Basketball Academy in Philippines

"If you build it, they will come."

Those were the words Kevin Costner's character repeatedly heard in the 1989 motion picture "Field of Dreams." In the film, "it" was a baseball field Costner constructed on the grounds of his farm.

Eddie Tarpey, a longtime senior correction officer at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, can identify. Tarpey, 44, doesn't hear voices in his head, and his sport of choice is basketball and not baseball. But he can identify nonetheless.

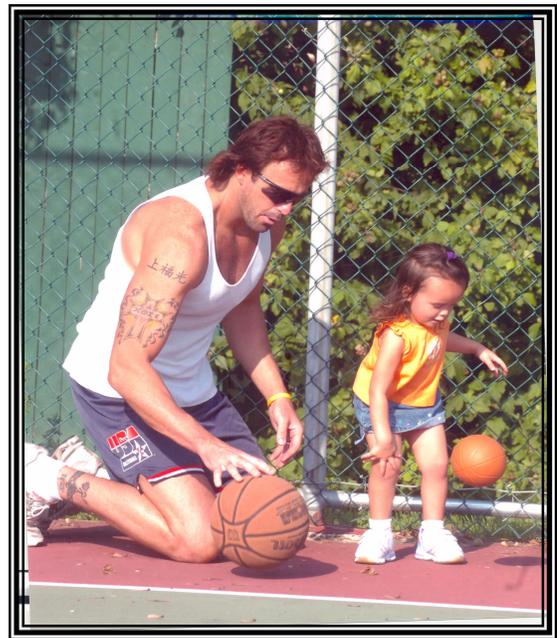
This spring, Tarpey will retire after 20 years with the New Jersey Department of Corrections, and he, wife Eden and 6-year-old daughter Sunshine will relocate to Mactan Island in the Philippines. Once there, he plans to establish a basketball academy for the town's youth.

Eden Tarpey is a native of the Philippines, although she and her family moved to Irvington when she was 5. Her husband never has been to the country that soon will be home for the Tarpey family.

"Basically, we're starting from scratch," said Eddie Tarpey, a native of Phillipsburg. "In many Asian nations, the main sport is either baseball or soccer, but basketball is number one in the Philippines. Where we're going, they love the sport, but there's not a lot of structure. All of the people I've spoken to from the Philippines have told me that if we set something up involving basketball, we'll get the kids."

"If you build it, they will come."

Basketball has been part of Tarpey's life since his childhood. He graduated from Phillipsburg High School in 1983. That year, Tarpey was a key contributor on a team that won the state championship. From there, he attended St. Peter's College in Jersey City on a basketball scholarship. He eventually transferred to Evangel University in Springfield, Missouri, where he continued to play basketball – averaging more than 19 points per game – and earned a degree in sociology.



Eddie and Sunshine Tarpey work on their ball-handling skills.

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Starting Over

All the while, Tarpey spent large chunks of his summer working at basketball camps and clinics under such respected figures as Phil Jackson, coach of the National Basketball Association champion Los Angeles Lakers and coach of Chicago Bulls throughout the Michael Jordan era; Butch Van Breda Kolff, longtime NBA and collegiate coach; and Pete Carril, who won more than 500 games as coach of Princeton University.

Long after he graduated from college and went to work for the NJDOC, the 6-foot, 5-inch Tarpey continued to play in a variety of basketball leagues. He also played for the South Jersey Saints, a team that visits prisons and uses basketball as a vehicle to extol the virtues of Christianity to the inmate population. Back in 2002, through one of his Saints teammates, Tarpey became part of a team that went to Italy to play basketball and do missionary work. There, he and his wife were introduced to the couple who had arranged the trip. They were Americans who had moved to Italy and were using basketball to bring kids off the streets and into the gym.

"My wife and I had a blast," Tarpey recalled. "I worked with the kids during the day and played in the games at night. I was so impressed by what was being done for the kids.

"As time went on, and I knew I'd be leaving the Department of Corrections and exploring other avenues, I kept thinking about the two weeks we spent in Italy," he added. "My wife and I decided we wanted to do something similar, but with our own unique spin, so to speak."

The Tarpeys are attracted to the warm weather, and their original idea was that they'd relocate to Florida. However, they thoroughly enjoyed the trips they had taken to the Caribbean, so they considered the possibility of launching the proposed basketball academy on an island.

The day Eddie Tarpey suggested the Philippines to his wife, everything started to fall into place. "It seemed like the perfect fit," he related.

Tarpey is hoping to introduce himself to the folks in Mactan Island through a series of camps and clinics.

"At some point, I'll obviously need volunteers," he said, "but as I meet people, and they realize I'm part of their community, that should take care of itself. Once I get the clinics going,

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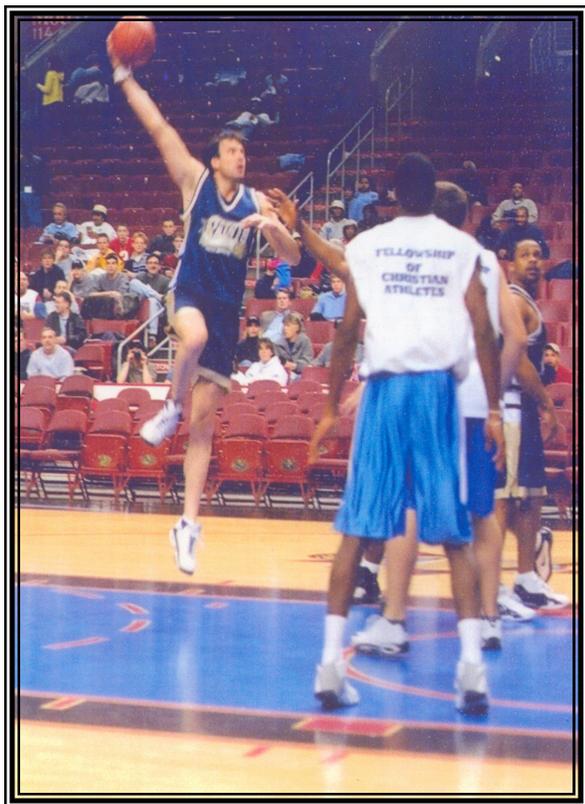
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Starting Over

I want to set up leagues for the kids to play in. Down the road, I'm hoping to encourage kids from the United States to come over and play in tournaments against the kids from the Philippines. I can't wait to get started."

Tarpey's research indicates that a basketball academy is likely to be well-received. However, while the youth of Mactan Island might have enthusiasm, many lack even the most basic resources.

"On You Tube, you can watch clips of kids in the Philippines playing basketball without sneakers on their feet," Tarpey said. "There they are, playing on dirt or concrete courts, either barefoot or wearing flip-flops. In fact, my wife's father (Romeo Ila) told me that he and his brother (Rito), who grew up in the Philippines, didn't get their first pair of sneakers until they were teenagers."



Eddie Tarpey averaged more than 30 points per game during his six seasons with the New Jersey Saints.

That's where Tarpey's "Sneaker Drive 4 Kids" comes in. In anticipation of the upcoming venture, he is accepting cash donations that will enable him to provide every child who attends his camps or clinics with a new pair of sneakers. In many instances, it will be the first pair of sneakers the child will have worn in his or her life.

"In China, I actually can buy Nikes for the kids for about a dollar a pair," Tarpey reported. "If somebody gives me a \$5 donation and says, 'Eddie, I'm sorry this is all I can spare,' I explain that they are providing sneakers for five kids."

In a few short months, all preparations will be complete, and it will be time for the Tarpeys to leave New Jersey for the Philippines.

"I'm happy for Officer Tarpey and his family," said Edna Mahan Administrator William Hauck. "That said, he'll certainly be missed. Not only is he an asset to our staff and a true professional, he's one of those people that everybody likes."

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Starting Over

Tarpey knows the impending move will not be easy.

"What I'm going to miss most of all are the people, the friendships, the smiles," he said. "My co-workers are awesome. We have wonderful family and friends. I live in the town where I grew up, so whenever I go someplace, I run into people I've known for 30 or 40 years.

"At the same time, this is such a cool opportunity. I have this vision that the idea will take off in Mactan Island and begin a domino effect. Maybe in a few years, we can have these basketball academies in a bunch of locations."

"If you build it, they will come."

