

Press Release

State of Maryland
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services



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The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services protects the public, its employees and the detainees and offenders under its supervision.

WCI Inmates to Help Clear Trail To B-52 Bomber Crash Site

Tues. & Wed. 11/17-18 Near Grantsville

TOWSON, MD (November 16, 2009)---WCI inmates will take the first rocky steps toward helping Western Marylanders mark a piece of Cold War history on Tuesday, when they begin clearing the first section of an eventual trail to the site of the 1964 crash of a nuclear-laden B52 bomber, where eventually a large memorial will be built.

Six WCI minimum-security inmates and two WCI maintenance officers will accompany WCI Administrative Officer Bill Jewell to the remote mountainside location near Barton for the two-day trail clearing. Inmates will remove branches and trees and clear a three- to four-foot path. Eventually, the entire three-mile trail will connect to a longer hiking path which leads directly to the crash site.

The enormous B52 Strato-Fortress, 185 feet wide from wing to wing, crashed in a blinding snowstorm at 1:30 a.m. on January 13, 1964. Four of the five crewmembers were able to eject from the plane, flying landward through the frigid air at 120 miles per hour. The men and the plane's wreckage were scattered over three counties in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Three of the five men died, including two who managed to eject from the aircraft but whose injuries prevented them from walking through the blizzard once they landed on the ground. The plane's nuclear payload remained intact.

WCI has been a leader in the DPSCS effort to put more inmates to work on meaningful, community-enhancing projects which at the same time allow the inmates to learn and respect local history. Secretary Gary Maynard has instituted the only program in the nation allowing military veteran inmates to restore state veteran cemeteries. Maryland also has one of the few inmate-run thoroughbred horse rescue farms, and is the only state to have extensively developed inmate environmental projects that protect oysters, grow bay grasses, and restore island shorelines.

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