

MCKEAN COUNTY 3 G PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024

“Planting Today for a Productive Tomorrow”



PROGRAM MISSION:

**PROVIDE A STEADY SOURCE OF AVAILABLE COMMUNITY
SERVICE SITES.**

**PROVIDE A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE TO INDIVIDUALS
PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM AND OUR COMMUNITY**

**PROVIDE TRAINING AND SKILLS TO THOSE PARTICIPATING IN
THE PROGRAM.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Introduction.....</u>	3
<u>Community Support.....</u>	4
<u>Community Service Staff.....</u>	5
<u>Recycling Center Operations.</u>	6
<u>Concrete Garden Boxes.....</u>	7-8
<u>Barn Cleanup.....</u>	9
<u>McKean County Fairgrounds and Fair.....</u>	10-12
<u>Program for Augmented Projects /</u> <u>Improvements.....</u>	13-16
<u>Footbridge.....</u>	14
<u>Bucktail Park.....</u>	15
<u>Poor Farm Cemetery....</u>	16
<u>Within the Community.....</u>	17
<u>Route 219 Welcoming Garden</u>	18-20
<u>High Tunnel 2023</u>	21
<u>Community Support/Donations.....</u>	22-23
<u>Crafts For All Seasons.....</u>	24-25
<u>Effect of Covid 19.....</u>	26
<u>2024 Community Service and Locations and Hours.....</u>	27
<u>Hour of Community Service in 2024.....</u>	28
<u>Incarcerated Males/Females.....</u>	
<u>Jail Population.....</u>	30
<u>Total Population of Incarceration.....</u>	31
<u>2024 Expenses and Cost.....</u>	32
<u>Statistics - Reduced Jail Population and Cost Savings.....</u>	33-34
<u>Non-Financial Benefits.....</u>	35
<u>Community Service Account.....</u>	36
<u>Looking Ahead & Ending Notes.....</u>	37

INTRODUCTION

Thirteen years ago, McKean County put its trust in the Good Growing Gardens Program (3G). Since then hundreds of pounds of vegetables and root crops have been harvested, numerous plots of flowers grown, hundreds of wood projects completed and, perhaps most importantly, hundreds of participants have learned new skills, improved their community, and, through their hard work, paid back the community for their crimes. Not all participants have benefited from the program, but many have found a new sense of self and purpose from it and gone on to make great progress in their personal lives.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The McKean County 3G Program would not be possible without the continued support of the McKean County Commissioners, the McKean County Jail staff, and the local community.



COMMUNITY SERVICE STAFF

The 3G Program is administered through McKean County Adult Probation. Many members of the Probation Staff assist with the program. The Adult Probation employees listed below are specifically assigned to administer and manage the program:



Caleb Raught

Community Service Coordinator



Sandi Tunno

Community Service Specialist

RECYCLING CENTER OPERATIONS

McKean County Conservation District and the County of McKean previously obtained two separate grants from the PA Department of Environmental Protection for the McKean County Recycling Center. A concrete pad was placed in front of the 3G Barn on Route 6 and a compactor installed. Although the County maintains the mechanical functioning of the equipment, the 3G Program maintains the daily operations of the program. This requires a substantial amount of daily attention as there is a need for constant cleanup of the area, assistance with individuals using the compactor, and, coordination with Casella Waste Management, which provides its services at no cost to the County of McKean, for removal and replacement of the dumpster for the compactor. The 3G Program also maintains a bin for the drop-off of scrap metal and a collection site for aluminum cans. The funds received from the metal scrap and aluminum cans are used by the 3G Program to purchase supplies for the garden and workshop at 3G and lower the overall costs of the Program for the County. Without the constant monitoring and work of 3G staff and participants regarding recycling, the County would be required to higher staff to manage and oversee the Recycling Program, at substantial additional cost. The Recycling Center provides a no-cost option to our County residents to drop off their recyclables and assure that they are processed productively.



NEW CONCRETE GARDEN BOXES

In 2024, we replaced the timber garden beds with concrete block beds. Participants tore out the old boxes, which had rotted since the establishment of the program 13 years ago. In addition, landscaping was added to make it easier to build the new flower beds and maintain them. Once the blocks were painted and the beds built, they were filled them with new, quality soil from RJ Lawncare of East Smethport.



In 2025, plans are to continue building more beds out of concrete blocks. The goal is to replace all garden beds with all concrete block. This will maintain the longevity of the garden beds for years to come.



BARN CLEAN-UP AND REORGANIZATION

At the start of 2024, we took stock of the barn and concluded that a cleanup was necessary to better utilize our space. We removed items that could not be used and organized. With this clean up completed, we now have much more usable space for future projects.



2024 McKean County Fairgrounds and Fair

The 3G Program provided many hands at the McKean County Fair Grounds. Participants worked to provide the community a beautiful atmosphere at the 118th annual McKean County Fair. The 3G Program has a flower bed with historical equipment displayed. Participants were essential to the restoration of the garden and several other aspects at the Fair Grounds. Both inmate and probation participants assisted with groundwork, mowing, painting, and other maintenance in preparation for the Fair.

Our signature project at the Fairgrounds is our flower garden, with pictures here before and after restoration and planting.

BEFORE:



AFTER RESTORATION:



This year 3G Program had a table set up in the Pytcher building during the Fair with some of its wood projects and freshly picked garlic. It was a golden opportunity to reach out and engage with the public, informing them of the program and its core mission of community service.



The 3G Program received donations during Fair Week for items that participants made and produce from the gardens.

We are looking forward to 2025 – the 119th Annual McKean County Fair on August 10th – 16th.

Program for Augmented Projects / Improvements

Although the Community Service Coordinator and the Community Service Specialist work with participants daily at the at the 3G Barn, in 2024 non-general fund (no additional cost to McKean County) were utilized for additional and specialized projects to make improvements. Probation officers who requested to work additional hours to their normal schedule were assigned participants to complete several projects including, but not limited to: replacing a foot bridge, planting new gardens for wildflowers, refreshing and making improvements to the Bucktail Park, revitalizing the Poor Farm Cemetery, and, disposing of piles of rotten wood and materials. This program allowed many participants, who normally work during the week, to complete their ordered community service hours after 4:30 p.m. on weekday afternoons and on many weekends.

In 2024 the garage off the side of the Poor Farm barn received a fresh coat of paint preserving and beautifying the wood!



Posing a safety risk due to age and wear the footbridge was rebuilt. The participants were supervised by Adult Probation on building a new footbridge along the Orchard Trail behind the barn. The construction and building materials were purchased from donations from produce and wood projects.



In Bucktail Park, the process began to refurbish our water pond, sitting benches, cannon and mural displays. Providing a beautiful sitting area along the trail.



We could not have accomplished all that we did at the barn this summer without the participants.

Poor Farm Cemetery

Community Service Participants under the supervision of Probation Officers revitalized the Poor Farm Cemetery paying homage to those who are laid to rest there. It had become overgrown and the benches and sign decayed. Regular care is vital to the preservation of the Barn and Poor Farm's history.



WITHIN THE BROADER COMMUNITY

The Community Service Program is much more than work at the 3G Barn area. In addition to the McKean County Fairgrounds project, in 2024 the Program assisted many other programs. Bart Barton, president of the McKean County Historical Society, routinely requests our assistance with various projects in and around the Old Jail Museum. In 2024, we assisted the Museum with reorganization of exhibits, renovation of the Sheriffs quarters, as well as the future Prospect Hill Fire Tower exhibit. Overall, our participants served 288 hours assisting with Museum projects. In addition to our partnership with the Historical Society, we had participants help at the Smethport Food Bank unloading trucks on their monthly delivery days. Five participants completed approximately 20 hours with the Food Bank in the fall of 2024.



Route 219 Welcome Garden, Bradford PA.

The Covid 19 pandemic made it difficult to gather participants to work on projects and several were, regretfully, neglected – including the 219 Welcome Garden. Renewed effort was undertaken in 2024 to revitalize the 219 Welcome Garden.

219 Garden BEFORE 2024 Renovation:



219 Welcome Garden AFTER 2024 renovations:



The work / cleanup process.



Participants took great pride in revitalizing the Welcome garden. The participants worked as a team on this project. Learning work skills and giving back to the community.



HIGH TUNNEL RESTORATION

In September 2014, the High Tunnel at the 3G Barn was completed. With our limited growing season and unpredictable weather, it extended our growing season and increased the produce that is grown. In 2023 a small group of participants, jail staff and adult probation staff installed a new cover for the high tunnel. The cover was purchased from donations. The high tunnel extends the growing season for lettuce and Swiss Chard in the Fall, Spring and Winter. The high tunnel provides: tomatoes, cucumbers and warm weather crops early in the summer, weeks before they could be harvested outside.



NOT WITHOUT THE HELP AND SUPPORT OF MANY

The support of the McKean County Commissioners and others in our community has been vital to the success of the 3G / Community Service Program. Two individuals who have provided substantial support and contributions are: Tom Stayer of Stayers Greenhouse; and, Bonnie Woods.

Tom Stayer / Stayers Greenhouse

Tom and Stayers Greenhouse have provided plants at reduced, and sometimes no, cost. He has provided much appreciated recommendations including what to plant, where to plant it and how to grow it. His advice and the staff and participants efforts have resulted in many 3G tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and lots of flowers!



Bonnie Woods

Bonnie Woods is a longtime friend of, and contributor to, the 3G Program. She donated approximately 100 lilies from her personal garden for us to plant.



CRAFTS FOR ALL SEASONS

During the Summer, the 3G Program's primary focus is on gardening. However, during the winter months when gardening is not possible, there is still much to do in the barn. The winter is the best time to revive, restore, and create new wood projects in the woodshop.



2024 has been an outstanding year for the painted wood projects, as we had many talented participants join us.



We have decorations for all seasons!



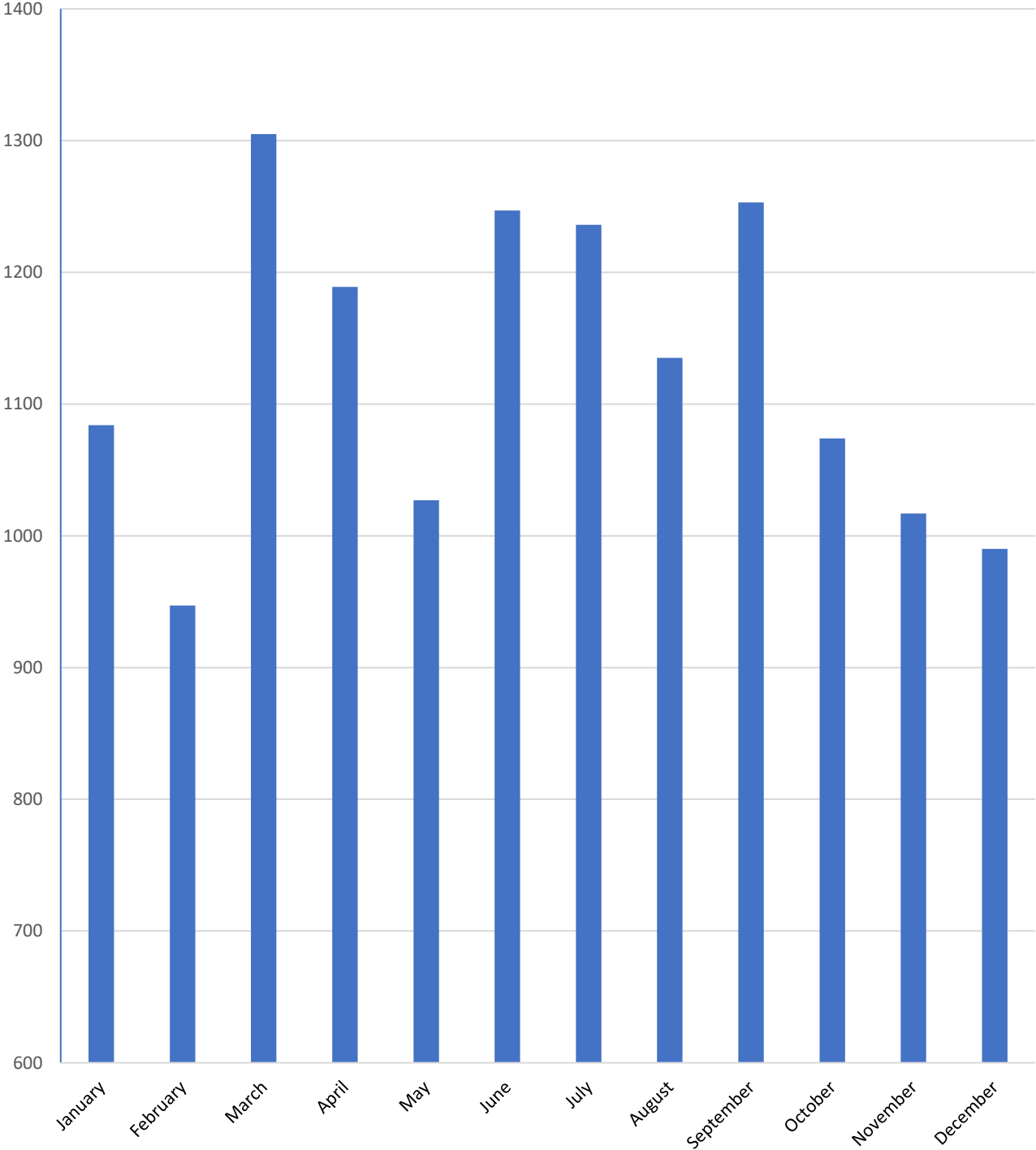
NOTE: Effect of Covid 19 (2019-2022):

The Covid 19 pandemic and its restrictions had a significant effect on both inmate population at the McKean County Jail and the number of hours of community service performed. During the pandemic, the jail population was kept at the minimal level possible to prevent a Covid outbreak and it was impossible to have teams of participants assemble and work with staff to complete projects. It was also very difficult to assign participants to local non-profits and other approved community service sites as their operations were greatly restricted. Therefore, the hours of community service performed for the years 2019 through 2022 was greatly reduced, and, the work of the 3G Program curtailed. In 2023 the Community Service Program and the 3G Program started the journey back to full functioning and revitalization. The data for 2019 -2022, including the hours performed and the reduction in jail population, is limited and does not provide beneficial information regarding the functioning and benefits of the program. In 2023, there were approximately 21 sites utilized. In 2024, there were 38 sites that were utilized for Community Service.

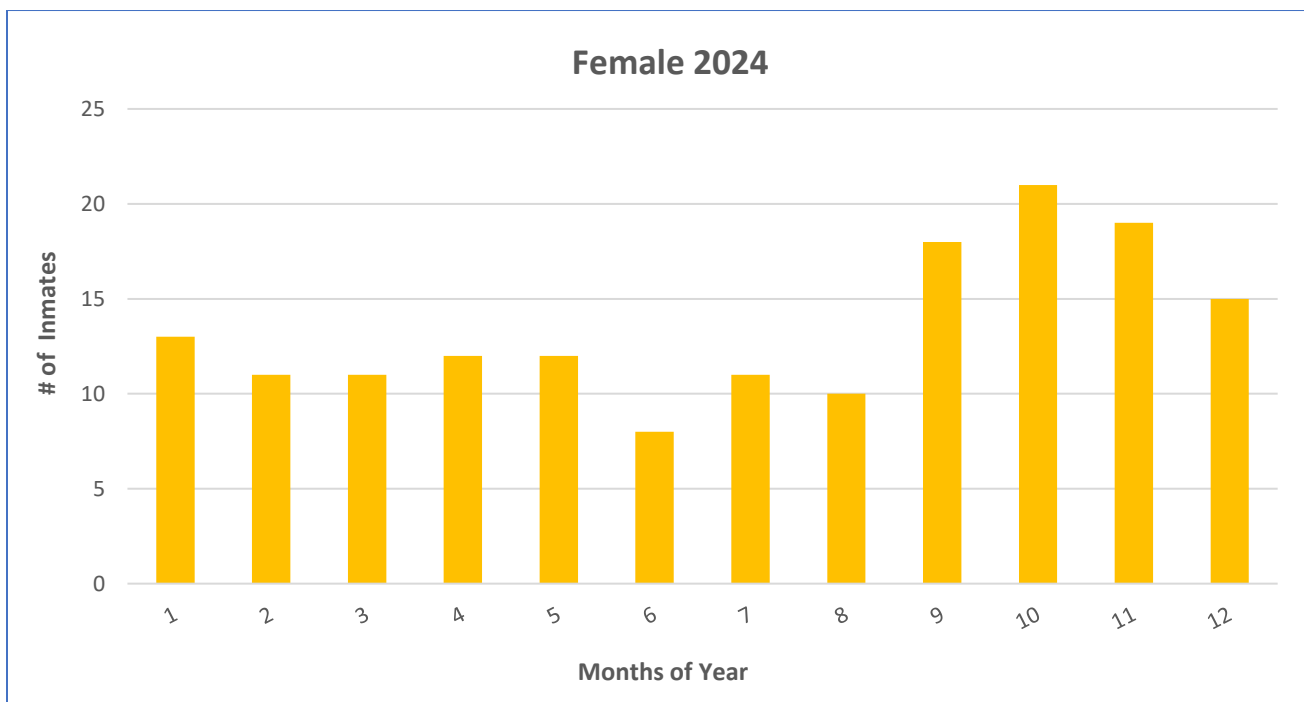
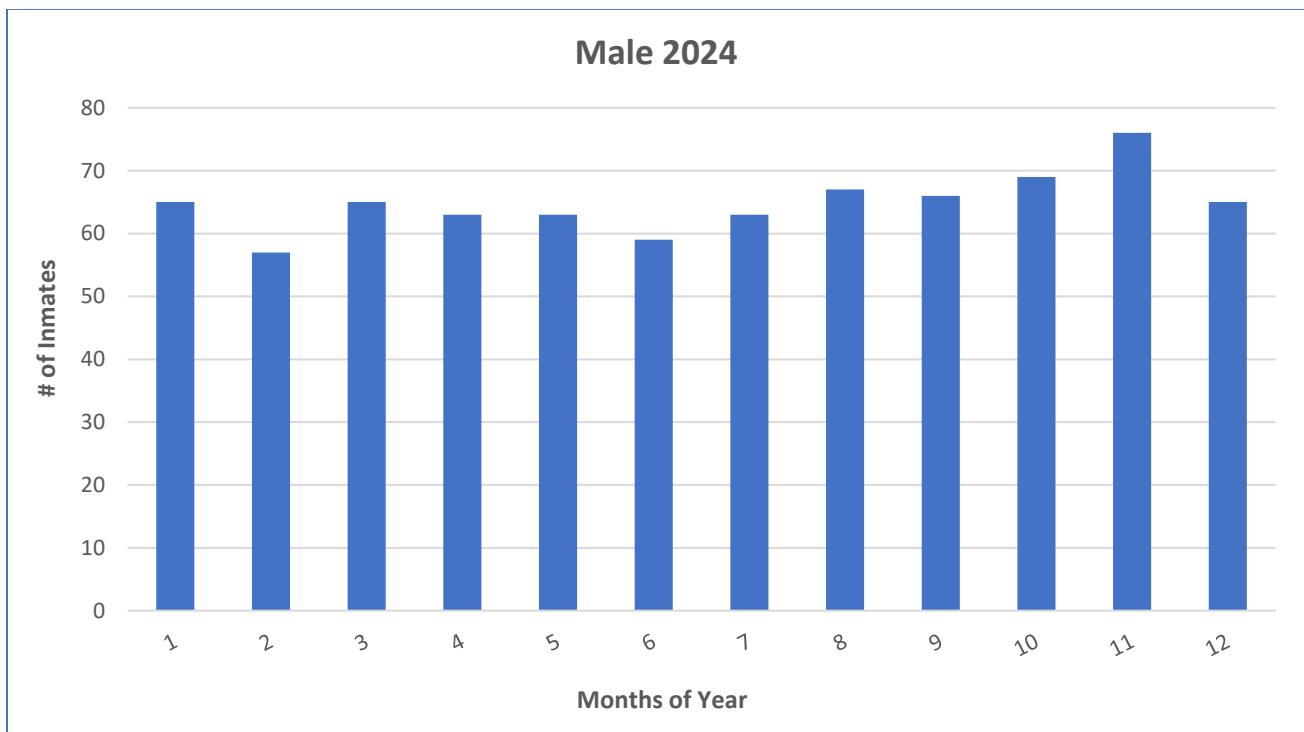
2024 Community Service Location and Hours

<u>Place</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Hours</u>
3G Program	4,610	Hope Unlimited	25
McK.County Historical Society	288	Penn State Arboretum	40
MCJ/McK. County Fairgrounds	8,090	Bradford Water Authority	50
McKean County Career Links	20	Kare for Kane	115
Bradford Goodwill	27	Catt. County SPCA	15
ADAS	35	Painted Post Food Pantry	50
Lafayette Township	50	Thrifty Mission	50
Bradford Water Authority	50	Finger Lakes Goodwill	25
Bradford United Way	20	Freedom Fighters Outdoor	25
Dreams-Go-On	25	Eldred Fire Hall	60
Destinations	10	Genesee Library	84
McK Co. Dept of Human Ser.	35	Kane Fish/Game Club	26
Eldred FireHall	60	Leek Hunt/Mountain Reserve	51
Serenity Food Bank	10	Bradford Salvation Army	65
Food for Life	25	St. Bernards Church	51
Hope Unlimited,FCC	25	Bradford Special Olympics	50
Wildcat Park	60	Quiet Creek Herb Farm	40
Willow Creek Herb Farm	40	Rehab, Resale, Revive	80

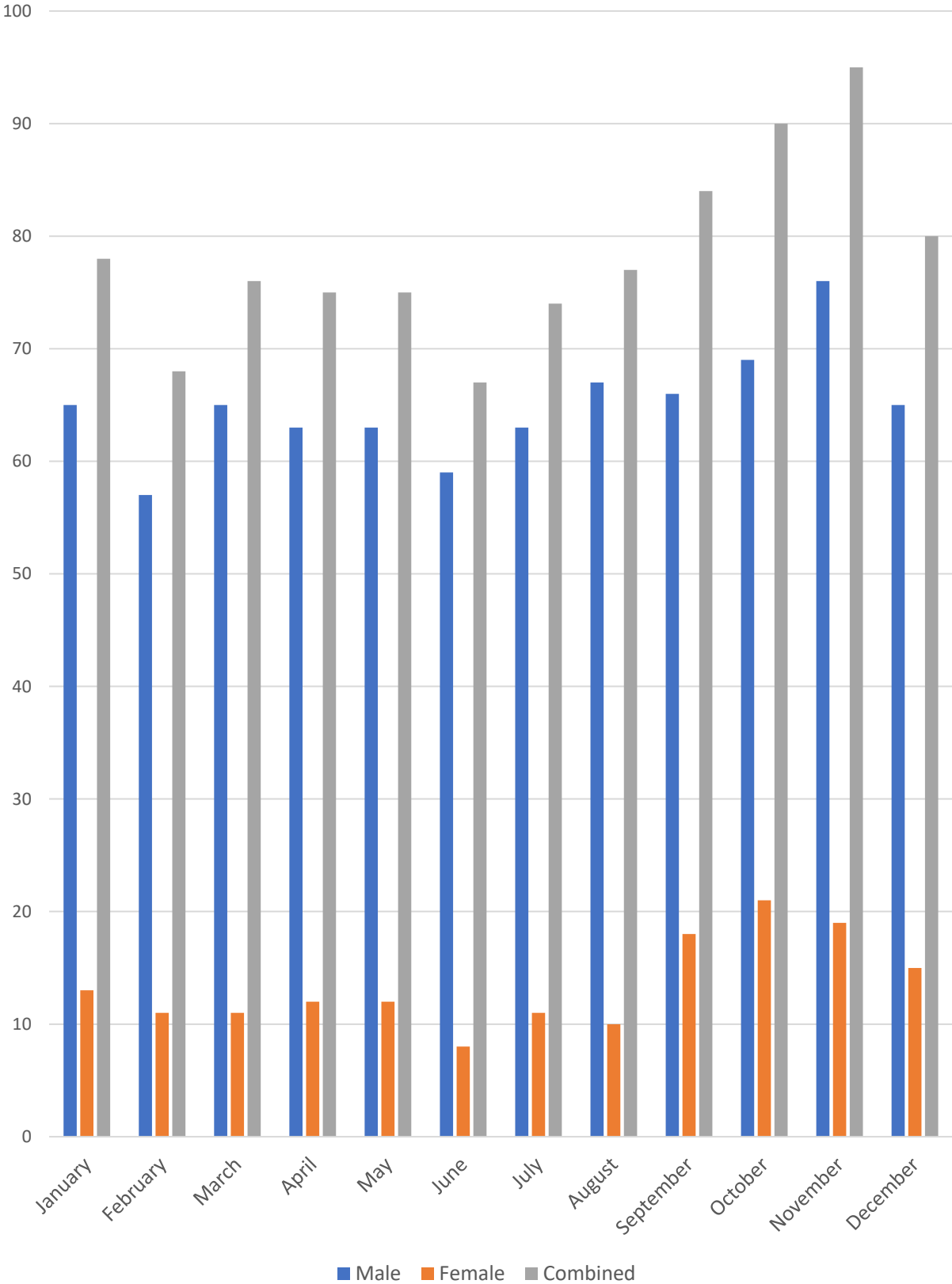
Community Service Hours Completed in 2024

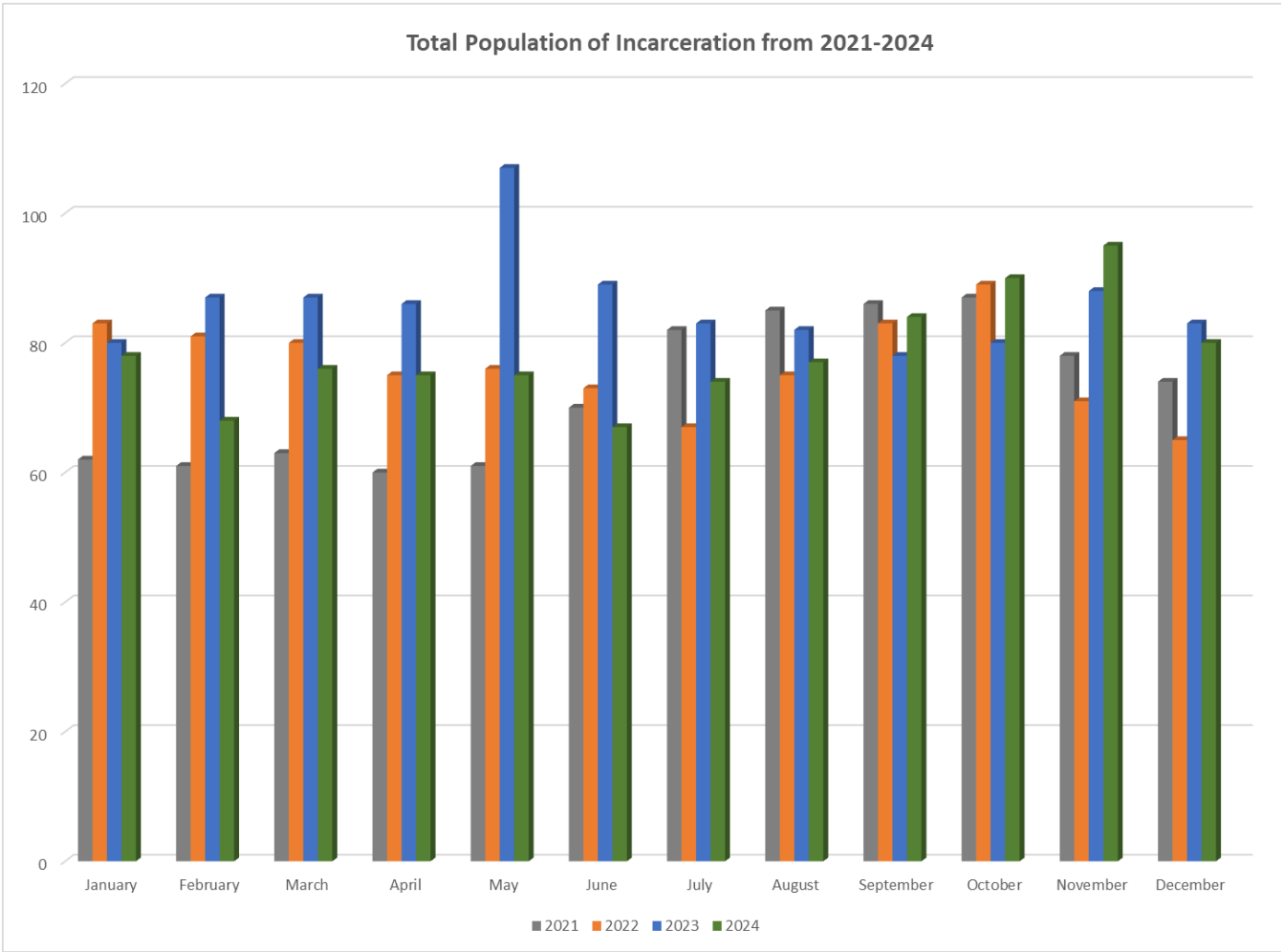


Number of Incarcerated Men and Women (Including out of county
defendants) by Month



Jail Population 2024





2024 EXPENSES AND COST SAVINGS

Direct Cost Savings.

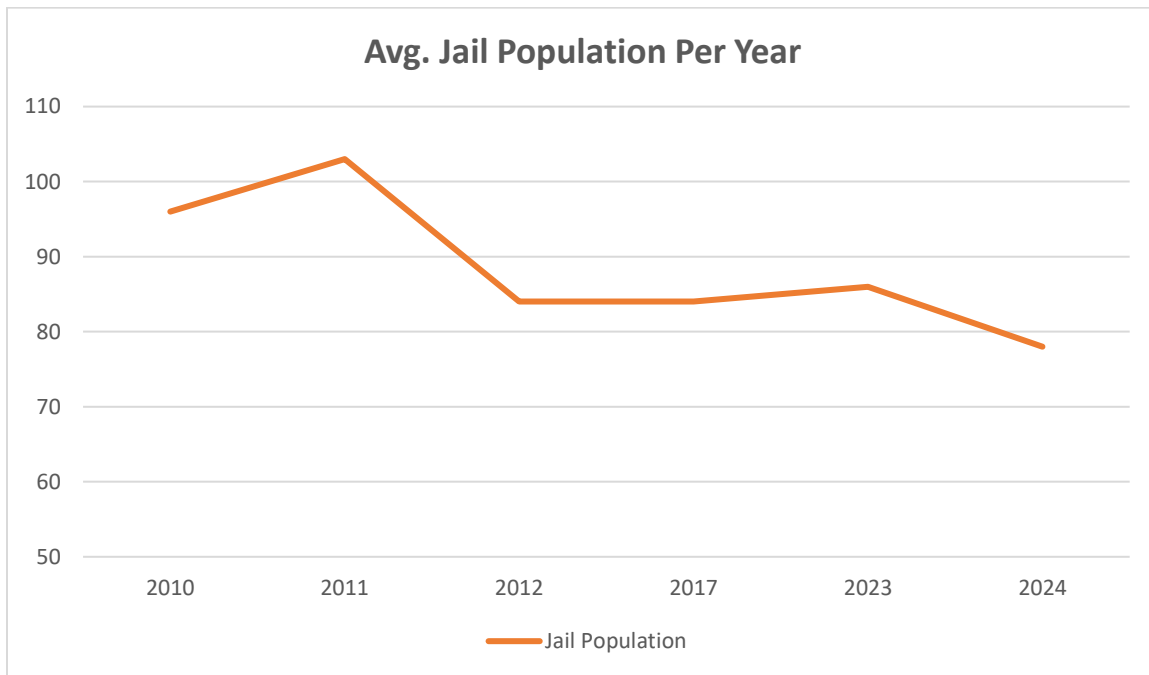
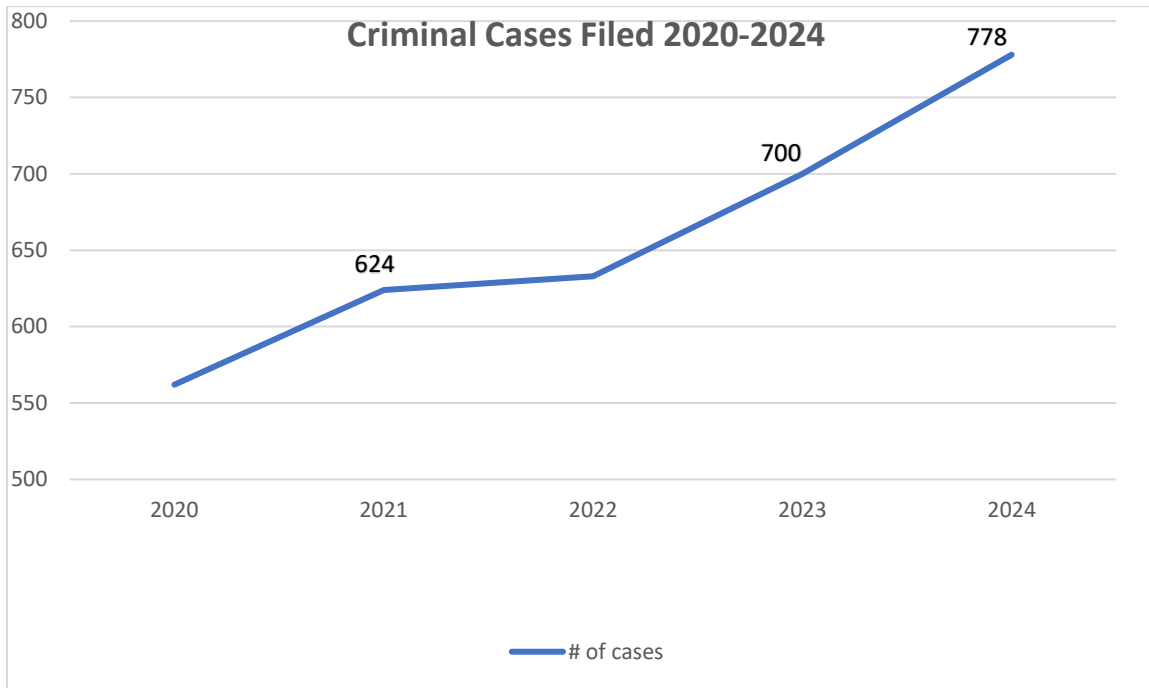
Incarceration costs money. The daily per diem rate to house an inmate in a County facility is estimated at \$110.00 (food, clothing, health care, etc.).¹ As the graphs and statistical information (on the next page) reflect the jail population has dramatically decreased in relation to case filings after the initiation of the 3G program. The 3G program may not be the only reason that the jail numbers have been reduced – even in years where case filings have increased – but it is a significant reason our jail population has declined. If Jail beds are reduced by 20 that is a daily savings of \$2,200.00 ($\$110.00 \times 20 = \$2,200$) – which will be an annual savings of \$532,900 ($\$2,200 \times 365 = \$803,000.00$). Further, the reduction in jail beds allows the county to lease open beds to other counties at a rate of \$110.00. At 10 beds rented daily that is income to the County of \$1,100.00 daily ($\$110.00 \times 10 = \$1,100.00$) – which will be an annual savings of \$401,500.00 ($\$1,100.00 \text{ a day} \times 365 = \$401,500.00$).

¹ There is a broad range of estimates for the cost to house an inmate per day in a County Jail in Pennsylvania. For example, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania sets forth the cost for a state inmate, the average for all state facilities, at \$174.83 (for 2021-2022). The House Appropriations Committee, 2/15/2019, *Criminal Justice Services*, sets the amount for a County Jail Inmate at \$29,520 annually or \$80.87 a day. However, this would have increased due to inflationary costs since 2019. The \$110 estimate utilized here was obtained from the McKean County Sherriff/Warden.

STATISTICS SUPPORT THAT THE PROGRAM HAS REDUCED JAIL POPULATION WITH SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS TO McKEAN COUNTY:

The Covid 19 pandemic and restrictions had a significant effect on both inmate population at the McKean County Jail and the number of hours of community service performed. The jail population was kept at the minimal level possible to prevent a Covid outbreak and it was impossible to have teams of participants assemble and work with staff to complete projects. Therefore, the statistical information for 2020 – 2022 is not included in this analysis.

As the graphs on page 34, demonstrate, in 2010, the year before the Program Started, the average jail population was 96. In 2011, the year the 3G Program started but hadn't had an effect yet on jail beds, the average jail bed population at the McKean County Jail was 103. In 2012 it fell to 84, and, in 2017 it was also 84. In 2023, the year the Program got back to full force after Covid, it was 86 and it fell to 78 in 2024. The fall in jail beds in 2024 is despite a significant increase in the number of cases filed in McKean County. In 2024 the total number misdemeanor and felony criminal cases filed was 778. This is approximately 39% increase in case filings from 2020. Although it is not the only reason for the lower jail population of 78 defendant's in 2024, the 3G Community Service Program is a significant contributing factor for this reduction that the population is lower in comparison to the cases filed.



Non-Financial Benefits



The Good Growing Garden Program provides the Community with fresh produce that is grown at the 3G Poor Farm Gardens. The Community Service / 3G Program maintains walking trails to provide the Community with trails to walk with beautiful scenery and history. The Program greatly assists the County recycling program. The Program maintain gardens at the barn and 3 others in McKean County (Courthouse, Fairgrounds and Bradford). Although it is hard to place a dollar figure on it, it gives participants a sense of pride and accomplishment from their hard work and talents – and assists them with their rehabilitation. There are successes and failures, but there are definite non-financial benefits for our participants, citizens and McKean County as a whole. They get to walk trails that otherwise would not be maintained, see flowers that would not otherwise bloom, obtain fresh produce that would not otherwise be available if the program did not exist; and, have individuals in their community that are productive citizens, in part, due to the assistance of this program.

COMMUNITY SERVICE ACCOUNT

As reflected below the program is bringing in sufficient funds through donations for projects and produce to cover the cost of supplies. Therefore, the cost of the Program are reduced.

Community Service Account **2024 Year End Totals**

Donations

Wood Products	\$ 1,874.00
Fresh Produce	+ 1,278.00
Metal/cans	+ 2,676.00
Total	\$ 5,828.00

Expenses Paid with Donations

Seeds	\$ 436.10
Lumber	\$1,242.41
Blocks	\$ 850.21
Planting Supplies	\$ 816.41
Dumpster	\$1,374.60
Equipment	\$ 215.17
Gravel	+ \$ 380.56
Total	\$5,315.46

Donations	\$5,828.00
Expenses	\$5,315.46

Balance Forward	\$12,170.71
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LOOKING AHEAD AND ENDING NOTE

We will continue to maintain the projects we have already adopted and completed, like our big four gardens (Barn, Courthouse, 219 and Fairgrounds gardens). We, of course, continue the core mission of the program: to instill in our participants a sense of pride and accomplishment that will assist them in their rehabilitation. Here are a few of 2024 participants' comments:

Andrew: (regarding the Bradford Welcome Garden): **“Look at that. We ***** did that!”** And, on the start of a different day: **“I’m excited to be able to go back to the Barn. I never really had a job where I felt like I did something that mattered.”**

Andrew completed hundreds of hours of community service while incarcerated to obtain early parole (earlier release from jail).

William: **“What are we doing next? Do you have anything for us next weekend?”.**

Cody: **“This place has really taught me a lot about myself.”**

Logan: **“It was a great experience. We were treated well for our hard work and it was enjoyable.”**

Many participants stop by after the have left the program to say hello, see what’s growing and literally show their family something positive and beneficial they completed.



“A garden requires patient labor and attention. Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them.” – Liberty Bailey

Participants thrive at the 3G Program because this program gives the participant a sense of accomplishment and can see the positive impact they have on the community.