

HAGERSTOWN HERALD-MAIL

Maryland

Rouse passes RCI reins to new warden

By HEATHER KEELS

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heather.keels@herald-mail.com

HAGERSTOWN — The leadership of Roxbury Correctional Institution passed from retiring Warden Nancy L. Rouse to new Warden Gregg L. Hershberger Tuesday morning with the presentation of a ceremonial key during a celebration inside the state prison south of Hagerstown.

Hershberger, formerly the assistant warden at the neighboring Maryland Correctional Institution-Hagerstown, has been transitioning into his new role for the past week and a half, and formally takes over as warden at RCI on Wednesday.

At Tuesday's ceremony, Rouse reflected on her 30-year career within the Maryland Division of Correction, which began with an internship in 1979.

"I've learned a great deal and I have grown a great deal," she said.

Among the most important lessons Rouse said she learned was the importance of embracing change.

Rouse said her retirement is a "happy change" in her life and she thought the transition to Hershberger's leadership would be good for the institution, as well.

Del. Christopher B. Shank, R-Washington, presented Rouse with a House of Delegates resolution honoring her for her career and extended the Washington County delegation's best wishes to Rouse and Hershberger.

In his remarks, Hershberger promised to do his best to live up to the faith Division of Correction officials have placed in him.

Hershberger said Rouse was his first mentor and had a positive influence on his career. He also spoke of lessons he learned from "four outstanding wardens" under whom he worked during his career, including how to be patient and how to manage a budget.

Hershberger started his career with the Maryland Division of Correction in 1982 as a correctional officer at Maryland Correctional Training Center. He transferred to the Case Management Department and was promoted to case management supervisor in 2001. In 2005, he became facility administrator for the Harold E. Donnell complex at MCTC and in 2006, he became assistant warden at MCTC. He was transferred to MCI-H in April 2008.

Hershberger said during his transition period at RCI, he has found its staff to be friendly and cooperative.

"I'm going to strive to work with them to make this institution the best it can be," he said.

After the ceremony, Hershberger said he did not intend to make any immediate changes at RCI.

He said RCI has a history of being a well-run institution with a great staff, and said he plans to sit back and observe before making any changes.

RCI, a medium-security prison opened in 1983, is the newest of the three prisons at the complex on Roxbury Road, off Md. 65 south of Hagerstown.

Hershberger said RCI is similar to MCTC, where he spent most of his career, because both have open courtyards and open housing.