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Photo by Sam Hearn

Men share their stories with an outside facilitator in VOEG's circle process

Victim-Offender Education Focuses on Spanish-Speaking Men

By Miguel Quezada and Juan Haines

On his second appearance before a parole board, Jose Segura was given a release date. He attributes this success to being able to express himself clearly through what he learned in the Spanish Victim Offender Education Group (VOEG).

VOEG is a program that puts offenders and victims of

crime in dialogue so they can discuss the impact of crime on families and communities.

"When I committed my crime, I had a belief system called machismo. This belief system taught me to have a big ego, be tough, never ask for help or let another man push you around," Segura said. "VOEG helped me see and transform the rage inside of me. I learned that asking for help or expressing my

emotions is acceptable. It's not something that makes me weak."

Segura, sentenced to 15 years to life, has been incarcerated for 20 years.

Trained facilitators Lesli Pastora Reyes, Steve

See *Victim* on Page 18

San Quentin Hosts 1st TEDx



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Neal Barsky, Sam Johnson, Delia Cohen, Darnell "Mo" Washington and David Le

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

Curtis "Wall Street" Carroll said his inspiration to learn how to read was when he heard about stocks. He said someone told him "that's where White people keep their money," to a laughing audience at a *Technology, Entertainment, Design*, (TEDx) event at San Quentin

State Prison. "It was a struggle learning how to read, but I kept at it."

Carroll, also known as the Oracle of San Quentin, talked about growing up in Oakland. His criminal life began at age 14, when he and his mother battled homelessness in a drug-infested environment. By

See *TEDx* on Page 14

S.Q. Toys for Tots Delights Kids

'I like visiting you; you're my partner'



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Members from the Veterans Group of San Quentin displaying a donated painting by a San Quentin artist to help with the toy drive

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

More than 194 toys were distributed to kids visiting San Quentin during the holiday season.

One of the recipients was 5-year-old Isaiah, who picked his toy and told his Dad, "I

like visiting you; you're my partner, and I like opening gifts."

The gifts were distributed over three days to children in the Main Visiting Room and the dormitories in H-Unit.

The 27th annual Toys for Tots program was sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps with

help from the Veterans Group of San Quentin, according to member Wesley Eisiminger.

Over the holidays, Gary Copper, chairman of the Toy Committee, and other veterans arranged a toy room with various gifts for boys and girls

See *27th Annual* on Page 4

California Building More County Jails

California has earned a reputation as a bastion of social liberalism, but reliance on mass incarceration continues to be a major component of its criminal justice policy, says a spokesperson for Californians

United for a Responsible Budget (CURB).

Of California's 58 counties, 23 "are already building new jails," according to the report

See *California* on Page 5



Courtesy of Stanislaus County

Breaking ground ceremony for new jail

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Prisoners United in the Craft of Journalism
In collaboration with students from the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY
Graduate School of Journalism



Journalism Guild
of San Quentin

San Quentin News strives to report on forward thinking approaches in criminal justice policies that support positive changes in prisoner behavior, particularly through rehabilitative efforts.

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The San Quentin News encourages inmates, free staff, custody staff, volunteers and others outside the institution to submit articles. All submissions become property of the San Quentin News.

Please use the following criteria when submitting:

- Limit your articles to no more than 350 words.
- Know that articles will be edited for content and length.
- The newspaper is not a medium to file grievances. (For that, use the prison appeals process.) We encourage submitting articles that are newsworthy and encompass issues that will have an impact on the prison populace.
- Please do not use offensive language in your submissions.
- Poems and art work (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.
- Letters to the editor should be short and to the point.

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Spanish Facilitator Impacts Lives

By Phoeun You
Graphic Designer

Lucia De La Fuente impacted the lives of 10 Spanish-speaking San Quentin prisoners with her skills as a counselor and teacher.

"She taught me how to deal with my traumas. I can own up to my crime and hold myself accountable for it," said Manuel Murillo, one of her students.

De La Fuente is one of three volunteers that recently launched Victim-Offender Education Group (VOEG) for Spanish-speaking prisoners.

"It's the other Spanish facilitators like her that are essential and important to help me express my feelings and emotions. It's not only a change for me; it's a change for everyone in the group. Now I have more confidence," Murillo added.

VOEG is a self-help program inside San Quentin that adopts restorative justice practices to find healing for both offenders and survivors.

"This program is about forgiveness and accountability. They go together," said De La Fuente. "It's about being accountable for the harm and forgiveness and it is about being accountable for the good they've done. Everyone has a different process for forgiveness."

In 2012, De La Fuente, a Mexican student, entered the United States on a visa to research Restorative Justice to earn a Ph.D. Her journey with VOEG began in a restorative justice facilitator training with IPP (Insight Prison Project), where she met former VOEG Program Coordinator Sonya Shah and VOEG facilitator Lesli Pastora Reyes.

Reyes recognized De La Fuente's potential and invited her to co-facilitate the first Spanish VOEG with Steve Granville.

After the third phase of training, which was held inside San Quentin, her belief in restorative justice was confirmed. De La Fuente witnessed a group of inmate facilitators model exercises from the curriculum. "That's when I decided to go nowhere and stay here," said De La Fuente.

As a Mexican citizen, De La Fuente understands the importance of serving the underserved community. "There was a cultural component that was missing (from VOEG). Everyone grew up in a different place. There's something about having the same heritage. You don't need to explain yourself all the time, because everyone gets you," said De La Fuente.

When the class began, De La Fuente, a soft-spoken petite young woman, was uncertain of her role as a facilitator. "The day that I met the group, I was afraid to say the wrong things and hurt them," she said.

Two years later, on Jan. 16, 10 Mexican men completed the first Spanish VOEG class. In



File photo

VOEG facilitator Lucia de la Fuente

class, the men shared what they took from the program and expressed how De La Fuente helped change their lives.

"This program is going to help me to fully understand the impact of my criminal behaviors and keep me from living a criminal lifestyle"

"She was there every step of the way when I had a hard time understanding the assignments. She was willing to stop and break each step down so I could understand it," said Jose Segura, who was recently found suitable for parole after serving 20 years. He aims to continue using what he learns out in the community. "This is going to help my kids because I can open up and better communicate with them. I can now be an example of their positive change."

Eduardo Gonzalez said, "She helped me understand the process of my crime — who I was then and who I am now. I use to have a difficult time expressing my feelings and emotions. This program is going to help me to fully understand the impact of my criminal behaviors and keep me from living a criminal lifestyle."

Reyes said of De La Fuente: "She was really timid — not sure if she was ready to facilitate. Now she is so confident in her abilities. (The participants)

call her 'The General.' She is not shy. When she sees something, she'll call it for what it is. I'm more flowery."

"Working with (De La Fuente) helps us see the best in men," said Reyes. "It's helped her confront some things that she wasn't ready to. It's healed us both."

After discussing the impact of the program, inside facilitators Arnulfo T. Garcia and Jorge Heredia presented certificates of appreciation to De La Fuente and Reyes on behalf of the participants. Both accepted the certificates with tears.

The students "have taught me that it's okay to be in a vulnerable place," De La Fuente said. "I didn't know how to say no to people. I wanted to please everyone even though I didn't want to. Now I can say no, because if I'm not OK, I can't be OK for someone else."

Despite the success of her experience, De La Fuente admits it is difficult being away from her country. "Life was hard in America trying to adjust to western culture." Aside from receiving a national scholarship, she struggles to find income.

De La Fuente plans to continue with VOEG and wants to expand restorative justice abroad. "I want to keep doing this with the youth and women," said De La Fuente.

Re-energized and clear with a vision, De La Fuente hopes to one day implement programs like VOEG in Mexico and different locations in Latin America. What drives her to continue her restorative justice endeavors is remembering the injustices that exist in her native land.

In two years, De La Fuente is scheduled to receive her doctorate in social change, focused on restorative justice, from California Institute of Integral Studies.

Third Trial Looms After 43 Years In Solitary

By Salvador Solorio
Journalism Guild Writer

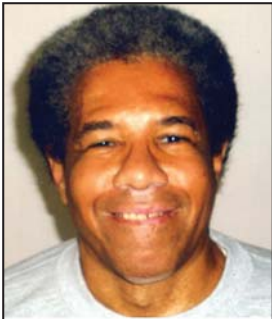
A federal appeals court has approved a third trial for a man who has spent more than four decades in solitary confinement for a crime he insists he didn't commit.

A lower court ruled that Albert Woodfox be released immediately because he could not get a fair trial after two previous convictions were tossed out. But the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals blocked his freedom and allowed Louisiana to hold a third trial, according to Mother Jones magazine.

The state wants to try Woodfox for a third time for the killing of prison guard Brent Miller in 1972. Woodfox has spent 23 hours a day in a six-by-nine-foot cell at the Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola) for the last 43 years.

Woodfox, Herman Wallace and Robert King were members of the so-called "Angola 3." Wallace died three days after he was released in 2013. King's conviction was overturned in 2001 after 29 years in solitary confinement.

Mother Jones reporter James Ridgeway wrote, "The men contend that they were targeted by prison authorities and convicted of murder not based on the actual evidence which was dubious at best – but because they were members of the Black Panther Party's prison



Albert Woodfox

chapter, which was organizing against horrendous conditions at Angola."

In a 2008 disposition, Angola Warden Burl Cain confirmed

Woodfox's political affiliation accounted for the seemingly permanent stay in solitary. Cain told Woodfox's attorneys he would keep Woodfox in solitary even if he wasn't guilty of Miller's murder, stating, "Okay, I would still keep him in CCR (solitary)...I still know that he is still trying to practice Black Pantherism, and I still would not want him walking around my prison because he would organize the young new inmates. I would have me all kind of problems, more than I could stand, and I would have the Blacks chasing after (the Black Panthers)...He has to stay in a cell while he's at Angola."

Amnesty International re-

acted to the latest court ruling with dismay, stating Woodfox "remains trapped in a nightmare -- both by conditions of solitary confinement and by a deeply flawed legal process that has spanned four decades."

Jasmine Heiss of Amnesty International stated, "Woodfox should have walked free. But Louisiana Attorney General Buddy Caldwell continues to relentlessly pursue vengeance over justice."

The magazine reported the victim's widow opposes another trial, and all the purported witnesses have died, but the state proposes to retry the case by having stand-ins read from the transcripts of the dead witnesses' prior testimonies.

Report Challenges Abuse of Solitary Confinement

A growing movement of experts and scholars is challenging solitary confinement as unnecessarily costly, undermining public safety and violating human rights, two organizations say in an 18 page report.

"Across the United States, policymakers are recognizing that long-term solitary confinement is inhumane and an unnecessary drain on resources," according to the report by the New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty and the American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico.

"At the same time, there is rising awareness that the use of solitary confinement can undermine public safety. Maine and Mississippi, in particular, have taken proactive roles in reducing their solitary confinement populations," the October 2013 report says.

The report focused on the use and abuse of solitary confinement in New Mexico prisons and jails. It noted that \$22 million was awarded in 2012 to former prisoner Stephen Slevin after he was confined in a pad-

ded cell in Dona Ana County for almost two years without a trial.

The document says during his time in solitary confinement, Slevin developed bedsores and fungus, his toenails grew so long they curled under his toes and he was forced to extract one of his own teeth because he was denied dental care.

Slevin's solitary confinement significantly worsened his existing mental illness due to his isolation and lack of medical care; his pleas for help were ignored and he never had an opportunity to see a judge, the report states.

The report says countless studies have shown that otherwise mentally stable people can experience severe adverse effects from even short periods of enforced isolation. Symptoms include social withdrawal, panic attacks, irrational anger, loss of impulse control, paranoia, severe depression and hallucinations. The effect on children and those already suffering from mental illnesses can be

devastating.

Since the 1980s, corrections have increasingly relied on solitary confinement as a prison management tool. Institutions called "supermax prisons" have been built to house prisoners in extreme isolation, sometimes for years or even decades.

The report says several hundred prisoners are kept in New Mexico's supermax lockup and several hundred more are held in disciplinary isolation cells.

According to the New Mexico Department of Corrections, about 13 percent of the state's prison population is housed in some form of solitary confinement. However, according to the U.S. Department of Justice National Institute of Corrections, New Mexico was ranked second-worst (13 percent) behind West Virginia (16 percent) as compared with federal detention of 7 percent in solitary confinement.

Jerry Roark, NMDC director of adult prisons, stated, "We got in the habit of making it too easy to lock down prisoners. Right now, we have too many

non-predatory prisoners in segregation. We need to change that, and we're working on it."

According to the report, the American Bar Association defines long-term solitary confinement as longer than 30 days. In 2013, the NMDC's combined average of stay for prisoners confined in New Mexico's supermax is 1,072 days.

The report states that 95 percent of prisoners are released to the public. How they are treated while detained plays a critical role in determining how they will adjust to public life and whether they re-engage in criminal activity when released. Those prisoners who have experienced extreme solitary confinement and especially those with mental illness, re-enter society ill-equipped to handle the "free world" in a healthy, constructive way.

The states of Maine and Mississippi have diminished use of solitary confinement. Maine's supermax facility often had its 100 strict-isolation cells filled; it now confines an average 40 of 45 prisoners.

In Mississippi's supermax Unit 32, programs changed by allowing group dining, additional physical activity, access to work opportunities and rehabilitative services, which resulted in a decrease in violent incidents and a 70 percent drop in numbers of prisoners in solitary confinement.

The amount saved in operational costs for daily housing in solitary (\$102) versus general population (\$42) was a major benefit of closing Unit 32. The state saved \$6 million per year. One major factor for the closing of supermax facilities is their drain on public resources.

The report recommends these changes:

- Increased transparency and oversight for confinement practices.
- Provide mental, physical and social stimulation for segregated prisoners.
- Limit solitary confinement to no more than 30 days.
- Ban solitary confinement for children and mentally ill prisoners.

—Salvador Solorio

United Nations Recommends Changes In Prisoners' Treatment

By Chung Kao
Staff Writer

A United Nations commission has recommended significant changes to the minimum standards for the treatment of prisoners around the world.

"No prisoner shall be subjected to, and all prisoners shall be protected from, torture and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment," the proposed Rule 1 says.

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) proposed revisions to the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (standard minimum rules) to conform to contemporary correctional science and models.

They are "the minimum conditions which are accepted as suitable by the United Nations."

An expert group studied best practices, national legislation and existing international law to "reflect recent advances in correctional science and best practices." The following are highlights of the proposed rules, to



be called "The Mandela Rules," honoring the late South African activist Nelson Mandela.

The purpose of imprisonment is "to protect society against crime and to reduce recidivism." Prison administrations should offer education, vocational training and work, and other programs of remedial, moral, spiritual, social, and health and sports-based natures.

Prisons must have a standardized prisoner case and medical file management system made available to prisoners.

Men and women, youth and adults, pretrial and convicted prisoners, and civil and criminal prisoners must be kept separately.

Limit celled housing to one person per cell; dormitories must contain compatible prisoners. All housing units must meet all requirements of health: air, water, floor space, lighting, heating, ventilation, toilet, and bathing or shower installations.

Prisoners must be provided with adequate clothing and bedding, changed and washed as often as necessary, nutritious food and drinking water, and at least one hour of outdoor exercise daily.

Prisoners should have access to free health care services, equivalent to those available in the community. Services must include dental and mental health care, prenatal and postnatal care for female prisoners.

Disciplinary sanctions must be proportional to the offenses. Prohibited are torture or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment, solitary confinement for more than 15 consecutive days, placement in a dark or constantly lit cell, corporal punishment, reduction of diet or drinking water, or col-

lective punishment.

Chains, irons or other instruments of restraint that are inherently degrading are prohibited. Restraints would be banned for women during labor, childbirth and immediately after childbirth.

Searches must not be used to harass, intimidate or unnecessarily intrude on a person's privacy. Strip and body cavity searches must be done in private by trained staff of the same sex, and body cavity searches must be done by qualified health care professionals.

Upon admission, every prisoner must be promptly informed, in a language and manner that he or she understands, of the prison rules and regulations and the prisoner's rights and obligations. Prisoners must be permitted to make requests and complaints to the prison administration, confidentially and free of retaliation, intimidation and other negative consequences.

Prisoners must be permitted to communicate with their families and friends, in writing and

by telecommunication and other means, and to receive visits from them and from their legal and diplomatic representatives.

Each prison must have a library adequately stocked for use by all prisoners. Prisoners must be allowed to attend religious services of their faith.

Every prisoner must have the right to notify his or her family of serious illness, injury or transfer and to receive notification of the serious illness or death of a near relative.

Women prisons must be under the authority of a female staff member. Female prisoners must be supervised by female staff members.

Prisoners may not be held in slavery or forced labor.

Prisoners diagnosed with severe mental disabilities and/or health conditions must be transferred to mental health facilities as soon as possible.

Pretrial detainees and persons not charged with a crime must sleep singly in separate rooms and may not be required to work.

American Prison Population Soars to 2.2 Million

‘There are also well-documented records of prisoner abuse, poor pay and benefits to employees, scandals, escapes, riots, lawsuits and wrongful deaths’

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

Over the past 30 years, the number of people behind bars in the United States has grown more than 500 percent to 2.2 million. A report by the Southern Center for Human Rights attributes the increase to the advent of prison privatization.

Two private prison corporations, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) and GEO Group (formerly Wackenhut Corrections Corporation), have profited from the dramatic rise in tough-on-crime incarceration and detention in the United States, the report adds.

During this time, immigration detention centers have risen from an average of 131 people to over 32,000 people on any given day.

Despite stating publicly that they do not lobby on sentencing or detention enforcement legislation, both corporations lobbied aggressively — to the tune of over \$22 million — to increase their share of federal detention and prison contracts. In 2012, U.S. Senate records disclosed CCA hired a lobbying firm to pursue federal immigration policy issues.

During Senate hearings, quarterly lobbying records confirmed GEO Group hired a firm to influence Congress

on issues related to comprehensive immigration reform in April 2013.

Once former legislators and corrections officials retire from public service, the companies hire them into the public and private sectors to take advantage of their political connections, the report disclosed. “They also help their lobbyists (or former lobbyists) obtain positions of influence in government, serving as political advisors and garnering appointments to various committees and boards.”

INVESTMENTS

The companies’ investments in Congress have turned imprisonment into a multi-billion dollar industry. Together, these private sector operatives have established more than 158 correctional and detention facilities with a capacity of more than 163,500 beds in the U.S. and three other countries, the report discovered.

Their revenue has exceeded \$3 billion annually, making them the third-largest prison system in the U.S., behind the states and federal government.

Despite their financial compensation, the report revealed, “there are also well-documented records of prisoner abuse, poor pay and benefits to em-

ployees, scandals, escapes, riots, lawsuits and wrongful deaths. At the same time, states and the federal governments have begun to rethink their sentencing and detention policies, citing cost, effectiveness and public safety outcomes” as reasons for reconsidering privatization as an alternative.

RELAXATION

Corrections Corporation of America told shareholders in 2012, “The demand for our facilities and services could be adversely affected by the relaxation of enforcement efforts, leniency in conviction or parole standards and sentencing practices or through the decriminalization of certain activities that are currently proscribed by criminal laws,” the report disclosed.

“An additional threat is the negative publicity garnered by multiple scandals in for-profit facilities nationwide. Allegations of prisoner abuse, financial mismanagement, medical neglect, riots, escapes and deaths have made headlines, contributing to growing popular opposition to for-profit incarceration and costly litigation for states. Negative publicity is viewed as a significant risk factor for investors in prison corporations, as it could

impact current and future contracts,” the report stated.

CCA and GEO Group are sensitive to the industry trends and recognizes the need to seek new and different markets to conserve and increase their profits. Today, the private prison industry has adapted by expanding its services to include more treatment services while states reduce sentences to shrink prison populations.

To remain a key component in the private prison industry, both companies have constructed alternative programs — the “Treatment Industrial Complex” — into their financial portfolios.

SERVICES

These ventures have emerged into correctional medical care, mental health treatment and community corrections. Other services include corrections programs outside of jail or prison walls, including probation, parole, halfway houses, day reporting centers, drug/alcohol treatment programs, home confinement and electronic monitoring. In addition, supportive services such as educational classes and job training are being added to their program, the report said.

According to Southern Center for Human Rights, commu-

nity corrections are big business, with three times as many people under these programs as are currently incarcerated in prison facilities.

The GEO Group has spun off a wholly owned subsidiary, GEO Care, in 2012. This corporation provides correctional mental healthcare services and operates several state psychiatric hospitals treating forensic and civil populations. More recently, Correct Care Solutions acquired GEO Care, which provides health care to incarcerated populations in 30 states, according to the report.

Since the GEO Group wanted alternatives to the prison market, the company has acquired Behavioral Interventions Inc., which manufactures GPS ankle bracelet monitors and other compliance technologies.

This new phenomenon must be examined, Southern Center for Human Rights said. These are criminal justice issues that advocates, systems actors, good government proponents, treatment and service providers, mental health advocates and government agencies must become more aware of the acquisitions of these services in the prison. It is critical that advocates of prison reform begin evaluating every proposed movement into this industry, the report added.

27th Annual Veterans’ Toys for Tots at San Quentin

Continued from Page 1

from newborn through age 17.

Several of the younger children who visited this year’s toy room were apprehensive at first not realizing the gifts were there for them. All that nervousness went away immediately after one of the veterans wearing an elf hat told the kids: “Pick a toy.”

“It gives me a chance to be around good people with a good purpose”

Three-year-old Rainni’s excitement turned to tears. She had to wait until after the family finished their visit; however, all her exhilaration returned when she picked up her toy before leaving.

West Block inmate Daniel Gutierrez escorted his 10-year-old brother, Aiden, and his 6-year-old sister, Aaliyah, to the toy room. The excitement and joy of receiving a gift just spread out all over their smiles when they said, “Thank you.”

The intimacy of Christmas and family sprouted throughout the Main Visiting Room as the holiday spirit could be



Michael Upton waiting to pass out toys to kids in the visiting room



(Top row) Stephen Wilson, Wesley Eisiminger, Tony Burch, Steve Emrick, Jyllyn Manley, Gary Cooper, Garvin Robinson (Bottom) Micheal Upton

seen on the faces of inmates and their loved ones.

Richard and La-Keesha Richardson literally celebrate Christmas every weekend together. “He’s my inspiration and the love of my life,” she said.

Mr. and Mrs. Ricky Gains believe Christmas gives a special accountability to their relationship. It epitomizes the empowerment of love and support it takes to get through these tough times.

Mrs. Lewis Scott told her husband, “To celebrate Christmas with the man I love is a great inspiration.”

Antoine Wati’s “Grandma Mae,” his mother and Aunt Felicia bring peace, love, joy and happiness to his life every time they come to visit. But “Grandma Mae” said, “Christmas is especially important because it’s all about family.”

Correctional Officer Gavrilchik said: “People put too much on giving gifts; I wish they would realize why Jesus was born. That’s a true believer.”

For VGSQ veteran Mike Upton, this was a unique experience. “It gives me a chance to be around good people with a good purpose.”

Jlynn, the VGSQ sponsor who has spent the last 13 years involved with the toy program, said, “These guys are my second family. I find as much joy spending time with them as I do with my own family.”

Texas Governor: Prisoners Need Chance To Begin New Life With Clean Slate

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

"The idea that we lock people up, throw them away, never give them a chance at redemption, is not what America is about," said Gov. Rick Perry (R-TX) to a nonpartisan research and educational institute in 2014. "Being able to give someone a second chance is very important."

More than 1.5 million Americans are incarcerated in state and federal prisons, a figure that has quintupled since 1980—counting those serving sentences in local jails the number rises to 2.2 million.

- Nearly 12 million cycle in and out of local jails each year, and still more end up with a criminal record without any period of incarceration.
- More than 600,000 Americans are released from federal and state prisons each year.
- More than 95 percent of

individuals in state prisons are expected to return to their communities at some point.

- More than 4.7 million people are currently being "supervised" in the community, with 3.9 million of these people on probation and 850,000 of them on parole.

A report from The Center for American Progress concluded that when someone has a criminal record, it presents obstacles to employment, housing, public assistance, education, family reunification and could result in monetary debts. Many of the offenses on record are minor or non-serious infractions; others are arrests without a conviction.

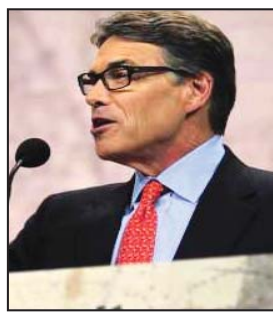
Due to advanced technologies and information available through the Internet, along with federal and state policy decisions, even minor criminal histories could carry lifelong barriers to social services or resources intended to aid the underprivileged, according to *One*

Strike and You're Out—How We Can Eliminate Barriers to Economic Security and Mobility for People with Criminal Records.

The report found more than half of adult inmates are parents of minor children, 2.6 million, or one in 25 American children, had a parent in prison in 2012, up from 350,000 in 1980.

U.S. incarceration rates have such a profound effect on families that in 2013, *Sesame Street* added a character with an incarcerated father, the report noted.

The report cites Michelle Alexander's book *The New Jim Crow*, saying, "Mass incarceration and its direct and collateral consequences have effectively replaced intentional racism as a form of 21st century structural racism. Indeed, research shows that mass incarceration and its effects have been significant drivers of racial inequality in the United States, particularly during the



Official Photo

Texas Governor
Rick Perry

past three to four decades."

In a positive trend, according to a 2014 Vera Institute of Justice review of states' laws, 23 states—ranging from Arkansas to Mississippi to California—broadened their expungement laws between 2009 and 2014. Reforms included extending eligibility to additional classes of offenses, reducing waiting periods, clarifying the effect of the expungement or sealing records and altering the burden of proof to facilitate expungement.

A recent study by the RAND Corporation offers evidence that

prison education and training programs reduce recidivism, increase employment and yield cost savings.

The RAND study found inmates who participated in correctional education were 43 percent less likely to return to prison than those who did not. Employment rates after release were 13 percent higher for inmates who participated in academic or vocational education programs and 28 percent higher for those who participated in vocational training.

These programs were found to be highly cost-effective. Every dollar spent on prison education saved \$4 to \$5 in incarceration costs during the next three years, when recidivism is most likely.

Despite their cost effectiveness, prison education and training programs are relatively scarce. According to a report from the Government Accountability Office, the number of federal inmates on waiting lists to participate in basic literacy programs nearly equals the number participating in such programs.

Leaders Address Public Safety on Capitol Hill

By Isaiah Thompson-Bonilla
Journalism Guild Writer

Leaders from three states traveled to Capitol Hill in June to tout the positive effects of their recent sentencing and corrections reforms for a summit on public safety attended by members of Congress who are considering reforming the federal system.

Nearly half of U.S. states have enacted reforms since 2007 through "bipartisan efforts... that have reduced prison growth and taxpayer costs while improving public safety," according to a June report by the Pew Charitable Trust, which hosted the event.

Leaders from South Dakota, Utah and South Carolina spoke about the improvements reforms have brought to their states. While the reforms vary, all of the states are reserving space in prisons for serious and repeat offenders and channeling non-violent offenders through cost-effective alternatives to prison.

The speakers found a willing audience in U.S. Representatives Bobby Scott, D-Va., and Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Wisc., who spoke in favor of federal reforms.

South Dakota's Republican governor, Dennis Daugaard, said the prison population in his state has stabilized since 2013. Two prison construction projects were halted, and the new prison funds redirected toward programs that will help to reduce recidivism.

Parole caseloads now look a lot different since the implementation of the programs. The report acknowledged that South Dakota's parole completion rate has gone from 37 percent in

2012 to 60 percent in 2014. Furthermore, the parolee population has decreased eight percent in nearly two years.

In the state of South Carolina, reforms have been underway since 2010. In 2015, the prison system statewide has declined 22 percent than what was projected without reforms -- a 9.5 percent drop in the population, bringing the total of incarcerated to 21,815 prisoners. South Carolina also closed two prisons and reduced by population of another prison in half, and the number of nonviolent offenders has dropped by 30 percent. South Carolina is also reporting a 16 percent drop in violent crime.

In Utah \$13 million has been redirected as a result of strict reforms and prioritizing prison space for serious offenders. In April 2015, a criminal justice legislation package was passed giving the corrections department the ability to strengthen the probation and parole departments. The package also helps to direct funds to re-entry programs aiding in reducing recidivism.

In the next two decades, legislators believe that they can reduce prison expansion by nearly 100 percent. If successful, taxpayers will save more than \$500 million.

Pew reported that the national incarceration rate fell four percent from 2003 to 2013. In contrast, the federal incarceration rate rose 15 percent over the same period.

Huffington Post concluded that, "changes and growing successes can serve as a guide for Congress as it considers sentencing and corrections reform at the federal level."

California Building More County Jail Facilities

Continued from Page 1

titled *CURB Decarceration Report Card: Are Counties Building Jails or Investing in Community Solutions?*

Five counties are building "two or more jails," and in terms of moving away from relying on incarceration, the report gave every county a failing grade.

The current plan to build new jails has CURB questioning the validity and nature of California's social-liberal reputation.

"While the rest of the nation is talking about reducing incarceration and its enormous social and economic costs, California is yet again pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into building new jails, reinforcing the state's reliance on imprisonment for decades to come," said Lizzie Buchen, statewide advocacy and communications co-coordinator for CURB.

Politicians use compassionate words such as "treatment" and "rehabilitation," giving the impression that a shift in incarceration ideology is underway, Buchen said. In reality, additional sums of taxpayer monies are being funneled toward "lock-up" facilities, she added.

"These so-called 'social service jails' do offer mental health and substance abuse treatment, but they also reinforce the idea that social problems, such as homelessness, should continue to be dealt with using state coercion," Buchen commented.

One of those doubling down on new jail construction is Los Angeles, the largest county in the United States, with a population of around 10 million people, 17,000 of whom are behind bars, CURB

reports.

Last year, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved a new men's jail expected to cost over \$1 billion and a women's jail projected to cost about \$200 million. The county spends \$3.2 billion a year on the local sheriff's department.

In addition to Los Angeles County jail building, the Board of State and Community Corrections has doled out about a half-billion dollars to fund jail construction in San Francisco, Santa Clara, Alameda, Ventura, Amador, Colusa, Yuba, Trinity, Humboldt, Butte, Sonoma, Yolo, Merced, Placer and Napa counties.

"New felonies can be created, and reduced sentences can always climb back up"

"Twenty-eight counties are leveraging \$1.7 billion in state grants to build and expand 35 jails," reports Anat Rubin for *The Marshall Project*. "These projects, in various stages of design and construction, will initially add about 12,000 jail beds in the state, according to the *Public Policy Institute of California*. But many of the new jails are designed to accommodate future expansions that could significantly increase their capacity."

At the urging of CURB, San Francisco temporarily rejected its jail building funds.

The United States has between 2.2 and 2.4 million people in its prisons and jails.

California alone has more than 200,000 people in its jails and prisons. However, California's prison population have been drastically reduced after the U.S. Supreme Court ordered a prison population cap in 2011.

To meet the cap, the state implemented a plan called, Realignment.

Realignment changed where people serve their time, from state prisons to county jails, once they are sentenced.

In addition, the state prison population has been reduced by the release of more than 2,100 Three-Strikers after California voters passed Proposition 36 in 2012. Then, California voters passed Proposition 47 in 2014, resulting in the penalty for some nonviolent property and drug offenses to be reduced to misdemeanors. CURB estimates that the measure would reduce about 40,000 jail and prison sentences.

"New felonies can be created, and reduced sentences can always climb back up," Buchen said. "If you're pouring money into building new cages, vested interests (private contractors and the prison guards' union) will see to it that they are filled," says Buchen.

"The nation's most ambitious prison downsizing was sold to the public with the same language used to promote sustainable food and urban farming: 'Local is Better,'" Rubin reported. "That was the phrase on the lips of California officials as they hurriedly transferred control for non-violent offenders — along with significant funding — from the state to its 58 counties."

—Juan Haines

America's Prisons Need To Focus On Healing, Education and Training

By Arnulfo T. Garcia
Editor-in-Chief

EDITORIAL

Prison is designed to break you, not to make you better. Our prison system takes people who have had traumatic lives and puts them in circumstances that expose them to even more trauma—like living in a cage with a stranger or being subjected to riots or having live ammunition fired by correctional officers trying to break up fights involving weapons or being isolated from family, friends and significant others.

People are placed in traumatic circumstances—when they've already demonstrated they are not able to handle trauma well, and it hardens them in order to survive. While in prison, people are not provided incentives or opportunity to rehabilitate themselves. Then the system kicks them back out into society, where they find themselves further behind than when they left the streets. When they re-offend, the system puts them in prison for life, under the Three Strikes Law.

When you commit criminal acts, you inflict pain and suffering on others. You lose your connection to the mainstream of humanity. Once connection is lost—to ourselves, to someone else, to our family, to our community—real feelings are lost too.

Disconnection and separation create more pain. When we mindlessly acted out from that pain, we lost our rightful connection in the larger community because we forgot who we really are. I know today that we can reclaim our identity and gather the resources to stay true to ourselves. Reclaiming ourselves begins with remembering those affected by our past actions and refocusing our minds on those who will benefit from our commitment to heal and be of service.

This process of reconnect-

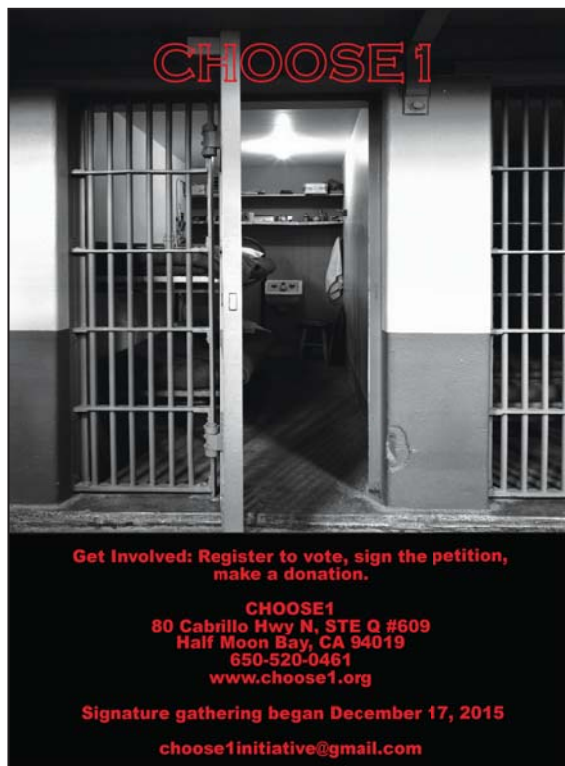
ing with the larger community through commitment and service will gain momentum if a new effort to reform California's Three Strikes Law succeeds. A reform plan entitled **CHOOSE1** proposes to save taxpayers millions of dollars by releasing those prisoners who have already done their time for crimes committed before 1994. With the passing of the Three Strikes Law in March of 1994, thousands of prisoners began serving long sentences for crimes that they had paid for already. It's been 21 years since the passing of "three strikes" and most inmates who would be released under this reform bill are older and wiser. If we don't reform the mistakes of three strikes, count on it to continue to increase the prison population and the prison budget. That budget is now more than \$10 billion and will only continue to grow.

There is an urgent need to change the injustice that's been going on for decades. As former Attorney General Eric Holder says, "Today, a vicious cycle of poverty, criminality and incarceration traps too many Americans and weakens too many communities. And many aspects of our criminal justice system may actually exacerbate these problems, rather than alleviate them. As a society, we pay much too high a price whenever our system fails to deliver outcomes that deter and punish crime, keep us safe and ensure that those who have paid their debts have the chance to become productive citizens."

Former President Bill Clinton says, "We basically took a shotgun to a problem that needed a .22. We took a shotgun to it and just sent everybody to jail for too long." Actually, Clinton is wrong. We didn't need a gun

at all; what we needed was true rehabilitation.

Crime is a symptom of society's ills. Most criminals aren't born evil; they are broken people, mentally ill people or desperate people. Therapy gets to the root of the problem and heals the person. Therapy also provides people with the tools to handle stressful situations. Along with education and vocational training, people are given the skills to secure meaningful job opportunities. An offender doesn't need a life sentence to stop offending; they need the space and opportunity to better themselves. These investments would allow offenders to become assets to the community, instead of liabilities costing society more and more. **CHOOSE1** aims to secure the money saved by releasing the aging three strike population and use it to spread rehabilitative services to all California prisons and lower tuition for college students.



Part 2: New System Designed To Better Monitor Patient Care

Dr. Timothy Belavich
Contributing Writer

Dr. Timothy Belavich answered *San Quentin News* questions about the delivery of health care services to prisoners. Belavich was formerly acting director of the Division of Health Care Services and deputy director of Statewide Mental Health Program. He is now employed by Los Angeles County. This second series of Dr. Belavich's answers pertain to custody and the prison culture. In future editions the topics will be *Suicide and Use of Force*, and *Transgender Special Needs*.

Custody and Prison Culture:

Overall, what policies/procedures have been implemented to impact the prison culture, particularly with respect to the custodial aspects?

CDCR has implemented several changes that are designed to affect the prison culture. Several years ago, a Custody and Mental Health Collaboration Training was developed and delivered to all custody, nursing and mental health staff at selected institutions, including San Quentin. CDCR is currently developing a training that focuses on techniques that custody staff can use when interacting with patients with mental illness.

Significant changes have been made that impact ASU. Inmates who have been placed in ASU for safety concerns now have greater access to property and privileges. A memorandum in December of 2013 was issued enforcing timeframes for releasing non-disciplinary MHSDS inmates from ASU within timeframes of 30 or 60

days depending on their mental health assigned level of care. Further, a policy was enacted requiring the transfer of MHSDS inmates who are housed in ASU for non-disciplinary reasons to occur within 72 hours of the committee determination.

In the past year, the Rules Violation Report (RVR, i.e., CDCR 115) process was changed significantly for participants in the MHSDS and the Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP) who receives a mental health evaluation related to the RVR. Some processes were newly added and existing processes were more clearly outlined. The inclusion of patients in the DDP is a new component of this process. Clinicians may now recommend that, in certain cases, some rules violations be documented in an alternative manner. This may occur when the behavior was influenced by mental health symptoms, developmental disability or impairments in memory or thinking. Clinicians have always been able to indicate when certain penalties may negatively affect a patient's mental health. This process has been enhanced by the provision of training for mental health clinicians so that they can better understand what penalties might apply.

In addition, RVRs may not be issued if the patient's behavior: occurred in connection with a cell extraction for the administration of involuntary medication; (Involuntary medication occurs in those situations when a patient suffers from a severe mental illness and may present as a danger to him or herself or others, or, he or she is gravely

disabled and cannot care for him or herself appropriately);

occurred in connection with a cell extraction for transfer of the inmate to a mental health inpatient facility or between mental health inpatient units;

occurred in connection with being placed in mental health restraints and/or seclusion;

if the behavior is determined to be an act of self-mutilation or attempted suicide.

Custody and mental health staff received new training on the process.

In order to ensure that patients at the Correctional Clinical Case Management System (CCCMS) level of care have equal access to programs, they are now being evaluated for placement at Minimum Support Facilities, from which MHSDS patients were previously excluded.

Over the past year we have created alternatives to ASU for our CCCMS population, with the activation of Short and Long Term Restricted Housing units. These units provide more frequent mental health monitoring, more treatment activities and increased out of cell time.

New policies have been implemented that provide patients at the Enhanced Outpatient Program (EOP) level of care similar opportunities as non-MHSDS or CCCMS inmates in areas such as education and vocation. Eligible EOP patients now have the opportunity to earn Milestone credits. EOP patients are no longer required to undergo unclothed body searches upon returning from treatment activities if they have been under constant staff supervision while out of the cell.

Dear Reader:

Our message of rehabilitation and criminal justice reform is spreading because of your support. Thank you. We've expanded into 23 prison libraries in California where the San Quentin News is distributed to inmates for free. We are moving closer to our goal: making it accessible to every prisoner in the state of California. One way you can help us get our rehabilitative message to more prisoners is to donate any amount. Donors who contribute \$40 or more will receive San Quentin News for one year. For tax-deductible contributions using your credit card, please visit our website at sanquentinnews.com, click on Support; scroll to the bottom of the page and click on Donate Here. Please allow 6 to 12 weeks for delivery of your first newspaper. You can also donate by sending funds for the San Quentin News to:
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Over \$2,300 Raised for Homeless Youths

By Emile DeWeaver
Staff Writer

“Everybody needs help,” emerged as the theme at Kid CAT’s fourth bi-annual Hygiene Drive during the holiday season. Hundreds of Incarcerated-Americans joined Kid CAT to help homeless youth in the Bay Area.

The drive raised more than \$2,300 in hygiene products and money to purchase products. But just as important as the money raised is the social space and opportunity the Hygiene Drive creates for people to re-envision their roles and options within society.

“It’s about saving lives,” Kid CAT member John Lam said. Larkin Street, COMPASS Family Services, At the Crossroads and Homeless Youth Alliance will receive the products and money raised and will then distribute hygiene kits. “It’s not just about giving kids the hygiene products. It’s about the message our partners bring with them. They offer these youths services and hope. The kits make good tools to start bigger dialogues,” added Lam.

“The Drive is an opportunity for incarcerated people to participate in something that promotes a positive self-image,” said Kid CAT member Philip Melendez. “Today, hundreds

Kid CAT Speaks!

of men who may feel like they live with the weight of society’s disapproval get to do something that says *I’m not the man I used to be*. Today, we’re all givers.”

Kid CAT member Adnan Khan said the hygiene drive is close to his heart because when he was 17 years old, he was homeless. He notes how alienated a lack of hygiene supplies made him feel. “I remember being on the city bus and being embarrassed when someone sat next to me. I didn’t want to be around people.”

Several Kid CAT members were homeless youths themselves, so they know first-hand how a stick of deodorant can make the difference between feeling human and feeling like one is alone in the world.

Greg “White Eagle” Coates is the chairman of the Hygiene Drive Committee. “I was homeless when I dropped out of high school,” he said. “Jehovah’s Witnesses and Mormons used to walk up to me and give me soap and shampoo. It meant a great deal to me.”

Coates is proud that despite competition with a food sale, the drive exceeded its goal of raising \$1,500 in hygiene. He hopes

the \$2,300 in hygiene products for homeless youth will decrease the temptation for homeless youth to steal products. He also expressed gratitude to San Quentin’s administration for allowing those on Death Row to participate in donating this year.

The men of Kid CAT were asked what they would say if they could speak to homeless youth.

“Don’t give up,” said Coates. “There are people who will help you if you have the courage to keep asking. Everybody needs help.”

Many members had a lot to say, and the common themes that emerged were “You are not alone” and “Please, ask for help when you need it.”

The drive would not have been successful without Kid CAT’s dedicated volunteers.

Gail Towle has participated in all four hygiene drives. When asked why she thinks the Hygiene Drive is important to Kid CAT members, she said, “The ability to physically give back to the community is fantastic.”

Dolan Beaird is the lead volunteer in charge of distributing hygiene products to youth shelters and following up on the

progress of Kid CAT’s outside partners. He has been working with the homeless for 30 years from Olympia, Wash., to San Francisco.

Beaird’s message to all the men who donated hygiene

products this year: “Don’t ever think that what you contribute doesn’t matter. Every bit of soap or shampoo matters. It’s all about the dignity of these youth. That’s what you’re contributing to.”

Letter to Kid CAT

Dear Kid CAT,

This is a letter of appreciation. My name is Thailée Nguon. I am a juvenile lifer. I anticipate every issue of the *San Quentin News*. I admire your programs (the piece about the Amala Walk almost brought me to tears!) and wanted to write to you to express my sincere gratitude for inspiring me on many occasions.

The reason I was finally compelled to pick up my pen now was because I just finished reading the story of Mr. Mike Tyler. As I was getting ready to study for my upcoming finals, I opened up the *SQ News* to see what you guys were up to and, lo and behold, another inspirational story! I couldn’t help but feel as though I was a part of your community as you sent one of your own to fulfill his life’s purpose. I could feel the joy jumping off the page as I was reading.

I hope to meet you all one day because I feel a strong connection to you guys and the values you represent. The community we’re attempting to build here (Pleasant Valley State Prison) is far from reaching its pinnacle but we have a strong network that is willing to see it through until the work is complete. In the meantime, I want to encourage you to continue to provide the light for the rest of us to follow. Thank you.

PS: Does [Kid C.A.T.] have a curriculum? I would like to submit it to the CRM here. Maybe we could create a group that would become an extension of the larger purpose.

Sincerely, your surrogate member,
Thailée Nguon

Response: Kid C.A.T. appreciates your letter, Mr. Nguon. We work to reflect the positive potential of the larger community of juvenile lifers and youth offenders. We are glad to read that the group has inspired others to positively transform their lives and make the choice to become leaders in their own community. We support your transformation and encourage you and other juvenile lifers and youth offenders to take advantage of the rehabilitative programs available at your institution and to give back by helping your peers in need of the same support. Keep us updated on your challenges and progress. We leave you with the quote by Mahatma Gandhi, “Be the change that you want to see.”

Lam Paroled After 22 Years

By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer

During his years in San Quentin, Ngheip “Ke” Lam never failed to light up the room with his bright smile. Now, after serving 22 years in prison for first-degree murder, he can smile for the outside world.

Lam was found suitable under SB 260 and paroled in December 2015. “It was through the grace and mercy of my victim’s family who forgave me that I was found suitable,” said Lam. “The mother of the son I murdered said she believed in my change, and she hopes that I would do well when I get out.”

SB 260, which became law in 2013, requires the parole board to give special consideration to youth offenders who committed their crimes before the age of 18.

“I want the brothers and sisters who are doing time to know there is hope, so give yourself a chance,” said Lam.

“Ke has been an ambassador for change and guidance to many men here in San Quentin and has been someone I have always looked up to and modeled my behavior after,” said Mike Tyler, a paroled Kid C.A.T. member. “I know that the San Quentin community will definitely feel the impact of his absence when he paroles.”

While incarcerated, Lam dedicated his time to playing team sports, going to church and mentoring kids on the weekend. Lam scrambled throughout the week facilitating various self-help programs. In the past 12 years, he has been



Photo by Sam Hearnes

Ngheip “Ke” Lam enjoying a baseball game

a founding member of many self-help groups, including the juvenile offender group, Kid C.A.T., and R.O.O.T.S. (Restoring Our Original True Selves).

Phoeun You, co-founder of R.O.O.T.S. said, “Ke is a pioneer and leader in this community; he saw that we needed a support group to teach and assist the Asian and Pacific Islander community here. Ke connected us with the Asian Prisoner Support Committee volunteers, who are now sponsors of the R.O.O.T.S. program. Without his help, there would be no R.O.O.T.S. program.”

Lam said his change started in 1996, when his brother passed away. That helped him feel more connected with the loss of his victims.

During an interview, Lam said one of the greatest lessons he learned in prison was “that

doing the right thing doesn’t always equate with real change. After serving 17 years, I thought my change was complete until I was denied five years for a lack of insight in 2010.”

“I knew the right words to say. I knew what the board wanted, but being denied allowed me to realize that I wasn’t ready; I had to go back and examine deeper, and I had to [reflect and improve] for myself and not the board.”

“It is important for others who are doing time to know this because with so many reforms happening, guys may be feeling increasing pressure to sign up for groups to get chronos [documentation of achievement] for the board, but may miss the bigger picture of going to self-help groups for themselves,” said Lam.

“I was able to gain insight and transform from being lost, depressed and irresponsible to become who I am today. Through V.O.E.G. (Victim/Offender Education Group) I became aware of the impact and magnitude I had on my victims as well as on the community. Through Kid C.A.T., I learned how to reconnect and deal with my childhood traumas, and mentoring kids through SQUIRES helped me reconnect with my younger self,” Lam added.

“Ke has continued to show increasing leadership over the past five years since my wife Gail and I first met him in Kid C.A.T.,” said Phil Towle, Kid C.A.T. volunteer. “Now he exits in a good position to have a positive impact [on] those around him.”

GA Juvenile Arrest Rate Drops

By Anouthinh Pangthong
Journalism Guild Writer

Clayton County, GA., has seen a decrease in its juvenile arrests. The dwindling arrest rate is due to the decline of referrals from school districts to county juvenile courts for minor offenses, according to an article by Martha Dalton, reporter for *WABE*, Atlanta.

The reason for an initial rise in arrest rates are the zero tolerance policies implemented by school districts in the 1990s, the article states.

Juvenile court Judge Steve Teske has been instrumental in the reduction of cases involving minor offenses that the county courts oversee. Teske collaborated with

Superintendent of Clayton County Schools Luvenia Jackson on how the county manages juvenile cases.

Together with Avery Niles, Commissioner of Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, the group created programs to divert the flow of school arrests to in-school resolutions.

“We looked at those offenses that really should not go to court, and then we looked at the supports that would be necessary in the schools,” said Jackson.

Since 2003, the daily detention rate declined by 80 percent, according to the article. Juveniles are now treated more like kids and less like inmates, Avery Niles comments.

Kid CAT (Creating Awareness Together) is a group of men that committed their crimes as teens and were sentenced as adults to life terms. The group’s mission is to inspire humanity through education, mentorship and restorative practices. Kid CAT Speaks wants to hear from the male and female juvenile lifers, educators, and policy makers concerning juvenile justice issues and rehabilitation. Contact us at San Quentin News, Attn: Kid CAT Speaks, 1 Main St., San Quentin, CA 94974

Prisoners Close to Parole Are Meeting Employers

By Tommy Bryant and Kevin D. Sawyer

Twenty-five prisoners got an up-close look at employment opportunities they might encounter upon release from San Quentin during the prison's second Employment Readiness Seminar.

Thirteen businesses and organizations attended the December event that doubled as a Job Fair.

As the evening began, there was a hint of nervousness from both employers and inmates. When resumes were presented and interviews started taking place, it did not take long for the room to buzz with excitement as connections were made and possibilities for the future became brighter.

"I have not yet been able to fully put into words the magnitude of humanity and hope I took away from the men," said a represented from the Glaziers' Union, District Council 16 in an email. "There were definitely some great candidates for our programs."

"This is an excellent program for those who are preparing to return to society," said Isiah Fields who recently earned an A.A. degree from Patten College.

Prior to the Job Fair, prisoners spent six weeks attending Employment Readiness Seminars. During the seminars' orientation, the men were given an overview of the curriculum and a detailed picture of what was expected of them.

"The Employment Readiness Seminar program is here to take some of the worry away by giving inmates job-planning skills to use upon release," said Diana Williams, a volunteer instructor who taught the course. "It runs on the premise that everyone wants a job."



Photo by Lt. S. Robinson

Bay Area employers posing for a photo at TRUST's second job fair event

The first and second sessions helped inmates identify what kinds of things they like to do. The next three classes turned to the business of writing resumes, cover letters, identifying transferable skills and exploring how and where to look for work.

Volunteers from the California Re-Entry Program joined the seminars to offer one-to-one assistance with resume-writing.

"In order to meet employers in person and receive a certificate of completion, (the men) must attend all the sessions,"

said Williams.

The men work hard in anticipation of meeting employers. In one of the final sessions, they practice interviewing. An essential element of this process is for them to learn how to talk about their commitment offense with an employer, which involves accepting responsibility for their crime.

"I encourage the men to consider who they are and what they like to do by using the Holland Interest Inventory," said Williams. "Each of us has something unique to offer the world and I love exploring this idea with the inmates."

Many inmates were surprised at the number of employers and volunteers who cared enough to attend the job fair, and many volunteers left the prison filled with enthusiasm.

"It exceeded my expectations and has turned out to be one of the best programs I've participated in," said inmate D.D. Coleman who has been incarcerated 27 years. "I was able to polish my skills while creating a competent resume. I was unbelievably inspired by all the employers, parole officers and consultants."

"My experience was truly amazing," said a representative with Social Imprints. "Programs like the Employment Readiness Seminar are vital to helping men being released on parole move in a positive direction."

In the final weeks leading up to the Job Fair, the men formed small groups to review and critique resumes and applications. They also learned how and where to look for employment with ex-offender-friendly

businesses.

Several employers attended the Job Fair for a second time to interview inmates as prospects for jobs once they are released on parole.

The idea for the program was sparked by San Quentin inmate Noble Butler, who said he is committed to creating job opportunities for inmates upon re-entry.

Williams has been volunteering at San Quentin for two years with California Re-entry Institute and TRUST (Teaching Responsibility Utilizing Sociological Training). She holds an M.A. in Counseling Psychology and is a Certified Professional Co-active Coach.

The next Employment Readiness Seminar is scheduled to take place in March. Williams said inmates in H-Unit are encouraged to sign up.

Federal Study Reports 4,309 In-Custody Deaths

By Larry Smith
Journalism Guild Writer

There were 4,309 in-custody deaths in local jails or state prisons in 2012, an increase of two percent (67 deaths) from 2011, a federal study reports.

The number of deaths in local jails increased from 889 in 2011 to 958 in 2012, which marked the first increase since 2009. The increase in deaths in local jails was primarily due to an increase in illness-related deaths (up 24 percent).

These deaths accounted for 97 percent of the total increase in deaths in jails and prisons in 2012. The overall mortality rate in local jails increased four percent, from 123 deaths per 100,000 local jail inmates in 2011 to 128 deaths per 100,000 in 2012.

Suicide continued to be the leading cause of death in local jails (40 suicides per 100,000 jail inmates); however, the suicide rate declined four percent in 2012 and has declined 17 percent since 2000. Heart

disease was the leading cause of illness-related deaths in local jails, increasing 14 percent in 2012.

The rate of AIDS-related deaths in local jails increased from two deaths per 100,000 inmates in 2011 to three per 100,000 in 2012, the first increase since 2006.

Despite the increase in 2012, AIDS-related deaths have decreased 63 percent in jails since 2000. Most jail jurisdictions (81 percent) reported no deaths in 2012, which

was consistent with previous years.

In 2012, 3,351 deaths (78 percent of all deaths in correctional facilities) occurred in state prisons, which was nearly equal to the number of deaths in 2011 (3,353). Although the number of deaths in state prisons remained constant, the overall mortality rate in prisons increased two percent in 2012. The increase from 2011 to 2012 was largely due to decrease in the prison population.

Persons age 55 or older made up 55 percent of deaths in prisons, the U.S. Department of Justice report said.

Male prisoners accounted for 99 percent of homicides in state prisons from 2001 to 2012. The most common unnatural cause of death among female prisoners from 2001 to 2012 was suicide.

Male prisoners had higher mortality rates than female prisoners, regardless of cause of death. With the exception of AIDS-related deaths, White prisoners had the highest average annual mortality rate for all illness-related causes of death from 2001 to 2012. AIDS-related deaths were highest among Black prisoners (18 deaths per 100,000 state prisoners) and were at least two times higher than for prisoners of different races or Hispanic origin.

From 2001 to 2012, the suicide rate for prisoners age 17 or younger was nearly twice that of older inmates.

Cancer was the leading cause of illness-related deaths of state prisoners, at 10,122, followed by heart disease at 9,874.

Illness-related deaths accounted for more than half of all deaths in local jails in 2012. Heart disease (28 percent) continued to be the leading cause of illness-related deaths in local jails in 2012.

Mental Issues Seen In Restrictive Housing

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

Jails and prisons vary widely in their use of restrictive housing, but a significant number of the prisoners in such lockups have mental problems, a federal report says.

Twenty-nine percent of prison inmates and 22 percent of jail inmates with current symptoms of serious psychological distress had spent time in restrictive housing units in the past 12 months, the study says.

Those inmates doing time in restrictive housing from 2011-2012 were from various demographic groups, according to a 2015 survey compiled by the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS).

The survey was administered to 91,177 inmates age 18 or older, including 38,251 inmates in 233 state and federal prisons and 52,926 inmates in 357 jails. The results are nationally representative of the prison and jail population at the time of the questionnaire.

It shows up to 4.4 percent of state and federal inmates and 2.7 percent of jail inmates were held in restrictive housing, which includes disciplinary, administrative segregation or solitary confinement, during that period. Approximately 10 percent of all prison and 5 percent of jail inmates spent 30 days or longer in restrictive housing.

The statistics show that during the 12-month period, 21 percent of Blacks and 16 percent of

Whites spent time in prisons' restrictive housing. According to the survey, both races spent approximately 17 percent of the time in the county jail hole.

Inmates of other races (American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islanders and those reporting two or more races) were more likely than White inmates to have spent time in restrictive housing. The BJS reported that these groups spent 20 percent of the time in prisons' hole versus 22 percent in jail.

Hispanics (16 percent in prison and jail) were as likely as Whites in prison and Whites and Blacks in jail to report having spent time in restrictive housing. Lesbian, gay, and bi-

sexuals (28 percent in prison and 22 percent in jail) were more likely than heterosexuals (18 percent in prison and 17 percent in jail) to have spent some time in restrictive housing, the survey said.

Figures also showed that "younger inmates were significantly more likely than older inmates to report having spent time in restrictive housing." Teenagers age 18 to 19 made up 31 percent of those in prison and 25 percent of those in jail to have spent some time in restrictive housing. Those in the age range of 20 to 24 statistically show 28 percent of those in prison and 23 percent of those in jail had been in restrictive housing at some time during that year.

Art Program Helps Prisoners Transform Their Viewpoints

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

Emile DeWeaver once defined himself as “the dangerous one,” and in 1998, it became apparent after he committed a senseless murder that earned him a life sentence.

Fast forward to 2016, now 36 years old, DeWeaver said that focusing on artistic expression empowered him to endure his 18 years of incarceration and ultimately to reconnect with his sense of humanity.

“Through art, I have been able to redefine how I see myself and understand my role in life,” DeWeaver said. “Art helped me find humanity and community and gave me the idea for the Prison Renaissance project.”

DeWeaver’s inspiration is to empower others to change how they see themselves through creative and artistic expressions.

“One thing *Prison Renaissance* represents is the idea of rebirth,” DeWeaver said. “We can change the world by changing ourselves. The goal is to use these individual rebirths to seed a culture of transformation that spreads through prisons and impoverished communities.”

Several other artists at San Quentin State Prison were similarly inspired when they heard about DeWeaver’s concept of *Prison Renaissance*.

“For us involved with *Prison Renaissance*, we recognize that through artistic expression, we have an ability to show personal transformation at its most rudimentary level,” said Jonathan Chiu, who is serving a life sentence for murder. “This transformation can be seen through

all forms of art, dance, painting, sculpture—no form is left out.”

Adnan Khan has been incarcerated since age 18. He said for him writing is like therapy because expressing his innermost thoughts brings up self-reflective subjects he normally does not talk about.

“When I was arrested for murder/robbery and put inside that cell, I was so disconnected to myself and the rest of the world. There was a small pencil and book that had two blank pages at the end. I tore out those pages and began writing,” he added, “Getting those words on paper was like performing an exorcism to rid myself of the demons that had tormented me all my life.”

For incarcerated people, *Prison Renaissance* recognizes that self-transformation faces an extraordinarily oppressive force that attaches a negative stigma to crime and punishment by imprisonment.

“Of course being in prison is a bad thing,” DeWeaver said. “But the insistence on stigmatizing people who wind up in prison supports a culture of alienation which tends to underscore rather than eradicate criminality’s roots. Whatever the ultimate solutions to stigmatization are, they begin not with the way society sees us, but how we see ourselves. That’s why I stopped calling myself a prisoner. I’m an artist, a father, a teacher. I’m an Incarcerated-American with a passion for civic duty.”

“There wasn’t any other medium available other than art to show this expression,” said *Prison Renaissance* co-founder, Rahsaan Thomas, also serving a

life sentence for murder. “There is a myth that separated us from our communities; *Prison Renaissance* seeks to reconnect incarcerated Americans with their stake in communities.”

Another goal of *Prison Renaissance* is a cultural shift in criminal justice policy, DeWeaver said, drawing from author Michelle Alexander’s *The New Jim Crow* to explain how to reduce criminality and incarceration in our society.

“Ending the conditions that give rise to mass incarceration requires a collective buy-in from both free and incarcerated citizens,” DeWeaver said. “We achieve this buy-in by showing how committed we are to the society we once helped destroy. Not lip service but showing the world the money. That’s why we love art, why it’s our medium. It strips you down and shows everything.”

The incarcerated Americans involved with *Prison Renaissance* produce artistic works that emphasize honesty and vulnerability.

“I talk to a lot of free people, who have different lives than I do, but I’m continually humbled by the commonality between us,” DeWeaver said. “*Prison Renaissance* helps to show this commonality that we all have. Because art strips us bare, it’s the perfect medium for revealing our common stake in each other.”

“Transforming culture will always begin in the minds of people,” DeWeaver added. “People are constrained by the language they use. We can begin to change minds by using different language.”



Photo by Peter Merts

Emile DeWeaver

“At San Quentin, we have answers,” Thomas said. “We have community, space and opportunity.”

By spring 2016, *Prison Renaissance* will have a website, (prisonrenaissance.org) that features incarcerated artists and mentorships for incarcerated artists. Both present roadmaps

to redemption and explore solutions to criminality and mass incarceration. The website will be a platform to create community between incarcerated and free artists, activists and educators.

“Writing gives me power within myself,” Thomas noted. “Everybody has an innate power within themselves.”

Report: Government Strides in Correcting Wrongful Convictions

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

The government has made significant strides over the past 30 years assisting individuals gain freedom after being wrongfully convicted. According to a recent study, exonerations have more than doubled, growing an average of 24 per year from 1989 through 1999 to an average of 52 per year from 2000 through 2010.

Wrongful conviction cases used in the study spanned 29 states and the District of Columbia. Over 50 percent involved murder. Of those wrongfully convicted, eight (three percent) were female, 22 (eight percent) were minors at the time of arrest and 13 (five percent) had a cognitive/mental health limitation.

“A Study of Victim Experiences of Wrongful Conviction” was sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to ascertain information regarding the range and frequency of issues victims face as they proceed through the exoneration process.

“The majority of the wrongfully convicted persons were African American (49 percent) and Caucasian (40 percent), with Hispanics comprising five percent of those wrongfully convicted,” according to the study.

A high proportion of wrongful convictions involved sexual offenses such as rape (27 percent) and/or other sexual offenses (25 percent). In addition to these allegations, eyewitness misidentification contributed to more than 50 percent of the wrongful convictions, the study shows.

Improper forensic science (29 percent), government misconduct (25 percent), false confessions (20 percent), false testimony (16 percent), informants/snitches (11 percent) and ineffective legal counsels (11 percent), respectively, were

also contributing factors in the wrongful convictions process, the study added.

In the majority of these cases (65 percent), more than 10 years had passed between the original conviction and the subsequent exoneration. In 20 percent of these cases, more than 20 years had passed.

Approximately 52 percent of the exonerations identified in this study involved DNA evidence. This is the most common factor of these exonerated cases, followed by recantation (28 percent) and a confession by the actual offender (18 percent), who was identified in 83 (31 percent) of the reviewed cases, the study added.

To gain a better understanding of the impact of crime on victims, the DOJ-sponsored agent, ICF International, used surveys from 23 service providers that reported working with victims of a violent crime during or following exoneration.

A number of agencies reported working with victims of rape (41 percent), murder (27 percent), aggravated assault (18 percent), domestic assault (9 percent) and robbery (5 percent). They reported that 43 percent of the cases involved eyewitness misidentification. Victim service providers initiated notification for 58 percent of these victims.

To adequately render the proper services for victims, the study found those agencies made these recommendations: (1) treat victims with sensitivity and compassion; (2) provide victims with information on the exoneration process, DNA testing and common causes of wrongful conviction and (3) offer victims access to both short- and long term care.

The majority of these victims (88 percent) first learned about the potential wrongful conviction prior to the exoneration.

Private Prisons Maximizing Profits With U.S. Government’s Help

By Thomas Gardner
Journalism Guild Writer

The United States government needs to stop working hand-in-hand with the corporate sector to maximize the number of immigrants held in lockup, a 2015 report states.

The relationship “guarantees” maximized profits for the private prison companies contracted with the U.S. government, says the report by the Center for Constitutional Rights and Detention Watch Network.

“There is a growing consensus that the mass detention of immigrants is unnecessary and inhumane,” the report says. “The U.S. government should move toward ending the use of immigration detention altogether.”

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE) has entered into “guaranteed minimum” contracts with at least six different private detention companies, according to the report.

Former ICE Director John Sandweg said, “Having a mandate out there that says you have to detain a certain number – regardless of how many folks are

a public safety threat or threaten the integrity of the system – doesn’t seem to make a lot of sense. You need the numbers to drive the detention needs, not set an arbitrary number that then drives your operation.”

The government needs to end “lockup quotas,” these “guaranteed minimum” contracts that ensure payment to the private prison contractor, in return for a set minimum number of detention beds, whether or not those beds are actually needed for use and filled, the report explains.

The report also criticizes the use of “tiered pricing,” in which ICE receives a discount on each person detained above the guaranteed minimum, the report says.

The agreements “serve to protect the bottom-line of private companies” while incentivizing the imprisonment of immigrants, says the report.

As part of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, ICE was required to increase its number of beds available for immigrant detainees. From 2006 to 2010, facilities were created to “maintain” a 34,000 person (minimum count) bed space capacity, the report

details.

“Many members of Congress have urged ICE to interpret this language to require that all detention beds be in use at all times—that is, that a minimum of 34,000 beds not only be funded, but also filled, every day,” says the report.

The Center for Constitutional Rights and the Detention Watch Network, authors of the report, say there is a direct link between lockup quotas and corporate interest in immigration detention, which is unethical.

“The private sector should not be rewarded for placing a price tag on the deprivation of liberty, and the government should be held accountable for being a willful participant in this corrupted system,” say the authors of the report.

Within the past decade, the immigration detention system has grown by 75 percent, the authors note.

“As a first step toward the ultimate closure of all detention facilities, ICE should end the use of guaranteed minimums and tiered pricing, and Congress should eliminate the national detention bed quota,” the report concludes.

Poll Reviews America’s Perception on Crime

‘Government statistics show serious crime decreased nearly every year from 1994 through 2010’

By Larry Smith
Journalism Guild Writer

Seven in 10 Americans say there is more crime in the U.S. now than there was a year ago – up slightly from the 63 percent who said so in 2014. Eighteen percent say there is less crime, and 8 percent say the level of crime has stayed the same.

The results are based on Gallup’s annual crime poll, conducted in October.

“Government statistics show serious crime decreased nearly every year from 1994 through 2010,” the report noted.

Since Gallup began in 1989 asking Americans about their perceptions of crime, majorities have said crime worsened compared to the previous year – with more than 80 percent holding this view in the ‘80s and early ‘90s.

Crime fell over the course of

the next decade, reaching a record low of 41 percent in 2001. By 2002, this figure was back to a majority, and ranged from 53 percent to 74 percent in the decade that followed.

The overall violent crime rate for rape, sexual and aggravated assault, robbery and simple assault fell from 80 victimizations per 1,000 persons in 1994 to 19 per 1,000 in 2010, according to U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

While 87 percent of Americans in 1993 said crime was up, this figure dropped to 41 percent in 2001. But the percentage perceiving more crime shot up again to 62 percent in 2002 – around the time of the Washington, D.C., sniper shootings – and has remained fairly high ever since, despite actual crime rates falling in most years.

Perceptions of greater crime are much lower in the West (64

percent) than in the East (69 percent) and the South (71 percent), while Midwesterners (76 percent) are likely to say crime has increased. Those who live in rural areas (75 percent) are more inclined to say crime is up than those in suburban areas (69 percent) or cities (68 percent).

Since Barack Obama took office in 2009, conservatives (80 percent this year) and Republicans (79 percent) have been the

most likely to perceive current crime in the U.S. as higher than in the year prior, compared with liberals (57 percent) and Democrats (65 percent) who have been much less likely to say crime is up since Obama was elected. This pattern was reversed when George W. Bush was in office.

Nearly six in 10 Americans say U.S. crime is an “extremely” or “very” serious problem – up slightly from 55 percent in 2014

and just 1 percentage point below the high for this measure in surveys conducted from 2000 to 2010. About one in three say the problem is “moderately” serious, while 5 percent say it’s “not serious at all.”

Results for this Gallup poll are based on telephone interviews conducted in October with a random sample of 1,015 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 states and DC.

Misleading Report About Arizona Inmates

By Nathan Hall
Journalism Guild Writer

A report saying the majority of Arizona inmates are violent or repeat offenders is being criticized as inaccurate and misleading.

REPORT

The report was released last year by the Arizona Prosecuting Attorneys Advisory Council.

“The most serious problem with the report is the conflation of ‘repeat’ and ‘violent’ offenders – two categories that reflect very different classes of criminal. This configuration is misleading,” according to a response by Caroline Isaacs, program director of the Arizona office of the American Friends Service Committee.

“Just over 50 percent of individuals are incarcerated for a violent offense, according to an October report from the Arizona

Department of Corrections. And 51.4 percent are serving their first prison term,” Isaacs wrote in her December critique.

“Drug addicts, alcoholics, and people with mental illnesses often commit multiple offenses due to their inability to control their behavior. This does not mean they belong in prison,” Isaacs wrote.

ARIZONA

The most contrary assertion in the report is that Arizona’s truth-in-sentencing law (and high incarcerating rate) is credited for the recent decline in crime, Isaacs stated.

“Yet, the data demonstrate the crime rate increased and decreased both before and after introduction of truth-in-sentencing. Many other states have deliberately reduced their prison population through sentencing reforms and seen an even greater drop in crime rates.”

Attitudes Change About Restricted Housing

‘Punishment that consists of endless isolation is barbaric’

By Lee Jaspar
Journalism Guild Writer

Attitudes about the treatment of inmates in America are shifting away from the use of “The Hole,” according to the Editorial Board of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.

“Punishment that consists of endless isolation is barbaric,” say activists and legal scholars working to end solitary confinement.

Growing numbers of mental health experts consider it torture and often it is the severely mentally ill who are

subjected to this form of custody.

“Of the 1.5 million people housed in state prisons, about 66,000 are in some form of restricted housing,” according to the newspaper.

Due to a legal settlement in Pennsylvania, by mid-2016 the state must stop sending seriously mentally ill inmates to restricted housing, the *Post-Gazette* editorial noted.

“It’s a step in the right direction, but Pennsylvania – and the nation – must work on getting rid of The Hole for good,” the editorial stated.

Critics Expose Myths Behind Capital Punishment

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

As the U.S. remains one of the five nations with the most executions in the world, critics opposing capital punishment are confronting the myths of its effectiveness.

Matthew Rozsa, writer for *Salon.com*, claims the debate about the death penalty is “riddled with misinformation”; challenging these myths won’t just create necessary policy change, it’ll save lives.

One myth is that the death penalty helps stop crime, Roza said.

He cited a 2009 study published in the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* that said 88 percent of the country’s top

criminologist don’t believe the death penalty acts as a deterrent to homicides, 87 percent believed abolishing it won’t have any affect on the murder rates, and 75 percent agree that Congress and state legislatures get distracted from finding solutions to crime problems.

Another myth is that anti-death penalty activists care more about criminals than their victims and for that matter all of the inmates on death row are guilty criminals, Rozsa states.

To dispel that argument, Cassandra Stubbs, director of ACLU, told MSNBC, the death penalty has innocence problems, and its days are numbered. There is good reason to suspect that many of the people put to death in this country have not been

killers at all.

Professors John J. Donohue of Yale Law School and Justin Wolfers of the University of Pennsylvania did a comparative study on the rates of violence between states using capital punishment and those that abolished it. In conclusion, the study “failed to find any evidence of a deterrent effect.”

Columbia Law School professor Jeffrey Fagan and a group of researchers did a comparative analysis of the crime rate in Hong Kong, which abolished the death penalty in 1993, and Singapore, which uses it as mandatory for murder. According to Roza’s story, “They found little difference in violent crime rates between the two cities.”

Enhanced Supervised Housing Unit Circumvents Solitary Reforms

By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer

Rikers is a bunch of New York City jails bunched on an island that is plagued with a history of violence so bad it has been documented by the U.S. Justice Department. Mayor Bill de Blasio came up with pre-solitary confinement to curb violence, but critics say his solution is merely a way of circumventing solitary reforms.

Blasio allotted \$27.3 million for the creation of what was labeled Enhanced Supervised Housing Unit (ESHU) and rushed it to the Board of Correction to be approved. It was in a 6-2 vote. The mayor appointed three of the board members just three weeks before the vote, according to Raven Rakia of *The Nation*.

In ESHU, prisoners are allowed seven hours of out-of-cell time, compared to 14 in general population. Each unit has 21 cameras and 50 beds, plus a higher staff-to-inmate ratio. ESHU has 250 cells.

Critics argue that ESHU undermines the new solitary confinement reforms. For example, while you can only be held in solitary 30 days with a mandatory seven-day break, you can be housed in ESHU indefinitely. Those who are mentally ill or under 18 are banned from

solitary.

However, according to an April ESHU report, 59 percent of the people housed in ESHU had a mental-illness diagnosis, according to Rakia.

In 1990, 1,552 slashings occurred on the island, according to a story in *The Nation* written by Rakia called *Rikers Is Reforming Solitary Confinement -- with Solitary Confinement*?

In 2011, the number of slashings went down to 35 but rose to 90 in 2014. Meanwhile, assaults on staff jumped 50 percent with guard-on-inmate use-of-force raised to 4,074.

Commissioner Joseph Ponte said an ESHU was necessary to control the most dangerous and violent inmates, according to the article.

An analysis for ESHU placement is used that predicts which incarcerated men have a propensity for violence. Factors that can make an inmate eligible include fighting, being classified part of a Security Risk Group, involvement in gang-related violence, using or possessing a weapon or involvement in protests, riots or disturbances.

Also, 63 percent were housed in ESHU for being in a gang. Things like association with know gang members, wearing certain colors or an informant’s word could label you

for the Security Risk Group.

One prisoner claims he was placed in ESHU for a scalpel allegation that was dismissed and a 2011 assault on staff that occurred on a prior Rikers Island stay, according to Rakia.

“Why am I being punished for the same thing twice?” the prisoner in question asked *The Nation*, according to Rakia’s article. “I did the box already.”

Prisoners complain that ESHU is worse than solitary confinement. Out of cell time has been denied because of lockdowns for issues as minor as wearing a tank top, according to Rakia.

The guards use MK-9 spray whenever a detainee does “anything (the guards) don’t want him to do.” A BOC report confirms that Use-of-Force-C tactics (including the use of pepper spray) were employed more during the first two months of ESHU’s operation than in a punitive segregation unit, or in maximum-security general-population units,” wrote Rakia.

“The public ...accused the department of trying to roll back the solitary confinement reforms that the board had been focusing on for so long,” wrote Rakia.

“I’ve done four years in the Box, and honesty, there’s really no difference,” a prisoner told Rakia.

Volunteers Honored at S.Q. Christmas Banquet

By Wesley Eisinger
Staff Writer

More than 300 people packed the San Quentin Protestant Chapel for a Christmas season banquet to honor some 50 volunteers from 16 churches who support the prisoners during the year.

The annual banquet, held Dec. 12, featured a feast of turkey and chicken, potato salad, macaroni salad, pizza, cake and coffee.

Chaplain Mardi Jackson presented certificates of appreciation to the volunteer individuals and groups including McGlothen Temple, Greater Love, Jeff Williams, New Faith Cathedral, Victory Outreach, Cornerstone, Hillside Covenant, Man to Man Ministries, Community Presbyterian Church, The Well, Grace and Mercy, Allen Temple, One Accord Ministries, Wings of Love, Tiburon Baptist Church, Maranatha, and Christ Bible Church.

San Quentin News adviser John Eagan, who is also a member of Tiburon Baptist Church, received the certificate on behalf of his church.

Eagan asked all of the volunteers to stand up and asked the inmates, "Why are they here?" The inmates shouted, "They love us!"

"That's true," Eagan responded, "but the real reason they come in here is because they believe they make a positive difference in your lives. What they have also learned is that you make a positive change in their lives."

Three of the churches, Victory Outreach, Cornerstone and Maranatha hold Bible study classes for inmates and also



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Inmates and volunteers enjoying each other's company before the big feast

offer residential housing after prisoners are returned to their communities. In addition, some of these churches come inside the prison and to the cell-blocks to sing Christmas carols.

Before the Christmas banquet began all of the Christian workers formed a circle and held hands as Chris Harris said a prayer.

The chapel choir led the crowd with holiday music. The audience came alive and began to sing along to *Praise the Lord*.

Tim Homes said he came to San Quentin five months ago from Wasco State Prison.

"I am very glad to be able to come to San Quentin. The Garden Protestant Chapel welcomed me with a warm heart. I am proud to be part of this event," Homes said.

Lawrence Pela commented, "I have never seen anything like this at the other prisons I've been



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Participants of the banquet anticipating a feast of turkey, chicken, potato salad, macaroni salad, pizza, cake and coffee

'Music Is About Freedom,' Naima Shalhoub Tells Prisoners

By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer

Naima Shalhoub and Marcus Shelby expressed the seven principles of Kwanzaa through their music at the fourth annual celebration inside San Quentin's Catholic Chapel.

"This is what music is: it's about freedom; it's about fellowship and sharing with community and what places need it the most," said Shalhoub.

Before a packed room, Shalhoub used her jazzy voice and Shelby rocked the bass guitar to delight the crowd with their performances of seven songs.

"The music is in line with the principle of Kwanzaa," said Shelby. "Part of who I am is an extension of these principles."

Father George Williams opened with a call to stand against the demonization of Islam.

"We want to encourage everyone at S.Q. to avoid the stereotyping of Muslims," said Williams. "In the season of light, when we celebrate Christmas, Kwanzaa and Hanukkah; join us for an end to violence carried out in the name of any religion."

Bread and Roses brought the artists in. The organization has been bringing musicians into San Quentin for 40 years, ac-



Photo by Sarah Deragon

Naima Shalhoub and Marcus Shelby performing in San Francisco county jail

cording to Lisa Starbird.

"We believe in the healing power of music," said Starbird, who has been with Bread and Roses for eight 1/2 years.

Prisoner David Jassy opened with a song performed in Wolof, the language of Gambia, accompanied by Samuel Wogie, who spoke in Swahili. Shelby added bass.

"David, that was amazing. I hope you don't mind I jumped in and played with you," said Shelby.

In honor of Umoja (Unity), they performed "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around,"

inspired by the unity demonstrated during the civil rights marches. S.Q.'s Lee "Jazz" Jaspar joined in on the piano.

**"We believe in the
healing power
of music"**

Raphael Calix hosted the event, pausing the singing before the impatient crowd to observe the prayers and rituals of Kwanzaa, including pouring

the libation into the Kikamba Cha Umoja (Unity Cup) to honor the ancestors.

"The prayers are straightforward — calling on us to be sincere and to be honorable," said Calix. "We honor our ancestors and the positive lives they lived by emulating them."

The music resumed with "Rise," an original song written by Shalhoub. It represented Kugichagulia (Self Determination).

"So this song, 'Rise,' I actually wrote it thinking about myself, a little Brown girl...I wrote it imagining what I would tell

myself," said Shalhoub.

The "Work Song" represented Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility). S.Q.'s Dwight Krizman joined the growing band on the drums.

For Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Shalhoub sang another of her inspirational songs called "A River Inside You."

"Sometimes it feels like I'm going nowhere, held captive by the highs and lows, but I know none of it can define me," sang Shalhoub. "I find myself running into the arms of things that try to keep me numb, but I know the gift is inside to help me find my freedom."

Nia (Purpose) was expressed with "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize," which Shelby mentioned was sung during the civil rights movement to keep up the sense of humanity and purpose. S.Q.'s Gino Sevacos was called up to play percussion.

Bessie Smith's "Work House Blues" was played in honor of Kuumba (Creativity). Shelby talked about how the minds of slaves created Blues.

Jaspar ignited the crowd with a passionate piano solo, drawing applause.

"If I had done what my baby told me, I wouldn't be in here today, I wouldn't be in this jailhouse with six more years to pay," sang Shalhoub.



Happy Valentine's Day



"Mom, I'm thinking about you, you're always on my mind and in my heart. I love you."

-John Lam



Abdul-Wahid & Aamilah Smith
"On this day Allah blessed our present and future. I love you."

-Abdul-Wahid

"Olga, you are truly my Valentine, you make me smile, you make me laugh, you make sense. I love you. Happy Valentine's day."

-Charlie Spence



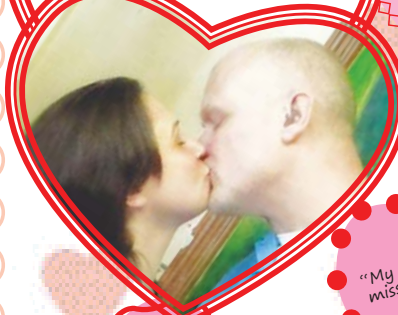
"Jessika Ruiz, everyday we are apart it pains me, but every day we are together our love grows stronger. I promise to love you and be with you forever."

-Rodolfo Medina-Barragan

"For many years I was lost and felt hopeless. I didn't want to live anymore. It wasn't until 2010, when I met you, my beautiful fiancée Yee Thao. I just want to thank you for your patience through the years. I love you so much. You will always be my Valentines."

-Lee Lor Xiong

Barry Spillman, "To the moon."
Felice Spillman, "Back only for you!"



"Puppyluv, you have given me the greatest love any man can ever ask for. I am so proud to finally become your one and only love, thank you for making me your husband."

-Love Always your Hubbie

LaDelle & Elayne Jackson
"Love is patient, love is kind. Thank you sweetheart for always being my Valentines."

-LaDelle



"You mean the world to me. Without you life itself would not mean much. I thank you for being here through the worst of times, as well as sharing the joys of life. You mean everything to me. Happy Valentines."

-Aguilar, I.

"Hija, my heart is relieved because you came into my life. Valentine's Day was grandma's birthday, and now, you, my precious daughter, is the valentine of my life. Not just for this day, but every day."

-Love, your dad Arnulfo



Para Deyanira

"Campos Feliz día de San Valentín. Que tu y Julianna piensan en mí me llena de a gracias y me hace feliz. Hoy deseo con todo mi corazón que pases muy feliz día de San Valentín mi cuñada favorita."

-Por Julio Martinez

J.P. & M.P.

"I went for a touchdown when I should have gone for a 1st down. But we never lost our supporting cast - especially God. Happy Valentine's Day."

-Love J.P.

Dear Kimii Y. Birdon,
In life there are few people we ever come to know with great intimacy...My precious wife, my soulmate for life, whom I was absolutely blessed, with the attentions never-ending in and by the very name of "OURS"! The way proper & fitting...sealed with wedding rings and by our solemn vows...

-Jarray D. Birdon

Ward & Katharina Weaver



Chanthon & Heather Bun

"Close your eyes, look into the darkness, and find me. Always and forever. I love you, Lotus."

-Chanthon Bun



TEDx Encourages Discussions On Criminal

Continued from Page 1

age 17, he was convicted of murder/robbery and given a life sentence.

“Financial illiteracy has been a disease that has crippled our nation,” he said. “Seventy percent of criminals are driven by money issues. You can’t have full rehabilitation without learning money management.”

Warden Ron Davis said, “Everybody has ideas about prison, but two things echo from today: opportunity and responsibility. Hearing these guys talk about accepting responsibility and then having them take advantage of the opportunities that we’ve provided will help them become successful members of our society.”

TEDx was first brought inside prisons by Jo Dee Davis as a challenge from inmates in Ohio.

Davis ran a computer lab for 16 years in Marion Correctional Institute. After she showed TEDx to the men, they believed they could perform the same or even better, she said. Since then, there have been two TEDx events in Washington State, three in Pennsylvania prisons and in California at Ironwood State Prison.

The first TEDx in Pennsylvania was held at a women’s prison, said co-coordinator Janet Kelley. “The themes in the male prisons were mainly about their programs. The women’s TEDx talks were emotional and about redemption.”

The San Quentin theme, *Life Revealed*, was produced by Delia Cohen and San Quentin Television. It sought “to create an experience that encourages new perspectives and ideas through discussions and partnerships that will lead to meaningful and lasting solutions to

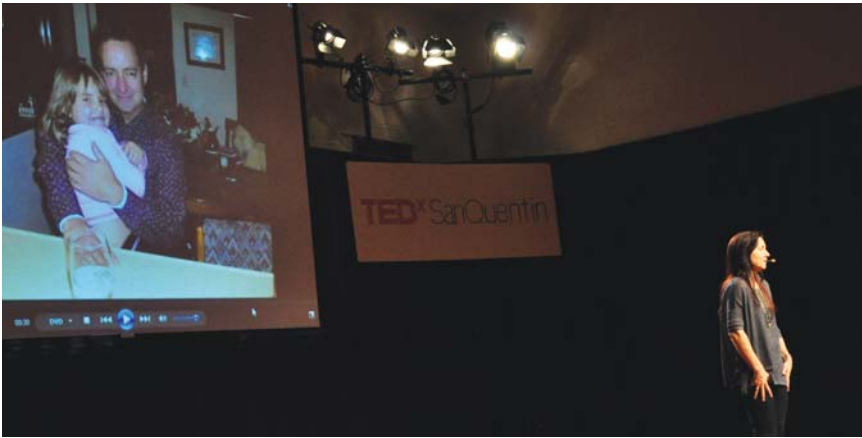


Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Dionne Wilson told a packed audience about her life changing experience



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Curtis “Wall Street” Carroll

building safer and healthier communities,” the program reads.

Prison Reform Needed:

Reforming the criminal justice system became a central theme by many speakers.

Former U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin spoke about poverty, prisons and government responsibility.

“Combating poverty should be a part of the economic policy of the government,” Rubin said.

He pointed out the obstacles one is up against when getting out of prison: reentering society and finding employment.

“Those incarcerated need to continue to take advantage of opportunity, and we as a society need to make sure that people have access to opportunity to make contributions to our society,” Rubin said. “People outside of prison need to learn that you are not just the crime you committed. We are all ... much more than the single worst thing we’ve ever done.”

The importance of “how we talk about the criminal justice system,” was discussed by Neal

Barsky, creator of *The Marshall Project* web site.

“How do we put criminal justice reform on the national agenda?” Barsky asked. He then quoted Black activist Eldridge Cleaver, who said, “Either you’re going to be a part of the solution or a part of the problem.”

Barsky reflected on this life and his inaction to social problems.

“I hadn’t done anything wrong, but I didn’t do anything right.”

Barsky said that through storytelling, reality about the criminal justice system could be brought into the national spotlight. “That’s why I started *The Marshall Project*. We need to bring these stories out so that the criminal justice system is in the national light. Think about how journalists affected the Vietnam War and civil rights. Think about how Selma affected civil rights.

“If you really want to understand *The Marshall Project*, read *San Quentin News*,” he added.

Crime survivor Dionne Wilson told the audience how she found forgiveness for her husband’s murderer.

“July 25, 2005, my life changed forever,” Wilson said with tears falling. “I went to bed thinking tragedy wouldn’t touch me. I thought as long our prisons were filled, I was safe.”

Wilson described her emotional turmoil while seeking closure following her husband’s murder. After conflicting feeling rooted in revenge, Wilson met with Insight Prison Project (IPP) facilitators. She said she didn’t expect to connect with people who had similar stories like hers.



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Officer E. Stanford

“I learned that the key to my healing was connecting with people who had done great harm and were seeking their own healing,” Wilson said. “It was clear that more suffering wasn’t the answer; the key to healing comes from programs like VOEG (Victims Offender Education Group).”

“VOEG is emotional work that explores the impact of crime, to build empathy, to heal unresolved trauma. Watching people become transformed completely erased my need to see the person who killed my husband executed. I never thought I’d have the experience of having this emotional healing or support. It’s been amazing. It’s really sad that these programs are so rare outside of San Quentin. We need to change that.

“Make them available. They reduce violence in prison. They transform the lives of people on both sides of prison walls. Say ‘yes’ to media. People need to know that’s going on inside prisons. Keep ways to connect prisoners and families.

“To society: I ask that you set aside what you think you know and get curious. Don’t ignore the harm they’ve caused. But, be open to the fact that people change. I ask you be open to the fact that redemption is possible. I want you to forgive by allowing the debt of formerly incarcerated people to be paid. But, the stigma lasts too long. They are marginalized for housing, employment, mental health support. It will take all of us working together.”

Inmate Darnell “Mo” Washington focused on leadership

and the value of education.

He said his educational inspiration came from his uncle who told him that when he graduated from high school, he’d buy him whatever he wanted. However, his uncle was killed before he graduated; his life was further jolted when his cousin was killed.

Washington said the incidents resulted in anger, rage and a desire for revenge through gang violence.

After being convicted of murder, receiving a life sentence and serving about 15 years, he discovered Restorative Justice and Criminal Gangs Anonymous, which changed his thinking and gave him an understanding of how his past affected him and his community.

Washington then began to notice that a lot of younger inmates were not getting their GED certificates, so he wanted to make a difference, like his uncle wanted to do with him.

“It doesn’t take much to make a difference in someone’s life,” Washington said.

He told the youngsters that if they passed their GED test, he’d give them his prison paycheck, which was \$20. After more than a dozen people passed the GED test, and more continued to pass at a higher rate than he could handle, he began cooking food for graduates.

“When my uncle believed in me, it showed that someone cared and I did better,” Washington said. “Sit face-to-face with your family members, and let them know that you believe in them.”

Ex-Offender’s Perspective:

Troy Williams spent 18 years behind bars before earning a release date. It was his fifth appearance before the parole board.

He began with an apology to his daughter and victims of his crimes and then drew on the struggles of re-entry caused by the lack of resources.

Williams said that he was paroled to a drug-infested neighborhood with prostitutes and trash all over the street.

“I felt like I was paroled to a neighborhood of throw-aways,” Williams said. “It was the tools that I learned while in prison that protected me from harm. I had to get away from the feeling of worthlessness. I watched about 30 men succumb to the pressures of the environment ... dope or whatever.

“When things got rough for me, I thought about my



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Inspector General
Bob Barton



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Phil Melendez



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Ron Self



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Diana Toche



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Robert E. Rubin

Justice Reform, Reentry and Rehabilitation

daughter, my mother. I thought about all the people depending on my success. I had a plan that I'd waited 20 years of get to. I knew that I needed to build a support group. I knew I couldn't do it alone; so I reached out to the only community I knew, the volunteers in this audience here today.

"Most of society is missing the benefits of what the men in here have to offer. There are many men here who are many teachers. We need to learn how to take the skills that the men here have developed and bring them to the community."

Williams closed by saying, "I don't understand why society spent \$50,000 a year to keep me in prison, but nothing to keep me out."

From The Eyes of a C/O:
Correctional Officer Ernest Stanford discussed rehabilitation from a guard's perspective.

Stanford, a correctional officer for 14 years, said he's always wanted to be in law enforcement.

"My life is on the line every time I come to work," Stanford said.

He said his career began by working on Death Row. However, the last four years he's been assigned to the Education Department.

Stanford told a story about meeting an inmate who had just arrived at San Quentin and wanted to find out about programs. Stanford instructed the inmate to meet him in the Education Department the following day.

"When I got to work, he was waiting for me," Stanford said. "I watched his entire transformation into a facilitator that helps a lot of other inmates."

"Life has revealed to me that everyone has a chance. I asked that you extend your hand and

show them the way to jobs and shelter. When I retire, hopefully, I could set up a transition home for the incarcerated."

More Ideas for Reform:
Sha Stepter-Wallace compared street hustlers to business entrepreneurs and weaved in how his transformation from drug dealer to motivational speaker is beneficial to public safety.

Stepter-Wallace said he grew up in an environment where his earliest childhood memories were of the smell of cocaine and sound of money-counters.

He said life as a drug dealer gave him an understanding of supply and demand, along with the ability to "manage inventory." However, he missed "life lessons" and found the basic facts about drug dealing: its illegal, dangerous and immoral.

He lamented on the shame for selling crack to a teenaged pregnant girl.

"The talents of a street hustler are rooted in exploitation," he said.

After arriving at San Quentin, Stepter-Wallace said educational opportunities allowed him to transform himself and find legitimacy by studying business entrepreneurship.

"I found that entrepreneurs have hustle. They'd take risks," he said.

Stepter-Wallace said he believes he can reform street hustlers into honest businessmen. He noted The Last Mile, an entrepreneurship program at San Quentin: "There is a zero recidivism rate for The Last Mile graduates who made it to the streets," he said to an applauding audience.

An interesting perspective of *Life Revealed* came from Pete Worden, CEO of Breakthrough Prize Foundation.

After a vague explanation about relativity, Worden lauded the work of scientists and the fact that his foundation awards \$3 million annually to promote science.

Worden then switched to NASA's search for intelligent life in outer space that ended with its message: "We are here. We are alive."

Find Center, by Chung Kao, was his journey about the benefits of meditation and yoga in search of peace.

Kao said that he spent his first 13 years incarcerated pursuing self-discovery.

"Violence-to-violence was the way I thought," Kao said. "But, deep inside I felt something wasn't right. I wasn't me.



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News
Jarvis Clark

I returned to center, time and again. He who overcomes self is mighty. I found center through meditation. I believe if everyone looks inside, they'll have such a transformation."

Veteran Ron Self began his talk on the shame he felt after a suicide attempt.

In 2012, Self began a self-help group at San Quentin called Veterans Healing Veterans From The Inside Out. Its concept centers on understanding how soldiers are taught their duties in Boot Camp. Self contends that in order for the soldier to properly re-integrate into society, there needs to be a Boot Camp Out.

Self's program utilizes the act of writing as narrative therapy.

"Things happen from writing down what you've experienced," Self said. "It gives the person the ability to share bad experiences and resolve old traumas."

Second Chances, by David Le, focused on the quandary of first-time offenders.

Le is serving 40 years to life for second-degree murder.

The Vietnam refugee spoke about his struggles of making it in America.

"I'm convicted of a violent crime, but I'm not violent by nature," Le said. "It paints a distorted picture of who I am. The determination of whether a person is a violent person should be found upon who that person is today, not the crime he has done a long time ago. I hope our desire for redemption shows that we are not monsters but people who want a second chance."

Inspector General Bob Barton discussed the effects of rehabilitation.

"We need to change how we use our prisons so people come out better and not make them worse. We've been doing the same thing over and over again, and expecting different results.

I am tired of seeing the same thing; that's why I want to make a difference."

Barton said the old model of punishment, incapacitation, deterrence and overlooking rehabilitation is short-sighted.

"Punishment is not a long-lasting solution to crime. There has to be rehabilitation. Transformation is a process and is the only thing that will have a long-lasting effect on society," Barton said. "When a person takes personal responsibility, there needs to be things like education. However, for every person in a program, there are 50 on a waiting list. Still, the opportunities need to outweigh the obstacles."

Barton closed his talk by using the story of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* to say, "If the Grinch could do it, anyone can."

Jacque Verduin began by talking about his father's ordeal of overcoming the aftereffects of being used as forced labor during World War II. Verduin said that his life was shaped by his father's willingness to meet with his captors and forgive them.

"My father came back a changed man," said Verduin, who now teach inmates self-control through a program called Guiding Rage Into Power (GRIP).

"The main goal of GRIP is to leave prison before you get out," he said. "Twenty-five percent of our graduates have gotten out, and none have come back in spite of a 60 percent recidivism rate (for others)." According to CDCR it is actually 54.3 percent.

Verduin was accompanied by GRIP graduate, Fateen Lateef Jackson.

"We have learned how to change suffering to healing," Jackson said. "I learned in GRIP that hurt people hurt people. Healed people heal people."

Jackson took responsibility for his past violence and wrongful acts in a performance of Spoken Word, called *The Apologetic Salute*.

Shakespeare in Prison:
Suraya Keating of the Marin Shakespeare Company told the audience, "We are using Shakespeare to reveal all the light within us," adding, "We use themes from Shakespeare to create parallel plays to create something about our own lives."

Several inmate actors discussed scenes from *The Tempest* and *The Life and Death of Julius Caesar* and how drama therapy helped them transform.

"I realized I've always been



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News

Shadeed Stepter-Wallace

an actor," said Antwan "Banks" Williams. "How I acted with my family was different than how I acted with my friends, which isn't how I acted in the streets. With one face comes many characters. How we use them ultimately shapes how we treat each other."

"This program has allowed me to explore a lot of traumatic issues that sent me to prison," Le'Mar "Maverick" Harrison said. "These programs helped me learn that if I can transform myself, maybe I can earn a change at redemption."

CDCR's Plan for Lifers:
The new budget for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is expanding services to life-term inmates, according to Brante Choate, acting director of the department's Division of Rehabilitative Programs.

"It's about finding programs that cater to lifers specifically. The governor recently met with 75 parolees and, based on that discussion, he now wants CDCR to adopt the types of programs geared to help them upon re-entry," Choate said.

The San Quentin Base:
"Inmates all over the state ask to be transferred to San Quentin," said opening speaker Diana Toche, CDCR undersecretary of Health Care Services.

"We have dedicated staff and more than 3,000 volunteers who come inside San Quentin to help with these programs. That's part of the community partnerships that makes San Quentin so strong. Programs are essential to show that rehabilitation has happened," Toche said. "So, it is incumbent for CDCR to make these programs available for every inmate."



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News
Jacques Verduin



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News
Chung Kao



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News
Ira "Prince" Perry



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News
Troy Williams



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News
Pete Worden



Photo by Eddie Herena- San Quentin News
Fateen Lateef Jackson

Arts & Entertainment

Crossword

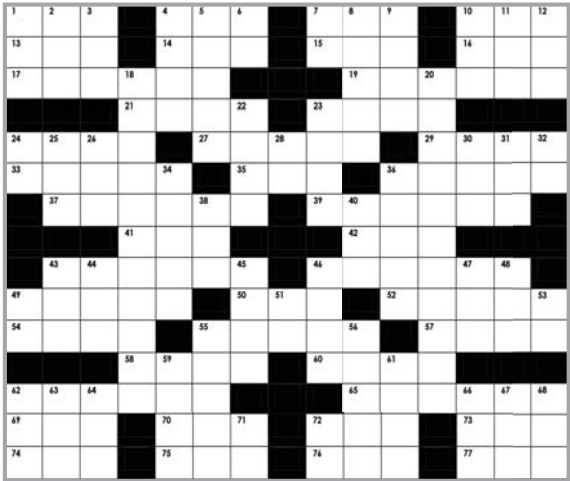
Across

- 1. ___ Quentin News
- 4. Pixar movie ___ Story
- 7. Base unit of area in the Metric System
- 10. 2 Broke Girls Actress Dennings
- 13. A poem of praise
- 14. Iron origin
- 15. PBS Show
- 16. Diamonds, slang
- 17. Recreational activities
- 19. To deteriorated, Adj.
- 21. Compensation plan qualifying employees shares of the company stock, Abbrev.
- 23. Hadrons Collider location
- 24. Actor Bruce or Laura
- 27. The nasal passages
- 29. TV Show VEEP Actor Tony
- 33. Flour product
- 35. Efficient light source, Abbrev.
- 36. Pixar movie about a robot
- 37. City in N. France on the Somme River
- 39. Cultural heritage or nationality, Adj.
- 41. "Elastic Heart" song artist
- 42. List of book's chapter, Abbrev.
- 43. People who work with concrete, stone, & brick
- 46. Crystalline mineral that is the chief ore of lead
- 49. Province in China
- 50. Generation
- 52. Forest fire starter
- 54. Bible garden
- 55. Cocktail lounge instrument
- 57. Devours or destroys
- 58. Emissions caused by burning this
- 60. Unsealed or unwrapped
- 62. Name of package company for inmates
- 65. To place in a grave, bury
- 69. Debra Messing 90's TV show ___ & Stacy
- 70. Produce in small qty., Abbrev.
- 72. 18 Down Movement that encourages inmate expression through___

Down

- 1. Universal Distress
- 2. A nucleotide that is converted to ATP, Abbrev.
- 3. Matrix Character
- 4. VGSQ's Toys for ___
- 5. War of the Worlds author Wells
- 6. Plural of you
- 7. News Organization
- 8. Flowers for loved one for Valentine's Day
- 9. Drew Barrymore movie ___ After.
- 10. SQ News Column ___ C.A.T. Speaks
- 11. Perfect tennis serve
- 12. Movie about a talking bear
- 18. Movement involving incarcerated artists: "Prison___"
- 20. A harsher sentence due to the circumstances of a crime
- 22. Intimate Friends
- 23. Surrender formally
- 24. Robber ___, Cooper
- 25. Baseball player stat
- 26. Dreaming stage of sleep
- 28. Prefix meaning returning to a previous state
- 30. Boxer Muhammad ___
- 31. A type of company
- 32. Recipient of a specific action
- 34. Football Hall of Famer ___ Sanders
- 36. Bruce Willis comedy The ___ 9 Yards
- 38. Indian flat bread
- 40. Place to go when an inmate is ill
- 43. Matthew McConaughey & Reese Witherspoon movie
- 44. Word for "One" (Scottish origin)

- 45. Rock song by AWOL Nation
- 46. Former Jets QB ___ Smith
- 47. Golden State, Lakers, Knicks are part of this association
- 48. Aged a specific amount of years, Abbrev.
- 49. 2nd lightest periodical chemical element, Abbrev.
- 51. The state of the original Walking Dead setting, Abbrev.
- 53. Monetary unit for India, Abbrev.
- 55. Flour product
- 56. A play with an aria
- 59. Seaport & Capital of Norway
- 61. Within or inner
- 62. Me, Myself, ___ I
- 63. Zuckerberg's position at Facebook
- 64. Music medium (Plural)
- 66. Ron Howard's name on the Andy Griffith's show
- 67. Homer Simpson's bartender
- 68. Origin word of a sleeping hollow in the ground
- 71. Hospital worker Title, Abbrev.
- 72. Monetary unit of Laos



Sudoku Corner

	9			7				6
				1			7	
4		5				1		
5	3			2		6		
		9	8		5	3		
		6		4			5	9
		7				9		5
	8				6			
6				9			4	

	8	7		9				
5	4						9	1
1			4		5			8
	2				9			
6		1		2		5		9
			7				6	
9			2		6			7
8	1						2	4
				8		9	5	

Last Issue's Sudoku Solution

1	5	9	4	8	2	6	7	3
4	2	3	7	6	9	5	8	1
8	7	6	1	3	5	2	9	4
6	3	7	2	9	8	4	1	5
2	1	8	3	5	4	9	6	7
5	9	4	6	1	7	8	3	2
3	4	5	8	7	6	1	2	9
9	8	1	5	2	3	7	4	6
7	6	2	9	4	1	3	5	8

9	3	2	1	7	6	8	4	5
5	1	4	3	2	8	9	7	6
7	8	6	4	9	5	2	3	1
3	7	5	6	8	1	4	9	2
2	4	8	9	5	7	1	6	3
6	9	1	2	4	3	7	5	8
8	6	7	5	1	4	3	2	9
4	5	9	8	3	2	6	1	7
1	2	3	7	6	9	5	8	4

Complete This Puzzle and Win a Prize!

If everybody loves anybody who loves somebody, under what circumstances would it *not* be true that everybody loves everybody?

The Answer to Last Months Trivia is:
President must be elected into office.

The winner to last Month's puzzle is:
Johnny Capistrano

Congratulation to Leroy Lucas for also getting last month's puzzle correct.

Rules

The prize will be for completion of brain twister puzzles. All puzzle submissions should be sent via U-Save-Em' envelope to *San Quentin News/ Education Department*. Only one entry per person. All correct submissions will be placed in a hat. The winner will be picked by a drawing of the first correct answer from that hat.

The prize is 2 Granola Bars. Prize will only be offered to inmates with privilege group status that allows for the prize items. Inmates transferred, sent to ad-seg, or otherwise not available to claim their prize will result in forfeiture.

The answer and winner's name will be published in the next issue of the *San Quentin News*.

Snippets

Studies shows that secondhand smoke decreases a person's ability to hear low frequencies by 1.8 times.

London is home to the first subway system in the world.

Unhealthy teeth and gums can cause bacteria to enter the bloodstream, which increases the risk of a heart attack .

Golf courses today have 18 holes, but in the mid-19th century, full length golf courses had no set numbers of holes and the size of the golf courses varied.

A recent European study found no link between cell phone use and cancer.

Babies, on average, blink their eyes less than adults.

Elephants, on average, will cycle through 28 sets of teeth throughout their entire lifespan.

During the Gulf War, Iraq was bombarded by 88,500 tons of bombs.

Fire Inside Tells Women Prisoners' Stories

By Juan Haines
Managing Editor

For the *San Quentin News* staff, reporting news from the perspective of women prisoners is challenging. So reading an authentic source, such as *The Fire Inside*, became a portal into their world.

"The transformation that prisoners' words go through from being a spoken 'gripe' to a printed article validates the writer's sense that their thoughts and feelings are objective; that they speak to others who hear them in this form," wrote inmate Urszula Wislanka.

The Fire Inside is a newsletter, which has published 50 editions in 18 years. As an incarcerated man, I felt privileged to

Book Review

learn what issues are important to *The Fire Inside* writers.

"Brutality and Use of Excessive Force," is a story about a woman prisoner being pepper-sprayed and beaten by a male correctional officer. After reading about this ordeal described by Tammarra Tanner, the words of Viktor E. Frankl immediately came to mind. In his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Frankl said, "The most painful part of beatings is the insult which they imply."

Multiple impressions arose as I thought about what Tanner went through and pondered "the insult which they imply"—be-

ing beaten as a prisoner—a woman being beaten by a man—being a woman prisoner and being beaten by a male guard.

I remembered a poem, "with no immediate cause" by Ntozake Shange, which begins: "every 3 minutes a woman is beaten."

The abuse women undergo every day on this planet is described in graphic detail in Shange's poem. This was the reality I carried with me into the painful world of Tanner.

A long time ago, I was beaten in county jail for talking.

I juggled Tanner's reality with my own memories while focus-

ing on Frankl's statement: "the insult which they imply." I lingered with her story for a long time. It will never leave me, because beating a prisoner implies so much about who we are as human beings.

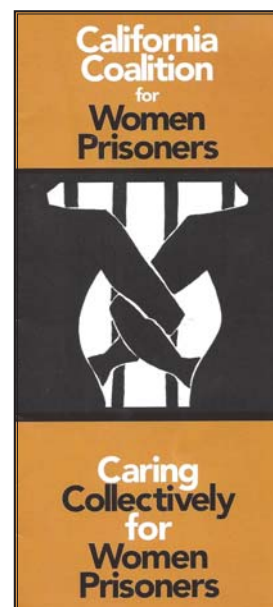
The reality is there was no immediate cause for Tanner's beating. Her story made me think about how prisons operate in this vacuum of ignorance—as if brute force is the answer to complex problems—human problems.

Naomi Murakawa clarified this mindless practice of discipline and punishment in *The First Civil Right—How Liberals Built Prison America* by quoting sociologist David Garland. She wrote, "in a conversation that assumed the fundamental institutional structure of criminalizing, policing, and incarcerating...the 'heated' conflict... became simply a matter of 'how best to run prisons, organize probation or enforce fines, rather than question why these measures are used in the first place.'"

So, when I read that Tanner was beaten for asking questions about her medical care, I weighed the borders and the differences between guard and prisoner, and of course, the 1974 Stanford Experiment popped into my mind. (A psychological experiment, in which college students were assigned to be "prisoners" or "guards" and some "guards" became increasingly abusive.)

So, the million dollar question becomes: "Why don't we do something better than what we're doing now with a prisoner considered to be disruptive, a 'problem child'?"

I believe that we don't correct the situation because the public is ignorant of the realities of prison life as unveiled by publications like *The Fire Inside*.



The Fire Inside enlightened me about healthcare for female prisoners, specifically, that shackling pregnant women has been curtailed. I found out that if someone is experiencing a drug overdose, a bystander won't be punished for helping. I learned the facts and fiction about HIV and AIDS. And, I learned that the Alternative Custody Program is a better solution to overcrowding.

I was disheartened to notice that the most recent issue was published in the summer of 2014. No doubt funding is always an issue.

The Fire Inside is produced by the California Coalition of Women Prisoners, which holds "volunteer nights" for the newsletter at 6 p.m. on the first Wednesday of every month at 1540 Market St., Room 490, San Francisco. 415.255.7036, Ext. 4. Direct questions to: info@womenprisoners.org.

The Walking Dead Is a Hit Television Show In San Quentin

By Emile DeWeaver
Staff Writer

For years, the members of SQ Reviews have heard stories about the A&E sensation, *The Walking Dead*. We gnawed our pillows in envy. Finally, we joined the land of the living in 2014 when KRON 4 syndicated *Walking Dead* (WD). We could then put our pillows to proper use — a cushioned tray for a bowl of snacks.

WD is such a sensation in San Quentin that several Incarcerated-Americans greet each other on what we call Walking Dead Day with "It's Tuesday!" We depart with the same exclamation; it's like the new "bonjour."

SQ Reviews meets in the lot between the education department and the *San Quentin News* office to talk about the fifth season of *Walking Dead*. We quickly fall into disagreement about a central character, Rick Grimes. Grimes is a former sheriff who served as the show's bright moral compass in Season 1 but who in Season 5 becomes a Machiavellian killer.

"I'm not saying Rick is a homicidal maniac," says Joe Krauter, the newest member of SQ Reviews. "Yes, the Terminus people had to die, and yes, Rick chose to hack that man to death with a machete, but maniac ...?" Krauter scratches the stubble on his cheek while he waggles his free hand, unsure of where he falls on the subject.

Terminus is a town of cannibals who lure desperate travelers with the hope of safe harbor, only to imprison them in cattle cars for eventual slaughter.

"Rick is a good dude, but he does bad things," says Rahsaan Thomas. He compares Grimes' decisions to his own past mistakes. He appreciates that WD examines what even the best people will do under extreme circumstances. "Rick had to kill the cannibals. They would've either come after him later or other innocents."

"Can you see what's wrong with that logic though?" Emile DeWeaver asks. He gives real-

Watch This



world examples that show the flaws in this logic. "'We have to invade Iraq or they're going to come for us.' Or 'This guy at the party has an angry look, so I have to pull my gun on him before he hurts me.' If these examples aren't moral uses of force, how does Rick gain the moral high ground to pre-empt bad behavior with executions?"

Krauter says, "Well, *The Walking Dead* is a complete and utter breakdown of society and law. In your gun example, you can turn to the law for recourse. There's no one Rick can turn to for the cannibals."

"Yeah, every time Rick kills, it's out of necessity," Thomas says. "He's a little messed up in the head, but it's not like he enjoys hurting people." Thomas again expresses an affinity with Grimes who, in Thomas' opinion, makes regrettable choices in difficult situations. "We're not exactly the same, I get that. Like Joe said, *Walking Dead* is post-apocalyptic."

Juan Meza shakes his head.

"No, it is the same. You're always talking about how bad it was in Brownsville when you grew up [New York, in the 1980s]. Violence was daily life. Brownsville was an apocalyptic crap-fest."

Thomas frowns at Meza's description of his home. "I wouldn't call it apocalyptic. It wasn't always crazy. Before the '80s, we used to leave the doors open. Then crack hit. Police stopped caring. There was no law."

"You do realize," DeWeaver says, "you just described the general plot of every post-apocalyptic story I've read."

"Right," Meza agrees. "And there still came a point where Rahsaan Thomas decided it's not okay to hurt people because they might hurt you."

"Okay, so Rick just needs therapy," Thomas says. "That's what I needed."

The members of SQ Reviews wonder what Thomas could teach Rick Grimes about finding humanity post-apocalypse.

Death Row Prisoner Free After 30 Years

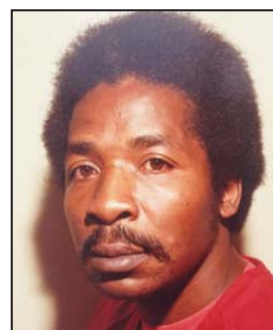
By Noel Scott
Journalism Guild Writer

Glenn Ford was exonerated and released last year after spending 30 years on Louisiana's Death Row. The man who prosecuted him says he was responsible for the wrongful conviction, according to *The Crime Report*.

Former prosecutor A.M. "Marty" Stroud said in a letter to the *Shreveport Times* he was "arrogant, judgmental, narcissistic and very full of myself. I was not interested in justice; I was interested in winning."

When Ford was released from Angola State Prison, he was given a \$20 gift card but denied any further compensation by the state of Louisiana for his wrongful conviction.

Just weeks after Ford's release he was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer. According to John Thompson, who was also exonerated, Ford died



Glenn Ford

destitute just 14 months later.

Stroud urged the state to pay Ford for his wrongful conviction and 30 years of incarceration in barbaric conditions on Louisiana's Death Row. The state refused.

The repentant prosecutor stated his regrets at a symposium for the Quattrone Center for the Fair Administration of Justice, then again on the TV news program *60 Minutes*.

Oficiales Reclaman Muertes a Manos de Policías

Por Thomas Gardner
Escritor del Gremio
Periodístico

Desde el año 2003 al 2009, el 60% de todos los reportes de arrestos relacionados con muertes resultaron ser homicidios cometidos por las autoridades, de acuerdo a un análisis federal reciente.

El informe del Departamento de Justicia de los Estados Unidos confirma que desde el año 2003 al 2009, las autoridades dieron muerte a 2,931 personas arrestadas, estas muertes han sido clasificadas como “crimi-

nales”.

En el mismo periodo de tiempo ocurrieron 1,882 muertes durante el proceso de arresto, los cuales fueron clasificados de naturaleza no criminal. El 11% de muertes fueron suicidios, 11% fue por intoxicación, 6% por lesiones accidentales, y el 5% por causas naturales, expreso el reporte.

“Una ofensa violenta fue el factor principal de los arrestos en tres cuartas partes de los homicidios cometidos por las autoridades policiales. En menos del 2% de estos incidentes no se presentaron cargos crimi-

nales, señalo el reporte.

El Congreso aprobó en el 2000 (DICRA) La Acción de Reportar Muertes en Custodia. La ley requiere que se registre a través de toda la nación cualquier muerte que acontezca durante el proceso de un arresto por agencias policiales locales, del condado, y estatales.

A través del programa (ARD) muertes acontecidas durante un arresto, la Agencia Federal de Estadística de la Justicia ha buscado determinar el número de estas muertes que realmente fueron reportadas.

Al usar el (SHR) Informes

Suplementarios de Homicidio del FBI, se toman en consideración dos categorías de muerte: justificable e injustificable, explico el reporte.

Más de un cuarto de homicidios (28%) cometidos por las autoridades policiales en los Estados Unidos, - ambos justificados e injustificados - no fueron detectados por ninguno de los sistemas (ARD ni SHR), según la información recopilada.

“En total, el programa de datos de la BJS ARD y los datos del SHR, identificaron aproximadamente la mitad del número de homicidios en manos de

oficiales de la ley durante el periodo del año 2003, al 2009 y el 2011,” informaron los autores del reporte.

Esto llevo al equipo de investigación a dudar acerca de reportes “voluntarios” de parte del estado y agencias locales. La respuesta de los investigadores fue la de implementar el uso de “fuentes de información abiertas” (inspecciones en la red y funciones de alerta de parte de Google) para identificar muertes que no hayan sido reportadas.

—Traducción por
Marco Villa

Grupo Educativo Ayuda A Reos Latinos

Después de 20 años de encarcelamiento con una condena de 15 años a vida, Jose Segura, fue encontrado elegible para obtener su libertad condicional en su segunda visita ante un comité de audiencias.

Segura, quien fue parte de (VOEG) Grupo Educativo para Ofensores y Víctimas, atribuye a las clases de VOEG en español el poder expresarse claramente ante el comité.

VOEG es un programa que facilita el diálogo entre ofensores y víctimas para tomar conciencia del impacto que sus crímenes han causado a sus familias y comunidades.

“Cuando cometí mi crimen tenía un sistema de creencia llamado machismo. Esta creencia me enseñó a tener un gran ego, ser fuerte, nunca pedir ayuda o dejar que otra persona se aproveche de mí,” comentó Segura. (VOEG) me ayudo a

ver y a cambiar la ira que vivía dentro de mí. Aprendí que el pedir ayuda o expresar mis emociones no me hace una persona débil”.

Los facilitadores de VOEG Lesli Pastora Reyes, Steve Granville, Lucia De La Fuente, visitaban la prisión de San Quentin una vez por semana para apoyar a García y Heredia a facilitar el proceso educativo entre los participantes.

El grupo en español fue posible por el ingenio de dos presos México-Americanos, Arnulfo T. García (San Quentin News Editor-in-Chief) y Jorge Heredia (San Quentin News Interpreter).

“Mucho antes de haber participado como estudiante en el grupo de VOEG siempre estime que el trabajo en uno mismo es posible solamente cuando uno expresa sus sentimientos en su propio idioma,” dijo Heredia.

“Si logras que una persona se exprese en su propio lenguaje, entonces podrá hablar de sus propios problemas, reconectarse consigo mismo y buscar el desarrollo como ser humano.”

García comentó que la presencia de líderes comunitarios como Daniel “Nane” Alejandrez motivan a los participantes a entender la importancia de involucrarse en este programa.

Alejandrez, fundador y Director Ejecutivo de Barrios Unidos en Santa Cruz fue el invitado para hablar con los graduados. Barrios Unidos es una organización multi-cultural que ofrece oportunidades educativas y entrenamiento laboral a jóvenes a través de trabajadores de la comunidad con experiencia.

“Nuestra visión de comunidades estables y seguras solo pueden ser visualizadas por líderes que no temen enfrentar

los retos de hoy de una manera prudente y rápida,” declara la misión de Barrios Unidos.

Durante la sesión, Alejandrez hablo extensivamente acerca de sus visitas a las prisiones durante los últimos 26 años, apoyando a detener la violencia en las calles y las prisiones. Posteriormente, Alejandrez hizo hincapié sobre los participantes de la clase de VOEG en español.

“Observo un grupo de guerreros que apoyan la paz listos para reintegrarse a sus comunidades,” menciono Alejandrez. “Tener programas como éste es una gran oportunidad para que las personas puedan realizar una introspección en sus vidas. Necesitamos esta clase de grupos donde las personas se reúnen en un círculo para procesar y sanar sus heridas. La sociedad no se beneficia al mantener a una persona en prisión sin futuro.”

“Alejandrez estableció una conexión honesta con los participantes. Es mucho mas fácil expresar empatía y amor en tu propio idioma,” expreso García.

Tare Beltranchuc de 46 años de edad, comento que el proceso de VOEG fue de gran ayuda para entender el por que llevo a hacer una persona violenta.

“El proceso de VOEG me ayudo a conectarme con mis víctimas a través de la empatía,” explico Beltranchuc. “Una vez que pude identificar y enfrentar mis problemas internos, empecé mi proceso de sanación y honestamente entendí el dolor que le cause a mis víctimas.”

Alejandrez identifico que el proceso del círculo y el escuchar atentamente son dos elementos muy importantes de éste programa.

“Me conmovió y emocio el escuchar los testimonios de los presos, ya que me da mucha esperanza. Un gran cambio resultara cuando veamos gente como la que veo hoy, abandonar estos lugares y reintegrarse a sus comunidades.”

Los facilitadores y Alejandrez recibieron un certificado de apreciación por su dedicación al servicio público de esta prisión.

“Continuare visitando las prisiones por mis parientes que se encuentran en la prisión, quienes se han educado así mismos sobre como vivir en paz,” menciono Alejandrez. “Deberían tener la oportunidad de irse a sus hogares.”

Programas como VOEG han ayudado a muchos prisioneros a entender y expresar de una manera más eficaz sus emociones, así como encontrar una manera de establecer una conexión y sentir empatía hacia sus víctimas.

Prisioneros como Segura, quienes han sido elegibles para obtener su libertad condicional todavía tienen que esperar aproximadamente 5 meses por la decisión final del Gobernador Jerry Brown.

Los integrantes del primer programa de VOEG en español son:

Victim-Offender Program Graduates Spanish Class

Continued from Page 1

Granville, and Lucia De La Fuente visited San Quentin State Prison once a week to teach VOEG.

The Spanish VOEG class is the brainchild of two incarcerated Mexican-Americans, Arnulfo T. Garcia (San Quentin News editor-in-chief) and Jorge G. Heredia (San Quentin News Spanish interpreter).

“Long before I started doing my own VOEG, I always believed in order to get the real work done, people needed to be able to express their feelings in their own language,” Heredia said. “If you get a person to express himself in his own language, he’ll be able to talk about his own issues in life, reconnect with himself and seek development as a human being.”

Daniel “Nane” Alejandrez, founder and executive director of Santa Cruz Barrios Unidos, was invited to the final class as a guest speaker.

Barrios Unidos is a multi-cultural organization that provides youth with educational opportunities and job training through experienced community workers.

“Our vision of safer and stronger communities can only be realized by leaders who are not afraid to face today’s challenges prudently

and expediently,” Barrios Unidos’ mission statement reads.

Alejandrez, who spoke about his 26 years of traveling to the nation’s prisons on a mission for peace, reflected on the men in Spanish VOEG.

“I see a group of peace warriors, ready to return to their communities,” said Alejandrez. “Having programs like this gives one the opportunity to look into their life. We need these types of groups that use the circle process that heals our pain. It does society no good to keep someone locked up with no future.”

Garcia said for community leaders like Alejandrez to come inside the prison and give the Spanish VOEG class positive feedback helps other men understand why they should take the program.

“Nane was able to connect with the men in an honest way,” Garcia said. “It’s easier to express things like empathy, love or relationships in your native language.”

Tare Beltranchuc, 46, said that the VOEG process helped him understand why he became a violent person.

“What it helped me to do is connect through empathy,” Beltranchuc said. “Once I was able to see and deal with the internal issues, only then could I begin to heal myself and truly understand the hurt I placed on my victims.”



Back row: Jesus Yanez, Gloria Musto, Judy Cavazos
Front row: Lesli Pastora Reyes, Lucia De La Fuente, and Steve Granville

Alejandrez said the VOEG circle process has power through the act of listening.

“I was very moved to hear these testimonies. It gives me hope. A big change will come as we see people like I see here leave these places and return to the community.”

The facilitators and Alejandrez were presented with a certificate of appreciation for their dedicated public service.

“As long as my relatives, and we are all related, who have educated themselves on how to live in peace are still behind bars, I’ll keep doing

this,” Alejandrez said. “They should have the ability to go home. And a \$200 gate only is not going to do it. We should have a welcome committee waiting for them and then take them to where they need to go.”

Other graduates of the 18-month VOEG program are:

Oscar Aguilar
Arturo Avalos
Vincente Gomez
Eduardo Gonzalez
Manuel Granados
Manuel Murillo
Juan Vega
Marco Villa

“As long as my relatives, and we are all related, who have educated themselves on how to live in peace are still behind bars, I’ll keep doing

—traducción por
Miguel Quezada

Reports: High Desert Prison Misconduct

By Kevin D. Sawyer
Journalism Guild Chairman

Guards' misconduct of overt racism and excessive force on inmates at High Desert State Prison in Susanville was revealed in a state investigation.

The disclosures are contained in a 120-page report by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) published in December. The investigation was ordered by the Senate Committee on Rules in the wake of numerous complaints.

"I don't think anyone expected it (the Inspector General's report) to be as scathing as it was," Hans Hemann, chief of staff for Sen. Loni Hancock, D-Berkeley, told the *Los Angeles Times*.

The OIG reported a mixture of misconduct, but the Senate committee "specifically requested the OIG review practices related to excessive use of force against inmates."

During the course of the Senate-authorized review, the OIG reported that its staff ran into "significant opposition from the union." It said the union made attempts to impede OIG informational, non-disciplinary interviews aimed at uncovering the veracity of allegations that the integrity of the correctional profession and the advancement of public safety at High Desert have been compromised.

The union's "only interest in this matter is to make sure correctional peace officers' constitutional and statutory rights are protected," Nichol Gomez-Pryde, spokeswoman for the California Correctional Peace Officers Association, told the *Times*.

"In its request, the Senate committee reported that a number of allegations surfaced that raised concerns about the safety of both inmates and staff," the OIG report said. "As part of this review, the OIG requested the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's (CDCR) Office of Internal Affairs immediately open expedited investigations into each allegation."

The OIG reported High Desert turning over six different wardens or acting wardens in the last eight years and that the various yards, housing different security levels of inmates, operate independent of each other.

"No two yards at High Desert have the same mission," it was reported. "The conflicting missions at High Desert make it difficult for vulnerable inmates, whether by commitment offense or disability, to program safely."

The report said there is evidence that a perception of indifference toward inmates exists at High Desert, and it is made worse by geographical isolation, the high stress environment and the guards' union that opposes oversight.

"We do not tolerate staff misconduct of any kind and will take appropriate action to hold all employees accountable," said then-CDCR Secretary Jeffrey Beard in a written statement, the *Times* reported.

The OIG said inmate attempts to file grievances through the inmate appeal process presents problems for inmates because the system at High Desert is not functioning effectively and the process to file complaints about staff is broken.

"Very few staff complaints were referred for investigation, and those that were referred have not been adequately monitored and tracked for response," the OIG reported. "High Desert does not have a process for addressing officers who are repeatedly accused of misconduct by different inmates."

The OIG reported cadets from major metropolitan areas in California, who graduate from the academy and are assigned to work at High Desert, leave as soon as they can transfer to another institution.

"Working around such dangerous individuals on a daily basis can be a highly stressful experience," the OIG reported. "CDCR does not have a program that adequately trains its staff or gives them the tools to cope with working in such a stressful environment."



Courtesy of CDCR

High Desert State Prison

The prison guards' union's mission is "to promote and enhance the correctional profession, protect the safety of those engaged in corrections and advocate for the laws, funding and policies needed to improve prison operations and protect public safety."

"Interviews of staff formerly assigned to High Desert indicated the existence of tight-knit social groups among employees, commonly referred to as 'cars' within the correctional community," the OIG reported. "Unlike any other locale, High Desert staff live in a true 'prison town' where they cannot disassociate from the job. The pressure to conform to the prevailing norm is tremendous."

The OIG revealed groups of High Desert employees who socialize outside of work often comprise supervisors and guards who work in the same housing units and during the same shifts.

"Many of the staff are actually related," the OIG reported. "Spouses, siblings and cousins are often employed at one or the other institution, literally creating 'family' ties."

Inmates who were interviewed, formerly housed at High Desert, reported common allegations of overt racism at High Desert, the report said. Some former inmates said the racism they experienced at High Desert was worse than what they experienced at any other CDCR institution.

"Officers called inmates the N-word or wetbacks," former inmates reported to the OIG. "Black inmates wouldn't get enough time to eat," "the offi-

cers would 'kick' the Blacks out of the chow hall first and then the Hispanics." And, "the White inmates didn't have to leave; they were running the kitchen."

Other inmates reported to the OIG that "the White staff were very racist and bigoted, not just toward inmates but also toward officers that were of a different race."

Jessica Pishko wrote an August 2015 article for *Rolling Stone* magazine titled, "High Desert Suicide: Was a Prison Guard Hazed to Death?" According to the OIG report, the article "explores the events leading up to the 2011 suicide of a High Desert correctional officer," suggesting harassment.

The OIG reported that over a 12-month period, there were many instances in which the hiring authority failed to refer cases of serious misconduct to CDCR's Office of Internal Affairs.

Former High Desert inmates who were interviewed said staff would disclose the commitment offense of inmates to other inmates which would place their safety in jeopardy. These inmates said staff told inmates about other inmates who were sex offenders, or provide them with access to the Strategic Offender Management System (SOMS), where electronic classification documents containing inmate records are stored.

The OIG report quoted a former High Desert staff member who said, "Inmates take a very dim view of other inmates who have committed various crimes, mostly sex offenses. And they tend to target them for assaults, for extortion, for a whole variety

of negative actions."

The OIG made many recommendations to CDCR, including:

- Infuse High Desert supervisory and management positions with culturally diverse staff who have experience working in other institutions and do not have lifelong ties to the community.

- Ensure High Desert is following the Department Operations Manual requirements related to staff in high-stress assignments.

- Seek out opportunities to partner with organizations, such as the U.S. Department of Justice, to conduct research and provide training to custody staff, starting at High Desert, on how to recognize and address implicit bias.

- Add a receipt feature to the *CDCR Form 602, Inmate/Parolee Appeal*, or assign a log number to all appeals at the point of collection.

- Immediately install cameras in all inmate areas, including, but not limited to, the exercise yards, rotundas, building dayrooms, patios and program offices of High Desert.

- Require allegation inquiries be conducted only by staff who have received formal internal affairs investigation training.

- Develop a method of tracking and recording staff access to records in SOMS and other inmate records, and periodically audit access history to identify potential misuse.

The report recognized that the guards at High Desert are always on high alert and go into the prison with an "us versus them" mindset. This, according to the OIG, creates an atmosphere of "if you aren't for us, you're against us."

The OIG report said depriving inmates of procedural justice, having them feel there is no remedy for mistreatment because the grievance process is inadequate with the perception that staff misconduct is not addressed, "there should be no surprise that violence erupts."

"Add to that a labor organization (CCPOA) that values the brotherhood of silence over the professionalism of its members, and you add another level of legitimacy to a negative culture," the OIG reported. "The irony is that this very culture endangers the staff working at High Desert as much as anything else."

"First, we want to note that there are dedicated, hardworking and conscientious staff that make up the vast majority of the workforce at High Desert," the OIG said. "They come to work every day and do the best they can in a very difficult job."

The OIG concluded saying many of the specific instances of misconduct and even some of the pervasive indifferent treatment of inmates can be narrowed down to a small percentage of active participants, many of whom are currently under investigation.

The CDCR activated High Desert in 1995 adjacent to the grounds of the California Correctional Center (CCC), in Susanville.

The full OIG report can be accessed at www.oig.ca.gov.

Federal Prison Houses 'Most Dangerous'

By Charles David Henry
Journalism Guild Writer

America's most famous haunted house is not devoted to spooky, frightening monsters grabbing the imagination or fascination of Halloween worshippers. It's located 100 miles south of Denver, Colorado, according to *Huffington Post*.

Given the reputation as "a cleaner version of hell," the USP ADX Florence Supermax Prison facility is the scariest in the United States. This house takes horror to an element beyond Halloween mischief or a Hollywood spectacle. The *Post* said.

Currently 403 of America's most-violent inmates in the penitentiary system are housed there. These men have been declared too brutal for even maximum security incarceration, the *Post* warned.

Since 1994, the prison has

confined its tenants to a 12-foot by 7-foot concrete cell with a toilet, shower, black and white television and accommodations for reading. The windows are entirely barred, so inmates cannot glimpse at the Rocky Mountains surrounding the complex. They must spend 23 hours per day locked in solitary confinement, the *Post* added.

Inmates are given one hour each day to exercise in a small outdoor enclosure designated as a gymnasium. According to the story, they are allowed 10 hours of physical activity per week. One 15-minute phone call is authorized per month.

In a CBS "60 Minutes" program narrative, prisoners could be heard cheering as they watched American and United airplanes crash into the twin towers on Sept. 11. High profile prisoners at the facility include Ramzi Yousef, 1993 World Trade Center mastermind;

Zacarias Moussaoui, 9/11 perpetrator; and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, Boston Marathon bomber.

Other notorious criminals locked down at Florence include Terry Nichols, the Oklahoma City bomber accomplice; Vincent Basciano, former Bonanno Crime Family boss; and Michael Swango, the serial killer physician who poisoned over 60 patients, the *Post* said.

Florence was designed to be escape-proof. The penitentiary's intended purpose is not for rehabilitation. Its mission is to impose harsh treatment and isolation. Once inside the facility, direction and time of day become increasingly difficult to ascertain. "This setup prevents both inmates from breaking out and cohorts on the outside from breaking in," according to the *Post* story.

Studies conducted on Florence and other "silent prisons"

discovered most inmates subjected to solitary confinement eventually suffer mental breakdown. Four prisoners killed themselves, and other former residents insisted they would have chosen capital punishment over a supermax sentence.

Often, an inmate's only human interaction is with guards, psychiatrists or clergy. Florence has been targeted as inhumane. *The New York Times* reported an incident where one inmate attempted to kill himself by cutting his wrist. When released from the hospital, a correctional officer forced him to scrub dried blood off the floor of his cell.

The government has litigated numerous lawsuits in defense of the facility's operation; however, the nation's fiercest threats "won't be penetrating those concrete barriers anytime soon," the *Post* concluded.

Lifers: Gun Enhancements Kill Hopes For Parole

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

Incarcerated men impacted by California’s “Use a gun and you’re done” law sat down to discuss its effects inside the San Quentin News room with Producer Michael Bott and reporter Stephen Stock of *NBC We Investigate* scheduled to be aired Feb. 26 at 11 p.m. and Feb. 29 at p.m.

“We deal out punishment instead of fixing problems in society,” said Bott.

He became interested in doing a story about gun enhancement after learning that a 16-year-old kid was sentenced to life for a drive-by shooting where the victim was not critically injured.

Under California Penal Code 12022.53, using a gun to commit a crime earns a mandatory extra 10 years, 20 extra years if the weapon is fired, and an additional 25-to-life if someone receives great bodily injury or dies.

Panel members included Ferrari Moody, Demond Lewis, Antoine Watie, Emile DeWeaver, David Le, Phoeun You, Fanon Figgers, Anthony Ammons and Miguel Quezada. They expressed their opinions about the law.

Moody killed David Thomas, who had just beaten him up. He was sentenced to 15 to life for second degree murder, with an extra 25 to life for using a gun that resulted in someone’s death. He hasn’t had any serious rule violations during his 13 years of imprisonment, and he

Yard Talk

has become a youth minister. Other panel members, Demond Lewis, Antoine Watie, Emile DeWeaver and Miguel Quezada expressed similar opinions.

“The gun enhancement laws are the new ‘life without the possibility of parole,’” said Lewis, who received 109 years for shooting a man in the leg.

Lewis received multiple punishments for the single offense under the three strikes law (45 years), gun enhancement (25), ex-felon with a gun (25) and prior prison term laws (14), he says.

One of the problems our panel stressed is that the law disregards mitigating circumstances.

“I think there is a different level of culpability, of intent,” said Watie. “I don’t think someone who kills and rapes a little girl should receive the same life without the possibility of parole as someone who committed a crime with the intent of protecting his family.”

Watie was convicted of manslaughter for acting in imperfect self-defense against his stepfather, who had just beaten up his mother. Watie went to retrieve his little brother and sister from the abusive man’s home. Watie fired the fatal shot when his stepfather came at him with what turned out to be something made of wood.

Normally, only a 10-year gun

enhancement applies to manslaughter, but because the shot went through a screen door, Watie received the 25 to life gun enhancement attached to the crime of shooting into an inhabited dwelling for a total of 36-years-to life, according to the published Appellant Court’s decision.

No one on the panel sees the law as deterring gun violence.

“I felt in the environment I was raised, it was safer to have a gun than be caught in the streets without my gun,” said Moody.

Watie said, “I used the gun to remove my little brother and sister from a dangerous situation; no law would change that.”

“The gun enhancement laws are the new ‘life without the possibility of parole”

Quezada added, “In my community, there were no laws, other than to survive.”

The discussion turned next to better solutions.

“The law isn’t working,” said DeWeaver. “The better solution is to repeal the law. It is ineffective; it contributes to the money

we don’t have for our schools; it’s breaking the taxpayer bank, and it’s not making the public any safer. Nothing is a better alternative than the gun law.”

“We won’t find the roots of criminality in gun stores. You find them in neighborhoods that feel like they are under siege by law enforcement. You find them in schools where 13-year-olds are treated like criminals and then shamed when they grow up and become criminals. You find them in houses without fathers because their dads are serving 109 years to life because they got in a fight and shot a guy in the leg.”

Quezada added, “A lot of root causes of crime in these communities are poverty, lack of education and resources. Allocating the appropriate funds to go into these communities, provide jobs and opportunities other than jail would be a solution.”

Watie said, “I needed education on how to handle emotions, how to handle anger and hurt feelings. If I’m educated on how to deal with these emotions, I wouldn’t have gone over there.”

Lewis commented, “There were years of stuff that led up to that day. The whole thing is stability and normalcy in the house. I grew up in a house that wasn’t stable. As a kid, you shouldn’t have to worry about being able to eat or if there is gonna be a fight. When you’re a kid in adult situations, you always overanalyze situations. I would have all the answers to my problems and

yours if I could tell you what a kid is supposed to do in an adult situation.”

Moody added, “It starts in the household. The fabric of whole household broke down. Women raising young men on their own. We raise each other. We learn from each other. We need to get back to a place where we are back in a family structure.”

Watie said, “It’s the culture that shapes the need to carry a gun. If you weren’t flashy, you wouldn’t need a gun. We turned this thing into a fad. Since I’m insignificant, I click up, so I can be seen. We need to change the culture.”

The panel ended the conversation with advice for their younger selves.

“I would tell young Emile, you are right, life is unjust,” said DeWeaver. “Life is messed up and racism is real, but the way you are going about dealing with the injustices isn’t helping you or solving the injustices. If you don’t like the way this world is, I can show you how to change it.”

Quezada said, “I think the generic answer is stay in school and listen to your parents. I would tell the kids to understand who you aren’t. We get so caught up in who we think we should be, or what other people tell us to be, we don’t take the time to understand who we don’t want to be.”

Moody would tell his young self, “not to allow current conditions to dictate future outcomes.”

February Highlights Love, Presidents and Black History

By **Angelo Falcone**
Journalism Guild Writer

Valentine’s Day is the special day in February when people send greeting cards called “Valentines” to their sweethearts, friends, and members of their families, all in the name of love, according to the *World Book Encyclopedia*. But what is love? Who is Valentine?

In the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, “love” is defined as “strong affection, warm attachment, or attraction based on sexual desire.” Love is also used to describe a beloved person, or someone who has

Asked On The Line

“unselfish, loyal, and benevolent concern for others.”

Love is not to be confused with affection or infatuation, however. Love implies intense fondness or deep devotion and, according to *Merriam-Webster*, affection suggests warm, tender feelings, usually not as powerful or deep as those implied by love. Infatuation implies a foolish or unreasoning passion or affection, often a transient one, such as a crush. Nevertheless, no other

day celebrates love more than Saint Valentine’s Day.

The *World Book Encyclopedia* describes Saint Valentine as not one, but two martyrs of the early Christian Church. The Roman history of martyrs lists two Saint Valentines who were beheaded on Feb. 14 in A.D. 269. One died in Rome and the other in Interamna, present-day Terni (60 miles from Rome). The Saint Valentine who died in Rome was a priest and the other Saint Valentine was bishop of Interamna.

The *World Book Encyclopedia* further reports that the custom of exchanging Valentines on Feb. 14 can be traced to the English poet of the 14th century, Geoffrey Chaucer. That’s because he mentioned that “birds begin to pair off on that day” supporting an old English belief that birds chose their mates on that day.

It was also reported that Valentine’s Day was traced to an ancient Roman festival called Lupercalia, which occurred on Feb. 15. This bizarre festival was to “ensure protection from wolves.” During this celebration, young men struck other people with strips of animal hide. “Women took the blows because they thought that the whipping made them more fertile.” Lupercalia was

linked with Valentine’s Day because of the similar date and the connection with fertility.

In the United States and Canada, people exchange Valentines, and many send flowers, boxed candy or other gifts. In Europe, celebrations

are similar, except in the United Kingdom and Italy. In those countries, some unmarried women get up before sunrise on Valentine’s Day and stand by the window watching for a man to pass. They believe that the first man they see will marry them within a year.

Prisoners & Volunteers Sing Christmas Carols

By **John C. Eagan**
Adviser, *San Quentin News*

“It was wonderful ... Thank you so much ... It made me feel human.”

Those were some of the prisoners’ reactions to the Christmas caroling by a group of volunteers who strolled through San Quentin cell blocks and dormitories on Dec. 19.

Most of the inmates stopped what they were doing as the carolers arrived. Many joined in singing a half-dozen Christmas songs. The odds-on favorite was *The Little Drummer Boy*.

In one dorm, a prisoner used his hands to pound out the drum beat on a nearby metal table.

About 60 volunteers braved the chilly evening to take part in the annual event. They were escorted by a number of inmates.

“It makes a huge difference for these men who are separated from their families at Christmas,” commented one escort.

“They don’t do this at any other prison,” said another. He recalled some years ago when he was transferred to San Quentin. “I was lying in my bunk, and I thought I heard singing. I couldn’t believe it, but there they were. Tears rolled down my face as I remembered happy times as a youngster around the Christmas tree.”

The holiday season sometimes means increased suicides, one escort noted. “This helps to cut that back.”

“It is an inspiring, blessed event. It stirs up wonderful childhood memories. The men are very grateful,” commented Protestant Chaplain Mardi Jackson.

“The men would gather around and join in the singing with smiles on their faces,” said one of the leaders, Music Minister Steve Howell of Tiburon Baptist Church. “Tonight they recognized these songs that so many know and that have been in their hearts for years.”

Other February Facts

February is the shortest month of the year; the only month that does not have 30 or 31 days. February has 28 days, except during leap year, which occurs every four years. This brand new year of 2016 is a “leap year,” so February has 29 days and five Mondays.

Groundhog day is on Tuesday, Feb. 2; Chinese New Year is on Monday, Feb. 8, and President’s Day is Monday, Feb. 15.

For members of the Christian community, the Presentation of the Lord is on Tuesday, Feb. 2, and Ash Wednesday is Feb. 10. The Feast for both Saints Valentine is on Sunday, Feb. 14.

According to the World Almanac, February is Black History Month, American Heart Month, Library Lovers Month, Youth Leadership Month, and Return Shopping Carts to the Supermarket Month.

There are two astrological signs in February: Aquarius, the sign of the Water Bearer (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) and Pisces, the sign of the Fishes (Feb. 19 to March 20). Amethyst is the February birthstone.

1. Alaska — In December the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission released recommendations that include re-evaluating pretrial practices, focusing on incarceration for serious and violent offenders, strengthening parole and probation to keep Alaskans from re-offending and prioritizing the needs of crime victims. If adopted, the commission says significant reductions in the state’s prison population would occur and \$424 million could be saved over the next decade, *Alaska News* reports.

2. Sacramento — Gov. Jerry Brown named Scott Kernan, a former state prison guard and warden, as secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in December. He succeeds Jeffrey Beard, who is leaving after three years in the Cabinet post. Kernan, 55, was hired as a guard in 1983 and served as a prison officer through 2000, except for his work as a budget analyst for the system in 1986 and 1987. He became an administrator in 2001 and served as warden at Mule Creek prison in Amador County 2003-04, then at California State Prison-Sacramento through 2006. He was the prison system’s chief of operations from 2008 to 2011, then ran a private consulting company before returning to the operations post in March. His appointment is subject to state Senate confirmation. The job pays \$243,360 a year.

3. Sacramento — After students protested the University of California system’s investments in companies that operate private prisons, about \$30 million of its holdings in those companies were sold, the *Los Angeles Times* reported. The UC system has a portfolio of nearly \$100 billion, but students and alumni say this change is sig-



nificant, at least symbolically.

4. Vacaville — An Office of the Inspector General report found health care at California State Prison-Solano inadequate. The report specifically cited either no hand soap or no disposable towels in six inmate patient restrooms. Several clinics did not have easily accessible protective equipment to control exposure to blood-borne pathogens. Annual tuberculosis screenings were also inadequate, according to the report.

5. Phoenix, Ariz. — State administrators awarded Corrections Corporation of America a contract for 1,000 private prison beds. The new contract doubles the number of beds under the company’s control at Red Rock Correctional Center.

6. Omaha, Neb. —When the State Legislature voted to abolish the death penalty and over-

rode Gov. Pete Ricketts’ veto, the *Associated Press* called it the top Nebraska news story for 2015.

7. Kansas City, Mo. —Missourians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty released their first annual report on capital punishment, according to *The Missouri Times*. Staci Pratt, the state coordinator for the group, said the report showed signs of optimism for opponents to capital punishment. “One of the things to hold onto is that Missouri is evolving,” she said. “While we did see six executions this year, we saw no new death sentences. There is beginning to be a sense of change in Missouri and whether or not the death penalty is appropriate.”

8. Illinois —The state’s Department of Corrections has agreed to build four new treatment units to house 11,000

mentally ill inmates, the *Chicago Times* reports. The construction comes after a settlement was reached in a long-running class-action lawsuit that alleged inadequate treatment amounted to “cruel and unusual punishment.”

9. Albany, N.Y. — The use of dietary punishments in New York’s solitary confinement units is ending under a settlement in December, *The New York Times* reported. According to the settlement, the punishment meals included ingredients that do not usually go together.

10. Wethersfield, Conn. — Even though the state’s highest court ruled last August that the death penalty is unconstitutional, the 11 prisoners on Death Row have not yet been moved, the *Hartford Courant* reports. Prosecutors seek to overturn the

ruling when they argue another death penalty appeal scheduled for early 2016.

11. Wethersfield, Conn. — Prison officials are planning to build a prison to exclusively house and deal with issues of inmates between the ages of 18 and 25, the *Associated Press* reports. Prison staffers will receive special training designed to address the needs of the youngsters. Programs at the prison will be designed to focus on the brain development of young adults, the state’s correction commissioner said.

12. Concord, N.H. — A lawsuit has been filed on behalf of an inmate whose 3-year-old son sent him a Thanksgiving card that included drawings and the handwritten message: “I (heart) U DADDY,” the *Associated Press* reports. In an effort to curtail drug smuggling, prison officials banned all greeting cards. The American Civil Liberties Union New Hampshire said the ban went too far and was ineffective.

13. Boca Raton, Fla. — A senior executive with the for-profit prison company, Geo Group, told investment bankers that despite talk of drug policy and criminal justice reform, the country will continue to “attract crime,” generating new “correctional needs.” “The reality is, we are a very affluent country; we have loose borders, and we have a bad education system,” said Shayn March, Geo’s vice president and treasurer. “And all that adds up to a significant amount of correctional needs, which, thankfully, we’ve been able to help the country out with and states with by providing a lower-cost solution.” The previously unreported remarks were made during a presentation at the Barclays High Yield Bond & Syndicated Loan conference in June.

Prison University Project Students Display Talents

By **Rahsaan Thomas** and **Juan Haines**

A prison chapel served as a theater on Christmas Eve when more than a dozen incarcerated college students took to the stage for an open mic. More than 150 guests were entertained by performances that included spoken word, original songs and testimonies of personal transformation.

Carlos “Juancito” Meza performed two spoken word pieces, *Sorry Son* and *Hands Behind My Back*.

Sorry Son, an apology for injustices his son suffered, shared the trials and tribulations of growing up Mexican-American. The testimony centered on Meza’s response to his son being pulled over by police while driving home from work and then being treated like a criminal.

Hands Behind My Back gave the audience a visceral and interpretative perception on how oppressive life can be as an incarcerated American.

Other performances, spoken word pieces and testimonies in-

cluded themes centered on social issues and transformation.

Aaron Taylor and Cody Koppe performed two acoustic freestyle guitar pieces that had a rock and roll sound that the audience enjoyed.

James Vick’s testimony, *Homeless in America*, gave an account on what it’s like to spend nearly a year as a homeless man in the U.S. Vick described what it’s like to spend the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays on the streets.

Gerry “Cap” Johns performed a monologue, geared around the plight of Bigger Thomas of Richard Wright’s *Native Son*.

Johns, a lawyer acting as Bigger Thomas’ lawyer, was joined by Anouthinh “Choy” Pangthong acting as the judge.

“A guilty verdict delivered upon him is a guilty judgment upon us all,” Johns said, referring to the charges against Bigger Thomas.

Jason Jones read a poem, *Innocent Perceptions*, that described what hope feels like “through innocent eyes.”

“Breaking up a family should itself be a crime,” Jones said. “A broken home meant bad construction, not a family that couldn’t function.”

Somdeng “Danny” Thongsy performed a spoken word piece, *My Own Prison*, telling the audience what it’s like to journey from innocent kid to hustler and from vagrant to a prisoner serving a life sentence.

“Tears of loneliness, fighting brokenness,” was a line that stood out in Thongsy’s piece.

Lemar Harrison’s rap, *The Beauty in Pain*, had the audiences’ heads bobbing to “If you want to see a rainbow, first you have to learn how to deal with the rain...’cause when the sun shines; you see the beauty in pain.”

Adnan Khan pitched a new cultural movement at San Quentin called Prison Renaissance.

Khan talked using education and art to change self-perception. He referenced other social movements with an artistic component such as the European Enlightenment and the 1920

Harlem Renaissance.

Gregory “White Eagle” Coates’ serene melody on a wood flute soothed the theater.

The scheduled acts were:

- Jens Brazwell – *Doin’ Time/Dream Within A Dream*
- Emile DeWeaver – *Lies*
- K. Walters – *Why I Like English 99A*
- J. Medvin “Killa” Clown – *All Lives Matter*
- Upu Ama and Artistic Ensemble – *Impact Gesture*
- Reggie Hola – *Unspoken*
- Micheal “Yahyah” Cooke – *Clothes Make the Man*
- Tommy Winfrey – *Power and How I Found Mine*
- Ralph Calix – *A Life Revealed*
- Joey Hopkins – *Heartache in Hell*
- Kevin Valvardi – *Three Poems*
- Timbuktu – *Who Am I?*
- Mesro Coles-El – *Public Service Announcement*
- Eusebio Gonzalez – *I am*
- Richard Lathan – *Broken, Ascending to Heaven*
- James Jenkins – *All Things in Common*

Website Offers Help to Families of Those Incarcerated

A new and free search engine, www.PrisonPath.com, provides information for the public. The site helps users in clarifying confusion and fear of the unknown when a loved one is charged and arrested, or sentenced to imprisonment in the United States. PrisonPath provides information including the ability to find a person incarcerated, visitation rules, contact numbers, and more about every American prison or jail. It also allows families and friends of inmates to communicate with each other on a specific page.

S.Q. Soccer Team Getting Sponsored

By Marcus Henderson
Staff Writer

When the season starts in April, the San Quentin Soccer team will have a sponsor.

Andrew Crawford is taking the required training so he can be the soccer team's sponsor.

"I'm very excited," said Crawford in his English accent.

Crawford read about the sports program in the *San Quentin News* and contacted Coach Don DeNevi.

DeNevi referred Crawford to Don Smith of Christian Sports Ministry for guidance through the process of becoming a sponsor, according to Smith.

Having a sponsor will allow them to compete against outside teams and grow the soccer program.

In the meantime, San Quentin soccer players challenge each other. In November, the San Quentin Legionnaires (Legends) defeated and deflated the S.Q. Golden Eagles soccer team, 5-3.

In the first five minutes of play, middle fielder Tare "Cancun" Beltranchuc received a slicing pass from striker Jeff Williams for the 1-0 goal.

The Golden Eagles, which consist of men 39 and younger, had to adjust to the speed and experience of the Legends, the 40s and up team.

But not before Legends left-side striker Carlos Meza weaved in and out through defenders, kicking a precision pass to Beltranchuc, who found the net for his second goal and the 2-0 lead.

"This is truly a team sport. It's about the positioning and passing. I think that our experience overcame the energy of the youngsters," said Beltranchuc.

The Golden Eagles answered by working the middle of the field. Striker Jose Vieyra passed the ball to mid-fielder Tury



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

San Quentin Legionnaires and The Golden Eagles Soccer Team

Avalos, who shot a rocket past the goalie, closing the gap 2-1.

Williams took advantage of the Eagles' celebration and sped down the field. Drawing the defense to him and leaving Legend mid-fielder Romey "Eagle" Kerr open. Williams kicked a drop pass to Kerr, who found the corner side of the goal for the 3-1 lead.

After a series of running back and forth, Juan Espinosa stole the ball from an Eagle player and kicked it to the wing to Meza. Meza kicked a drop pass to Kerr, who did an amazing flip kick past the goalie for a commanding 4-1 lead.

"This is my sport. I'm 62 years old. I'm just happy to still be doing this," said Kerr.

Golden Eagles Coach Arturo Huerta got his team to settle down. They found Avalos on the right side of the field. He blew past two defenders for the goal, being down 4-2.

Sixty minutes in, the Golden Eagles worked the middle of

field, until Vieyra shot a pass to mid-fielder Peru Ruiz, who put it through the net for the goal, pulling within one down 4-3.

"The Golden Eagles are full of youngsters. The principle is to have fun and enjoy the game. So it's about discipline and controlling your emotions and everything else will gel," said Vieyra.

The Golden Eagles defense still could not stop Williams, who weaved in and out of defenders up the middle and kicked the ball right between the goalie hands, sealing the win, 5-3.

"It was brutal running up and down with those youngsters. I think they couldn't stop us from scoring; it took the air out of them," said Williams after the Nov. 14 game.

Legionnaires Coach Gavin "Jo Jo" Robinson added, "I like what I saw from both teams. The passing was good. Everybody is still shaping their skills, and we are trying people out at different positions. We are hoping to play some outside teams soon."



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Juan Arballo kicking past the defense

Tournaments Feature Ping-Pong, Pinochle & Horseshoes

San Quentin residents celebrated New Year's Day by participating in recreational tournaments on the Lower Yard. They competed in events like ping-pong, pinochle and horseshoes.

In a heated battle, Steve Reitz took the ping-pong title, beating J. Hamilton two games straight in a best of three-championship match. In the first set, Hamilton used speed to slam kill shots past Reitz, but Reitz's returns were just as fierce. They traded point for point and the set went to deuces twice before Reitz sealed the 23-21 win.

"Anytime you go to deuces, you know you have a good game," said Reitz. "In these tournaments, you get to play different people you don't normally associate with, and you get a chance to improve your game. We just thank the coach for the new tables; we were playing on plywood at first."

The second set Reitz kept the pressure on, taking the lead and finishing 21-19 for the win.

"It was a good game. I know it wouldn't be easy. He always plays hard to win," said



Photo by Raphaela Casale

Sherouse Marquez and Timothy Nash playing on the new ping pong table

Hamilton.

Melvin Cosby and his partner took the pinochle tournament, beating J. Brown and V. Johnson in the finale. Trash

talking begun immediately between Cosby and Brown. That brought laughter to the on-lookers. Cosby and his partner played with chemistry and

finesse to clench the victory.

"I just enjoy coming out and being with the fellas," said Cosby. "It's a great way to start the New Year, but winning

makes it that much more fun."

To end the day, Dennis Oates and his partner won the horseshoe event, defeating Doug Thiessen and E. Vicks. With steady hands and focus, Oates was able to hit ringers and keep the horseshoes close to the pole to rack up the points for the win.

"With these tournaments you get to meet new people from different races," said Oates. "That helps to take the tension away."

Thiessen added, "It also helps to build up morale as we continue to work on our rehabilitation in the New Year."

Tim Fielder and Glenn Hardy took third.

"Everybody was focused, laughed and had fun," said Fielder.

Event coordinator Orlando Harris concluded, "It wasn't a big showing. We need to do more to spark the prison community to come out and participate. We are working on different games and prizes for the New Year. Overall, it was a festive holiday."

—Marcus Henderson and Steve Harris

College Tennis Team Defeats S.Q. Men

**By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer**

San Quentin Prison is known for outside community members, including the Golden State Warriors organization, coming in to compete with inside teams. However, for the first time, several women from a college tennis team ventured onto the Lower Yard to engage the Inside Tennis Team.

Holy Names University Tennis Coach Scott Howard returned to the prison with six members of the women's team, three men and his wife. He said he came back after being moved by a previous visit when he brought in some of the male tennis team.

"It's a great experience to see we are all flesh and blood," said Howard. "We are all human beings, and everybody has a story to tell. We can all learn a little bit from each other."

After seeing a prison yard for the first time, Mariel said, "I'm learning that prisoners aren't like the scary people you see in



Holy Name University Players, their coach Scott Howard (back row middle wearing black) and tennis sponsor Leslie Lava posing with the Inside Tennis Team (ITT)

movies. Up close in person, everybody seems ordinary; everyone is very friendly."

Marlayna added, "Everyone is really nice."



ITT's Robert Barnes returning a serve during practice

Chelsea saw the day as a way to give back.

"I'm really happy to help with rehabilitation. I think it brings happiness and joy, and it is good to play against other people," said Chelsea.

The Holy Names women's tennis team is a division two. It ended last year with a winning record, according to HNU player Mariel.

The day started with matches. Young women who grew up playing tennis against older men who learned the game while in prison.

The opening contest paired Chelsea, from Germany, and Amaru against inside members Paul Alleyne and Orlando Harris.

Alleyne and Harris put up a fight, but fell 4-3.

"You guys are a lot better

than we expected. Duck (Harris) aced me, and I almost never get aced," said Chelsea, who a teammate describes as one of HNU's better players.



Marlayna running tennis drills

Franchise Defeats Associates in Championship

**By Marcus Henderson
Staff Writer**

The Chise, short for Franchise, swept the Associates to win the Champion Basketball League four-on-four for 38 and older basketball championship, 31-20.

Down 2-0 in the best of five series, the Associates felt the pressure. Center/power forward Greg Eskridge put the team on his back and scored the first six points.

The momentum changed when Chise guard David Lee made a free throw to ignite his team. They scored seven straight points to take the lead, 7-6.

The game and series MVP Damon Cooke grabbed a whopping 15 rebounds that gave the team multiple second-shot chances. He also scored 4 points off put-backs.

"This season was about perseverance, camaraderie and a high level of consciousness. We had to play outside our egos for the betterment of the team. When that happens, victory is inevitable," said Cooke.

The Chise went 10-0 in the regular season, losing one game in the semi-finals and finished 15-1 overall.

"The hardest thing to do is to get different personalities

to play together and buy into the system," said Chise Coach Demon Lewis.

Lewis has won three basketball championships as a player and now his first as a coach.

The Associates looked to their bench for a spark, and Jihad came in to hit two quick points, closing the gap, 15-13. That was the closest they would get.

As the basketball saying goes, "Hands-down, man-down," meaning when the defense fails to guard their men, they suffer the consequences. The Chise sharpshooters, Aubra-Lamont "Coocoo" McNeely, Reggie Rausse and David Lee, hit six critical three-pointers, which count for two. Along with Antione L. Wiley's inside and outside defense, they put the game out of reach at 26-17.

"They out-played us. It was a bad night to have a bad game, but congratulations to the Champs," said Associate Tim Thompson.

Associates guard Orlando Harris finally warmed up and made three jumpers, but the hole was too deep, and The Chise smelled blood.

Chise center Rahsaan Thomas won his second CBL title in three years.

"I'm not the best player in the world; I've just been blessed to be on the best teams, and I give

my all," said Thomas.

Eskridge added, "I came to do my best. If I was going to lose, we were going to do it as a team. We had some key injuries, but congrats to the Champs."

Eskridge had 7 points, 5 re-

bounds and 4 blocks.

Aaron "Harun" Taylor, the CBL commissioner, added "The two best teams played. The Associates had some key injuries, but they made it to the finals. Rahsaan (Thomas) is the

only player to win two championships. He was drafted sixth round both times. He is the Cliff Livingston (former Chicago Bull who won Championships with Michael Jordan) of the league."



Antione L. Wiley, Reggie Rausse, Damon Cooke, Demon Lewis, Rahsaan Thomas
Front row: Aubra-Lamont "Coocoo" McNeely and David Lee

Revisiting Black History's National Movement

By Aly Tamboura and
Kevin D. Sawyer

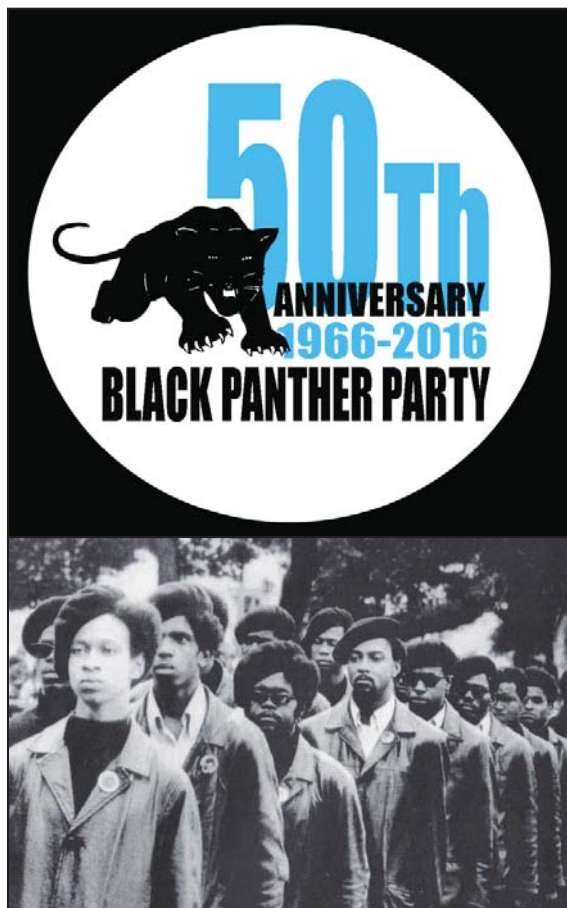
Once a year, America turns its eyes toward Black history to honor heroes of the nation's evolution from slavery to Jim Crow and the struggle for equal rights.

In 1966, Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seal planted the seeds of a Black nationalist movement in Oakland, CA, that spread rapidly to the rest of America. And now, after 50 years, the Black Panthers theme of armed militancy, which began in Black communities, has been expropriated by the radical right. The Panthers' calling card of carrying weapons openly in public has become a disturbing part of daily American life in communities from Florida to Oregon, even on some college campuses.

Black history narratives honor the likes of Harriet Tubman, who formed the Underground Railroad, Frederick Douglass, who fought to abolish slavery, and Martin Luther King Jr., icon of the civil rights movement. They are recognized for what they did in the name of freedom, equality and progress. But not much is said about how the Panthers managed to set the tone for the politicization of weaponry by militant right-wing groups, paving the way for the "Stand Your Ground" laws and the "open carry" frenzy.

The Panthers party spread its roots into the fabric of every African-American community, expanding into a national organization with over 40 chapters throughout the United States, and abroad, including Britain and even Israel. Armed resistance was an attractive summons to people of color everywhere. The Brown Berets movement in East Los Angeles was a Chicano/Latino version of the Panthers.

Originally named the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, the organization opened its first Oakland office in January, 1967 responding to a need for what its founders described as a mechanism "to combat police violence in



Members of the Black Panther Party

Negro neighborhoods." The party had a simple but important platform for winning the minds and the hearts of the people: bringing services, including food, to underserved neighborhoods.

In response to the Panthers, communities around the nation rallied to create programs such as the Free Breakfast for School Children Program, which opened up from coast to coast in cities such as Oakland, San Francisco, Atlantic City, NJ, Boston, MA, New Haven, CT, Winston-Salem, NC, and elsewhere. Free medical clinics, free clothing programs, food giveaways and educational opportunities called Liberation Schools were also established. "Each one, teach one" was the model. In addition, some cities formed Legal Defense Programs for Black tenants and those facing criminal charges.

While some pragmatists in the party toiled in the community to make improvements, some charismatic leaders, such as former San Quentin prisoner and author of *Soul on Ice*, Eldridge Cleaver, set out on a course of militancy. They were involved in several armed and violent confrontations with police. In its first few years of existence some Panthers as well as law enforcement officers were killed or injured in clashes.

came from FBI actions that later in Senate hearings were described as illegal and unconstitutional. But before the program ended, Fred Hampton, Mark Clark, Alprentice "Bunchy" Carter, John Huggins and many others were killed, and Panther supporters say COINTELPRO was involved.

The increasing loss of leadership around the country was devastating for the Panthers:

Co-founder Huey P. Newton was shot and arrested for murder after a traffic stop in Oakland, October 1967, and sentenced to prison.

Panther offices across the nation were raided by police who arrested numerous members.

The costs of bail and legal fees took a toll on the organization.

Besides fundraising and donations, the main enterprise the Panthers utilized to fund its operations was the publishing and sale of the Black Panther Party newspaper, which began in April 1967. Though the newspaper had an impressive distribution, it did not produce the revenue necessary for prolonged legal battles with the government.

Despite dwindling financial resources and the pressure of government surveillance programs such as COINTELPRO, the depleted organization soldiered on.

In the years that followed, Cleaver fled the U.S. to Cuba in 1974, finally settling in Algeria to escape an attempted murder charge.

Bobby Seale resigned from the party in 1974. That same year Elaine Brown was appointed to lead the Panthers. Under her leadership the Panthers "focused on electoral



File Photo

Huey P. Newton

politics and community service." Brown, still involved in Oakland politics today, helped Lionel Wilson become Oakland's first Black mayor.

Huey P. Newton, who served time in the California Men's Colony at San Luis Obispo, for his 1968 manslaughter conviction in the death of a police officer, went on to earn his Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Cruz. In August 1989 he was killed in West Oakland in what police say was a drug-related murder. Tyrone Robinson, then 25, was tried and convicted of Newton's murder.

Fifty years after its beginning, the Black Panther Party's efforts to address many of the very issues facing African-American communities today have been absorbed by the larger and more amorphous and interracial Black Lives Matter movement. Meanwhile the Panthers' most lasting legacy may be one they never bargained for: They inspired Whites on the right to adopt militancy backed up by firearms as a tool of intimidation.

