

# San Quentin News

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Photo by Jane Tyska

Ribbon cutting ceremony at the Richmond Center

## Richmond Gets Re-entry Center

By David Eugene Archer Sr.  
Journalism Guild Writer

The new Richmond Re-entry Success Center is designed to help people recently released from prison or jail to get back on their feet, broadcast station

KQED reports.

The center is located in downtown Richmond to be easily accessible to formerly incarcerated people, reported Sukey Lewis for KQED.

See *Richmond's* on Page 4

## CDCR's New Secretary Plans Rehabilitative Efforts

By Noel Scott  
Journalism Guild Writer

California's new prison boss says he plans major changes to boost rehabilitation efforts and cut back on inmate abuses.

Scott Kernan said altering the prison culture is his top priority as the new secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, *The Associated Press* reported on Feb. 10.

It's an us-against-them culture that often pits prison guards against inmates and outsiders, Kernan told *the AP* in an interview.

Kernan, 55, worked his way up through management starting as a correctional officer in 1983.

According to *the AP*, Kernan reported the prisons are less crowded, and state policymakers are emphasizing inmate



Courtesy of Sacramento Bee

CDCR Secretary Scott Kernan

rehabilitation.

To accomplish this, Kernan wants training for rank-and-file correctional officers, leadership programs for supervisors, and a search for methods that have worked in other states.

This follows a scathing report

by Inspector General Robert Barton, who says the California Correctional Peace Officers Association, which is the guards' union, "encouraging a code of silence."

See *Secretary* on Page 4

## Outside Guests Flock To SQ Financial Literacy Class

By Rahsaan Thomas  
Journalism Guild Chairman

Outside guests and young incarcerated men flocked to Curtis "Wall Street" Carroll's Financial Education Class to hear him translate investment jargon into terms they understand.

Up-and-coming filmmaker Taylor Laslie drove up from Los Angeles to check out the class. She heard about it from a *Life of the Law* podcast.

Despite being a 2012 Yale graduate, she knew nothing about investing.

"Yeah, I am one of the people who thinks about finance as being an elite game," said Laslie. "My parents are lawyers and I am well-educated but I never thought about stocks, finance, and assets management. I'm similar to a bunch of the guys starting out in this program."

See *Financial* on Page 20



Photo by Sam Hearn

Jeri Jones, Audrey Auld and Pam Delgado performing at Peace Day 2015

## A Look at Peace Day's History

By Juan Haines  
Senior Editor

The San Quentin Day of Peace committee was established to show fellow inmates ways to reject violence and support peace. The tradition continued May 7.

In 2006, interracial strife kept San Quentin State Prison on repeated lockdowns. Just before a yard event to celebrate Black history, all came to a head as a race riot erupted. Afterward, a multiracial group of men, most serving life sentences, came together and went to

the administration to ask for a Day of Peace.

Each year the Day of Peace event draws support from high-ranking administrators supporting the efforts of peaceful-minded inmates.

"Open dialogue, violence prevention workshops, and the annual Day of Peace celebration serve as alternatives to violence and thus stem the tide of violence by saturating prisons as well as society with peace," Chairman Chris Schumacher said at last year's celebration.

In support of peace, hundreds of inmates wearing white T-shirts along with prison staffers and local community members walk together around the prison's Lower Yard.

See *Day of Peace* on Page 4

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Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Curtis Carroll, (right) talking with students after class

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# San Quentin Nurse Heals One Inmate at a Time

By Tommy Bryant  
Journalism Guild Writer

Diabetes is a serious problem at San Quentin and Elina Appleton has made it her mission to help those affected.

"Most inmates have no idea what the disease is or how it affects them until they start losing toes, feet, legs, kidneys, go blind, have heart attacks and/or strokes," said Appleton a licensed vocational nurse best known as "Red."

The legendary H-Unit nurse filters a hundred questions and symptoms a week. Often the answers indicate diabetes. About 20 San Quentin inmates in H-Unit are on regular insulin treatment.

"Inmates with borderline A1C blood levels approaching 6.9 are the most likely candidates for Type II diabetes," adds Appleton. Avoiding painful amputation and expensive medical care is clearly a win-win for inmates and taxpayers, she says.

She teaches a 10-week class that covers diabetes issues including using the glucose meter for healthcare management. "Once inmates observe their glucose levels most begin to watch what they eat and exercise after meals," states Appleton.

"This class helped me to see people cared more about my life than I did, so I'm grateful," said Morlin Dorgan, an inmate at H-Unit. He added, "Some of my peers have gotten parts cut off."

"I now have the power to take control of my diabetes," said another student inmate.

Inmate Dennis Bagwell, a diabetic for 30 years, said, "I have...lost sight in one eye due to diabetic complications. It is up to individuals to take control of diabetes before diabetes takes control of them."

"The tough part is keeping sugar levels down with limited diet options," inmate Demetrius Verdun said. Inmate Robert Craig suggested, "Everyone on the planet should be taking a program like this, whether you are diabetic or not."

Philip Budweiser said he used to ignore diabetes because "I was depressed...I used food and sweets as a crutch. I would like



Photo by Raphaelae Casale

Elina Appleton

to thank all of the San Quentin medical staff for the help and continuous support they have afforded me."

Appleton said she entered a 100-Mile bike ride sponsored by Tour de Cure American Diabetes Association, which raised \$1 million for research on diabetes.

She said diabetes affects more than 24 million people in the United States.



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



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.

## We Want To Hear From You!

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 artwork (cartoons and drawings) are welcomed.
- Letters to the editor should be short and to the point.

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By Thomas Gardner  
Journalism Guild Writer

Early access to psychiatric care for people who are mentally ill may result in fewer violent incidents and hospitalizations, reports public television station KQED.

When the opportunity to treat beginning-stage mental health disorder is missed, then a sort of "snowball" dynamic can be set in motion, where violence and then more violence often is the result, according to Scott Shafer's story for *The Crime Report*.

"At California's five state psychiatric hospitals, patients are mostly criminal defendants found not guilty by reason of insanity or incompetent to stand trial," said Shafer.

Many families of patients at the psychiatric hospitals feel that their loved ones are now finally getting the kind of treatment that they should have gotten before the tragedy happened that sent them there, Shafer reports.

"Advocates for the mentally ill say we need to make more treatment available in the community whenever possible — rather than in locked state hospitals like Napa," Shafer said.

Recent high school graduate Shawn Brackin had become increasingly depressed and withdrawn. In what his family says was an attempt at "suicide

by cop," he walked into a local police station in 1995 in possession of a handgun, reported Shafer.

"He was wanting to die," says Frank Brackin, Shawn's father, who explained that his son had struggled since the age of 6, after having suffered a severe head injury as a result of being struck by a car, the report adds.

On that tragic day at the police station, Shawn was shot but survived; however, an officer was shot and killed accidentally by a fellow cop, the story noted.

**"We need to make more treatment available in the community whenever possible"**

The sentencing court recognized Shawn's mental illness, and as part of a plea deal agreement, he was found "not guilty by reason of insanity." Shawn has now been a patient at Napa State Psychiatric Hospital for nearly 20 years, Shafer reports.

Yet, as if trapped in a repetitive cycle, violence continues as part of his life. Shawn has suffered numerous assaults by other patients over the years while at Napa and now appears to have severe brain damage,

said Shafer.

His parents have filed a lawsuit against the Napa hospital alleging negligence for not keeping their son safe, the report notes.

Violence remains an ongoing problem at the state psychiatric facilities, Shafer says. "Five years ago...a staff member (psychiatric technician Diana Gross) was murdered by a patient at Napa State Hospital."

In response, many changes have been made, most of which are designed to protect staff. The hospital is now allowed to isolate the most dangerous patients, the report states.

Although most are minor, Napa has documented 1,800 assaults within the last year, according to the report.

"We have made tremendous progress in safety improvements and in mitigating violence at the hospital," Napa Executive Director Dolly Matteucci told Shafer.

The mother of one Napa patient, who was found not guilty by reason of insanity after having killed a person in the Berkeley Hills, said her son is slowly getting better, adding, "It was only because of the sustained treatment we had through Napa," Shafer reported.

"Despite the complaints and problems at California's state mental hospitals, there's a long waiting list to get into them," Shafer notes.

# DA Gascon's Reforms Encounter Roadblocks

By Charles David Henry  
Journalism Guild Writer

San Francisco District Attorney George Gascon's attempt to reform law enforcement is generating an all-out battle with police officers and deputy sheriffs, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported.

Gascon is a former career cop, who ascended to become the city's top prosecutor. He finds himself in an ugly dispute with Police Chief Greg Suhr and the police officers' union. This animosity stems from how he proposes to set priorities for fighting crime in the city, according to the *Chronicle*.

The rift escalated when Gascon lambasted the Police Officers Association early this year in a statement to a blue ribbon panel of retired judges he used to investigate corruption in the San Francisco Police Department, the story said.

Gascon described the city's law enforcement community as "an old boys club." These remarks upset the rank-and-file, and many cops were angry about Gascon coming in and they never have let him forget it, the story continued.

"You have to understand, if you sit in my place and you see the trajectory of all this stuff, it's been one thing after another," Gascon said of police criticism.

Vivian Ho, who wrote the story, said the union representatives blasted back at him, denying that there is racism in their ranks. However, they accused Gascon at a dinner in 2010 of "making racially insensitive remarks."

Retired police officer Chris Breen accused Gascon of making disparaging statements, after Gascon consumed a great deal of red wine, about Black officers he worked within the Los Angeles Police Department. This caused an African-American man seated nearby to ask him to quiet down because he was offending his family. Gascon denies the allegations.

To complicate matters, the Gascon recently charged three San Francisco deputy sheriffs with staging "a fight club" for jail inmates. That prompted the deputies' union to join its police counterpart in accusing Gascon of padding his resume for higher office, Ho wrote.

Gascon told the reporter, "If

I really wanted to look at future electability, would I be pissing off every single police union in the country and certainly in this state? If you're looking for a position in the state, you want their support."

This confrontation has created uproar in the city's law enforcement community. "It's not surprising that many cops feel that they're being painted by a broad brush," said Tony Ribera, a former San Francisco police chief and director of the International Institute of Law Enforcement Leadership at the University of San Francisco. Others applauded Gascon's scrutiny at a time of heightened concern over racial profiling and police brutality, according to the story.

According to Ho's story, "A prime source of friction emerged when Gascon co-authored Proposition 47, a ballot initiative that reduced six non-violent felonies to misdemeanors. It passed in November 2014, and supporters and opponents are increasingly debating whether it's helping people or spurring a surge of property crime." The police union is sponsoring radio ads attacking Gascon for his

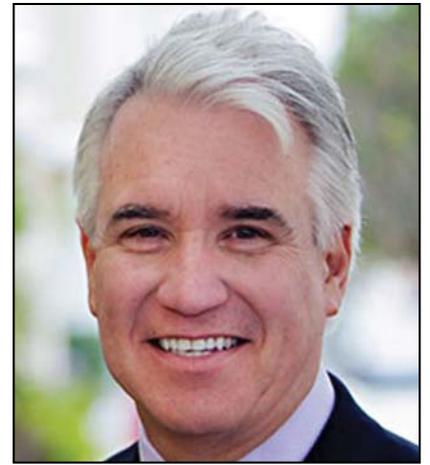
practices.

Ho revealed that Gascon faces discord in his own office where he took control of that department after never prosecuting a single case.

There are some prosecutors who opposed their boss' support of Proposition 47. Some think it was political grandstanding at the cost of their ability to do their jobs.

The story said, "Their boss' growing police reform efforts hold the potential to further complicate their relationships with police detectives and other officers, whom they rely upon to testify in court."

At trial, police officers must disclose information that affects an assistant district attorney's ability to prosecute the defendant. The competency of police and prosecutors to work together



Official Photo

SF District Attorney George Gascon

day-to-day has been bruised by "a lot of generalizations about the police department that are not fair to the rank-and-file," said Ribera.

County Public Defender Jeff Adachi said, "You have the district attorney and the (police union) arguing about racism when five years ago, they wouldn't even acknowledge it; that's progress."

## Proposition 47 Being Blamed for Rise in Urban Crime

A number of sources have responded to Proposition 47 critics' claims that reducing certain non-violent, non-serious offenses from felonies to misdemeanors is to blame for California's 2015 increase in urban crime, *The Washington Post* reported.

Since it passed, critics of the initiative have abundantly tried to blame Proposition 47 for a rise in crime. However, former San Diego Police Chief William

Lansdowne told the *Sacramento Bee*, "There's no data proving such a link."

Two professors of criminology, law and society in the School of Social Ecology at the University of California at Irvine and a professor from Stanford Law School told the *Post*, "No such crime wave is likely to occur."

When disputing this assumption, Charles E. Kubrin, Carroll Seron and Joan Petersilia told

the *Post*, "California's decision to cede authority over low-level offenders to its counties has been, for the most part, remarkably effective public policy and an extraordinarily rich case study in governance."

Mike Males, Ph.D., senior research fellow at the Center of Juvenile and Criminal Justice, wrote in a research report, "If the reduction in local jail populations after Proposition 47 passed in November 2014, was

responsible for the urban crime increase in early 2015, as some sources are arguing, then cities in counties with the largest reductions in jail populations in 2015 would show the biggest increases in crime; however, the data suggest this is not the case."

A nonpartisan Pew Charitable Trusts study "found that raising the felony threshold has no impact on property crime or larceny rates. It also showed that states that increased their thresholds saw crime drop about the same amount as the 27 states that did not change their theft laws." The threshold amount has no bearing on property crime and larceny rates.

Harsher penalties cost taxpayers a bundle to build and maintain prisons. "They do not automatically cut crime, just as lighter penalties don't automatically invite more crime. Offenders act for a wide variety of reasons, and whether they might be convicted of a felony than a misdemeanor isn't a large part of their thinking," the *Bee* reported.

"In California, these latest results should help put the lie to flimsy claims that Proposition 47 has emboldened crimi-

nals and endangered the rest of us. Remember, the same dire predictions of a crime surge accompanied the state's 2011 adoption of realignment, which shifted responsibility for tens of thousand of felons from the state to the counties. And a similar chorus of warnings rang out when voters softened the state's Three-Strike laws in 2012," Lansdowne said.

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**"No such crime wave is likely to occur"**

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The *Post* reported the counties that invested in offender re-entry in the aftermath of realignment had better performances in terms of recidivism than counties that focused resources on enforcement.

"As other states and the federal government contemplate their own proposals for prison downsizing, they should take a close look at what these California counties are doing right," the three professors concluded.

—Charles David Henry

## San Francisco Sheriff Responds To Federal Immigration Policy

By David Eugene Archer Sr.  
Journalism Guild Writer

San Francisco's newly elected sheriff says there are open enforcement questions about a new policy that gives federal immigration officials instead of local agencies priority over inmates wanted for deportation.

Sheriff Vicki Hennessy said she awaits details on how the policy will be enforced, *The Associated Press* reported Feb. 24. Former Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi,

defeated in the last election, had said he was bound by city laws barring cooperation with federal immigration officials.

U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch told the House Appropriations Committee that the Bureau of Prisons will first offer Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) the option to take inmates facing deportation into custody.

Lynch said law enforcement agencies seeking to prosecute those inmates on other crimes

will have to assure federal officials they will turn the inmates to ICE custody once their criminal cases have ended.

Lynch's announcement was less than a year after a man wanted by immigration officials allegedly shot to death 32-year-old Kate Steinle on a San Francisco pier. Bureau of Prison officials had transferred the suspect to San Francisco, where he was released instead of being deported for a sixth time, reported the *AP*.

## Law Enforcement is Divided Over Prop. 47's Implementation

By Tommy Bryant  
Journalism Guild Writer

Many law enforcement personnel are resisting implementing Proposition 47, which reduced some drug felonies to misdemeanors, according to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

There is "a disappointing level of resistance," the ACLU states in their report, as reported by Ben Poston in a Nov. 11

*Los Angeles Times* article.

"Some are making irresponsible and inaccurate statements linking Proposition 47 and crime," the ACLU said. "Others are falsely claiming they are no longer able to arrest people for petty crimes or that a misdemeanor is not a 'real penalty.'"

The ACLU strongly supported the California ballot proposition.

Some law enforcement of-

ficials, including Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell, blame a rise in crime on minor consequences for repeat offenders under Proposition 47, the *Times* reported.

The Sacramento County Sheriff's Department reported arrests for Proposition 47 offenses were down 43 percent.

Enrollments are down in drug treatment programs because a threat of a felony can no longer be used to persuade offenders

to sign up, Los Angeles County authorities told Poston.

"I don't know how they solve that problem," said Marc Debbaut, president of the Los Angeles County Association of Deputy District Attorneys.

Noticeable drops in jail population occurred after the passage of Proposition 47, but that number has since risen as county jails continue modifying early release and sentencing structures, said the

ACLU.

Petty crimes are being dropped without charges at some jails, while others detain offenders, according to the ACLU study.

The jail population with misdemeanors doubled in Riverside County in March when compared to the same month a year before. During the same period San Bernardino's misdemeanors dropped by one-quarter.

# Secretary Kernan Committed to Rehabilitation

*Continued from Page 1*

The Inspector General report found that guards at High Desert State Prison had created a culture of racism and used a startling amount of force against inmates, among many other problems.

The new training will include stress management and diversity classes for all employees and a national executive training class for wardens, Kernan said.

"The more training officers have, the better suited they are to contributing to a better correctional system," said Nichol Gomez-Pryde, a spokeswoman for the guards' union.

The union, however, filed suit against the department and the Inspector General's Office over the months-long investigation at High Desert.

Kernan also said California is on its way toward regaining control over its prison medical system. CDCR lost control of its medical department more than 10 years ago by federal court order due to inadequate prisoner care.

The following Q&A with Secretary Kernan was provided by the CDCR's Public Information Office on Feb. 23:

**Q. What do you see in store for CDCR staff?**

A. I see an evolving role for all CDCR staff in a fast-changing criminal justice system. The expectation of staff

to singularly keep an inmate, ward, or parolee behind bars is evolving to an expectation that all staff be professional role models and participate in the rehabilitation process. We have to understand the incredibly difficult environment that staff work under each day and give them the training and tools to protect public safety, emotionally survive themselves, while also changing the lives of the inmates under our charge. That is public safety at its core.

We cannot tolerate abuse or bias toward inmates just as we can't tolerate abuse, violence, and bias from inmates against other inmates or staff. I have difficulty accepting when our critics paint us with a broad brush of being insensitive, biased, racist, and abusive. But I also challenge us to not paint the same broad brush toward inmates. I know that a vast majority of staff come to work each day and do the right thing. We have to figure out how to continue to evolve our profession and help an inmate who will ultimately be our neighbor.

**Q. What challenges are there in managing inmates after all the population reduction measures?**

A. The monumental shift in criminal justice practices in the last five years has greatly impacted our population demographics. We have a tougher inmate with greater supervision



Courtesy of CDCR

Secretary Scott Kernan

needs and more complex challenges that require response if we are going to protect public safety. No matter that complexity, 90 percent-plus of inmates complete their sentence and are released to our communities.

Our challenge is to address the individual inmate's criminal thinking and give them the skills to not perpetuate their criminality and create more victims. If we did that 20, 30, 90 percent of the time, think of the victims we would save, the money California taxpayers would save, and the lives we would change.

**Q. How do you see CDCR's rehabilitation efforts working – both inside and outside the**

**walls?**

A. Inside, we rebounded from significant cuts in our in-prison educational and Career Technical Education (CTE) programs. We hired teachers and vocational instructors, updated curriculum, invested in learning technologies, and expanded college education programs throughout the system. Our Prison Industry Authority (CALPIA) expanded cooperative agreements with the private sector and implemented a number of cutting-edge programs that are both profitable and rehabilitative.

I will see that we build on the improvements and expand these programs. The evidence clearly shows that an inmate with an education, CTE certificate, or experience in a field that is transferable to the private sector is more successful.

Outside, CDCR is taking a larger role in coordinating with federal, state and local agencies to supervise and program offenders to prepare them for transition to society. We are building on our existing collaboration with agencies and developing new partnerships. I see the partnerships addressing housing and employment needs, access to medical and mental health care, transitional services for long-term offenders, and re-entry services for offenders preparing for release.

**Q. What can CDCR do to further reduce recidivism?**

A. The public and private sec-

tors are implementing promising and innovative programs that are evidence-based and creating results in reducing recidivism. CDCR is tapping into these resources. I am open to innovative and creative ways to impact our inmate population positively. We will once again strive to be a national leader in the corrections industry by being open to change, listening to what works, and shaping corrections policy.

**Q. You have an extensive background with the agency. How do you see that helping you do your job?**

A. I spent nearly 30 years in CDCR and worked from a Correctional Officer to my current appointment as Secretary. I remember living with my mom at San Quentin as she pioneered the female role in a previously male-dominated system. She influenced my great love for corrections and all the employees that are dedicated to the department. I made plenty of mistakes in my career and learned from them all.

I am humbled to be appointed to this leadership position and strive every day to improve our organization. I'm extremely proud of the work we do and understand that we must continue to evolve and expand our strategies to improve prison operations and public safety. I am positive about the future and our contribution to the larger criminal justice system.

## Richmond's New Re-entry Center Helps Ex-Prisoners

*Continued from Page 1*

The center is key to the county's plan to help keep people out of jail, said Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia. "If we can show this center works and these programs work, it'll hopefully help build the case for investing more money in this type of work, it makes quality of life better for people who are released from jail and return, and it makes our community safer. So it's a win-win."

Center director Nicholas Alexander commented, "If we look back at how re-entry

worked over the last decade, it's really been unsuccessful...over half of people tend to go back into incarceration...the bar is pretty low, unfortunately."

"Part of why re-entry work has failed is that people can be denied employment and housing based on their criminal history," Alexander added. The center's holistic approach is designed to help its clients navigate those legal barriers.

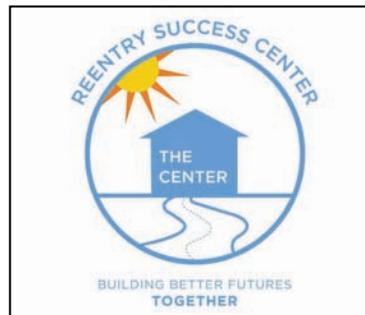
"As a whole we're working more collaboratively, so less people are going to slip through the cracks."

Kenneth McDowell spent five

months behind bars on a felony assault charge. When he got out about a year ago, he had lost his housing and job. He said, "You have to gather your thoughts...and you have to just take every step a little step at a time."

McDowell wants to become a chef, but he is working as a janitor at the center.

Fifteen years ago, Dameion King was serving a three-year sentence for firearm and drug



possession. Now he's a coach at the center.

The space is designed to make

people looking for help feel more empowered. King said, "I know that when I came home, there was nothing like this."

The center has helped about 100 people from across the county since opening in October 2015. Contra Costa has invested about \$10 million in community-based re-entry services and \$400,000 in the center, the March 10 story reported.

Supervisor Gioia said as more people hear about the center and get the help they need, he hopes it will become a model for the rest of the state.

## Day of Peace Established in 2006 to Discourage Violence

*Continued from Page 1*

Supporters take to a makeshift stage in the middle of the yard to give speeches, recite poetry and entertain participants about what the event means to them.

During the last couple of events, The Native Hawaiian Religious Group of San Quentin entertained the walkers with dances. A Asian group called Heiwa Taiko, drummed for the walkers.

Music is provided by Bread & Roses each year.

Last year, the late folk singer Audrey Auld entertained the walkers with songs that were created in a workshop with inmates.

The sidewalk art contest is one of the biggest attractions



Photo by Samuel Hearn

The Heiwa Taiko drummers performing at the 2015 Peace Day celebration

to the Day of Peace, with more than 100 exhibits last year.

Josh Walkenhorst and Natalie Tovar bring Day of Peace

participants snacks donated by Walkenhorst's package vendor.

Over the years of the celebration, tables have been sprawled

across the yard with various self-help groups giving out information about their organization. The groups include: Vet-

erans Healing Veterans from the Inside Out; Ifa Foundation; No More Tears; The Work; Protestant Church; Project LA; TRUST; ELITE; Brother's Keeper; SQ CARES; Native Hawaiians; Diabetes Project; Free to Succeed; REACH; Vietnam Veterans Group of San Quentin; Catholic Church; Centering Prayer; Restorative Justice; Karros; SQUIRES; TEDx; San Quentin Prison Report; Hope For Lifers; Guiding Rage Into Power; Freeman Capital; California Reentry Institute; Criminal and Gang Members Anonymous; Shakespeare at San Quentin; The Richmond Project; Alliance for Change; The Last Mile; Restoring Our Original True Selves; Kid Creating Awareness Together.

# Test May Explain Racially Biased Police Shootings

By Kevin D. Sawyer  
Associate Editor

“Uncontrolled prejudice” may explain why White police officers shoot young Black men so often, according to an article published in *Mother Jones* magazine.

The conclusion is based on the Implicit Association Test (IAT). It is designed to measure racial prejudice that people cannot consciously control, and 51 percent of those who have taken the test online demonstrate a “moderate to strong bias,” reported the Dec. 1, 2014, article by Chris Mooney, a book author and staff writer for *The Washington Post*.

The article described a study where Denver police officers and community members viewed photos of Black and White men. Some of these men in the photos held guns and others held “harmless objects” such

as wallets.

The officers were asked to press a “Shoot” or “Don’t Shoot” button for each image. Police officers reacted better than community members when deciding whether a subject was armed, but they still showed bias against Black targets.

The IAT “asks you to rapidly categorize images of faces as either ‘African American’ or ‘European American,’” reported *Mother Jones*. “You also categorize words like ‘evil,’ ‘happy,’ ‘awful’ and ‘peace’ as either ‘good’ or ‘bad.’”

“As words and faces keep flashing by, you struggle not to make too many sorting mistakes,” Mooney reported. “You think of yourself as a person who strives to be unprejudiced, but you can’t control these split-second reactions.”

Negative words paired with Black faces suggest racial bias that may come from someone’s

culture that shapes the way their brain is wired, the article reported.

**“You think of yourself as a person who strives to be unprejudiced, but you can’t control these split-second reactions”**

“Police are considerably slower to press the ‘Don’t Shoot’ button for an unarmed Black man than they are for an unarmed White man, and faster to shoot an armed Black man than an armed White man,” reported Mooney.

“You might also be more inclined to wrongly think you see

a gun, when it’s actually just a tool, right after seeing a Black face,” the article reported.

Other research, according to Mooney, suggests the men who killed Michael Brown and Trayvon Martin did not have to be conscious, overt racists to pull the trigger.

“You’re an officer, you’re pumping adrenaline, you don’t have time to evaluate whether your implicit bias is driving your behavior,” Phillip Atiba Goff, president of the Center for Policing Equity, told Mooney.

There “doesn’t need to be intent, doesn’t need to be desire; there could even be desire in the opposite direction. But, biased results can still occur,” Brian Nosek, a psychologist at the University of Virginia and IAT researcher, told Mooney.

The article said people regularly categorize and sort things such as furniture, animals and concepts. These things are automatically labeled and filed in various folders in the brain to help us function. But some ways of categorizing may be erroneous which can lead to “prejudice and stereotyping.”

Categorizing the differences between Blacks and Whites produces rapid or automatic assumptions about their characteristics, the article asserted. “Common stereotypes with the category ‘African-Americans,’ for example, include ‘loud,’ ‘good dancers’ and ‘good at sports.’”

One key to correcting racial bias, according to the article, is to shift the behavior of people and make them aware of how “cultural assumptions merge with natural cognitive processes to create biases.”

The article suggested placing people in scenarios where a Black person is an ally, adding that it is possible to alter instincts to decrease prejudice by including other races as part of the same team.

“A good start may simply be making people aware of just how unconsciously biased they can be. That’s particularly critical in law enforcement, where implicit biases can lead to tragic outcomes,” Mooney wrote.

The IAT can be taken online at: [understandingprejudice.org](http://understandingprejudice.org).

## Blacks Experience More Police Force Than Other Races

By Charles David Henry  
Journalism Guild Writer

Blacks experience higher rates of police force than Whites and Hispanics, a federal report says.

“Blacks (14 percent) were more likely than Hispanics (5.9 percent) and slightly more than Whites (6.9 percent) to experience nonfatal force during street stops,” the U.S. Department of Justice reported. “Blacks were twice as likely as Whites (0.7 percent) to experience force during contacts involving a personal search.”

In the period from 2002-2011, Whites (20 percent) had a greater rate of police contact than Blacks (17 percent) and Hispanic (16 percent). However, during the most recent contact with police, “Whites were slightly less likely than Hispanics to experience excessive nonfatal force in their encounters with police throughout 2002-2011, the 2015 report added.

The report stated that of those who experienced force during their most recent contact, approximately three-quarters of the persons confronted described the verbal (71 percent) or physical (75 percent) force as excessive.

Persons in urban neighborhoods (2.1 percent) were more likely than those in suburban communities (1.5 percent) to experience nonfatal force with law enforcement. Among those who did not experience the use of force during their most recent police contact, Whites (73 percent) were slightly less likely than Blacks (70 percent) to report one contact during the prior 12 months.

The report shows Blacks were more likely to experience force by police regardless of whether the contact also involved a personal search. Blacks (1.4 percent) were twice as likely as Whites (0.7 percent) to experience force while also being personally searched. Blacks (1.8 percent) were also slightly more

likely than Whites (0.7 percent) to experience force during contacts that did not involve a personal search.

Statistically, males and persons 16 to 25 were subjected to more police contact and the use of force during their most recent contact than females and persons age 26 or older, the report adds.

The information also showed that “a lower percentage of persons who were shouted or cursed at by police believed the forces was excessive (49 percent) compared to those who were pushed or grabbed (79 percent), hit or kicked (97 percent), had a pepper spray used against them (81 percent), or had a gun pointed at them (81 percent).”

In addition, among the residents who experienced force during their most recent contact with police (1.6 percent of all contacts), 13 percent believed the police behaved properly, while 87 percent did not, the report concluded.

## Wealth Is Irrelevant to Minority Incarcerations

By Marcus Henderson  
Staff Writer

A new study reveals that rich Black kids are more likely to go to prison than poor White kids, *The Washington Post* reports.

**“Race trumps class, at least when it comes to incarceration”**

“Race trumps class, at least when it comes to incarceration,” said Darrick Hamilton of the New School, one of the researchers who produced the study, according to the March 23 *Post* article.

Hispanics were incarcerated more than Whites with similar wealth, but less than Blacks, the study concluded.

The study began in 1979 and followed a group of young people of various races and

economic positions.

“About 2.7 percent of the poorest White young people – those whose household wealth was in the poorest 10th of the distribution in 1985, when they were between 20 and 28 years old – ultimately went to prison,” according to the article. “In the next 10th, 3.1 percent ultimately went to prison.”

It also stated that “their chances of being imprisoned were far less than those of Black youth from much more affluent circumstances.”

The information indicated 10 percent of affluent Black youths in 1985 would eventually go to prison.

In 2012, the household wealth of Black participants in the study who had never been incarcerated was \$16,200.

Whites who had never been incarcerated had an average household wealth of \$192,000.

Blacks who had been in prison had zero wealth at the median; Whites that had been in prison reported wealth of \$5,000, the article reported.

## Report Claims Outrageous Tactics Used to Build Bogus Criminal Cases

By Larry Smith  
Journalism Guild Writer

The government is using outrageous tactics to build bogus criminal cases, *The Crime Report* claims.

The tactics include making up crimes, the report alleges. Is it OK when the government makes up crimes to catch criminals? What if they are not criminals? Writer Adam Wisniewski posed such questions in a special report, “Outrageous Government Conduct.” The story cites the case of a 36-year-old Mexican immigrant, Emanuel Gerardo Cota-Ruiz, living in Arizona. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison for conspiring to rob a cocaine

stash house that actually was a government “sting” operation with fake drugs.

Cota-Ruiz was a sheet-rocker with no previous criminal history, unemployed, and desperately searching for money to buy food, clothes and school supplies for his children, according to Wisniewski. The sting was invented by agents to catch some of the “most violent players” in the drug trade who prey on fellow drug dealers, according to the report.

Cota-Ruiz and three friends, who also were involved in the sting, pleaded guilty to avoid a longer sentence than the 10 years they received. Later one of the defendants filed an appeal, which was denied because of the

prior plea bargain agreement.

However, while issuing the denial, Judge Edward Leavy of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals wrote a five-page condemnation saying the “manifest injustice” by ATF agents should have led to a dismissal of the original case due to “outrageous government conduct.”

A *Crime Report* investigation found that from August 2014 through 2015, 126 motions to dismiss a case based on “outrageous government conduct” were filed. The vast majority of them were denied.

The report said government officials insist they need such sting operations because of the difficulty in dealing with drug activities.

## NYC Settles Two Inmate Deaths at Rikers Island

By Rudy Morales  
Journalism Guild Writer

New York City has agreed to pay \$5.3 million to the families of two inmates who died at Rikers Island jail, Reuters reported.

The settlement was announced in November by Nick Paolucci, spokesman for the city law department.

It provides \$3.8 million to the family of Jason Echevarria, 25, who died after guards

allegedly ignored his pleas for medical help after he ingested a toxic “soap ball” used to clean cells.

The family of Carlos Mercado, who died of diabetes complications within hours of arriving at the jail in June 2013, received \$1.5 million.

The announcement came five months after a federal judge sentenced a former guard to five years in prison for deliberately ignoring Echevarria’s medical problem.

# CDCR's Answer to Mental Issues and Suicide

Dr. Timothy Belavich answered *San Quentin News* questions last December about the delivery of health care services to prisoners. Dr. Belavich was formerly acting director of the Division of Health Care Services and deputy director of the Statewide Mental Health Program. He is now employed by Los Angeles County. In previous editions *San Quentin News* reported his views on the Coleman lawsuit and custody and prison culture. This edition focuses on Suicide and Use of Force. Transgender Special Needs will appear next month.

**By Dr. Timothy Belavich  
Contributing Writer**

**Q. Tell us specifically about the programs and policies that have been implemented to reduce the suicide rate.**

A. Education for staff, patients and families is an important piece of any suicide prevention program. Suicide

## Editorial

prevention posters are located in every institution. Custody staff carries pocket cards that identify suicide warning signs and risk factors. We have created workbooks for inmates placed in restricted housing, and we have disseminated informational pamphlets for inmates and their families and friends. In addition, every institution has an assigned suicide prevention coordinator who is required to attend the Men's Advisory Council and Inmate Family Council in order to provide education about suicide prevention and to answer questions about mental health concerns.

In order to try to reduce the suicide rate in Administrative Segregation Units (ASU), CDCR increased the frequency of welfare checks in all admin-

istrative segregation units and initiated the use of intake cells (cells that have been designed to be suicide-resistant) in ASU. CDCR also developed a workbook for all inmates placed in ASU, and purchased hand-cranked radios for inmate's use while in ASU. The workbooks and radios were distributed because it was recognized that initial placement in ASU can be emotionally difficult, and it is important for inmates to be able to have a diversion in an isolating environment. The workbooks contain some suicide prevention messages and coping strategies.

Training for health care and custody staff has been revised and expanded. In addition, new training modules and methods for enhancing suicide risk eval-

uations completed by mental health staff have been developed and implemented. Additionally, a system for monitoring compliance with CDCR's suicide prevention policies was developed and will become part of the department's regular monitoring.

Statewide suicide prevention video conferences occur monthly and include medical, nursing, custody, legal and mental health representation at all institutions. Every institution has an assigned Suicide Prevention Coordinator.

**Q. What changes have been made in the Use of Force policies and procedures?**

A. Mental health is now involved in all situations that may require controlled use of force, whether or not the inmate is a participant in the mental health program, also known as the Mental Health Services Delivery System (MHSDDS). Specifically, when controlled use of force is considered, a "cool-down period" is required. A mental health

clinician must assess the inmate and determine if the inmate 1) understands the order 2) has difficulty complying with the order and/or 3) if the inmate's mental health symptoms are likely to get worse if force is used. The mental health clinician will work with the inmate if he is suffering from a mental health related condition. Furthermore, nursing staff will review the health care record to ensure that the use of a chemical agent will not adversely affect an existing health condition. Decisions to use force are now a team decision that involves custody, mental health, nursing and medical staff. If the team cannot agree, the decision about whether to use force is elevated to custody and mental health (and medical, as appropriate) management. Mental health is now involved in all institutional reviews of controlled use of force and immediate use of force incidents involving patients in the MHSDDS.

# American Prisons Can Take Cue from Nations Abroad

**By Charles David Henry  
Journalism Guild Writer**

The most punitive and rapidly growing prison systems in the world are located in countries with brutal histories, a noted writer states.

These histories include colonialism or slavery, combined with capitalist exploitation of prison labor, said Michelle Alexander, author and senior fellow at the Ford Foundation.

In a review written for *The Washington Post*, Alexander describes how Baz Dreisinger, a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, introduced "a wide range of approaches to crime, punishment and questions of justice in diverse countries."

Dreisinger's intriguing new book, *Incarceration Nations*, searches for clues that might "answer the question of what justice is or, rather, what it ought to be."

When the world is forced to look at the reality of incarceration, the American criminal jus-

tice style of punishment seems to always be chosen. According to Dreisinger, this system "is not normal, natural or inevitable."

"Western democracies, particularly America, have chosen capital punishment, solitary confinement, mandatory minimum sentences, Three-Strike laws, militarized police forces and building of prisons unlike anywhere in the world," Alexander wrote.

"America has the world's highest incarceration rate and an abysmal recidivism rate of 60 percent. However, the ratios of Aboriginal people jailed in Western Australia are now worse than the racial disparities for Blacks in the United States," Alexander narrated.

In her review of *Incarceration Nations*, Alexander wonders whether it's possible that privatization has something to do with stimulating the profit margin that's feeding the Australian appetite for mass incarceration.

"These are the roots of the prison industrial complex,"



File Photo

## Norway prison

Dreisinger explains. It's "a tangle of legal, business, and government interest that has existed for centuries." Despite that explanation, Alexander doesn't think the author really answered these questions.

In a released statement, Dreisinger told the press. "America, it seems, is finally beginning to tackle the legacy of punishment and human warehousing coldly captured by the term mass incarceration."

"We are the world's largest

jailed, with 2.3 million people behind bars." One in 31 adults, or 7 million people, are under some correctional control. More Blacks are in some criminal restraint today than were enslaved in 1850. Up to 25 percent of the adult population in prison also suffers from mental illness, Dreisinger adds.

America considers juveniles too immature to vote or buy alcohol; however, our criminal justice system deems them mature enough to live in adult

prisons, where one in 10 is sexually assaulted. "We are one of just nine countries who punish (with) both life sentences and the death penalty," Dreisinger continues.

Different approaches to incarceration are being pursued in other parts of the world, often with greater success, Dreisinger said. "In Rwanda, an entire nation has committed itself to healing, forgiveness, reconciliation and restorative justice following a genocide in which neighbors hacked one another to death in the streets."

The country of Norway, "reflecting its long-standing egalitarian culture and spirit of communitarianism, a spirit that extends to its prisons," has a 20 percent recidivism rate.

"We in America might one day overcome our own history of genocide, slavery, discrimination and oppression and create a justice system that is truly a source of international pride rather than shame," Alexander concludes.

# Former Inmates Face Multiple Barriers to Successful Re-entry

**By Forrest Lee Jones  
Journalism Guild Writer**

Even with a new skill set and good behavior, returning home after years of incarceration can be difficult for former inmates and the communities they return to, according to a report in *Ebony* magazine.

"As we work to reduce mass incarceration, we must not neglect to address the barriers the formerly incarcerated will ultimately have to face," the op-ed by Zachary Norris says.

"Once they leave the iron gates and stone walls of prison, they should not have to begin a new sentence on the outside. Without ample opportunities and reinvestment in poor and struggling communities, life after prison easily becomes nothing more than extension of

a sentence."

This past year, there has been bipartisan support for prison reform in Congress, which demonstrates the nation getting serious about prison reform, the Jan. 29 story notes. However, there is a critical element missing from the conversation of mass incarceration reform, which is how to reinvest in communities that will help people succeed once they come home, writes Norris, who is executive director of the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights.

Reducing mandatory sentencing for nonviolent offenders is front and center in the national debate on prison reform, but there is little discussion among the nation's policymakers and leaders about ensuring successful re-entry for the formerly incarcerated, says the

report.

"We know that this country's long history of racial injustices has led to communities of color being overwhelmingly targeted by the criminal justice system and disproportionately suffering from poverty," according to Norris. "To effectively end this cycle of criminalization, incarceration and poverty, we need a serious plan to reinvest in mental health care, housing, food and employment services in the communities most at risk."

A study done by 20 community organizations entitled "Who Pays? The True Cost of Incarceration of Families" revealed how financial and other barriers faced by the formerly incarcerated can dramatically impact not only their future, but also that of their families.

For example, families over-

whelmingly provide housing, food and employment opportunities for their previously incarcerated loved ones. Among those surveyed in the "Who Pays?" report, 48 percent of all families and 58 percent of those living under the poverty line were unable to afford the fees and fines and debt which deepen their economic despair.

The study shows the average debt incurred for court-related fines and fees alone for those facing incarceration was \$13,607.

"It's no surprise then that nearly two out of three families (65 percent) with an incarcerated family member were unable to pay their family's basic needs, with nearly half unable to afford enough food or pay for their housing," according to Norris.

The study showed a strong connection between poverty and criminal behavior, both making it nearly impossible to set formerly incarcerated people up for success.

"Aside from the economic devastation, other unmitigated factors prove equally harmful to the re-entry process. The stigma, isolation and trauma of incarceration have a sizeable and terrible impact on the families and communities of the formerly incarcerated," says the report.

The "Who Pays?" report concluded that 50 percent of all formerly incarcerated persons and 50 percent of the family members surveyed suffered negative health conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, hopelessness, depression, anxiety and nightmares.

# The Effects of PTSD on Juvenile Inmates *Part 1*

By John Lam  
Journalism Guild Writer

*This is the first installment of a two-part series detailing the impact of trauma on incarcerated men's likelihood of success at the parole board.*

In the many group discussions held each day in San Quentin, it is not uncommon to hear men raise their hands and say, "I don't know how to connect with myself."

I felt this way, too, for many years. I thought I was alone in that feeling, but I wasn't. I realized many incarcerated people were disconnected from their emotions, due in part to a lack of awareness about trauma's im-

## Kid CAT Speaks!

pects.

Trauma has created a serious barrier to self-reflection for many people, including myself. For those incarcerated with lengthy sentences those for whom the parole board will determine the time of their release this dearth of self-reflection can prove disastrous: The parole board often cites "lack of insight" in issuing denials.

When I came to prison at age 19, the violence and intimidation shocked me at first, but eventually fear became the norm.

the self is wounded, or when a person who directly experiences, witnesses or learns about a violent event is 'damaged.'" This was my experience of prison.

Within several months after coming to prison, a numbness set in that allowed me to survive the fear for being targeted and the trauma of witnessing violence. Though they may not be diagnosed with actual PTSD diagnosis, incarcerated people often respond to the violence they have experienced with indifference, hyper-vigilance, or other PTSD symptoms.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reports: "All people (who) lived through a traumatic event that caused them to fear for their lives, see horrible things, . . . feel helpless. . . (and experience) changes in the brain that may result in PTSD." I believe everyone with whom I have been incarcerated has experienced these changes to some degree.

"I have been through four riots since I have been incarcerated and numerous violent altercations for the past 19 years," said Donte Smith, 35.

"If you asked me three years ago (prior to coming to San Quentin), I would have told you that I didn't care about my victims or what they went through

because my top priority was about survival. I was numb and hopeless, and had difficulties relating to the crazy events happening around me (let alone) to what I had done to get to prison."

This numbness is particularly troubling as I sit in groups with men who are attempting to process their culpability and to take responsibility for the harm they caused. The goal in these group settings is to truly empathize with and feel remorse for the victim(s), but men I have known find that their numbness prevents them from doing so.

In addition, I have seen numbness keep people from understanding the factors leading to their crime; such understanding is essential to being found suitable for parole.

"When I was in LA county jail, people were getting raped, beat up and robbed, so I put up a shield and never took it down so that people would not mess with me," said Falao Toalepai, 52, serving 25 years to life for first-degree murder.

"I had no one I could trust to talk to about why I am in prison (because) I was worried about how other people would look at me — and it cost me 32 years in prison. I have been to the board five times and was denied each time for a lack of insight."

## Letter to Kid CAT

My name is Jeffrey Hall. I am serving a life without parole sentence at Solano State Prison. I've been in prison for 25 years in July.

I've been reading (Kid CAT Speaks) articles... and I find them intriguing. We have a fair amount of programs here at Solano Level 3, yet I really enjoy your articles and the cause.

Is there something LWOPs can do to help under the Kid CAT banner and/or to create a branch of Kid CAT? I'd be very grateful for any information/guidance you can offer.

### Kid CAT Response:

We appreciate your letter and willingness to be of service to your community. We receive letters from juvenile lifers including those with LWOP sentences who desire to contribute to rehabilitative programs. It is encouraging to see leadership in various prisons reaches out and steps up with the desire to create programs such as Kid CAT.

We would like to help by creating an informational packet of the Kid CAT group so that our community partnership manager could send it to the community partnership manager at Solano. We would work to secure approval to make this packet available.

Meanwhile, Kid CAT holds monthly writing workshops with *The Beat Within*. The workshops are based on pre-selected quotes and writing prompts created by juvenile lifers. The participants discuss the prompts, then break off to write responses. Thereafter, the participants read their pieces. The prompts are general and intended to stimulate thought.

You may contribute by writing about your personal transformation, realities, and experiences as a juvenile serving LWOP. If published, you will receive a copy of the issue in which your story is featured. When possible, beginning this month, we will publish in Kid CAT Speaks one prompt from the monthly workshop so other incarcerated men and women may contribute their stories. Please keep us updated on your struggles and achievements.

Send writings to: The Beat Within  
P.O. Box 34310  
San Francisco, CA 94134

### Writing Prompt:

Send word: Write a letter to the youth in the Juvenile Hall that you came from. Write the letter as if you would read it in person to them. Write the letter so it is gender neutral. Explain what juvenile hall you were in, what unit, when, why, and your age at the time. Were you in and out? Were you released, sent to CYA, tried as an adult and sent to county jail or prison? What is your sentence, how long have you been incarcerated, and what is your age now? This is your letter; tell your truth. Include what can be valuable to the youth. Keep in mind the advice or message you would or would not have listened to at that age and time. Avoid preaching and talking down to them or at them; instead go to them where they are at in their life. If you were never in juvenile hall, write a letter anyway.

Prompt by Miguel Quezada

### TRAUMA

In the worst moments of all incarceration, trauma strips away the ability to empathize, to relate to other people, and to have self-awareness.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders defines trauma as "an event in which there is physical harm,

## Juvenile Interrogation Techniques Can Result in False Confessions

Children are now being exposed to a controversial interrogation technique by adults that can lead to false confessions the American Bar Association (ABA) reports.

The ABA newsletter urges parents and teachers to fight the use of the Reid Technique in their schools. It encourages parents to demand that they be notified before a principal plans to interrogate their child.

John E. Reid & Associates, the developers of the Reid Technique, "appears to be expanding the use of its technique on kids. In addition to training police interrogators, the company is now marketing its technique to school administrators across the country," the ABA reported. So far, this training has occurred in at least 12 states.

The Reid Technique is a set of psychological tactics designed for one purpose: "to extract confessions . . . The technique is a guilt-presumptive, accusatory, manipulative process," the ABA reported.

Children have a greater propensity toward false confessions due to the use of psychological interrogation techniques designed for seasoned adult criminals that exploit the developmental vulnerabilities of kids, according to the ABA.

"Bottom line: using . . . potent techniques like the Reid Technique on students is . . . a recipe for disaster," the ABA reported.

Some of these vulnerabilities are attributed to what is called the "juvenile brain," which is more prone to traits like impulsiveness, vulnerability, as well as a tendency to be motivated by short-term rewards. This can include giving in to the pressures of interrogation by deciding that a confession is the only way out of a difficult situation, regardless of its truth, the ABA notes. The Reid website cautions that it is "well-accepted that juvenile suspects are more susceptible to falsely confess than adults." The site warns that "every interrogator must exercise extreme caution and care when interviewing or interrogating a juvenile."

The consequences of using the Reid Technique on children are not lost on the U.S. Supreme Court, the ABA reports.

"In the landmark 1966 decision *Miranda v. Arizona*, the court cited the Reid Technique to conclude that the 'heavy toll' of custodial interrogation may result in false confessions," the ABA noted.

"The court went even further in 2009, in *Corley v. United States*, stating that 'there is mounting empirical evidence

that these pressures (of psychological interrogation generally, not specific to the Reid Technique) can induce a frighteningly high percentage of people to confess to crimes they never committed,'" the ABA added.

False confessions played a role in nearly 30 percent of all wrongful convictions that have been uncovered by DNA evidence, according to the Innocence Project.

There were 221 exonerations since 1989 that involved proven false confessions, according to the National Registry of Exonerations.

Children are two to three times more likely to falsely confess during interrogation than adults, according to the ABA.

"Confessions are incredibly powerful evidence. A full 81 percent of proven false confessors whose case went to trial were convicted — and that figure does not account for those false confessors who pled guilty before trial. (Of the first 125 DNA exonerees who falsely confessed, 11 percent pled guilty.) People, including judges and juries, are very reluctant to believe that a confession might be false — and the result, too often, can be a wrongful conviction," the newsletter stated.

—John Lam

**Kid CAT (Creating Awareness Together) is a group of men who committed their crimes under the age of 23 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 all juvenile lifers, educators, and policymakers concerning juvenile justice issues and rehabilitation. Contact us at San Quentin News, Attn: Kid CAT Speaks, 1 Main St., San Quentin, CA 94964**

# Elderly Inmates Burden State Prisons

By David Eugene Archer Sr.  
Journalism Guild Writer

The elderly population in state prisons continues to climb, causing financial burdens and other problems, reports Michael Ollove for the Pew Charitable Trusts.

State and federal prisoners 65 and older outpaced the total population by 94 to 1 from 2007 to 2010, according to Human Right's Watch.

By 2014, Virginia's elderly prisoners had grown in number to 7,202, or 20 percent of all inmates.

The consequence of this for state prisons is it costs more money for health care for the aged – between four and eight times that of younger prisoners, according to the report.

In 2013 nearly half the \$58 million Virginia spent on off-site prisoner health care was for older prisoners, according to

Trey Fuller, the state's prisons' acting health services director.

"Over time we'll need more and more money... because they will need more drugs, more specialist visits, more nursing hours, more everything," Fuller said.

Corrections officials point to two factors that cause this increase in older prisoners. The first is increase in the rate older adults are entering prison. The second factor is changes enact-

ed in the get-tough-on criminals 1990s resulting in longer prison sentences, the March 17 story reported.

"It was the push for mandatory sentences and three strikes you're out," said Linda Redford, director of aging and geriatrics programs at the University of Kansas Medical Center.

People in prison generally are less healthy than the general population. They have abused drugs and alcohol or neglected their health for many years, the story noted. They have higher rates of cardiac disease, high blood pressure, hepatitis C, diabetes and other chronic diseases than the general population.

"Prisons weren't designed for patients who are getting older. They were ... for people 18 to 55," said Owen Murray, chief physician for Correctional Managed Care, University of Texas Medical Branch. One in five Texas prisoners is older than 50.

States have had to install ramps and shower handles and make other physical modifications. Many prisons have had to create assisted-living centers with full-time nursing staffs. At least 75 prisons provide hospice services for dying prisoners,

according to the Vera Institute of Justice.

When aging prisoners reach the end of their sentences, corrections officials often have a hard time placing them. "Private nursing homes don't want to take elderly offenders..." said Virginia's Fuller.

Studies have found that older ex-offenders are less likely than younger ones to commit additional crimes after their release, Ollove noted. But politicians and the public don't seem willing to release former murderers and sex offenders, though they are decades removed from their crimes and physically incapable of repeating them, said Liz Gaynes, president of the Osborne Association.

"It comes down to they did a bad thing, and they should be punished," Gaynes said.

"States will be forced to pay more and more for that attitude," Gaynes added.

"Either you figure out ways to get them out of the prison system and on to Medicare, or ... you need to fund those facilities and care services that are necessary," said Texas' Murray.

So far, most states have opted for the second approach, reported Ollove.

## Criminalization and Poverty Linked to Nation's Prisons

By Charles David Henry  
Journalism Guild Writer

Criminalization and poverty are intertwined within the nation's incarceration system, a report by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

"It is almost always the poorest among us who fall prey to the two-tiered system of justice that separates the haves and the have-nots," the ACLU stated.

"Pay-to-stay jail fees are the next generation of unending debts that seek to tether low-income people to the criminal justice system," the ACLU reported in 2015, pointing to booking fees and daily fees. An inmate may be assessed a booking fee upon arrival, referred to as a processing fee, a reception fee, or administrative fee.

Some people are charged a daily fee. This should not exceed the cost of housing and feeding the person for each day of incarceration, the report maintains. Additionally, a few counties charge release fees, covering the cost of processing a person out of jail, the report added.

The report revealed that courts in Ferguson, Mo. and Concord, N.H. are illegally incarcerating people who cannot pay their court fines and costs.

In fact, the ACLU of Ohio led ground-breaking reform to combat debtors' prison with its 2013 report, *The Outskirts of Hope*.

Ohio has 88 counties with over 100 jails throughout the state. This report shows that 75 facilities are full-service jails. "Out of the 75 county facilities, 40 charge a pay-to-stay fee for incarceration, either through a booking fee, a daily fee or both."

"In Jail & In Debt: Ohio's Pay-to-Stay fees" reported that Williams County, home to the Corrections Center of Northwest Ohio (CCNO), charges the highest pay-to-stay fees. This 638-bed multi-county correctional facility houses inmates from five counties. It has one of the highest booking fees at \$100. The jail then charges \$66.09 per day.

"Williams County does not consider whether a person is indigent when they assess the fees, so all people regardless of income must pay the same daily fee. When a person is released, money may be taken from their commissary account to pay their pay-to-stay balance if the amount is above \$25," the report noted.

These charges are imposed against a person simply because they are in jail, the report said. The courts have identified

these as a "non-criminal fee," meaning that a person cannot be incarcerated for failure to pay them, but in practice, they operate with little difference from a modern-day debtors' prison, *The Outskirts of Hope* reported.

"Any amount unpaid will remain on the person's account and will be counted against them if they are incarcerated in the jail again," the report added. "Collections are processed through Intellitech Corporation. If someone were jailed in the CCNO for 180 days, they would owe about \$11,996.20."

According to the ACLU, individuals are typically expected to pay their debts while incarcerated, either directly or through commissary funds. If the jail is unable to collect all of the fees before the prisoner is released, the debt is turned over to Intellitech within 180 days. If not, it will be reported on the person's credit history.

In materials provided to the ACLU, Intellitech claimed it does not pursue collections against people who are indigent, yet this does not appear to be the practice. In interviews with people who were clearly indigent and had been declared so by the court, they reported receiving many calls and letters and the debts were reported on their credit history.

## CPAC Panel Takes on Criminal Justice Reform

By Wayne Boatwright  
Journalism Guild Writer

The conservative take on criminal justice reform was debated at this year's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC).

A CPAC panel discussed policy tools that would send fewer people to prison while maintaining public safety, reported Nathalie Baptiste of *Prospect.org*.

The strongest advocate for maintaining the status quo was David A. Clarke Jr., the African-American sheriff of Milwaukee County since 2002. Clarke acknowledged that the United States spends approximately \$80 billion a year on its criminal justice system. But he dismissed most

recent reform efforts, saying, "All this is going to do, at best, is shift the costs" down to the state and local level as with California's prison Realignment.

Alternatively, the former attorney general of Virginia, Ken Cuccinelli, supports reform efforts and noted that "Over the last 10 years, (Texas) has reduced both their budget for prisons and their crime rate by double-digit percentages."

Pat Nolan of the American Conservative Union supports a move toward an evidence-driven public health model: the government would only prosecute certain crimes like rape, murder and robbery while targeting major drug traffickers as opposed to street dealers

and other nonviolent drug offenders, Baptiste reported.

Clarke countered that such attempts to reduce incarceration may simply be normalizing criminal behavior in communities that can least afford it.

"If you're a struggling mom living in a slum or a ghetto..." Clarke said "...you're doing everything that you can to keep your kid away from that dope dealer standing on the corner..."

In at-risk communities, without support structures in place for social alternatives to incarceration like those mandated by California's Proposition 47, Clarke does not believe that the most effective way to keep a community healthy is "by cuddling up to criminals."

## Brown's 309 Judicial Appointees in Five Years

By Salvador Solorio  
Journalism Guild Writer

Many of the judges Gov. Jerry Brown appointed in the past five years have a public defender background, according to KQED's *The California Report*.

"Observers said the sizeable number of public defender appointments is a big shift from Brown's predecessors, who largely appointed prosecutors," noted the report.

"Since taking office five years ago, Brown has made 309 appointments to the bench. A KQED analysis shows that 26 percent, or 81 of those elevated, have been public defenders at one point in their careers," the report states. "About 14 percent were district attorneys, and... 31 percent had some prosecutorial background."

Since Brown's election to his third term in 2010, the justice system has undergone a host of dramatic changes. The changes engineered or supported by Brown were made in large part to ease overcrowding in the state's prison system.

Brown pushed through Realignment, which shifted the responsibility for the supervision of thousands of offenders from state prisons to local jails. Recently Brown proposed a ballot measure that aims to let nonviolent offenders qualify earlier for parole if they participate in rehabilitation programs,

Brown's appointments re-

fect a significant shift from the "tough on crime" trends of the 1990s and early 2000s, which filled state prisons far beyond capacity and led to a federal court order to reduce the state's prison population, according to the report.

A more-diverse bench will make a more-balanced system, said Michael Ogul, president of the California Public Defenders Association.

"Now, the hope is that the new era of public defender judges will actually be people who are not jaded, who are genuinely open-minded, open to considering the totality of the evidence, and trying to understand the background of the individual who appears before them," Ogul said.

Brown has said he believes diversity extends beyond someone's race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender—it also includes their life and work experience.

The governor also said that "using and manipulating the fear of crime has allowed one segment of our society" – law enforcement – to dominate the bench. But prosecutors aren't the only qualified lawyers "The judges are supposed to be independent. You want judges that have a commercial background, you want judges that have a prosecutorial background, city attorneys, or county counsel, or small practice, plaintiffs' practice – you want a diversity, instead of kind of a one note fits all."

# Merle Haggard: San Quentin Parolee, Music Icon

By Thomas Winfrey  
Art Editor

"I turned 21 in prison doing life without parole," music legend Merle Haggard sang in his famous 1968 hit "Mama Tried." The song was Haggard's public apology to a religious mother, Flossie Mae, and his acknowledgement that "she tried to raise (him) right."

Merle Ronald Haggard passed away on his birthday, April 6, 2016, at his ranch in Palo Cedro, Calif. He was 79 years old.

Haggard was only 15 years old when he first went behind bars for a robbery. In the next five years, he was locked up for other petty crimes until, at the age of 20, he was sent to San Quentin State Prison for burglary in 1957. His three years spent behind the San Quentin walls ultimately impacted both his life and the music he made.

Curly Ray Martin, 76, lived several years alongside Haggard, inside and outside of prison walls. Both grew up in Oildale, Calif., a small town on the outskirts of Bakersfield.

"I drove my grandmother over to Mrs. Haggard's house because they both were church-going women, and that's where I met Merle," recalls Martin. "About three months later, I heard he was in trouble — and he ended up in San Quentin."

But Haggard was in trouble from birth. He spent his first years in the abandoned boxcar that his father, James, a railroad carpenter, had turned into a makeshift home for his family, according to Nancy Henderson in the *New York Times*. Soon, Merle lost his father to a stroke.

"It was a devastating event for the young boy, who was very close to his father," writes Henderson.

Haggard spiraled into a rebellious way of life. Henderson



Merle Haggard in San Quentin North Block on June 20, 1994

File Photo

said Haggard hopped a freight train and was chased all the way to Fresno, where police retrieved him. He spent his youth engaging in petty crime and truancy from school. Even when he was in reform schools, he attempted to escape, only to be thrown back in again, according to Henderson.

Nearly a year after Haggard landed at San Quentin, Martin followed in his friend's footsteps, and reunited with Haggard at San Quentin for similar burglary charges. During their time spent together, Haggard taught Martin how to play the bass guitar.

Long before Haggard got his first break in the music industry (he was hired to play bass in Wynn Stewart's band in 1963), Haggard honed his craft of music on the San Quentin yard, Martin remembered.

"Sometimes you'd see ol'

Merle sitting by himself near the old steam plant, up against the fence, writing songs, and everyone would just leave him alone," Martin said. "He would play a lot of his own music, but I would also hear him play music from Lefty Frizzell and George Jones."

When Haggard wasn't alone with his musical muse, Martin would join Haggard in the yard, where they'd drink and play music.

"In 1959, Merle and I went to The Hole twice for getting drunk and raising hell -- once on his birthday, once on mine," said Martin.

The wild side that had sparked in Haggard's youth had followed him into prison, where he spent his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in solitary confinement.

While incarcerated at San Quentin, Haggard saw Johnny Cash perform live in 1958. The experience convinced Haggard to take his talents more seriously. After he was paroled in 1960, Haggard set his sights on becoming a country singer like his role models -- Lefty Frizzell and Jimmie Rodgers.

He took his guitar and performed in the bars of Bakersfield, where he attracted attention and help from those around him.

"Liz Anderson, Ken Nelson, Buck Owens, Wynn Stewart and Tommy Collins all helped Merle because he was good and he deserved to be helped," Martin said.

By 1964, Haggard reached the Country Top 40 with "Just Between the Two of Us," a duet with Bonnie Owens, the former wife of country singer Buck Owens, and Haggard's second wife.

Johnny Cash once introduced Haggard as a "man who writes about his own life and has a life to write about." Haggard's honesty became a staple of his unique music.

He wrote about his drinking in his number one hit, "I Think I'll Just Stay Here and Drink," one of many songs in which Haggard was candid about his life and the questionable decisions he had made in life.

a guitar-driven blend of blues, jazz, pop and honky-tonk," according to the *New York Times*.

Four years after his release from San Quentin, Haggard reunited with Martin, who was paroled, in 1964. Martin recalled how Haggard had already become a success, "so much so that he could drop \$3,000 on a bet at one of the tables."

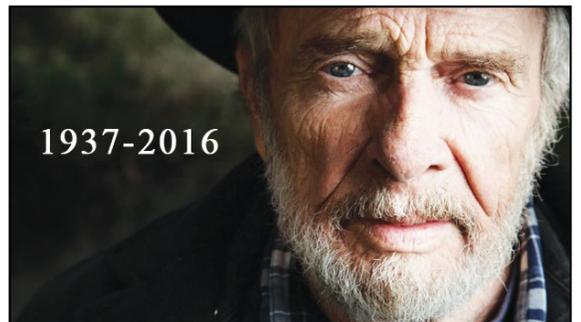
In 1972, then-California Gov. Ronald Reagan granted Haggard a rare full pardon.

But Haggard never forgot where he came from. In his song, "Branded Man," which was released in 1968, Haggard sang, "But no matter where I'm living, the black mark follows me/I'm branded with a number on my name."

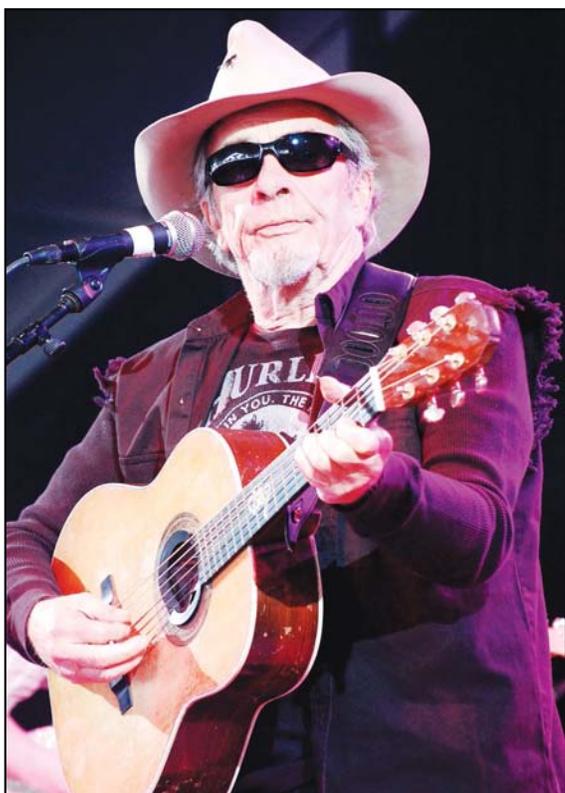
Martin, who has been back in prison since 1967 for a murder conviction, considers Haggard's transformation a triumph. Haggard's music and the stories he told with his songs have resonated with millions of fans over the years.

"Merle made everyone proud," Martin said of his old friend.

Haggard is survived by a sister, Lillian; his wife, Theresa Lane; their two children, Ben and Jenessa; four children from his first marriage, Dana, Kelli, Marty and Noel; and a son, Scott, from a previous relationship.



File Photo



File Photo

Merle Haggard's live performance



File Photo

Merle Haggard playing the fiddle

# Mother's Day: A Chance to Honor Our Mothers



Jarray D. Birdon's mother  
Celestine Belton

**By Angelo Falcone**  
Journalism Guild Writer

In honor of Mother's Day, we wondered: How much do the men in blue love their mothers? More than their girlfriends or spouses? Do their emotions match those of men on the other side of the wall?

"There is a higher volume (of flower sales) for Mother's Day than for Valentine's Day," according to Flower Confidential by Amy Stewart.

"There may be a reason for that. Valentine's Day is all about roses. But when people send flowers to their mothers, they tend to send arrangements, not just a dozen roses ... so you might send more stems to your mother at Mother's Day than you do to your wife at Valentine's Day," Stewart reports.

Asked On the Line posed this question to men on the mainline: What do you admire most about your mom (or the woman who raised you)?

**Markee Carter:** "My mama is my heart and soul. We have

been there for each other through good times and bad times. I have done a lot of bad things in my life and she was always there for me when I was on the streets and in here. I am happy that we still have that bond. We love each other and I can talk to her about anything, so I thank God for blessing me with my mom and long as we live."

**Jose Flores:** "Women come and go. Girlfriends can be here today and gone tomorrow. But there is only one Mom, with a capital M. The love from Mom is truly unconditional. It doesn't matter what I do or say, who I am, or what choices I make, my Mom loves me no matter what. But the love of a girlfriend or wife is conditional. There are things that I can do, say or be that will cause a girlfriend or wife to stop loving me. Only Mom loves forever."

**Walter Johnson:** "Moms, thank you for always being understanding with me, for always being there for me, and for always being truthful. Moms,

I hope you have a happy and blessed Mother's Day."

**Christopher Scull:** "My mother was truly the most loving, caring and helpful woman I have ever known in my life. I miss her very much. I will always love her. I will always remember her because she loved me the most."

**Forrest Jones:** "My biological mother, Genova Jones, died when I was a baby. My godmother, Elvira Miles, raised me just like she raised her own children and she instilled in me the same qualities that she instilled in her own children. I admire her for that. My godmother died last year."

**Cody Brown:** "Mom, you are honest, loving, courageous, trusting, selfless, humble, respectful, resilient, tolerant, beautiful, and you have an amazing sense of humor. Nobody is perfect, but in my eyes, you are the embodiment of a perfect mother. I love you so much."

**Phil Phillips:** "My mother is a pillar of strength and inde-

pendence. My mother never let the circumstances overcome her; she rose above them. She also, by her diligent attention to health, stayed young and fit."

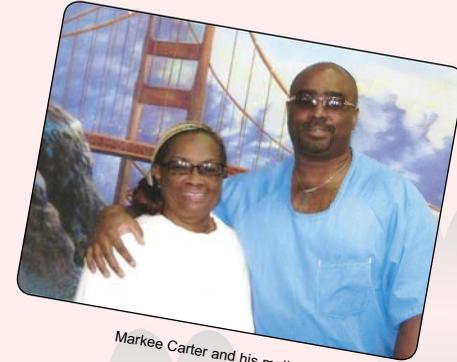
**Matthew Edwards:** "I admire my mother's love, strength, and sacrifice. My mother got pregnant by force, rejected her racist family's disapproval, and still chose to birth me with love. Through disrespect, adversity, or heartache for me coming to prison, my mother's unconditional love, strength, and selfless sacrifice remains unshakable and everlasting."

**Ray Monde:** "My mom's fierce independence and determination to be self-sufficient inspired me not to be easily influenced by others."

**Matthew Nguyen:** "What I admire most about my mom, aside from the fact that she carried five children from Vietnam to America and that she gave birth to seven children, is that she gave birth to me, I was her last one, and I was an 11-pound, 12-ounce baby. I love you Mommy!"

**Sam Johnson:** "Mariah Johnson, Elizabeth Johnson, Connie Herbert and Deloris Williams: You all loved me with so much unconditional love, even with my flaws of not feeling I was good enough or when I was weak with low self-esteem. Your love wrapped my heart gently and warmly. Your love assured me that I was a gift from God. Through my 25 years, your love kept me from being alone. Thank you for your wisdom, understanding, strength and life lessons. When the walls of my cell felt like they were closing in, your love penetrated the cold darkness with the light and love of Jesus. To all my mothers who raised me with their unconditional love, hugs and kisses, I, your loving son, love you and adore you in the mighty name of Jesus Christ."

**A. Alvarez:** "I am the luckiest man for being born to my mom. She cherished me in a way I couldn't understand until I became a parent. Thank you, mom, for loving me and not judging me."



Markee Carter and his mother



David Harrison, with his mother and father Kathleen and Steve

## Happy Mother's Day



Shelly Warrens, Anthony Ammons, Shenique Ammons and family members



Joyce Smith



Aunt Opal, Timothy Holmes his mother, Pearl Holmes



Jim Snider's mother, Margaret



Orlando Harris and his mother



Bonneville Salt Flats Photo Effect

Photo by P. Jo

## Snippets

**M**ercury, also known as quick-silver has a silvery color and reflective metallic nature.

**I**n all of India's 100,000 year history, it has never invaded another country.

**S**unlight can reach a depth of around 262 feet in the ocean.

**O**wls have an 80% success rate for catching their prey.

**L**ucha Libre wrestlers are generally divided into two types: rudos and técnicos. The rudos are the "bad guys" and the técnicos are the "good guys."

**O**ctopuses have three hearts, which are all located in their heads.

**G**old is so malleable that a thread drawn from one ton of gold can stretch over 480,000 miles, comparable to stretching from the earth to the moon and back again.

**Y**oga comes from the Sanskrit term word "yui" meaning "to unite".

# Sudoku Corner

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

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

## Last Issue's Sudoku Solutions

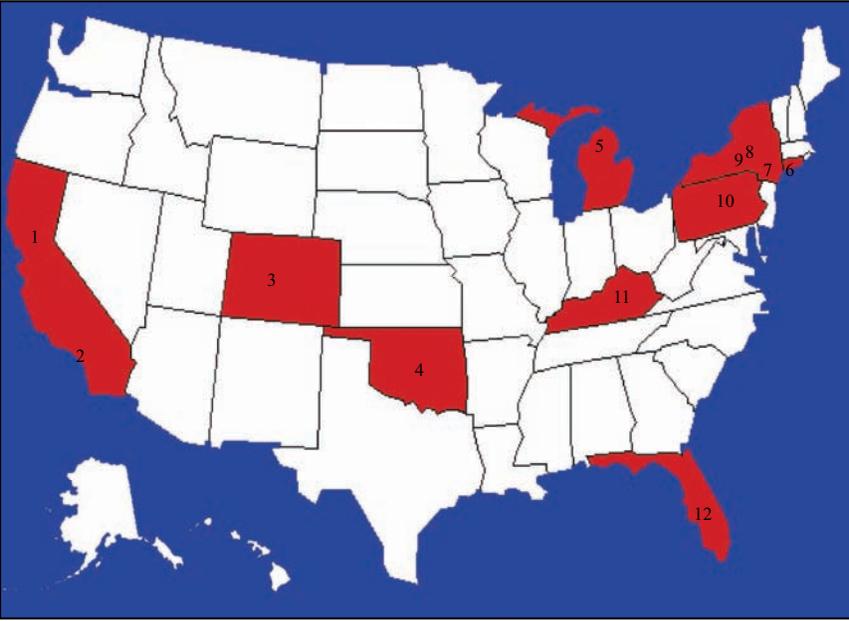
4	8	7	6	2	3	5	9	1
3	5	2	4	9	1	7	8	6
6	1	9	7	8	5	4	3	2
1	2	6	8	4	7	9	5	3
5	7	4	9	3	2	1	6	8
9	3	8	1	5	6	2	7	4
2	9	3	5	6	4	8	1	7
8	4	1	3	7	9	6	2	5
7	6	5	2	1	8	3	4	9

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

## The Month of May

- May is the third of seven months in a year with 31 days. This year, May has five Sundays, five Mondays and five Tuesdays.
- Holocaust Remembrance Day and Cinco de Mayo (The Battle of Puebla) are on Thursday, May 5.
- Mother's Day is Sunday, May 8; Mother's Day in Mexico is on Tuesday, May 10.
- Armed Forces Day is on Saturday, May 21 and Memorial Day is on Monday, May 30.
- For the Christian community, Eastern Orthodox Easter is on Sunday, May 1; the Ascension of the Lord is on Thursday, May 5; Pentecost is on Sunday, May 15; The Most Holy Trinity is on Sunday, May 22; Mary, The Help of Christians is on Tuesday, May 24 and The Body and Blood of Christ is on Thursday, May 26.
- The World Almanac reports May is Clean Air Month, Get Caught Reading Month, National Barbecue Month, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, National Inventors Month, and National Mental Health Month.
- There are two astrological signs in May: Taurus, the sign of the Bull (April 20 to May 20) and Gemini, the sign of the Twins (May 21 to June 21).
- The May birthstone is the emerald.

# News Briefs



**1. Sacramento, Calif.** — Gov. Jerry Brown granted clemency to 59 people, just before Easter Sunday. Most were convicted of nonviolent drug-related crimes. All of those pardoned have obtained a court certificate declaring that they are now rehabilitated. A gubernatorial pardon may be granted to people who have demonstrated exemplary behavior and have lived productive and law-abiding lives following their conviction.

**2. Los Angeles** — Robert Contreras will be paid nearly \$6.9 million to settle a lawsuit after police shot him and left him paralyzed, reports the *Associated Press*. Officers said they fired after Contreras turned toward them with something in his hand—it was a cellphone.

**3. Colorado** — A 2015 change in the law regarding parole revocation cut in half recidivism rates for technical violations and reduced the state’s prison population.

**4. Oklahoma** — The Oklahoma Corrections Department has paid \$92.7 million to Tennessee-based Corrections Corporation of America and Florida-based GEO Group, Inc. to house state prisoners for one year, according to prison officials. Since 2004, the state has spent about \$975 million on contracts with the for-profit, private prison companies, the Oklahoman reports. The state’s prison system is operating at 122 percent of capacity, prison officials report.

**5. Kincheloe, Mich.** — Inmates at Chippewa Correctional Facility in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula have participated in a peaceful protest over the quality of food provided by a state

contractor, an official said. The demonstrations follow another protest at Kinross Correctional Facility, the *Detroit Free Press* reports.

**6. Hartford, Conn.** — In 2007 Connecticut raised the age at which juveniles can be tried as adults to 17. Gov. Dannel P. Malloy says he now wants the age to be raised to 20 by July 1, 2019. Malloy’s reasoning includes research that shows developing brains can make bad, impulsive decisions that can lead younger people into the criminal justice system, reports the *Associated Press*.

**7. New York** — Richard Rosario spent 20 years in

prison before his conviction was overturned, and he was freed. While Rosario was in Florida, he was convicted of a shooting that happened in New York City even though he said he had 13 alibi witnesses to confirm his story, reports the *Associated Press*. Rosario’s case adds to the more than 25 New York City convictions that have been overturned in the last five years.

**8. New York, N.Y.** — A jury trial set Candie Hailey, 32, free after dismissing a charge on which she had spent more than three years in a New York City jail, reports the *Associated Press*. Hailey, who has been di-

agnosed with borderline character disorder, mood disorder and anti-social personality disorder, spent much of those three years in solitary confinement for repeated rules violations. She had faced new charges of criminal mischief, harassment, obstructing government administration and assault, all from her stay in jail. The charges were dismissed in March.

**9. New York** — U.S. District Judge Shira Scheindlin approved a plan in March to reduce solitary confinement in the state’s prisons. Scheindlin says the “historic settlement” will greatly reduce the frequency, duration and severity of sol-

itary confinement for thousands of prisoners, making conditions “more humane and more just,” reports the *Associated Press*. She called solitary confinement a “drastic and punitive designation, one that should be used only as a last resort and for the shortest possible time to serve the penal purposes for which it is designed.”

**10. Williamsport, Pa.** — Lycoming County Coroner Charles Kiessling Jr. has started ruling heroin overdose deaths as homicides. Kiessling says drug dealers are murderers. He said he wants to raise awareness of a heroin epidemic that contributed to a 13 percent increase in overdose deaths in the state in one year. “If you chose to sell heroin, you’re killing people and you’re murdering people. You’re just as dead from a shot of heroin as if someone puts a bullet in you,” Kiessling told *The Daily Item of Sunbury*.

**11. Frankfort, Ky.** — Proposed new legislation would give some nonviolent felons a second chance by letting them seek to have their criminal records erased. Republican Gov. Matt Bevin said he looked forward to signing the bill, if it clears the state House and Senate, reports the *Associated Press*.

**12. Ocala, Fla.** — Johnny Edward Ostane was freed after serving more than two years for battery of a police officer and other charges. Ostane’s release came after a follow-up investigation found inconsistencies with the arresting officer’s report, along with inconsistencies in other reports by the same officer, the *Ocala Star-Banner* reports.

# WORDCROSS PUZZLE

**ACROSS**

1. Nautical way to say yes
4. Cable movie network
7. Food measuring label (Abbrev.)
10. “Blackish” network
13. River in S. France
14. Gun toting group
15. U.S. medical doctor’s group (Acronym.)
16. Car speed rating (Abbrev.)
17. FOX TV show about crime solving angel
19. A coach drawn by four horses
21. 4:00 p.m. prison number crunch (Prison Slang)
23. NBA The Heat’s Chris
26. Matt of “The Martian”
27. ‘80s TV show “Miami \_\_\_\_\_”
31. The six degrees of Kevin \_\_\_\_\_
33. Giorgio Armani cologne
34. Millions has six of these
35. Donald Trump’s talk
37. Drag’s oneself (Yiddish)
39. Refusal or denial
40. School fitness subject (Abbrev.)
41. Navy depth charge (Slang)
45. Gov. Schwarzenegger
49. Affect of “Ocean’s Eleven”
50. City in Central

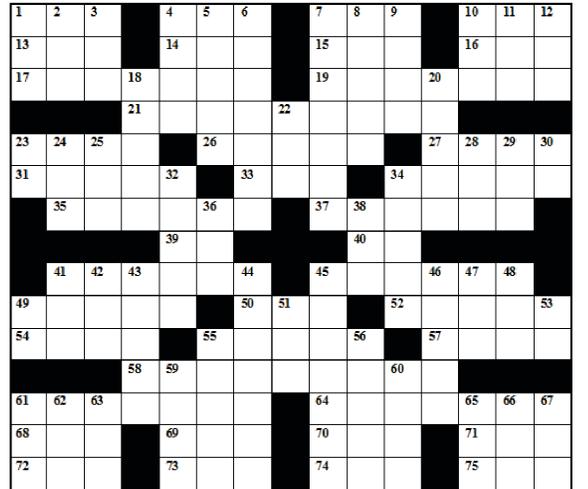
Switzerland

52. Tragedy emotion
54. Southeast Asian spicy cuisine
55. To rotate, spin
57. Beloved
58. Prison bus (Prison Slang)
61. Weather condition limiting movement in prison
64. Whiskey alternative
68. To express approval or triumph in Spanish
69. Searching airport agency
70. Mr. Tina Turner
71. Human blood types
72. Sound made when winning a game
73. Person who makes, writes, etc.
74. Adds style to a web page
75. The dot character in Morse code

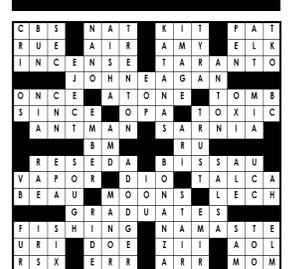
**Down**

1. \_\_\_\_\_-or-nothing
2. Any person
3. Rest, and so forth (Abbrev.)
4. Intelligence (Slang)
5. Sigmund
6. Spiderman comic book villain
7. TV show “Blindspot” story line revolves around these

8. Rafael Nadal’s country
9. Type of oil used in Nutella
10. Shumer of “Trainwreck”
11. Lifers’ obstacle
12. Asian comedian Margaret
18. Watery discharge from a sore or wound
20. To be frank with someone
22. Oversharing of personal stories
23. A type of child’s gun
24. To be high spirits (Slang)
25. Genre “\_\_\_\_-Fi”
28. To move violently
29. The crest of a hill
30. English lang. forming the 3d person (Abbrev.)
32. Children’s detective Drew
34. Eddy of *SON* April’s Documentary
36. Acronym for medical term of decreased body
38. Life-saving technique (Abbrev.)
41. Used to express delight
42. Retirement govt. agency (Abbrev.)
43. Former Katherine of “Grey’s Anatomy”
44. Every January 1st is a?
45. Able to live only where oxygen is present



**LAST MONTH’S ANSWERS**



65. TV show “Breaking \_\_\_\_\_”
66. Brown sash worn with a Kimono
67. Like it or \_\_\_\_\_

# Cinco de Mayo: De Historia y Cultura a Comercialización

Por Tare Beltranchuc  
y Marco Villa  
Contribuidores

El Cinco de Mayo es el día festivo que probablemente la mayoría de personas en los Estados Unidos confunde con la Independencia de México, la cual se celebra el 16 de Septiembre.

A pesar que el Cinco de Mayo a ganado popularidad en los Estados Unidos todavía existen personas que desconocen la historia que dio origen a la celebración.

Todo comenzó en 1861, cuando Benito Juárez llegó a ser presidente de un país económicamente arruinado. Los conservadores habían derrochado el Tesoro Nacional, obligando al Presidente Juárez a suspender los pagos de la deuda externa hasta llegar a

un acuerdo con los gobiernos europeos.

En respuesta Francia, España, e Inglaterra enviaron sus flotas de guerra a ocupar el puerto de Veracruz para exigir el pago de la deuda al gobierno mexicano. Los ingleses y los españoles se marcharon después de haber llegado a un acuerdo en el cual México garantizaba continuar con el pago tan pronto como le fuera posible. Sin embargo, los franceses gobernados por el Emperador Napoleón III aprovecharon la oportunidad y trataron de conquistar y establecer un imperio francés en territorio mexicano que favoreciera los intereses de Francia.

El 5 de Mayo de 1862, el ejército francés bajo el mando de el General, Charles Latrille de Lorencez atacó a el ejército mexicano encabezados por el General Ignacio Zaragoza en el Estado de Puebla. La armada francesa estaba completamente segura de obtener una victoria fácil, ya que su superioridad al ejército mexicano en número y experiencia. Los franceses contaban con más de 6,000 soldados bien armados y disciplinados, contra un ejército mexicano pobremente armado con menos de 2,000 sol-



Courtesy of History.com

## Cinco de Mayo celebración en San Francisco

dados. La batalla se extendió desde el amanecer hasta el atardecer.

Sorpresivamente y en contra de toda predicción los mexicanos derrotaron a el ejército francés, considerado en esa época como “el primer ejército del mundo”. El cual no había conocido derrota alguna por 50 años, escribió Ignacio González autor del Significado del Cinco de Mayo.

El triunfo de la batalla de Puebla constituyó una gran victoria moral para el gobierno Mexicano, representando su habilidad de proteger la soberanía de la Nación. La revista Time Magazine comentó que “La victoria de la batalla de Puebla simboliza unidad y orgullo, lo cual aparente ser una batalla entre un David mexicano derrotando a un Goliath francés”.

En los Estados Unidos, el Cinco de Mayo ha obtenido más popularidad que en México. En los años 60’s “Activistas chi-

canos acogieron la festividad como una forma de edificar dignidad entre México-Americanos”, Jose Alamillo expresó, Jose es un profesor en estudios étnicos en la Universidad de Washington en Pullman.

A la llegada de los años 80’s, esta festividad empezó a tener una publicidad a gran escala, lo cual de acuerdo a Jose Alamillo, “Cambio el significado de una celebración enfocada a la comunidad a una festividad de alcohol”.

El Cinco de Mayo es ahora una celebración mexicana donde los platillos mexicanos y las bebidas alcohólicas son el ingrediente primordial. Grandes corporaciones cerveceras como la Dos Equis, Tecate, Corona y Anheuser-Busch (Budweiser) han tomado ventaja de la creciente comunidad hispana para comercializar este día festivo.

Actualmente la conmemoración de la batalla de Puebla no se considera como un día

festivo nacional en México, sin embargo, en el Estado de Puebla donde se llevo a cabo la batalla, si es considerado un día festivo oficial. La comunidad de poblanos organizan un desfile militar y simulan la batalla de Puebla para conmemorar la victoria del Cinco de Mayo.

En los Estados Unidos algunos miembros de la comunidad celebran el Cinco de Mayo exhibiendo banderas mexicanas y en ciertos vecindarios las calles son cerradas para celebrar en grande.

En las escuelas algunos estudiantes decoran sus salones de clases y cocinan comidas mexicanas básicas. Varios restaurantes deleitan a los consumidores con platillos mexicanos (mole poblano, barbacoa, tamales, burritos, enchiladas, tostadas con guacamole, salsa picante) y disfrutan de sus bebidas favoritas (margaritas, cervezas, y tragos de tequila) al ritmo de la música de Mariachis.



## Cinco de Mayo: From History and Culture to Commercialism

Cinco de Mayo is probably the most misunderstood holiday celebrated in the United States. The defeat of a French army is often mistaken for Mexican Independence Day, which is observed on Sept. 16.

Cinco de Mayo, translated Fifth of May, has gained popularity in the U.S. where many people are unaware of the historic battle that inspired the celebration.

It started in 1861, when Benito Juárez became president of a country in financial ruin. The fleeing conservatives had emptied the national treasury, forcing President Juárez to suspend all payments on foreign debts until he could make new arrangements with the European governments.

In response, France, Britain and Spain sent their troops to Veracruz to demand repayment. The British and the Spaniards negotiated their own settlements with Mexican authorities and headed back to Europe. However, France was ruled by Napoleon III, who saw an opportunity to conquer and establish an empire in Mexico that would favor French interests.

The French army was confi-

dent of victory. On May 5, 1862, over 6,000 well-armed French soldiers, led by Gen. Charles Latrille de Lorencez, attacked a poorly equipped Mexican army of less than 2,000, led by Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza. The battle lasted from daybreak to early evening.

Surprisingly and against all odds, the Mexicans defeated the French army, considered “the premier army of the world,” which had not been defeated for almost 50 years, wrote Ignacio Gonzalez, author of The Significance of Cinco de Mayo.

The victorious Battle of Puebla represented a great moral victory for the Mexican government, for it symbolized the country’s ability to protect its sovereignty against other nations.

As Time magazine noted, “The Puebla victory came to symbolize unity and pride for what seemed like a Mexican David defeating a French Goliath.”

In the United States, Cinco de Mayo has attained greater significance than in Mexico. By the 1960s, “Chicano activists embrace the holiday as a way to build pride among Mex-



Mexico's Flag

ican-Americans,” José Alamillo said. He is a professor of ethnic studies at Washington State University in Pullman.

By the 1980s, this holiday began to be advertised on a wider scale, “changing the meaning of the celebration from community self-determination to a drinking holiday for many people,” Alamillo declared.

Now Cinco de Mayo is a day to celebrate Mexican food, tra-

ditions, culture — and booze. Beer corporations like Dos Equis, Tecate, Corona and Anheuser-Busch (Budweiser) have taken advantage of the ever-growing Hispanic community to commercialize this holiday.

Today, the commemoration of the battle is not observed as a national holiday in Mexico; however, in Puebla, Mexico, where the battle took place, it

is an official holiday. The community of Poblano stages a military parade and mock battle to commemorate the Cinco de Mayo victory.

In the United States, community members display Cinco de Mayo banners and in some places the streets are closed for neighborhood gatherings.

Students decorate their classrooms and try their hand at cooking some basic Mexican food. Some restaurants spice up their menu with Mexican dishes (mole poblano, barbacoa, tamales, burritos, enchiladas, tostadas con guacamole, salsa picante) and enjoy their drinks (margaritas, beer and shots of tequila) to the rhythm of the mariachi bands.

—Tare Beltranchuc  
and Marco Villa

# Easter Day Banquet Celebration at SQ

By Arnulfo Garcia and  
Charles David Henry  
San Quentin News Staff

The doors of the Catholic Chapel were swung open to approximately 250 invited guests on Sunday, April 3. They came to dine, fellowship and listen to the smooth sounds of jazz pianist Matthew Lee Jaspar, a quartet of Spanish musicians and songs by Michael Adams.

As Father George Williams welcomed the congregation, he told them, "The doors to the church are always open and not just to come to eat food. We are here to serve all, at all times.

"Easter is the most important celebration of the Catholic Church; it's the Resurrection

of Jesus Christ," he added.

Michael Adams opened the Easter Day assemblage with these words: "We are all sharing the love of Jesus Christ here today. The church welcomes all men of all races and all interfaith dominations to share Jesus' love and to rejoice in God's love."

After Father Williams blessed the provisions, 12 line servers filled the plates of the invited guests.

The Easter Banquet had special meaning for many. Robert Tyler explained his feelings: "It's the coming together of people in the church and non-members that brings the gift of sharing love as a blessing."

Roger Chavez commented, "The celebration of Easter and

to honor Jesus Christ who died for us is what gives reverence to the spirit of the church. I want to give a special thanks to Father George for his tireless dedication to the men here at San Quentin."

Stephen Pascascio said, "It's a blessing to see everyone enjoying a pleasant meal and the warmth it brings to share God's blessings and to thank Father George for his dedication and tireless work."

Jessie Skinner said, "It's a glorious day at San Quentin."

"God is benevolent and merciful," said Bernard "Abdur-Raheem" Ballard, a Muslim who was invited to attend. "It's interfaith events like this that show how gracious and merciful God's blessings are,

as we come to share these precious moments with other men of faith."

***"It's the coming together of people in the church and non-members that brings the gift of sharing love..."***

B. Chandler, a man of Jewish faith, said, "I'm here seeking the experiences of other religious worships."

"I'm very grateful and blessed to be here with the men of San Quentin," C. Jack-

son said.

S. Woige said, "It's a blessed day. God is good all day. Today serves as a reminder that there are times when we must come to appreciate the sacrifices that are taking place all around us every day."

"Mother Earlene," a regular visitor to the various religious affairs at San Quentin, was ecstatic. "I'm so happy to be fellowshiping with the guys during Easter Week. Everybody should come and join us in the name of Jesus Christ."

Marischal Brijido closed with these remarks: "I feel blessed to see all the brothers come together from all around the prison to be in one place for a worthwhile purpose. They are my rock."

## Prisoners Learn Meaning Behind Good Friday

By Juan Haines  
Senior Editor

With his huge 1960s Afro standing out in a sea of blue-shirted inmates, Greg Dixon's soft keyboard melody gave San Quentin's Protestant Chapel a type of pleasantness rarely found in a prison setting.

Pats on the back and hugging repeatedly took place as the men-in-blue mingled about in the place of worship.

Adding to the relaxing mood, Albert Flagg's keyboard and a sharp, yet muffled bass guitar filled the air while dozens upon dozens of incarcerated men waited for Good Friday services to begin.

Seven microphones were evenly posted on the stage for the 25-member Garden Chapel

Choir. In the background four large palm leaves uniformly decorated the wall, a reminder of Jesus' triumphal entry to Jerusalem on what became known as Palm Sunday. A tall wooden cross, nailed to the back wall, invoked Jesus' death by crucifixion. A placard hung atop, slight askew, reading, "Jesus King of the Jews."

The services began with all the men standing with heads bowed. A fiery sermon spoken in Spanish caused all hands to rise skyward. It ended with a long applause.

Again hands rose while the men were swaying in rhythm to the choir singing halloo-lo-yah.

Elder Derrick Holloway gave thanks to all of the men-in-blue for coming to Good Friday services, even though the sched-

uled special guests were unable to get into the prison, and the Final Four college basketball tournament was underway.

Church leaders delivered a short sermon about the significance of Good Friday.

Trent Capell and Michael Hampton focused on the power of redemption.

They let the men know the inescapable nature of sin and the gift Jesus Christ gave to everyone through blood sacrifice that created the covenant between God and man, allowing everyone entrance to the kingdom of heaven.

"The blood. Why is the blood so significant?" James Cavitt asked. "Why did it take the blood of Christ to make a difference? Without the remission of blood, there is no forgiving. It

took innocent blood for man to have a way back to God."

Ferrari Moody described Christ as "the trustworthy, the sinless leader of man."

Moody addressed the power of being washed in the incorruptible blood of Jesus. "Have you been washed in the blood of the Lord?" he asked. "The deeds of the earth do not matter, if you haven't been washed in the blood of Jesus."

Other church leaders added to the meaning of Good Friday and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Holloway then took the podium and began his sermon that took the church-goers from Genesis to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Holloway emphasized "completing your assignment," as a way to let the men know that

working for God or doing God's work needs to be the driving force behind being a Christian.

"Whatever God has placed in front of you, complete your assignment," Holloway said. "People are fickle. They like you today, and they're gone tomorrow. Just keep walking for Jesus."

Holloway's sermon examined sin, and he admonished the audience to understand that completing their assignment could "cost you your personal possessions, your family or even your life."

Holloway praised Chaplain Mardi Jackson, the first African-American woman to work in the prison's Garden Chapel. "That's got to be the work of God," he said.

The sermon ended with the singing of Amazing Grace.

## CDCR Losing Battle in Disrupting Cell Phones in Prisons

By Kevin D. Sawyer  
Associate Editor

The state's prison system is losing its battle to disrupt cell phone use by inmates in its 34 facilities, *The Associated Press* reported.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has so far failed in its attempt to block cellphone signals in the prisons, *AP* said. Because of rapid technological advances, the CDCR may have to shift gears and find new methods to combat illegal cell phone use by inmates.

"It's been difficult to make sure the technology can handle those upgrades," CDCR spokeswoman Dana Simas told the *AP*, adding, "Whether we're going to scrap it or whether we can find solutions to these issues, that will be determined later."

CDCR reported in 2011 that it had run tests using Managed Access Systems (MAS) technology to interrupt contraband cell phone signals at two of its prisons. At that time there were plans to have MAS installed "at all institutions by 2015."

Global Tel-Link (GTL), the

leader in the prison phone industry, has the contract with CDCR to provide inmate calling service and MAS technology. Taxpayers, however, do not pay for its cost, according to the *AP*. The company "recoups



its cost from the fees inmates pay...using (GTL) land lines."

In 2014, Deputy CDCR Press Secretary Terry Thornton said, "Eighteen CDCR prisons have Managed Access System technology installed and in use."

But the prisons where MAS is operating was not disclosed because of "safety and security reasons," she said.

*AP* reported the state installed MAS "to prevent unauthorized cell phone signals from reaching their destination."

However, the technology used previously to carry cell phone traffic switched over to the new Long Term Evolution (LTE), 4G technology, which transmits voice calls over a wireless network, and the prisons' system does not capture Wi-Fi transmissions, *The AP* reported.

The CDCR no longer plans to expand MAS technology in its remaining 16 prisons, the article noted.

GTL spokeswoman Megan Humphreys said in an email to the *AP* that the company cannot comment because it is currently in discussions with the CDCR.

In 2012, state legislators raised concern over whether GTL's professed MAS technology would be able to keep pace with industry development.

Members of the state Senate asked the California Council on Science and Technology

(CCST) to analyze the issue of contraband cell phones and the viability of proposed technology to manage cell phone access in state prisons.

"As for the proposed MAS recently contracted for by the CDCR for managing cell phone access in prisons, our conclusions are clear: the technology shows promise, but it is not ready for deployment," the CCST stated in a 2012 letter.

***"...we believe California must plan carefully how best to manage the issue of contraband cell phones in prisons..."***

The CCST said the preliminary testing conducted in California at the time was "extremely limited in scope and scale," proving only a concept trial and not a full pilot program.

"Managed access as proposed will not do the job that the CDCR wants done," a 71-page CCST study said.

"MAS is not the only technology that could be used," the CCST wrote. "Several other technological options, including some that were identified during the development of this report, should be considered, tested and weighed before committing to a full investment in MAS."

The CCST letter concluded, "...we believe California must plan carefully how best to manage the issue of contraband cell phones in prisons, and invest in research and development that will produce a system which meets the needs of the state through deployment of mature and tested technology."

The *AP* reported that the CDCR has asserted that Global Tel-Link will be able to keep up with developing technology.

The number of cell phones confiscated in California state prisons has dropped, the *AP* reported. In 2011 there were about 15,000 phones confiscated. In 2015 there were less than 8,000 phones seized.

# Topic of Discussion: *Felons' Voting Rights, Part 2*

By **Rahsaan Thomas**  
Journalism Guild Chairman

There was a time when it took rampaging terrorists to keep people from the polls, now it's voter apathy discouraging many Americans from the ballot box.

Emancipation left Blacks as the majority in the South. Freed Blacks in five Southern states outnumbered Whites. During this period, which was around 1867, African-Americans started electing Black senators, according to the history book *Enduring Vision* by Paul S. Boyer, et al.

The Ku Klux Klan was formed in Tennessee back in 1866. It used violence and terrorism to stop Blacks from voting, according to *Enduring Vision*.

Much later Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led non-violent protests

in Selma, Ala., in which many people were attacked for participating. His leadership and courage led to the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which granted protections that allowed Blacks to return to the polls.

A Yard Talk panel met in San Quentin State Prison's Lower Yard gym to brainstorm on how to get people back to using this right many died to make available.

**Q. How can we motivate people to go to the polls?**

**John "Yahya" Johnson:** "The solution is simple: knowing the power is in the people. Apathy in colored communities is because we show our discontent and nothing gets done. We have to start teaching the people what the power of voting really means.

"When the slaves were freed in the South, look at how much

## Yard Talk

voting changed. We had Black senators, members of Congress: Harim Revels, P.B.S. Pitchback, and Ida B. Wells. They changed the whole Southern society in 10-20 years. Then President Rutherford B. Hayes pulled out the federal troops and southerners started attacking the vote, so we know that the power is there. We have to bring folks back into the remembrance.

"Although we don't like many things about the system, if you can get enough people galvanized around an issue, you can change it."

**Eric Curtis:** "There have been things that changed – people of color were able to do it – the Rockefeller law, Proposition 36. However, it's like we score

one goal and the game is over, instead of pushing for more issues."

**Jamie Sanchez:** "You would be able to get more votes when more people are affected. They have to have the impression that their vote really matters because it really makes a difference."

**Johnson:** "We are not the spearheads or champions of legislation -- even though we made these things happen by power of the vote. The conception of these things came from parts of the system, and we became the assistants. When we realize we have the same power, we can make things happen."

**Curtis:** "Basically sports figures and entertainment figures are listened to more often; they can do blogs and web sites to get people to vote."

**Johnson:** "Rock the Vote was big, but on a more sustainable level, it takes us in a grassroots movement to start organizations...we have to make this a profession. Start with making social institutions for change. We can't rely on stars; we need to have things in place we can sustain from

generation to generation."

Many provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 expire. The expiration date was reset in 2006 until 2031, according to Wikipedia.

**"They have to have the impression that their vote really matters because it really makes a difference"**

**Q. What do you think about the fact that certain parts of the Voters Right Act have to be renewed?**

**Johnson:** "The implications of the Freedom and Voters' Right Acts are we have to be protected by law to have an inalienable right granted to us, and that's insane. Why haven't we passed a law that makes the Freedom Act and Voters' Right Act permanent?"

**Sanchez:** "I think the reason they do laws in that way is because they don't want to lose control. They want to be able to take it away."

If we aren't using our right to vote, maybe they already have taken it away.

## Inmate Computer Usage For Laudatory Chronos

By **Angelo Falcone**  
Journalism Guild Writer

Updated security protocols will affect all inmate workers and clerks who use computers as well as inmate workers with pay numbers.

In a meeting with Chief Deputy Warden Kelly Mitchell, the MAC Executive Council learned that all computers for inmate use must be modified, tasks involving chronos and waiting lists must be in the hands of staff sponsors, local printing will no longer be supported, and inmates with pay numbers will be audited in the near future.

"We reviewed the hard drives of about 40 inmate computers and found personal files," said Mitchell. "No personal inmate documents should be on any computer. This includes personal files and documents such as letters, homework, canteen and package lists, legal work and letters to victims. Unless a

## MAC Corner

document is a security threat, there will be no adverse action taken at this time."

When it comes to inmate groups and ILTAGs, Mitchell said, "Inmates cannot be involved in making chronos or having control of waiting lists for programs or have access to any type of database, inmate locators, or attendance sheets for programs.

"Inmates may not print or have any identification information about other inmates, including names, CDCR numbers, housing, and race or ethnicity on their computers. Inmates are also not allowed to have control over other inmates' documents, especially those that can affect a release date or Milestone credits.

"Also, Microsoft Access will no longer be supported. This in-

cludes staff computers. Instead of Access, staff will use Share Point and inmates may only use Microsoft Word, Excel, and Acrobat."

Inmate computers will no longer be connected to local printers. "All printing must go through staff. We will be transitioning to central printers accessible by state employees only," said Mitchell.

Concerning inmates with paid job assignments, Mitchell said, "We will be conducting audits of inmates with pay numbers. Job assignments take precedence. Inmates may not participate in groups during their work hours. An inmate is paid to be at work, not at a group. If an inmate is attending groups during his work hours and he is getting paid, that is fraud and he will be issued a 115."

## CDCR to Expand Inmate Firefighting Program

California's new corrections secretary says he plans to use more county jail prisoners instead of state prisoners for the firefighters program, *The Associated Press* reported.

"As we expand to the county level, I think it's going to be able to keep our fire camp population at a right, reasonable level," said Scott Kernan, who recently took over as secretary of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Kernan said he has made agreements with 12 county sheriffs and four more are pending to send county inmates to the state's fire camp program.

About 40 percent of the approximately 3,700 inmate firefighters committed manslaughter, assaults, batteries, or robberies. However,



Firefighters working in the field

inmates are reviewed for any risk of danger that they may pose before they are sent to

the firefighter program. County jail inmates may have active drug or mental

## Texas Law Helps Parolee Re-entry

By **David B. Le**  
Journalism Guild Writer

Former prisoners have a better chance of finding rental housing in Texas, thanks to a new state law.

The new law exempts landlords from civil liability for renting to people with criminal records, the *Austin Chronicle* reported in January.

Even with the help of HB 1510, formerly incarcerated people find it difficult to attain housing because of housing shortages. Landlords can

still deny people with criminal histories without violating the Fair Housing Act according to the newspaper.

Testifying for the bill, Douglas Smith of the Texas Criminal Justice Coalition said he had a criminal record and recounted a conversation he had with a landlord: "I asked if they ever made exceptions. He said, 'No! If we made an exception for you, a White person, and not someone else, then we'd be violating the Fair Housing Act.' I was shocked."

Smith paroled in 2014 and reported he had been living in his parents' garage apartment.

City Councilman Greg Casar said increasing more Accessory Dwelling Units would improve affordable housing opportunities for everyone.

"We're in a landlord's market," said Casar. "If we don't have more than enough housing, landlords are going to have that advantage. It's really important for us to have more than enough housing for our population so that landlords have to compete for tenants."

Isa Arizola said she had rented an Accessory Dwelling Unit with her family without incident until the new landlord asked her to file a new application in which Arizola's criminal record was revealed. At that point, she and her family were asked by the landlord to move out.

"My kids are suffering the consequence of what I did several years later," Arizola said.

—David B. Le

# Navigating the New World Through Virtual Reality

By Juan Haines  
Senior Editor

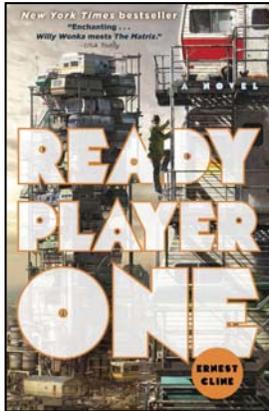
For someone who has never experienced 21st century technology, understanding new technologies, like the internet, can be challenging. But placing these new developments in the context of a world from which you are separated while incarcerated is even harder.

Ernest Cline explores these elements in his book *Ready Player One* (2011), in which he touches on themes of individuality, coming of age, and technology.

Set in 2045, the story revolves around a future internet called OASIS. Its creator, the reclusive and wealthy bachelor James Donovan Halliday, passes away, leaving behind his entire \$240 billion fortune to anyone who can solve a puzzle he has built inside the internet.

Wearing a virtual reality mask, the main protagonist, Wade Watts, enters the digital world as an avatar named Parzial and plays a game to solve the puzzle.

Parzial wants to solve Halliday's puzzle, get the money and become someone of importance, while the girl he cares about,



Art3mis, wants to be the person to chance the world for the better. Parzial's sidekick, Aech, is on the quest for himself.

The characters in *Ready Player One* bond together in an effort to beat the powerful corporations.

Cline's use of gaming is an important element in this futuristic fantasy novel.

It creates two distinct worlds: the virtual world of OASIS, and reality. Cline's characters struggle with this dichotomy, but come to the realization that reality, and the people in it, matter

## Book Review

more than the circumstances of the game.

Nevertheless, Wade finally understands reality:

*I come to see my rig for what it was: an elaborate contraption for deceiving my sense, to allow me to live in a world that didn't exist. Each component of my rig was a bar in the cell where I had willingly imprisoned myself.*

Some San Quentin inmates are also gamers who, like Cline, have created their own avatars in images seemingly in perfect rehabilitative form. Everyday San Quentin gamers sit around with their thick reference books, making up fantasy worlds that have all-imaginable technology, defined magic they know and understand. Their avatars have superpowers that include force-fields and invisibility.

They lay their cardboard worlds on tables and go on adventures that get them away from the stale life of incarceration; an activity easily understood, looking from the inside and out. The most interesting thing

about these convicts, seeking adventure: every one says their quest must be based on finding solutions to anti-social behavior. They want to be do-gooders.

Two classic stories—*As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner and *Journey to the Center of the Earth* by Jules Verne—also use well-developed characters to discuss social conflicts through adventure and quest.

The premise of Faulkner's story is quite simple: after family matriarch Addie Bundren dies, the father, Anse, and his children want to honor her dying wish to be buried a long way from home, Jefferson City.

The character interaction in *As I Lay Dying* holds onto a dysfunctional Southern world view that draws sympathy for all the Bundrens. The long journey gave Faulkner apt opportunity to dissect family values. Readers learn the Bundrens, in spite of challenges, are a family that sticks together, no matter what.

In *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, Jules Verne combines

quest and family by probing into a willingness to be open-minded while journeying into the unknown.

This is quite different than Cline's characters who leave the "real world" in order to immerse themselves into a make-believe place.

Hans in *Journey to the Center of the Earth* contemplates the quest toward the center of the earth with his uncle:

*It must be that a man who shuts himself up between four walls must lose the faculty of associating ideas and words. How many persons condemned to the horrors of solitary confinement have gone mad — simply because the thinking faculties have lain dormant!*

These interesting works of literature seem consistent with Cline's theme that is a rich and layered storyline of social responsibility.

*Ready Player One* takes on global warming, corporate greed, and poverty in a way for readers to identify. Even though the story occurs at a time and in a place unfamiliar to most incarcerated readers, it earns a "read it" mark because of its fast pace that keeps the mind working.

# Tomorrowland Inspires Dreamers to Change the World

By Jonathan Chiu  
Staff Writer

Finding solutions to Earth's biggest problems is a major theme of *Tomorrowland*, a Disneyland attraction and name of an alternate dimension movie.

Casey Newton, the main character in *Tomorrowland*, is recruited to save the world by Athena, a child android. When murderous robots try to kill them, they turn to Frank Walker (George Clooney), a former citizen of *Tomorrowland*, to help them complete their journey.

*Tomorrowland* is a fun and

## Watch This

socially conscious movie that pits worldwide epidemics against dreamers seeking to change the world.

San Quentin Reviews meets in the lot between the Education Department and *San Quentin News* to discuss the movie's message of hope.

"I feel cynical today," said Emile DeWeaver. "*Tomorrowland* portrays hope as salvation, but it nags at me that hope can sometimes be an excuse to pine

for the future without taking steps to make concrete changes right now."

"I hear you," said Rahsaan Thomas. "But you have to hope. It goes back to that saying, 'Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right.' You create your own self-fulfilling prophecy. And if you have no hope, you're hopeless; then there are no solutions."

Some of the problems the

movie highlights are global warming, terrorism, and wealth disparity. The story's villain is Governor Nix (Hugh Laurie). He feels such a sense of hopelessness for the world that his solution is to destroy Earth with all of its inhabitants.

"Ironically, the bad guy wasn't wrong about his assessment of the world," I said. "We do face epidemics of starvation in Third World countries while the United States faces a rise in Type II diabetes due to obesity. I like the parallels between *Tomorrowland* and real life. People try to fix the problems, but they're hindered by politics and people with money and power wanting to keep them."

Juan Meza agreed with me that bureaucracy and politics get in the way of many solutions. "And we see this in prison. If I designed a positive, healing program that works, I may never be able to implement it because of the bureaucracy. It makes me think about the struggle to educate the public about restorative justice. How can we introduce restorative ideas into a system that's institutionally retributive? That's a big problem, and I don't know if we have a solution."

"The solution is easy," Thomas throws his hands in the air, exaggerating his hyperbole. "We have dreamers like Emile 'Dreamweaver,' who thought up the Prison Renaissance to build a culture of community, mentorship, collaboration and rehabilitation. And it's focused on recruiting the biggest dreamers: artists and educators."

The members of SQ Review laugh, and we close out the day telling jokes.

"Wait," DeWeaver says to Thomas, whose comment emulates the android in the movie who recruits dreamers. "I ap-



preciate the plug, but are you saying I'm a little girl android?"

"Man," Thomas says and bounces to the edge of his seat. In the movie there's a strange dynamic between the android girl and George Clooney's character, who fell in love with the android when he was a boy. "What's up with George Clooney holding a torch for a 12-year-old girl? It was weird."

We erupt with agreement. DeWeaver said, between fits of laughter, "I felt like sometimes they were about to kiss, because the music and the moment was there! What is wrong with Disney?"

"Nothing is wrong with Disney," Meza says, straight face. "What's so weird about a dude obsessed with internet, lives alone, keeps older women out of his house but takes in run-aways? Totally normal."

I get the last word. "So the message of the movie is: 'Wake the dreamers inside of you.' We all need to come together to save ourselves, this planet, and to create a world where George Clooney can fall in love with adult robots."

# Soledad's Veteran Service Office Assists Re-entry Inmates

By Tommy Bryant  
Journalism Guild Writer

The Veteran Service Office at Correctional Training Facility in Soledad is assisting incarcerated vets in obtaining benefits.

Ed Munis had worked as a lobbyist for veterans' issues in Sacramento before his incarceration. He was recruited by originator inmate Michael "Doc" Piper. With the warden's approval, they started the Veteran Affairs Office 10 years ago.

Inmate Jerry Lytle recalled, "In 2004, I met up with another veteran who was getting benefits, and he said, 'You know you should get your benefits. You're entitled to them.'"

Filing for the disability benefits never seemed to get anywhere, reported Krista Almanzan on radio station KAZU in an NPR series titled

"Back at Base."

Lytle reflects, "I think because I was in prison, I couldn't deal directly with them. I was dealing with them through the mail, the only process I had."

Lytle eventually transferred to CTF Salinas Valley. This is where he heard about the Veteran Service Office.

The office assisted Lytle in obtaining his disability compensation. He was entitled to \$1,000 a month for exposure to Agent Orange and also suffered from PTSD after serving in Vietnam.

Due to his current incarceration, Lytle can only receive 10 percent of that amount or about \$100 per month.

Similar offices assist incarcerated vets in 23 other states and all California prisons via mail, Almanzan reported.

The office has helped about 1,000 incarcerated veterans

and their dependants receive over \$15 million in benefits for the past 10 years.

The Monterey County Veteran Service Officers assist the prison office in submitting paperwork after reviewing claims.

"And plus we can access and check status on appeals on the outside," says George Dixon of the Monterey County office, adding that they are here to assist all veterans, not to judge them.

"An awful lot of people that are in the VA ... that are not too excited about helping out convicted felons, so that's been a struggle," acknowledged Munis. "So far, we've prevailed."

"I plan on paroling ... continuing to do this until ... they bury me," says inmate Munis.

"Back at Base" is part of a series broadcasting on seven NPR radio stations throughout the country.

# San Quentin Giants and A's Get Revamp

By Marcus Henderson  
Staff Writer

More than 35 incarcerated men displayed their skills and athleticism at San Quentin's 2016 baseball try-outs.

The San Quentin A's and Giants coaching staff observed many new players with raw talent.

"This is one is our biggest turnouts, since they opened West Block," said Giants sponsor and Head Coach Elliot Smith. "We lost a lot of players from last year and we want to replace that talent."

The influx of youth offenders made up the majority of players fighting for a spot on the teams' 17-man roster.

"As a youth, being active is a part of our rehabilitation," said Cordiare McDonald. "Playing and talking to outside teams will help me restructure my life for



Photo by Sam Robinson

## SQ Coaches Elliot Smith and Steve Reichardt

going home.

"This program teaches you cooperation and that teaches you jobs skills. Because when you do get home you will have to work with other people."

A's volunteer and Manager

Steve Reichardt said, "It was good to work with the first-time players. The key points we will focus on are our pitching staff, fundamentals on defense, and discipline when at bat."

The energetic players went

through multiple fielding drills to test their baseball IQ and mechanics.

"You can be athletic and talented, but you have to know what to do in real time on the field," said Isaiah "Raheem" Thompson-Bonilla. "For the infielders, they should know what play to turn in any given situation. The outfielders need to know their cut-off points."

The mechanics consisted of: the proper way to grip the ball and transition to a smooth throw, how to hold the bat, laying down a bunt and base-running.

"I grew up around baseball; I played in junior league," said Aaron "Duddah" Sanders. "I'm here to show the best of my abilities. If I'm up to par, I can make something out of this."

Player hopeful Vance "DT" Farland said, "I'd rather play than watch the game. The training given is positive reinforce-

ment. On the streets, you really don't get that. With positive reinforcement, you gain the confidence that you can do anything."

The younger men were not the only ones that came out to show and prove. The 52-year-old Robert Hollis has skills in the infield that might put him on the roster.

"I wanted to leave my mark on second base and show the youngsters that I've still got it," said Hollis. "I pray that everything goes well for everybody."

Now the task for the coaches is to decide if there is enough talent to build two teams – the A's and Giants -- or just one.

"We are looking to have a team with integrity and cohesiveness," said A's Head Coach John "Yahya" Parratt. "We will have more team management this year. We will come out focused to go undefeated."

## Six-Mile Run Brings Out Runners of All Ages

Over loud cheers and constant encouragement, 70-year-old Steve Wilson completed the San Quentin 1000 Mile Club's annual Six-Mile Run with the time of 62:17.

"The guys wouldn't let me quit," said Wilson. "Too many people get in their 60s and stop doing things. They just sit around the tables playing cards and dominoes. If you think you're old, you will be."

Wilson has been running less than a year and has become the club's inspiration.

"I had triple bypass surgery a few years back," said John Levin, Wilson's running partner. "I figured if he can go out there and run; I knew I could do it."

After weeks of rain and a cancellation, the 24 runners were excited about finally starting the Six-Mile Run.

Front-runner Markelle Taylor was on the road to perfection as predicted. He shattered the six-mile record by three and half minutes with the time of 34:23, beating 37:56.

This is the third record Taylor has broken this year.

"I thank Jehovah God for giv-

ing me the mental and physical strength to endure," said Taylor. "I notice people are getting excited to see me accomplish these goals, and that gives me a chance to give witness."

"It's starting to motivate people to come out and accomplish their goals, and that motivates me. People I don't even know are starting to ask me for running pointers, and that is humbling."

Community volunteer Coach Kevin Rumon said, "He makes it look easy. It's like Stephen Curry -- you know the guy is working, but he makes it look easy."

Reporter Doug Sovern of radio news station KCBS 740 AM and 106.9 FM came to cover the event.

"That guy Taylor runs smooth. I ran back when I was in school, but I wasn't that smooth," said Sovern.

He said the idea to cover the 1000 Mile Club came when his editor read the February GQ article on the San Quentin 2015 marathon. Sovern did not read it; he wanted to experience the race for himself.

"I thought this would be a

great story," said Sovern. "I think it's terrific that these guys set goals and accomplish them."

After the GQ article, some of the runners had mixed emotions about media coverage.

"I thought 95 percent of the article was good. It talked about rehabilitation and the team's camaraderie," said Chris Schuhmacher.

"I was disappointed because I thought it took the easy route and played into the criminal stereotypes. We all know what we are in for, but most of the guys committed their crimes 15 or 20 years ago. I believe these guys have mended their lives and are very remorseful and not that same people."

Schuhmacher placed fifth with a time of 43:10.

Chris Skull, who sees running as a power to transform, took second at 40:02.

"This was a great experience," said Skull. "Running puts everything in perspective for me -- my frustrations and disappointments. This feels good. I was a person who wouldn't finish anything; so this is a great feat for me."

New member Tommy Lee Wickerd finished his first six-mile run at 48:07 for 11th.

"I decided 14 years ago to eliminate all negativity from life," said Wickerd. "So doing something good in prison and with support is priceless. My wife pushes me to be the son my mom and dad raised me to be."

Troy Dunmore, who is 52 and following his doctor's orders to exercise, placed 13th at 49:39.

"I have a heart condition and I mainly run for that," said Dunmore. "But my goal is not

to let someone older than me beat me, like Larry Ford and Mr. Wilson. No, for real, my goal is to finish the marathon. Those guys are my inspiration."

The March 25 event saw two veteran runners struggle and drop out at the halfway mark, while four walk-ons pushed their way through to the finish line.

"These events are for the yard. More people should come out and test their mettle against the time," said long-time veteran Tone Evans.

—Marcus Henderson



Photo by Krissi KKhokhokashvili

Member Markelle Taylor running the 6-mile race

## Univ. Pacific Comes to SQ for Tennis Exhibition

The University of the Pacific Tigers tennis team broke barriers and built bonds through an exhibition game with San Quentin's Inside Tennis Team.

"Prison life is a part of the American society that most people don't know about, and if you think your students are highly educated, then they need to come here and understand this," said Pacific Athletic Director Ted Lellan.

After an hour drive from Stockton, the Tigers started the day by partnering with the members of the San Quentin tennis team for doubles matches. The lively games found the guys bonding, being openly supportive and offering congratulations with each great play or return.

"Most visitors come here with

nervousness and fear," said SQ member Clay Long. "When they see something different, then they don't want to leave. I think it's important to share our stories." He also said their coming in "helps me to be a better citizen."

The Tigers were ranked 56 in the NCAA. They have recruited players from around the world, including India, Brazil and Ecuador.

Their star player, senior Sam Verbeek, is from the Netherlands. He plans to turn pro after graduation.

"It's refreshing coming here. You can get caught up in your own bubble," said Verbeek. In San Quentin, "You get exposed to a different part of life you don't get on campus."

Verbeek shared that he had the best four years of his career in Stockton and that it is a very real and sincere place that shaped him as a person and player. The college also has something else to smile about: it just hired former NBA star Damon Stoudamire as its head basketball coach.

"You are always representing something bigger than yourself. You represent the culture and the program," Verbeek added.

Pacific Head Coach Ryan Redondo shared his experience and deep passion for the game by taking the men through a workshop.

They performed hitting and serving drills. Coach taught about net zones, where you have to visualize invisible lines

above the net, each about a racket-length high. The higher the balls are hit offensively gives the opposing player enough time to regroup defensively. The lower the balls are hit cuts down on your opponents' reaction times.

"It's about skills development, toughness and character," said Redondo. "Some matches can take three or four hours, so you have to be in physical shape. That's why we train with a lot of visualizations and meditation."

The tennis players then played king of the court, where about five teams faced off. The first one to two points stay on the court, then the next team steps up. The team with the most wins becomes the king of the court.

The March 26 event ended with a spirited exhibition game between Pacific's top four players, giving the small crowd a show of quality play.

"It was really nice of these college kids to come out and show us love," said SQ tennis member Chris Schuhmacher.

All the members of the SQ team were moved to be reunited with volunteer Leslie Lava, who brought the Tigers in. Lava broke her ankle picking up one of her 70-pound show dogs. She came down the Lower Yard ramp with a smile and an ankle boot.

"I made it," said Lava. "I couldn't let the team down."

By the look of joy on everyone's face, she didn't.

—Marcus Henderson

# SQ Kings Beat Bittermen in Pre-Season Opener

By **Rahsaan Thomas**  
Journalism Guild Chairman

The San Quentin Kings basketball team held off a fourth-quarter surge to beat the visiting Bittermen in the surprise pre-season opener, 61-53.

“They got out to an early lead and held on for dear life,” said Trailblazer Ryan Williams, who also plays for the Bittermen. “We’ll put our feet under us and come back ready to rock.”

Before the game, seven visiting Bittermen trooped onto the San Quentin yard on March 18, expecting the Kings to be there ready to play the season-opener.

“It feels fantastic,” said Williams. “We’ve been waiting all winter to come back here.”

However, nobody told the Kings that the Bittermen were coming. More than half the Kings were locked in their cells watching March Madness on their 13-inch personal TV sets.

While King Head Coach Orlando Harris scrambled to assemble his team, the Bittermen watched the SQ Warriors tryouts and chatted with fellow basketball enthusiasts. By the time the sun broke through the overcast, the Kings were in uniform, ready to go.



Photo by Raphael Casale

SQ Kings' Demond Lewis (left) and Bittermen Timmy Hall guarding Oris Pep Williams

The Kings jumped out to a 30-10 second-quarter lead with the shooting of Demond Lewis and Oris “Pep” Williams, who finished with team highs of 15 and 12 points, respectively.

Toward the end of the period, Ryan hit a three-pointer while falling to the ground. That ignited a Bittermen 10-2 run with new recruit Ron Quimel contributing an assist. The score was 32-20 Kings at the half after Ryan scored through contact, but missed the free throw. He had 13 first-half points and

finished with 23. For Quimel, a junior high basketball coach, it was his first time playing inside a prison.

“People can tell you or give you a scouting report, but you’ll never experience it until it’s game speed,” said Quimel. “Basketball has been really good to me. This is an opportunity to give back to the game that I love and make somebody’s day.”

In the third, Lewis dropped a trey to help push the King’s lead back up. Oris followed with five

points scored on back-to-back plays including an and-one and a floater. The score was Kings 49-34 at the end of the quarter.

“It feels great being out here with the guys,” said Lewis. “We added nice new pieces and it made us better.”

Lewis was referring to new King members Derrick Holloway, D. “Zayd” Nickolson, and Whitney Vardel Jackson. They played their first game in white uniforms with the gold crown crests on them.

The Bittermen closed the gap

to 57-53 with one minute left in the fourth.

Ryan tried a three-pointer from the top of the key, but it missed. The Kings failed to score and Ryan missed another trey.

Bittermen Timmy Hall fouled-out intentionally grabbing Holloway to stop the clock. Holloway sank one free throw, increasing the lead to 58-53.

Bittermen Rob Enber shot for a three from the top of the key that clanked off the rim and landed in the hands of King Tare “Cancun” Beltran. He broke down court to score his sixth point, putting the game out of reach for the Bittermen as time ran out.

“It’s a good start,” said Beltran. “New guys, new chemistry. My prediction is we’re going to be undefeated this year.”

King Charles Sylvester stood beside Beltran, nodding his head in agreement. The two guards borrow a movie title to call themselves Rush Hour for their coordinated fast breaks and slight resemblance to Chris Tucker and Jackie Chan.

Bittermen and former semi-pro Will Wheatly was held to eight points. Quimel and Ted Salviet also dropped eight each.

# SQ Warriors’ New Season Brings New Talent

Twenty-three incarcerated basketball players showed up in the Lower Yard to compete for a chance to play for the San Quentin Warriors.

The group included most of last year’s team and several new guys eager to earn one of the 12 spots.

Making the Warriors is a huge opportunity. They play against former NBA players from the Golden State Warriors coaching staff, as well as former college basketball players and former overseas pros. They have even played active college teams like St. Mary’s and Pacific Union.

“It would mean a lot. It would mean I accomplished a feat over 23 other dudes. It means I have some talent,” said Edward Moss.

No one is guaranteed a spot, said SQ Warrior Head Coach Daniel Wright. “I don’t care who you were last year. You have to earn your spot.”

Wright listed the qualifications for being a Warrior as: having a great attitude, dominating a game without scoring, and making him say, “I got to keep

you.”

Potential new recruits included Donnelly Thompson, a muscular guy who played youth league ball, and David Silva, an 18-year-old who would have started his prison time in a higher security level prison, if not for the Youthful Offender Program. Under this new law, incarcerated teenagers are sent to lower-level prisons instead of maximum-security facilities.

“It’s a fantastic opportunity – better than being on a level three with all that serious mentality,” said Silva.

The tryouts consisted of full-court scrimmage games, complete with referees.

“Your game isn’t judged by what you did in pickup games,” said Wright. “The game is judged with officials and shot clocks.”



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Warriors' Luke Walton playing against the SQ Warriors

Thompson had a quiet, solid game, playing good defensive and scoring a couple of baskets, but Silva stood out to Wright. Silva put himself in position to make easy baskets by being the first one back on offense.

“I didn’t think he was going to make it, but for what he did, he earned a spot,” said Wright.

The tryouts ended with a slam-dunk by Tevin Fournette,

a former John Marshall High School player, who made the team.

Noticeably missing was 6-foot-7 former Memphis University player Mack Simekins. The 26-year-old was on a visit during the tryouts.

Simekins still made the team because of his experience, height and talent. He said he was the sixth man on the Memphis

team, averaging about 9 points and 5 rebounds a game. He played with NBA player Tyreke Evans at the alma mater of Derrick Rose, who now plays for the Chicago Bulls. His team made the NCAA tournament’s Sweet 16, but he didn’t get to play because of a suspension over off-court problems. Playing for the Warriors represents an opportunity for redemption.

He missed a chance to go to the NBA because of “not being focused. I had no father figure; nobody taught me anything growing up in Oakland,” said Simekins. “I’d tell kids to stay focused. Don’t lose track of your goals, and listen to good mentors or you’ll be in my position – all this talent and I ended up in prison.”

Warriors from last year who re-earned their spots included: Allan McIntosh, Harry “ATL” Smith, Montrell “Mad Defense” Vines, Rafael Cuevas, Jason Jones and Anthony Ammons.

Other new Warriors are Fournette, Maurice Gipson, Darrell Benford, Harold Malbrouga and Dave Lee.

Benford said, “I’m excited. I came at the beginning of last year and didn’t make tryouts. I like everybody’s attitude and how they move the ball around. I like how everybody plays together. I like how (outside teams) come in here and devote their time-- it gives me hope that society doesn’t look at us like we’re just prisoners.”

Lee said, “Hopefully as a point guard, I can dictate the flow of our game. I’ll be able to help keep the team under control – cool, calm and collected.”

—Rahsaan Thomas

# Inside Tennis Team Opens Season

By **Marcus Henderson**  
Staff Writer

The San Quentin tennis program opened its 2016 season with intensive fun and competitive games of mixed-doubles.

“You always want to have a good match no matter who you’re playing,” said volunteer Eddie Metairie. “Even if it’s doctors or lawyers, you approach the game the same.”

Metairie came with three tal-

ented women, who have supported the program for years.

The women said they came to share their passion for the sport of tennis, and it’s about community involvement.

“I always wondered what it was like in prison,” said Metairie. “I never wanted to go to prison. Then I saw the tennis documentary, when the double champions Bryan Brothers came in. Then I thought, that’s was a good way to get in.”

Metairie and the women said coming in gives them the chance to learn about the guys’ life journeys and how their games have improved.

“It’s always a good time playing here,” adds Metairie. “You don’t always get that in the outside world.”

As the volunteers packed up their rackets and shook hands, the goals for the season were set: to have respect for each other, to have patience, to trust

in yourself and your partner.

“It felt like a visit,” said Paul Oliver, SQ tennis team member. “I thank San Quentin for providing this outlet. Playing is a great stress reliever. It’s a thinking game, and that helps me keep my wits. The whole program is about being positive and good health.”

The March 19 opener lived up to its excitement with good competition and friendships.

# Financial Literacy's Solutions for Everyone

*Continued from Page 1*

Her lack of investing knowledge is the norm for Black people. Only 25 percent of Black households have over \$10,000 saved for retirement, compared to about double that percent of White people, according to the telecast *Nightly Business News*.

"That means the odds are you will never be financially sound," said Carroll. "You're screwed...so what's your alternative – drugs, robbery? When I heard that, I almost cried."

Echoing the statistics of non-stock-owning African-Americans were other guests at the March 10 class, including Mario Catley, author of *Why Not You: Nine Steps to Reprogramming Your Family's Health*, and his cousin, stay-at-home mother Travina Catley.

"I want to get educated; If I'm educated, I'll be able to educate others as well," said Travina. "This is something that we didn't grow up learning, so it would be nice to be able to help others, so they grow up financially free as well."

Carroll gained national fame for teaching fellow-incarcerated men the money management and investing skills he developed in prison after learning how to read and studying the



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Carroll teaching financial solutions to the class

stock market.

Now his classes are changing the landscape of investors. Of the 50 incarcerated men who braved the rain to attend, at least 17 were men under 25 years old.

Carroll commanded the attention of the class with his candid dialogue and use of prison analogies.

"It's not about the money; it's about style of management," said Carroll. "If you can't man-

age cookies and chips ... then you can't manage money. We are trying to change that tide. You can't keep your mom from going to a home ... you are broke. It ain't your choice. We ain't even in a position to take care of our elderly."

Robert A. Bagwell, a 19-year-old Hispanic student with VL tattooed on his face, said "It's fairly simple. It's not that hard to understand the way they are teaching it."

Laslie said, "Wall Street's ability to take seemingly scary financial situations and turn them into understandable terms is incredible, because teaching is a really hard thing to do. It says a lot about his patience and passion."

Joe Hancock, Carroll's assistant teacher, handed out small packs of cookies to youngsters who could tell him what a P/E ratio is.

Carroll explained why he

uses unconventional methods with his younger students. "The same old status quo doesn't work. I'm here (in prison, so for him) the battle was lost. We'll lose the war if we don't do something different. It took me 10 years to realize I needed to make some changes. We have to find a faster pace to get them (young students) to see the need to make a change."

Carroll also instructed the class on how to evaluate when a disaster could mean a company's stock is undervalued.

"I find value by going into the storms, because people that run from a storm leave all their stuff behind," said Carroll. "Oil is the crisis which means oil is the value. For the people in the streets, they love it because oil is cheap. With money they are saving, they are thinking of buying a new car...they are consumers. They aren't thinking about benefiting from the very thing that is saving them money – lower oil stock prices."

The San Quentin Prison Report, the prison's TV-crew, filmed the class for a teaching tool in other places.

"It seems like it is a blessing that this gentleman has gotten the opportunity to educate himself in the system, and now he's educating others," said Catley.

## Sacramento Judge and CCPOA President Visit SQ

By Salvador Solorio  
Journalism Guild Writer

A judge and peace officer leader, who visited San Quentin recently, said they want to support reforms in the criminal justice system.

They visited the Comparative Religion class at San Quentin to observe up close one of the prison's more than 70 rehabilitation, educational and vocational programs.

"You guys are here of your own accord, on your own time," Chuck Alexander told the students. He is president of the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA).

He was accompanied by Judge Steve White of Sacramento, who spent time talking

with individual students.

Their visit came after an invitation from Prison University Project Executive Director Jody Lewen.

Both Judge White and Alexander understand public anxiety about: crime, sentencing reform, the impact of the Three Strikes Law, and mandatory sentencing. Both want to analyze data and inquire into what things are being done wrong in the current justice system process.

Judge White wants to change the influence of law-making that historically was emotionally driven and instead use data that will rationally influence law-making and criminal justice policy.

Alexander, a successor to CCPOA President Don Novey,



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Lewen tours of San Quentin's Education building

advocates that stakeholders in the prison system work together and focus upon programs that will benefit public safety. Alexander said he strongly

approves of the educational opportunities such as Prison University Project's program at San Quentin.

Historically the CCPOA

has been a very effective and influential lobbying organization that pursued an agenda that made correctional officers some of the highest-paid and benefit-endowed public servants in the state.

The Don Novey era of the CCPOA influenced policy-making legislators to pass laws that did eventually lead to state prisons becoming overcrowded to the point federal jurists determined prison conditions had become unconstitutional.

Statistics have shown inmates that educate themselves have much lower rate of recidivism, which translates into savings for the state. Studies show that job skills learned in prison translate into employability on the street.



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Judge White talking with a Prison University Project student



Photo by Eddie Herena - San Quentin News

Chuck Alexander speaking to the Comparative Religion class