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Ida B. Wells: early Black journalist and activist



File Photo

Ida B. Wells

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild Chairman

Before Black Lives Matter, and before former San Francisco 49er Colin Kaepernick took a knee, there was Ida B. Wells. She was a pioneering journalist with a social conscience who laid the foundations of resistance to racial injustice and violence against Black people.

“Out of their own mouths, murderers shall be condemned,” wrote Wells in *A Red Record*, referring to murder by lynching.

Beyond her journalism, Wells, who died in 1931, devoted her life to social justice and activism.

Her special cause was to open the public’s eyes to the epidemic of lynchings as a tool of social control.

“Somebody must show that the Afro-American race is more sinned against than sinning, and it seems to have fallen on me to do so,” Wells wrote in *Southern Horrors*. “The Afro-American is not a bestial race.”

Wells’ scholarly findings and arguments challenged the prevailing notion that Black criminality was evidence of Black inferiority. Wells was traumatized by the lynching of three of her close friends.

The three young Black businessmen were lynched defending their store from local Whites. Wells, who was then editor of the *Memphis Free Speech and Headlight*, a Black newspaper, published an article about the lynchings. This event set her off on a lifelong crusade.

Before Wells made her appearance on the scene, White journalists routinely rationalized anti-Negro violence as the only way to handle Black criminals and the only way to discourage the “Negro rapist,” wrote Khalil Gibran Muhammad in *The Condemnation of Blackness*.

Wells published two books on the subject, *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases* (1892) and *A Red Record: Tabulation Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynching in the United States 1892-1894* (1894). Her books refuted the justifications Whites put forward in defense of lynching.

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Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Participants sitting in a small circle share their personal experiences in the San Quentin Protestant Chapel

Prisoners contributed their input on criminal justice reform

By Joe Garcia
Staff Writer

Criminal justice reform took center stage at a San Quentin State Prison forum that brought together inmates, social justice advocates, formerly incarcerated citizens and public officials.

“Reform has to change, as we all together are changing,”

said Assemblymember Timothy Grayson, D-14th District, Concord. “We all still are rehabilitating. When I leave here, I’m going to tell people I just came from a place called ‘Project Opportunity.’”

“In one word – Wow! For me there’s this ‘wow’ factor going on right now. I’m overwhelmed by the narrative that comes from only you,” Grayson added, referring to

the prisoners.

The first-ever True Impact of Criminal Justice Reform in California Forum took place on Jan. 11. About 40 participants sat in small circles to share personal experiences and ideas about past, present and upcoming changes in sentencing policies.

See **FORUM** on Page 4



Photo by Steve Emrick

Options facilitators (in-blue), Kathy Narasaki, Tom Gorham and reception graduates holding their certificates

Options program graduates men from San Quentin’s reception center

By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer

Fermin Fernandez says he used meth for 41 years starting when he was 13. “I thanked the officer for arresting me. I wanted to quit but couldn’t just quit.”

In January, Fernandez was a member of the first Reception Center graduation class of the Options Recovery Services addiction initiative. In September 2018, the Options program took its incarcerated

counselors where none had ever gone before – the Reception Center – to help men start breaking the addiction cycle as soon as they arrive in prison. “So if I would have had this (program) years ago,” said Fernandez, “maybe my life would have been different. It gives hope that there’s a way (to stop using).”

Although Fernandez is serving his fourth prison term, he said it’s the first time he had an opportunity to participate in a drug treatment program. “My coming back

to prison had to do with drugs,” said graduate Fernandez.

People first entering the prison system are confined 23 hours a day in the Reception Center, segregated from the rest of the prison population. In reception, the new arrivals undergo a classification process to determine their security level and until last September had no access to anti-addiction programs.

See **OPTIONS** on Page 16

Veterans’ toy drive is “all about the kids”



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Toys collected for the Veterans’ Toy Drive in the SQ visiting room

By David Ditto
Staff Writer

It was toys and smiles all around as dozens of children came to visit their dads in San Quentin State Prison at Christmas-time.

“It’s all about the kids,” said Tony Burch, vice chair of the veterans group that sponsored the Toys for Tots event in its thirtieth year.

“I just love to see the expressions on the faces of the kids,” said Army veteran Garvin Robinson,

long-time secretary and treasurer of the Veterans Group at San Quentin.

Robinson admitted that sometimes he has as much fun as the kids playing with the toys.

“I can see they got the spirit in them -- the joy on their faces shines as bright as on Christmas Day. It reminds me of me when I was a kid,” said Army Vietnam veteran Adam Sinegal.

See **VETERANS** on Page 5

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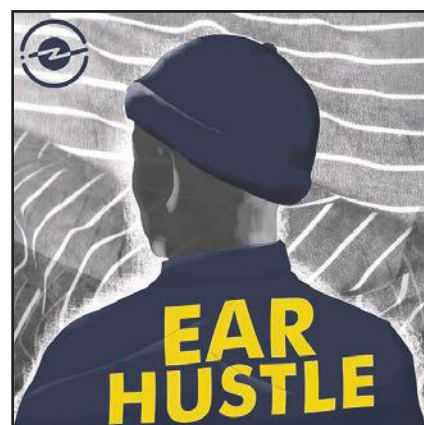
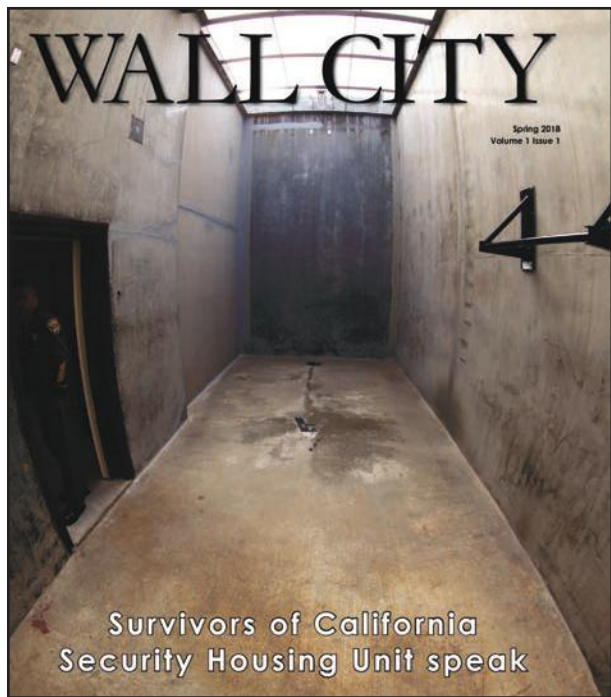
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Wall City Magazine is more than just stories-- it's a look into transformation, humanity and re-building community.



Attention people incarcerated on San Quentin Death Row

Ear Hustle is working on a story about mail in prison and we want to include stories from men on death row. If you have a good story about an impactful letter you have sent or received please share a brief description of the letter and why it is important to you.

You can contact us through institutional mail:
 Ear Hustle
 C/O Education Department

If your story is chosen we will arrange an interview with you via the phone. Thanks for considering our request.

SF Archbishop blesses SQ men during holiday season visit

By Timothy Hicks
 Staff Writer

Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco blessed the men and grounds of San Quentin Prison and delivered a message of salvation during a holiday season visit.

The title of his sermon was, "Salvation is worked out right where we are at."

"God comes to meet us where we are at," said the archbishop. He said part of his responsibility as Catholic leader of this region is to visit San Quentin two or three times a year, mainly around the holidays.

"I look forward to coming here and getting to know the men here in the prison," said the archbishop on his Dec. 30 visit. He also said that it is a "moving experience" for him when he comes to prison.

The archbishop has been coming to bless San Quentin Catholic men for six years out of his 36 years in the ministry.

Eighty-six-year old Brian Gragan, an outside visitor, has been feeling welcomed at San Quentin for three years. Whenever the archbishop

comes, "It's a marvelous demonstration of what holiday and communion means to the men in blue," said Gragan.

Upon the archbishop's arrival there was a Vietnamese Mass in session. When it ended, he greeted the Vietnamese priest and some of the participants in attendance.

Kelvin Ross has been the Catholic Chapel's clerk for two years. He has seen the archbishop six times.

"Every time I met him, I found him to be very personable and knowledgeable," said Ross. "He and Father George allow us to speak candidly and they be respectful toward us and treat us like human beings. They encourage me to strive better in my walk."

Father George Williams, who everyone at the prison calls Father George, has been at San Quentin for eight of his 25 years in the ministry.

"We are all brothers and we at the Catholic Chapel welcome all, no matter what your religion is," said Father George. "I believe in helping all the guys in their spiritual journey."

Prison resident Richard B. Evans has worked closely

with Father George for the past three years.

"He has a loving heart towards the prisoners and gives a significant amount of his time to our needs. That's huge!" Evans said.

The archbishop stood at the door welcoming attendees by shaking hands. He was dressed in his white and gold Chasuble (robe), his Miter (hat) and held his pastoral staff that he calls "Shepard staff" in his right hand. By his side were alter service workers Arturo Huerta and Pablo Ramirez, holding lit candles.

Kit Greerty, who was there with her husband, Tom, from Martinez, read the book of St. Paul on forgiveness and love.

The archbishop led the singing of "Glory, Glory to God."

"One of my responsibilities is to stimulate the people," he said.

He spoke first in English and then Spanish to translate the message to the Spanish speaking community present. Video pictures of waterfalls were displayed in the background.

"Salvation is an obedience

to God's will," he said. "The one who is enslaved is the one who is entrapped in a vice of life." He correlated that to human life.

Father George prayed and personal petitions were allowed by the inmates and congregation. Many were voiced throughout the room, ranging from prayers for the sick, the immigrant communities to Death Row inmates.

A Bible reading from the book of Colossians was followed by music from the Spanish choir led by Michael Adams.

After the song entitled, "All the ends of the Earth have seen the power of God," the archbishop addressed the crowd in Spanish and English. A cross hung in the background as the archbishop read from the Bible.

Michael Adams sang "Oh Holy Night," and Father George wished all a happy new year.

The archbishop blessed the congregation and charged them to go out and spread the gospel of Christ.

Before service ended, the archbishop blessed the communion utensils and the members had communion. Father George held the big Bible for the archbishop while he prayed.

San Quentin resident Kenny Rogers read from the scriptures, Luke Chapter 3 verses 1-6.

Dwight Krizman, co-director of the choir, sang "Salve Regina" in Latin. He said it is a song asking the Virgin Mary to pray and show us the baby Jesus.

"Being able to fellowship with Father George and the archbishop is a gift from God," said Krizman. "It was a privilege for him to come and I hope that he takes the experience of the incarcerated men with him to the streets."

"I have you all covered in my prayers every day," said the archbishop.



Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone and Father George Williams conducting holiday service in 2016

Photo by Eddie Herena

Judges balk at President's immigration policy changes

By Charles Stanley Longley
Journalism Guild Writer

Some judges are balking at immigration policy changes ordered by the Trump administration.

The new policies include having immigration judges speed up their cases to meet quotas or face being fired *The New York Times* reported Sept. 7.

The objections involve a series of changes that the judges' bosses in the Justice Department say are aimed at chipping away at a backlog of 732,730 cases, the newspaper reported.

There has been emphasis on efficiency and speeding up the process, said New York Immigration Judge Amiena Kahn, executive vice president of the National Association

of Immigration Judges.

"Judges were being pushed to move faster at the expense of denying immigrants their rights in court," according to the article.

New York judges feel as if they are acting like law enforcement agents because they have to meet quotas. Instead of taking their time to decide these cases according to the law, they feel obligated

to operate their courtrooms like they are in a traffic court instead of an immigration courtroom, the story said.

Union President Judge Ashley Tabaddor called the policy changes an attempt at "huge psychological warfare."

The new policy on immigration makes it mandatory for judges to meet these quotas. They are being monitored

on their computers in order to see if they are keeping pace.

When Philadelphia Judge Steven A. Morley postponed a case because he believed the immigrant did not receive the proper notification, the Justice Department reassigned all of his similar 87 cases.

The Justice Department added seven New York judges to help speed up the immi-

gration cases. There are now a total of 33 New York immigration judges, the newspaper reported.

The Justice Department called the changes "a series of common-sense reforms" that would realign "the agency towards completing cases, increasing both productivity and capacity and changing policies that lead to inefficiencies and waste."

Gang violence in El Salvador often cited as reason for asylum

By Aron Kumar Roy
Journalism Guild Writer

Rampant gang violence in El Salvador is forcing many people to flee the country, according to an article in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Two gangs, MS-13 and Barrio 18, regularly murder and extort people in their own neighborhoods, the Nov. 2 story reported.

This is one explanation for the waves of migrants seeking to enter the U.S. either by petitioning for asylum or by entering illegally, the newspaper stated.

"As a worker and as a human being you can't live in this country in peace," explains El Salvadoran Jose Gualberto Claro Iglesias. "You spend all your time and energy trying to defend your business and your family."

One gang set fire to Claro's truck while he and his family were inside because he refused to pay extortion fees, the article reports.

He then sent his wife and four children to live in Los Angeles in 2015.

Claro was caught trying to cross the US-Mexico border in 2017, held for nearly 13

months in a U.S. immigration detention center, and finally deported back to El Salvador.

He said he now plans to sell his property in El Salvador and may move his family to Panama.

Many youth in El Salvador have bleak prospects for employment and are attracted to gangs as an alternative to traditional employment, the story noted.

"The only opportunities they have are working at the market nearby where they can unload or load trucks. It's either that, or they can join one of the gangs," said school

Principal Amilcar Rivera, "You can earn \$300 a week doing manual labor or you can get \$1,000 a week from extortion. Which one do you think these young people will choose?"

Poverty affects one-third of El Salvadorans, according to *World Bank Data*.

The government of El Salvador attempted to address the problem by brokering a truce between the two gangs.

As a concession by the government, gang leaders who were incarcerated were moved from solitary confinement or maximum security prisons to

more permissive custody arrangements. Although the homicide rate the year after the truce was brokered fell by 42 percent, many business leaders, lawmakers and voters accused the government of bowing down to the gangs by not enforcing laws.

The government ended the truce after pressure by the U.S. government.

"The government's credibility was destroyed by the truce," said Martin Rogel, an auxiliary judge who sits on El Salvador's Supreme Court. "It was as if El Salvadorans stopped believing in God. Sal-

vadorans have stopped believing in the rule of law."

After the truce ended, the homicide rate rose to 60.1 per 100,000, nearly 12 times the rate in the U.S. and the highest in the world, according to the United Nations.

"The highest cost is human," said a successful El Salvadoran businessman, Javier Siman. "We're losing the best people we have. They either flee the country, they get killed or they are constantly forced to move around. They have to pay the gangs just to enter the neighborhoods where they live and work."

Argument against solitary fails US Supreme Court review

By Anthony Manuel
Carvalho
Journalism Guild Writer

The U.S. Supreme Court has rejected a challenge to solitary confinement, but Justice Sonia Sotomayor sharply

criticized prisons limiting outside exercise time.

"It should be clear by now that our Constitution does not permit such a total deprivation in the absence of a particularly compelling interest," Sotomayor wrote

in her opinion, Courthouse News Service reported Oct. 9.

The case consolidated circuit court appeals revolving around Jonathon Apodaca, Joshua Vigil and Donnie Lowe's treatment within solitary during their incarceration at Colorado State Penitentiary.

Sotomayor voted to reject the challenge but said the lawsuit failed to focus on security and outside exercise.

The court unanimously rejected the prisoners' petition for certiorari, which argued for 8th Amendment relief

against solitary confinement based on cruel and unusual punishment.

Lowe spent 11 years in solitary confinement for a second-degree burglary and introduction of contraband. He died shortly after he was released from prison.

"While we do not know what caused his death in May 2018, we do know that solitary confinement imprints on those that it clutches a wide range of psychological scars," Sotomayor wrote.

Lowe's death and the liti-

gation spurred a change in solitary policy and procedures in the Colorado State Penitentiary.

Colorado has become a model for the entire country by increasing outdoor time for solitary inmates to an average of 31-45 hours per week, said Mark Fairbanks, a spokesperson for Colorado's Department of Corrections.

"We have departments coming in all across the country, all across the world, to see what we're doing in our department," said Fairbanks.

Sotomayor supplied numerous pages of concern that illustrated the high court itself has recognized that the deprivations of a prisoners' outdoor time is considered "perverse."

"Courts and corrections officers must ... remain alert to the clear constitutional problems caused by keeping prisoners like Apodaca, Vigil and Lowe in 'near-total isolation' from the loving world, in what comes perilously close to a penal time bomb," she wrote.

San Quentin News

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- 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.
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Behind the Scenes



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Marsy's Law measure to expand victims' rights

By Harry C. Goodall Jr.
Journalism Guild Writer

A ballot measure meant to expand the rights of victims of crime passed in six more states in November, according to an article by *Forbes*.

Known as "Marsy's Law," the measure gives victims certain rights, including notice of criminal proceedings related to the crime and presence at those proceedings.

"It is gratifying to know

that innocent victims of crime in these six states will not have to suffer the injustices that my family endured upon my sister's murder," said Henry Nicholas, who spent \$71.8 million in support of the measure.

Nicholas' sister Marsy was killed by her ex-boyfriend in 1983, but the state did not inform her family when her ex-boyfriend was released on bail soon after the crime, leading to a confrontation with him in

a grocery store a week later.

Critics of the law say it threatens a central tenet of the American justice system: that everyone is innocent until proven guilty, according to the article.

Chandra Bozelko, a contributor to *The Hill*, argued in a recent post that Marsy's Law gives victims the right to withhold evidence by refusing to be interviewed or deposed, even if it could prove a defendant's innocence, essentially

denying that person a fair trial.

"There's only one justification for such a violation of due process," she wrote. "Everyone must assume that the accused is guilty."

Versions of Marsy's Law passed in ballot measures in November in Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Nevada, North Carolina and Oklahoma. Other states that have enacted the law include California, Illinois, North Dakota, Ohio and South Dakota.

Organization helps newly released find jobs

By Richard Bonnie Evans
Journalism Guild Writer

A Michigan organization is working to help former prisoners succeed when they are released, flintside.com reports.

"Prejudice against formerly incarcerated people makes it nearly impossible for them to get a job or rent an apartment," said Leon El-Alamin,

founder and executive director of MADE Institute.

"A lot of what people think they know about the criminal justice system is outdated or just misguided, and that harms formerly incarcerated people who are trying so hard to turn their lives around," El-Alamin said at the annual meeting of Safe & Just Michigan, a statewide organization that

promotes criminal sentencing reform.

The October event in Lansing, Michigan, drew 200 people with its theme, "Moving hearts and minds toward justice."

MADE Institute helps train the formerly incarcerated for employment and to find housing.

El-Alamin has served time

in prison. He told the group: "There's dignity in being able to work and put food on the table."

The event also featured Ellen Buchman, vice president of The Opportunity Agenda in New York. Safe & Just Michigan was founded in 2000 as Citizens Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending. In 2018 the name changed to Safe & Just Michigan.

President Trump's federal appointments lack diversity

President Donald J. Trump has secured lifetime appointments for dozens of federal judges who do not represent the diversity of the American public, according to an article by *NPR*.

The Republican-controlled Senate has confirmed President Trump's nominations for a group of judges that consists mostly of White men.

"Of his 48 appellate nominations, none are African-

American," said Vanita Gupta of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. "None are Latino. Only nine are women. Our nation's great diversity should be reflected in its government institutions, especially the federal judiciary, which serves as the guardian of our rights and liberties."

This push to confirm conservative judges is so important to the Republican Party that legislators were holding

hearings for judicial nominees even when the Senate had been in recess, according to the Nov. 15 *NPR.org* article.

The federal judicial candidates nominated by President Trump were 77 percent men, 84 percent White, and 11 percent rated as "Not Qualified" by the American Bar Association, according to data collected by *NPR*.

The confirmed judges included 29 to appeals courts,

53 to district courts and two to the Supreme Court.

"He came into office with a mandate to nominate judges in the mold of Justice (Antonin) Scalia and Justice (Clarence) Thomas," said Carrie Severino, chief counsel at the Judicial Crisis Network, which advocates for conservative judges. "That was a key reason he won the presidency," *NPR* reported.

—Aron Kumar Roy

California teachers' retirement fund to divest from private prisons

By Salvador Solorio
Journalism Guild Writer

California State Teachers' Retirement System (CalSTRS) is divesting its stock holdings in private prison companies CoreCivic and GEO Group, reported Randy Diamond the Chief Investment Officer (CIO). CalSTRS's \$230 billion of assets

makes it the second-largest pension system in the US.

This decision makes it the nation's third major public pension fund to divest from for-profit private prison companies.

CalSTRS's investment committee voted for a divestment review in July, after the Trump administration's "zero tolerance" border crossing policy resulted in children being separated from their parents. The two private prison companies ran facilities that housed detainees.

The review of the divestment looked at whether CalSTRS's investments in the for-profit prison companies violated its environmental, social and governance (ESG)

policy, which requires respect for human rights.

"Based on all the information and advice we were provided, the CalSTRS board decided to divest according to the policy criteria," said Investment Committee Chair Harry Keiley in a press release.

The divestment is scheduled to be completed within

six months.

While reviewing the investment, CalSTRS staff were told by the companies that they did not detain minors or directly take part in the separation of families. Still, CalSTRS concluded that providing detention facilities for the parents warranted divestment, Diamond reported.

A GEO Group spokesman defended the company in a comment to CIO: "We believe [CalSTRS] decision was based on a deliberate and politically motivated mischaracterization of our role as a long-standing service provider to the government."

Officials of CoreCivic could not be reached for comment.

FORUM

Continued from Page 1

Contra Costa County District Attorney Diana Becton had these comments after her time in a circle: "I'm a newly elected district attorney, who ran on a platform of criminal justice reform, so I know I'm in an environment where I'll be working with people who aren't on the same page."

"They don't believe keeping the community safe can go hand-in-hand with criminal justice reform, but we need to start having the courage to say, 'Yes, it can.'"

"It was so powerful to just sit and listen and hear your hope for the future."

Assemblymember Mark Stone, D-29th District, Santa Cruz/Santa Clara, also participated in a circle and addressed everyone afterward. "The hard work you're willing to do allows us to go to policymakers and argue for reform. We can't do that without your willingness to articulate the changes that happen in these groups."

"I view each of you as a partner. We know reform is always going to be an uphill battle."

Formerly incarcerated Terah Lawyer now works

as a project coordinator for Impact Justice. She served her entire prison term at California Correctional Women's Facility. "Fifteen years, three months and eight days," she said, giving her exact time behind bars. "Yeah, I don't play."

"I'm in this work for life," Lawyer said. "I'll never forget being a lifer and believing I would die in prison."

She wants to see Life Without Parole (LWOP) sentences become abolished and is a passionate advocate for the Drop LWOP campaign.

"How can we say in one breath that we're going to offer Proposition 57 credits – that everyone is redeemable, that everyone can earn their way out, but we still have people stuck with LWOP?" she said.

Lawyer also works for Homecoming, an organization that helps the formerly incarcerated find sustainable, comfortable housing.

"It's not about so-called 'transitional' housing," Lawyer said. "It's about placing people into community homes and semi-independent honor housing."

"Each person getting out of prison has unique needs. The only thing people getting out of prison have in common is that they just got out of pris-

on."

One of the inmates who organized the event, James King, expressed his appreciation for all the outside guest participants.

"It means so much, just to say you see us and you hear us," King said.

Hillary Blout, director for the Sentencing Review Project, said she stepped away from the San Francisco District Attorney's Office after seeing cases that were not handled in a way she agreed with.

Blout described herself as a "reformer – turned prosecutor – turned reformer again."

"I wanted to do things differently," she told. "They called me more of a social worker."

"We need to examine how likely it is people will reoffend, read their background, try and keep families together. Shouldn't that be our goal?"

"I'd like to see us move prosecution into a new direction, where it's only the last line of defense. Putting people away in prison should be the last option."

Blout is instrumental in supporting Assembly Bill 2942, which allows district attorneys the discretion to consider a prisoner's past sentencing and factor in who they are today – the programs they're involved in and their disciplinary record while

incarcerated. "There are too many people that can make the argument that it no longer serves the interests of justice to keep them in prison," Blout said. "The opportunity should be given to see people's better side – not just the crime they committed at one moment in time."

"It means so much, just to say you see us and you hear us"

Inmate Fanon Figgers opened the forum by explaining how, after getting sentenced to 210 years-to-life and all his appeals were denied, he started acting up in prison because he didn't think he had anything to lose.

"It was my mother that hit me with reality," he recalled. "She said, 'Your daughter needs you. You have to make changes.'"

"That's when I started to ask myself, 'How did I get here?' I started to think about the harm I caused to my community, started to do some deep soul searching."

"I discovered things about

myself and realized change is possible from within – first spiritually, then morally," Figgers said. "Hopefully, you all can help us change these sentences because you see that we really can change."

Inmate Nathan McKinney spoke on behalf of a "struggling sector of our community ... those that can't articulate to the (parole) board that they're no longer a threat – guys with learning disabilities and the limited ability to comprehend."

"We all know the stories about 'Why didn't that old dude go home?'" said McKinney. "Guys like that need to be given a real opportunity to be seen, not for what they say, but for what they do."

"It's in no one's best interest for these guys to continue to be kept in prison."

Phil Melendez returned to San Quentin for the first time since being released in 2017. He was pointed to frequently as a lifer, who received the benefit of reduced sentencing laws and has had an extremely successful reentry.

"I know it sounds crazy," Melendez said. "But I'm really happy to be back in San Quentin."

Melendez now works as an outreach associate for Re:Store Justice. A paroled

youth offender and former SQ KidCAT member, he has visited Lancaster, Old Folsom and Vacaville prisons to help start, develop and teach curriculum for KidCAT, the program for imprisoned youth offenders. Melendez also facilitates Transformative Justice and provides training for prisoners to apply for reconsideration of their sentence under Senate Bill 1437.

Paul Payne became the press secretary for State Sen. Bill Dodd, D-3rd District, Contra Costa County, in April 2018. He emphasized that his boss is a strong advocate for criminal justice reform.

"We're impressed by the people here taking advantage of these rehabilitative programs and really taking it to heart," Payne told to SQN. "Senator Dodd is extremely moved and sympathetic to your plight. It's incredible to see people putting in the time to rebuild themselves and understand what happened in their life."

"Me, I tend to still have a skeptical side, a cynical side, so I have to wonder if this is a room full of ringers, or is this the norm? If everyone in prison were like this, we could just open the gates right now, so to speak."



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Formerly incarcerated advocate Terah Lawyer



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Speaker Nathan McKinney



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Contra Costa DA Diana Becton



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Participant Fanon Figgers



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Assemblymember Mark Stone



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Participant Steven S., Assemblymember Timothy Grayson, with participant Ron Ehde



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Participants Rahsaan Thomas and John Johnson talking to Hillary Blout, director for the Sentencing Review Project

The formerly incarcerated face uphill battle with education and work

By Richard Bonnie Evans
Journalism Guild Writer

The formerly incarcerated are often relegated to the lowest rung of the educational ladder, a recent report concludes.

Prisoners and former pris-

oners "rarely get the chance to make up for the educational opportunities from which they've been excluded," according to "Getting Back on Course: Educational exclusion and attainment among formerly incarcerated people," published in prisonpolicy.org.

"Education is especially critical for people seeking employment after release from prison," the report stated.

The October 2018 report is based on data from the National Former Prisoner Survey. It "revealed a staggering 27 percent unemployment rate

among formerly incarcerated people...and the outlook is particularly bleak for people of color."

The report was produced by Lucius Couloute, a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

The "overly punitive disciplinary policies and practices contribute to the criminalization—and ultimately, incarceration—of large numbers of youth," the report said.

Twenty-nine percent to 41 percent of Black and Brown men and women, who were

formerly held in prison, do not have a basic high school diploma or GED. The rates of unemployment of formerly prison-bound White, Black and Brown people without a high school diploma range from 25 percent for White men to 47 percent for Hispanic women.

VETERANS

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Hundreds of toys and smiles of joy greeted the children as they entered the festively decorated San Quentin visiting rooms to visit their inmate family members and friends.

The toy event is scheduled for the weekends before Christmas and on Christmas Day each year.

Robinson, who has been incarcerated for 33 years and has three sons of his own, said about the toy giveaway, "It fixes me – I can put a smile on a kid's face. This is the best thing I've done in my life."

"We treat all kids equally," said Marine Corps veteran Stanley Baer. "It ain't the kid's fault," he said about the children visiting their incarcerated loved ones. He explained that many of the children come to visit inmates who have been convicted of serious crimes with lengthy, life or even death sentences. "They're the most grateful because it's so unexpected."

Baer helped a young girl pick out the doll she wanted. After consulting with her

mom, the girl embraced the doll with both arms and a beaming smile. Baer commented, "That moment right there – that one genuine moment – made the whole day worthwhile."

"Some of these kids are like family to us"

"Some of these kids are like family to us," Marine veteran Gary Cooper said, "We've seen them grow up over the years." Cooper said it reminds him of the joy he and his own kids shared when shopping and opening presents during holidays past.

On their way to the main visiting room, visitors walked by the children's playroom. Looking in, they were surprised to see tables stacked with hundreds of toys for the visiting children. Reactions included: "Oh, look at that, Michael. Wow! Yay! I want that!"

Each child entered to choose the toy they wanted to take home, but with so many options, which one?



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Kai Kane, Nicola "Uncle Nick" Buccì, Riley Kane and Frank Jerigan picking out toys in the visiting room



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Kenji Jackson with grandson Troy Jackson

The choices included a wide range – from the Millennium Falcon, Kylo Ren's Tie Silencer, BB-8 and R2-D2, to dolls, play walkers and play mats for toddlers and infants. From basketballs, soccer and footballs to high-tech electronics like the Vtech Alphabet Apple and the Leap Frog learning tablet.

"I wanna take that!" said one young girl. With parent's approval, she was given her toy, and with a huge smile said "My Num Noms – Yum!" She then began dancing joyously, repeating, "I got Num Noms!"

One inmate with his child said, "I used to get so excited," remembering Christmases from his own childhood. Another said about the game "Operation," "That game's

been around since when I was a kid." Other games that have been favorites for generations included Sorry, Monopoly, Connect 4 and Trouble.

The veterans group's staff sponsor, Rachael Murray, a CDCR employee, worked with the SQ veterans group to put the event together. "Rachael was instrumental," said veteran Baer. She drove a van to the Toys for Tots warehouse where it was filled – front to back, floor to ceiling – with the toys she then brought to the prison.

Murray said she enjoys working with the veterans because they are all team players. She said the toy giveaway "always has been and always will be about being able to bring some joy to the kids ... making sure they have something to smile about."

VGSQ members Earl Orr and Samuel Gaskins gave out the toys in the other visiting room in San Quentin's H-Unit.

The veterans group also does food sale events inside San Quentin to raise funds to donate to the Toys for Tots program -- usually several thousand dollars each year, according to VGSQ member Fred Cole.

This year's donation was under \$2,000 because of a statewide suspension of food sales in prisons, said Cole. He added that VGSQ hopes the sales will be reinstated.

Dozens of children receive toys each day during the event. One of them was 5-year-old Troy Jackson. He happily picked out a toy with his grandfather, Kenji Jackson, whom he came to visit.

Ten-year-old Riley and 5-year-old Kai, visiting their "Uncle Nick," chose Num Noms and slime to take

home with them. "I wanted the slime," said Riley, as Kai described how he would stretch the slime and make noises with it: "You can do this."

Thirteen-year-old Jayla Watts, daughter of Jerome Watts, was happy to get a toy but said that the best thing about Christmas is "spending time with my family." She continued, "Even though this is a prison, I still enjoy spending this time with my dad and my family in here – it feels like it's not a prison." Jayla's dad, Jerome, said that the visit is the highlight of his holiday season.

The grandmother of another visiting child said that she was excited to see all the toys given away because it was completely unexpected. She said in 13 years of visiting her son, "in so many prisons - this is the first time I've seen anything like this. It's a real blessing."



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

San Quentin Veterans Tony Burch, Adam Sinegal, Stanley Baer, Garvin Robinson and Gary Cooper



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN

Jerome Watts with daughter Jayla

Kid CAT's hygiene drive raises money for homeless youth



Kid CAT members with hygiene products donated from the residents of San Quentin for Huckleberry Youth Multi-Service Center

Photo by Jonathan Chiu, SQN

**By Joe Garcia
Staff Writer**

A group of San Quentin prisoners collected money and hygiene items for Bay Area homeless youths.

"Even in prison, guys got that spirit of giving," said Gregory "Eagle" Coates, a member of the youth offender organization Kid CAT.

"It's always rewarding, especially for the guys that've had the experience of being homeless kids themselves. A lot of guys in

Kid CAT know about that," Coates added.

The group pounded the pavement daily throughout October, November and December to collect donated hygiene items and inmate trust account donation funds for the Huckleberry Youth Multi-Service Center. The San Francisco-based organization provides care and housing to homeless and at-risk kids.

The men of Kid CAT asked their peers to contribute whatever they

could spare for a collective donation.

Kid CAT is a self-help group that primarily serves offenders who committed their crimes at a young age.

"We've collected hygiene for other organizations in the past, but we've been giving to Huckleberry House for the last three years because of the connection to underprivileged youths," Coates explained.

Outside volunteers Phil and Gail Towle helped deliver the hygiene items to a

Huckleberry representative on Jan. 6.

Kid CAT members sorted the items and put them in about 50 individual care packs containing soap, shampoo, toothpaste, lotion and deodorant.

"You guys are undiscovered treasures," said Phil Towle. "Gail and I are the lucky ones because we get to see firsthand your heartfelt desire to serve the world."

"You guys give because it's in your bones. That's the unspoken and deepest truth I see - you give not because you're trying to pay back society but because your hearts care about the well being of other human beings."

Nou Phang Thao, the last of the original founding Kid CAT members still incarcerated, has experienced and witnessed the effects of giving from one's heart.

"What I've seen myself is how great a feeling it is for the guys that do walk the tiers every night, speaking and interacting with everyone in their unit," said Thao. "They may not realize it when they first sign up for that duty, but man - it's powerful stuff."

"You can talk about 'being of service' all you want, but when you get out there

and actually do it, you really feel it."

Coates said with a smile, "There's always some guys in their cells and on the tiers being sarcastic - you know, saying, 'Hey, what about me? I need a donation. (Others) are very giving.'"

"A huge part of Kid CAT's mission is to serve our entire community"

After years of being the driving force behind the hygiene campaign, Coates stepped aside to allow Miguel Sifuentes the opportunity to hone his organizational skills on this year's event.

"Eagle's still the heart and soul," said Sifuentes. "I just helped out with keeping track of all the paperwork."

Kid CAT raised close to \$1,200 for this year's drive - all from inmate trust account donations, some as little as \$5. KidCAT members in each housing unit engaged in a fierce but friendly competition to see which unit would generate

the most contributions, with West Block winning hands down.

"We always try and put together as many bags as we can," said Coates. "But with the money we raise, they can get more bang for the buck out there than what we have to spend at the store in here."

"Molly Brown, the lady we work with at Huckleberry House, always seems really touched by the men in prison who are willing to give -- 'really impressed that you guys would do that.'"

"A huge part of Kid CAT's mission is to serve our entire community," explained Kid CAT Chairman Si Dang. "It makes us feel human, and it's such a valuable lesson to encourage and instill in incarcerated youths."

On a stormy Sunday, the SQ Firehouse provided a truck to carry the hygiene bags from inside the prison out to the parking lot, where the Towles waited to meet with Molly Brown.

"I'm just humbled and deeply moved by the passion and involvement of Phil and Gail Towle," said Dang. "They sacrificed their time, stood out in the heavy rain to deliver the goods, and did it all with a great spirit. That's just who they are."



Photo by Jonathan Chiu, SQN

Chase Benoit, Thanh Tran and Ryan Dietz unloading soap bars



Photo by Jonathan Chiu, SQN

Gregory Coates, Tommy Ross, Nou Phang Pang and Kid CAT Chairman Si Dang loading hygiene products in the rain



Photo by Jonathan Chiu, SQN

Cody Brown, Mark Hensley and Joe Hancock organizing hygiene products

Prominent attorney notes First Step Act is insufficient

Kid CAT Speaks!

By John Lam
Journalism Guild Writer

Opponents of President Trump's new criminal justice reform say that the new law doesn't do enough and will set a bad precedent.

"Donald Trump claims

he's taking a step toward desperately needed criminal justice reform but he's not," wrote Keith Wattley in an Op-ed in *The New York Times*. Wattley is a prominent criminal justice advocate and attorney in California.

At issue is the bi-partisan supported legislation known as the First Step Act, which was signed into law by

President Trump on Dec. 21.

"The First Step Act has been described by activists as groundbreaking in the fight to end mass incarceration... (but) I respectfully disagree. This is not a case in which a little reform is better than none," Wattley adds in the Dec. 4 article.

"It prevents those convicted of the most serious crimes from reducing their sentences, and in doing so it perpetuates the false narrative that people who commit violent crimes are fundamentally different from those who commit non-violent crimes."

Wattley is executive director of a non-profit called Uncommon Law. The firm provides therapeutic and legal counseling for people serving lengthy prison terms in California.

"More than 200 of our clients have been released from life sentences, and not a single one has gone on to commit a violent crime. But this (law) tells my clients their personal transformation

doesn't matter," said Wattley.

"I have the greatest respect for Van Jones and his organization #cut50 who fought hard to get this legislation to pass. However, it is my goal to ask all change makers to be mindful that those who have both suffered and perpetrated the greatest harms also have the greatest capacity for transforming themselves and their communities."

Supporters of the law say it will limit the practice of mandatory minimum sentences and allow nonviolent drug offenders with little to no criminal history to be sentenced below mandatory minimums.

The law would also provide time-reducing credits to some people in federal prison for completing educational, vocational and therapeutic programs. However, violent offenders are excluded.

"The reform would ensure that enhancement and the lengthy sentences they bring are only used on the most dangerous criminals and not spent instead on low level

nonviolent drug dealers," wrote Jason Pye, in an Op-ed in *The Hill*. Pye is the vice president of legislative affairs at FreedomWorks.

"This kind of 'smart on crime' legal approach goes hand in hand with the desire of President Trump to be tough on crime, which is most effective when the right crimes are addressed with the right penalties."

In direct contrast, Wattley wrote. "While it is tempting to believe that we keep our communities safe by locking up people of violent crimes for as long as possible... People convicted of murder and who have been paroled on a life sentence – are actually the least likely to return to prison... their return rate is roughly 1 percent."

The new law will reportedly,

- Reduce mandatory minimum sentences for up to 2,000 people annually

- Reduce discrepancy in sentencing crack versus powdered cocaine



Photo courtesy of Julie Hess
Keith Wattley

- Affect 4,000 people in the federal prison system
 - Prohibits the shackling of women during childbirth
 - Inmates won't be sent to prisons over 500 miles from their home
 - End life sentences under three strikes law
- "This the first step, not the end," said Democratic Illinois Senator Dick Durban, co-sponsor of the bill. "We still have a lot of things we still need to do."

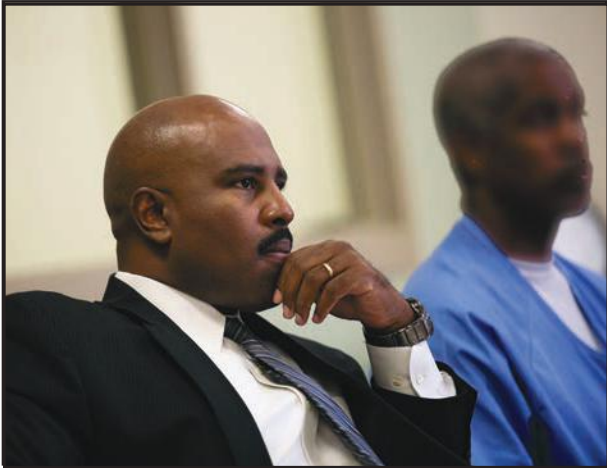


Photo courtesy of Julie Hess

Keith Wattley sitting with a client for a hearing

The cost of reputation in prison: being transgender in prison

The purpose of earning a reputation in prison is for one reason—survival. However, the cost of survival may take extreme forms.

"When I first came to prison in the 80s, being a transgender meant being someone's property. We would be used to carry weapons, for sex, to wash and clean dirty workout clothes, but, in that we were also well protected, and it gave you a sense of security," says Jarvis "Lady J" Clark, who has been incarcerated 30 years, serving a 27-year-to-life sentence for first-degree murder.

"However, the protection we got was catch-22, because we had to belong to someone or a gang or be preyed upon."

Clark, who goes by the name Lady J, says she has never been forced into a relationship.

"I always had a choice in choosing who was going to be my husband," Lady J adds.

Transgender males prefer the pronoun "she," and in their relationships in prison, they often are viewed as "wives" by their "husbands."

Although "wives" are pro-

tected and serve a domestic role in relationships with their husbands, it is not without the danger of violence.

"Being a wife comes with the responsibility of fighting alongside your man. If he got into a riot, you go into that riot with him," Lady J says.

Despite being in a relationship that provided protection, Lady J says that she has never relied upon that for security. Instead, she wanted to earn her own security based on her own reputation.

"I knew someday I was going to get old in here, so I set out to earn a reputation early on of not being a sissy or a victim. So I fought whenever someone tried to challenge me," Lady J says.

Some of the challenges transgender people face in prison include are: extortion for money, sex or physical abuse.

"While I was at Calipatria, a very muscular man ran into my cell and said 'when these doors close, I'm gonna get me some.' When he did, I ran to the back of my cell and got my razor and turned around and told him 'if the door closed and you're still

here, I'm gonna cut you from elbow to asshole.' He said I was tripping and got out of my cell."

During her incarceration, Lady J has accumulated 22 disciplinary infractions: 10 for fights, three for riot participation.

"Lady J is a punk but not a punk," says Nick Lopez, inmate at San Quentin, who has known her for more than 20 years.

"Punk" is a derogatory prison term used to describe homosexual prisoners or one who is easily bullied.

"I've known him since we were at Calipatria. He had more heart than some of the guys there. One time, I saw him kick off a riot. It was crazy," Lopez adds.

In response, Lady J says, "The person who instigated the riot was getting beat up by the Mexicans. He started screaming out to me 'mama prison, mama prison,' while other Blacks were just standing there watching him getting beat up. Without a second thought I ran into the crowd and started swinging and punching, and the Blacks saw me and ran into the riot



Photo by Eddie Herena

Jarvis "Lady J" Clark speaking at the SQ TEDx event

with me.

"They really had no choice, because what would they look like if a transgender was brave enough to run into a riot and they didn't?"

In reflection on the cost she has paid to be respected, Lady J says, "My mother died while I was in prison. If I didn't have the mind-set to gain a reputation, I'd probably be home by now."

"If I had to do it all over again, I would've put myself in protective custody."

Upon entering CDCR, LGBTQ inmates are not automatically placed in protective custody.

The formerly reputation-oriented Lady J has transformed into a person who advocates for the LGBTQ community in San Quentin.

In 2015, Lady J co-founded a program called Acting with Compassion and Truth (ACT) in San Quentin to increase understanding and decrease violence toward LGBTQ inmates.

"Those who attend our classes are majority heterosexual men who want to better understand who we are, and some have family members that are gay."

In 2018, Lady J became the first appointed LGBTQ inmate representative in CDCR.

"The administration had seen qualities in me and believed that I would be the best fit to be a voice for the LGBTQ community here," Lady J says.

San Quentin is one of nine prisons in CDCR that is designated as a transgender hub. "I'm a mentor to the LGBTQ and the protective custody community here in San Quentin," Lady J says.

Lady J keeps an "open door policy" for those who frequent her cell who are not

LGBTQ, but who are heterosexual men.

"Mama J has been a mentor to me," says Jacob Gabel, 20, a heterosexual first-term offender. "When I got here, I didn't know anybody, and she reached out to me and helped me."

"I'm not naïve of the perceptions of hanging out with Mama J and the transgender community here. I'm not embarrassed nor do I care what they think. I have a brother who is gay and some friends who are gay, and besides it's the 21st century."

"Mama J and the transgenders here respect you for who you are. They don't peer pressure you into conformity. You can be who you are. That's why I feel more comfortable with Lady J than anyone else," Gabel adds.

In response, Lady J says, "A lot of people respect me because I'm real with who I am. I never hid who I was. I have always been Lady J."

Lady J's story is not one that is typical for LGBTQs in prison, but one that does highlight the general practice of earning a reputation through violence despite gender identity differences.

—John Lam

Since the publication of this article, Jarvis Clark is no longer on SQ's mainline

Dear Kid CAT

I'm serving a 25-to-life sentence and have been incarcerated since the age of 17. I am now 40 years old and I want to give back to my community and the young women here at Chowchilla State Prison.

I remember the day I came here and there was a lot of lifers who helped me, but a lot of them have been released. I want to help these women around me because they need positive guidance. It's really bad here; it is worse than when I first came here and I need to help.

I really need and want your curriculum and to start this group in our units. I don't have a sponsor or volunteers to purchase your curriculum.

I will be very happy and will teach the ladies here with your curriculum to the best of my ability. In the meantime, I will try to find someone to purchase the curriculum.

Sincerely,

Brittany P., Chowchilla State Prison

Dear Brittany,

We want to first express our admiration for your selfless goals of wanting to help those around you. Thank you for your interest in teaching our curriculum. It is absolutely free of charge; you don't need to purchase our curriculum; it is created for the very reason why you want to use it—to teach others. We are currently working on a way to send it directly to anyone who is interested, with or without a sponsor. Hopefully we will get that done soon and send you a copy. Keep up the good work!

The Beat Within

A Publication of Writing and Art from the Inside



Kid CAT and *The Beat Within* hold monthly writing workshops. *The Beat Within* conducts writing workshops in juvenile detention centers throughout the country. Kid CAT Speaks will publish one topic each month. Your writing should reflect a positive message that helps the youth make a better decision in life. Your stories will be read by the youth in detention centers. If published, you will receive a free copy of the publication. Your story can make a difference. Tell *The Beat Within* you read about them in Kid CAT Speaks!

"Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything." Colin Kaepernick – a free agent professional football player. From your own personal experience, what are your thoughts on this quote?

The Beat Within
P.O. Box 34310
San Francisco, CA 94134

Martin Luther King Jr. Day and others that impacted American culture

By Aaron Taylor
Contributing Writer

In 1975, there was a huge controversy in the Los Angeles Unified School District when many Black parents kept their children out of school as an observance of Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.

The problem: MLK Day wasn't yet recognized as a national holiday. It took a vote years later with the state of Arizona being last to officially recognize it, over the vote of the late Sen. John McCain. He later admitted that he wishes he could've done that vote over, but at the time, he said it wasn't about Martin Luther

King Jr., but the paid holiday. The larger point being that Black community members haven't waited for permission from anyone to recognize days within the calendar year as reverence for its heroes. Below are days and months that many in the Black community hold near and dear to their hearts.

- Jan. 15, Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- February, Ancestor Appreciation Month, where ancestors are honored who made the great trek in the bottom of slaves ships, who helped build this country with their free labor into the economic powerhouse that it is today.
- March 31, Queen Hatshepsut Day, in honor of the first female Pharaoh of Kamit (Egypt). Long before there was a United States, this Black woman lead one of the greatest empire in the history of the world.
- April 20, Nelson Mandela Day, in honor of the South African freedom fighter, who served 27 years in prison and became the leader of his nation post-apartheid.
- May 19, Malcolm X Day celebrates the life and legacy of Al'Hajj Malik Al'Shabazz, also known as Malcolm X, the great orator of the plight of the Black experience and his own personal journey, leaving the religion of Christianity, going into the Nation of Islam, and finally returning to the religion of Al'Islam.
- June 19, Juneteenth honors slaves who were the last to discover that they had been freed through the Emancipation Proclamation two and half years after its signing.
- July 14, Harriet Tubman Day honors the woman who risked her life to free slaves from the South and fought in the Civil War against the South.
- August, called Black August. This month honors all Black men and women who have fought for freedom, justice and equality from inside of prison walls, across the nation and around the world. Many during this month also observe fasting.
- Sept. 11, Marcus Garvey Day celebrates his contributions to the Black experience.
- Oct. 22, Queen Nzinga Day. One of the great leaders from Western Africa who fought off many Europeans and Africans who tried to intrude into her kingdom.
- November is "Prophets' Appreciation Month." During November, we honor all great men and women who came forth throughout history, who brought a message of Love, Honor and Respect for all and our Creator. The prophets reminded us of our connect to one another, rather than seeking to divide us from each other through religion, hate, racism, bigotry and other man made constructs.
- December 26-31, we celebrate "Kwanzaa," the six days where we reconnect through the six principles, rooted in unity and love, and we give gifts that have been hand- made or created by the person so that there is a personal connection.

Rap music offered a fresh new voice for the Black community

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild Chairman



Public Enemy

Photo from Wikipedia

In the 1980s, rap music became a powerful expression of Black youth. Public Enemy led the way in establishing a Black social consciousness in contrast to the prevailing narratives of violence and materialism.

The group consisted of Chuck D, Flavor Flav, Terminator X, Professor Griff and the S1Ws, which stands for Security of the First World. The group produced studio albums, "Yo! Bum Rush the Show," "It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back" and "A Fear of a Black Planet," which raised the political awareness for the youth in the streets of America.

Songs such as "Fight the Power," "911 Is a Joke," and "Brotha's got to Work it Out" tackled diverse issues inside the Black community. In 2005, "Fear of a Black Planet" was selected for preservation in the Library of Congress due to album success. Next the group released "Apocalypse 91...The Enemy Strikes Black" that continued to address the politics that affected the Black community with songs such as "Can't Truss It" and "Shut 'EM Down" detailing how the people should deal with the continual oppression. Also "I Don't Wanna be Called Yo Nigga" took on the issue of use of the word outside its original derogatory context.

But it was the song "By the Time I get to Arizona," that drew the most controversy, a song protesting the state of Arizona for failing to recognize the national holiday commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the time. The rap group's musical legacy also help shape the generation of what is known as "rap metal" where rap lyrics blended with rock grinding guitars. Songs like "Bring the Noise" and "She Watch Channel Zero?!" paved the way for rock and hip-hop circles to mix.

Public Enemy's strong, pro-Black and political music became an alternative to the violent gangster rap music from the late 80s through the early 2000s. The group used the same hard-hitting rhyme patterns over ferocious beats to celebrate Blackness. The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2013.

SQ's Kwanzaa celebration turns into a call for responsibility and unity

By Lloyd Payne
Journalism Guild Writer

A Kwanzaa celebration in San Quentin turned into a call for responsibility and unity for 100 men, mostly Black prisoners.

Hosted by Darnell "Moe" Washington, the event began with seven men performing candle lightings for the common principles of Kwanzaa, a seven-day community-based celebration based on seven principles of living positive lives.

Thomas Washington lit the candle of Umoja (Unity), and read the principle.

After lighting the candle of Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Jewel "Hank" Harrison gave a passionate speech regarding the understanding of self-determina-

tion and the consequences of not doing so.

Phillipe "Kells" Kelly lit the candle of Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), and talked about collective work and responsibility. His main point was that in order to work as a collective, we have to stop separating ourselves from each other.

"This is a serious problem, especially in prison, between the younger and the older inmates," said Kelly.

Paul Hamilton lit the candle of Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics). He spoke to inspire men to recognize the value of cooperative economics. He referred to the first president of Tanzania, who implemented Ujamaa in Tanzania growing economy in East Africa.

Hamilton defined cooper-

ative economics as: to build and maintain businesses together for profit.

Andrew "Drew" Wadsworth lit the candle of Nia (Purpose), and said, "I had something written, but I wanted to speak from my heart. Nothing is greater than love, and that's my purpose."

He challenged the audience to act out of love no matter what the situation.

Eric "Maserati-E" Abercrombie lit the candle for Kuumba (Creativity), and said, "We can use our imaginations and create something out of nothing. Find out what you're good at and do it."

George Red lit the candle of Imani (Faith) last. He suggested faith is not only tied to religion; he connected faith to hope, saying, "It is a blessing to us all."

Darnell Washington said that it was important for the young and old to understand the importance of Kwanzaa.

"It is our duty to show the young what a good community could look like," Washington said at the Dec. 29 event in the Catholic Chapel.

"There's plenty of people who hung on trees for us. People gave their lives so that we have the things we have. So, let's honor them by coming together, not just this one day, but every day."

An original song, "Looking For a Change," was written and performed by Flame.

Jeffery Atkins, keyboard and vocals; Terry Slaughter and Charles Ross of the Just Us Band performed '80s-'90s R&B, and closed with "Long Time Coming," by Sam Cooke.

A series of hip-hop performances, beginning with Maserati-E and Than Tran, who rapped about not being held back, displayed the diversity of talent in San Quentin.

Adrian "AJ" Johnson talked about how American culture shows up all around, such as on street signs and dollar bills, but African culture has been stripped away. He said knowing one's culture connects with your identity.

"Every time you look in the mirror, you see your ancestors," Johnson said. "They are still with you. They are in your heart," he said while pounding on his chest.

Phillipe "Kells" Kelly was guided to the stage, blindfolded wearing a shirt with

photos of prominent civil rights leaders taped on it as a reminder to stand up for freedom, justice and equality.

Arthur Jackson elaborated on the responsibility of older inmates toward the younger ones. "We have a responsibility to educate ourselves out of this predicament," Jackson said, referring to incarceration. "This is not a call for a senator or prisoner's rights organization; we have a responsibility. Responsibility is not just a word. It is an action. It is a form of trustworthiness to you on how to act."

The celebration ended with satire by Oran "Artwork" Hudson, based on the hypocrisy found in American culture regarding women's rights, equal rights, peace and respect.

IDA B. WELLS

Continued from Page 1

Wells wrote, "If this work can contribute in any way toward proving this, and at the same time arouse the conscience of the American people to a demand for justice to every citizen, and punishment by law for the lawless, I shall feel I have done my race a service."

More than 120 years later, in 2018, the U.S. Senate finally passed a federal anti-lynching law.

Wells' books analyzed the causes of lynching and compiled statistics that showed that only one-third of those victims of lynching were accused of rape. She reported the majority were killed as part of a scheme of intimidation aimed at scaring Blacks

away from full participation in the economy, in education or in exercising their political rights.

Wells studied press accounts of more than 1,100 Black men, women and children who were hanged, shot or burned alive. During the 1880s and 1890s, one person was lynched every other day, and two out of three victims were Black, according to *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About African American History*, by Jeffrey C. Stewart.

The violence was usually carried out by vigilantes, and if the local authorities did not actively assist in the murder, they did nothing to stop it, Stewart's book added.

Wells also sparked national controversy when she focused attention on the phenomenon of White men raping Black women. If the

men were arrested, they were either acquitted or served minor sentences, but none of the White assailants were lynched, Wells maintained.

"Colored women have always had far more reason to complain of White men in this respect than ever White women have had of the Negroes," wrote Wells in *A Red Record*.

She exposed the reality of the sexual exploitation of Black women a century before the "#metoo" movement came along. Wells traced the roots of sexual violence against the Black woman to slavery.

Wells wrote that White men should stop using the excuse that Black men were being lynched for raping women because, in fact, Black professionals and businessmen were being targeted and lynched for threatening the economic grip Whites held over the Black community.

"The city of Memphis has demonstrated that neither character nor standing avails the Negro if he dares to protect himself against the White man or become his rival," wrote Wells. "There is therefore only one thing left to do: save our money and leave a town which will neither protect our lives and property, nor give us a fair trial in courts, but murders us in cold blood when accused by White persons."

Wells' office was eventually burned down, and she was warned to not return to the city. She moved to New York and eventually settled in Chicago, where a famous public housing project was named for her. She continued her writings, documenting the rise of police killings of Blacks happening in the North.

Wells became outraged at

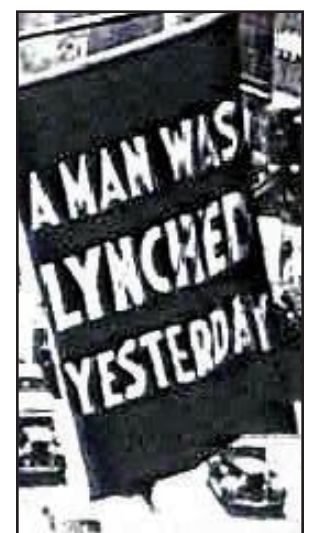
the police killing of Alfred Lingle, 16, who allegedly broke a restaurant window. He died in a hail of 35 bullets, according to "The Condemnation of Blackness".

She demanded that the heads of the police departments step down if their precincts were involved in controversial shootings. She called for progressive crime prevention approaches, such as getting young Black men jobs by overcoming discrimination.

Wells became a welfare advocate and probation officer for the National Association for Colored Women in her later years.

She took a firm stand against White women reformers who defended lynching as necessary, and she scorned Black male leaders who failed to speak out.

"I'd rather go down in his-



File Photo
NAACP banner hung in NY

tory as one lone Negro who dared to tell the government that it had done a dastardly thing," said Wells in 1917.

SQN celebrates Black artists and entertainers

By Marcus Henderson
Journalism Guild Chairman



Kendrick Lamar

Photo from Wikipedia

Rapper Kendrick Lamar made history by becoming the first hip-hop artist to win a Pulitzer Prize. Lamar won the honor for his fourth studio album, "Damn." His socially conscious music is carrying the torch of legends such as Nas, Public Enemy, X-Clan and Dead Prez for the new generation of rappers. The Compton, CA, rapper's music documents for millennials the continued struggles of Black people. His song "Alright" became an anthem of Black youth growing up under the Trump Administration. The song's powerful hook repeated "Everything will be Alright" after detailing the hardships of Black people's life in America. Lamar curated the soundtrack for the movie "Black Panther," Marvel's first Black superhero. His hit single, "All The Stars," from the film has generated more than a half a billion streams, four Grammy nomination, and an Oscar consideration for Best Original Song, according to Entertainment Weekly. Lamar's other studio albums "Good Kid: M.A.A.D City" and "To Pimp A Butterfly" proved that rap is more than sex and violence. Kendrick Lamar's has generated commercial success without compromising the craft.

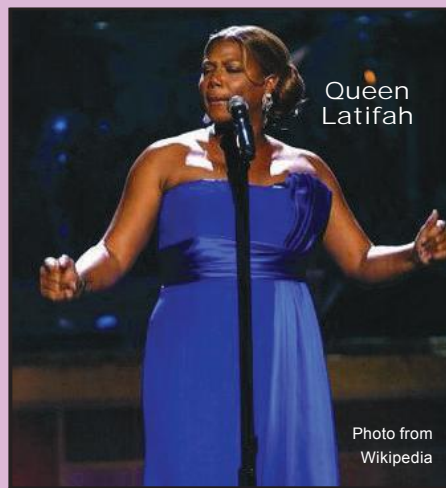


Bob Marley (1945-1981)

Photo from Wikipedia

Jamaican Bob Marley, a musician and composer, helped popularize Reggae music worldwide. Marley's music produced worldwide political protest anthems such as: "Exodus," "Rebel Music," "Get Up, Stand Up." His other popular songs include: "One Love/People Get Ready," "No Women, No Cry" and "I Shot the Sheriff," and many more. Born Robert Nesta Marley on Feb. 6, 1945, he cut his first record at age 17. He formed a group called the Wailers that included Bunny Livingston and Peter Tosh, who also went on to become Reggae legends in their own right.

Beginning in 1968 Marley incorporated the Rastafarian faith into his music. Marley died of brain cancer at the age of 36. He was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1994. His children are following in their father footsteps by producing their own politically and socially conscious music.



Queen Latifah

Photo from Wikipedia

Queen Latifah (Dana Owens) broke into the rap scene in 1989 with her first album, "All Hail the Queen." Having created the female anthem, "Ladies First," Queen Latifah created an identity of female authority to counteract the disrespectful rap lyrics prevalent in hip-hop music. She reinforced herself as a true African Queen by being often photographed wearing her traditional African headdress. Her second album, "Nature of a Sista," continued to promote powerful lyrics of both Afrocentric and female self-respect. She is more known today as a movie and television star. She currently stars on the FOX program, "Star." Queen Latifah also manages her own music and production company.

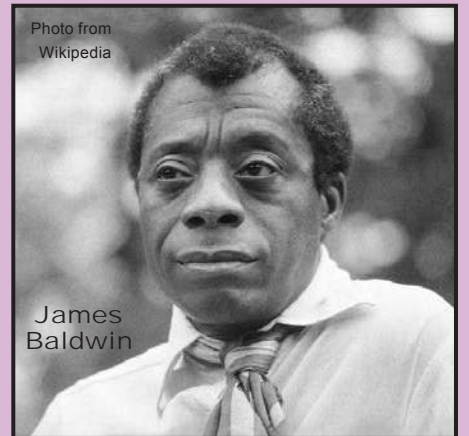


Photo from Wikipedia

James Baldwin

James Baldwin, a talented author who came to prominence in the 1960s, produced essays and novels that detailed Black people's struggles with religion, sexuality and the sense of community. Baldwin's 1974 novel, "If Beale Street Could Talk," has recently been adapted as a feature film about a mother whose daughter's fiancé was wrongly imprisoned. His first novel, "Go Tell It on the Mountain," detailed the terrors of growing up as a preacher's son in a Harlem slum when the hero fails to fit into the community's stereotype roles. Baldwin's writing style transform his novels into high-level narratives that combine both psychological insight and sophisticated thought.



Spike Lee

Photo from Wikipedia

Spike Lee, a leading film director, helped open the door to movies directed by African Americans. The box office success of Lee's movies proved that audiences wanted to learn more about the complexities of Black relationships, social issues and bio pictures.

Lee's first film "She Gotta Have It" reversed the role of sex and love by featuring a noncommittal Black woman and three Black men competing for her affection. Another film, "Jungle Fever," delved into interracial relationships. His movie "School Daze" bought the lives of Black sororities to the big screen. The movie also showed the struggles of the Black community's issues around light skinned Blacks verses dark skinned Blacks.

Lee's "Do the Right Thing" was a commercial success and became a cult classic for the Black community. The film tapped into the racial and generational conflicts in the city of Brooklyn. He introduced the character Radio Raheem, a teen who found peace through music, but was killed by the police. The film explores the incident, which sparked a riot that exposed all the pains of the community, and that's how the movie ended.

The film examined interracial conflicts in America and how Whites accept Black stars but despise Black people. The movie detailed the explosiveness of America's multi-cultural communities. Lee once again challenged the American viewers with the movie "Malcolm X," the bio-picture based on the biography written by Alex Haley. The film chronicled the Black nationalist leader's life from his time in prison, the Nation of Islam, founding his own Organization of Afro-American Unity and ultimately his assassination. The picture received some Oscars' nominations but no awards.

Lee's 2018 movie "BlacKkKlansman" has generated six Oscar nominations. The film tells the true story of Ron Stallworth, Colorado's first Black police officer, who infiltrated local Whites' hate group in the 1970s. Lee draws the parallels between the times of Stallworth and present-day White-supremacist movements. Spike Lee's movies have been more than entertainment, because he has forced all Americans to look at themselves.

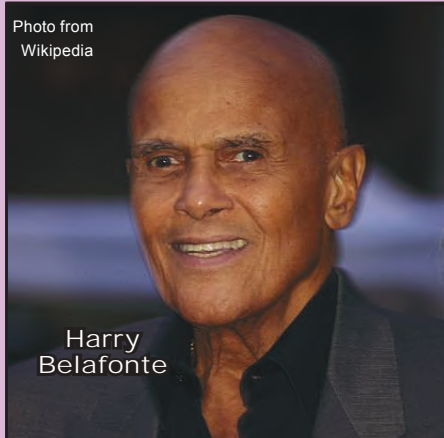


Photo from Wikipedia

Harry Belafonte

Harry Belafonte, singer, songwriter, activist and actor, has been an advocate for political and humanitarian causes throughout his long career. In the 1950s he was "The King of Calypso," a Caribbean music style. His album "Calypso" was the first million-selling LP by a single artist, according to industry sources. Belafonte recorded music in many genres-- blues, folk, gospel and show tunes. He won three Grammy Awards including the Lifetime Achievement Award, an Emmy and a Tony Award. He starred in films: "Carmen Jones" (1954), "Island in the Sun," and others. Belafonte was an early supporter of the Civil Rights movement and one of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s confidants. He reportedly helped provide for King's family since King made only \$8,000 a year as a preacher. He bailed King out of the Birmingham City Jail and raised money to have other civil rights protesters released. He helped fund the 1961 Freedom Rides, supported voter registration drives and helped organize the 1963 March on Washington. During the McCarthy era, Belafonte was black-listed like many other civil right activists. Since 1987, he has been a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, and he is currently an American Civil Liberties Union celebrity ambassador for juvenile justice issues.

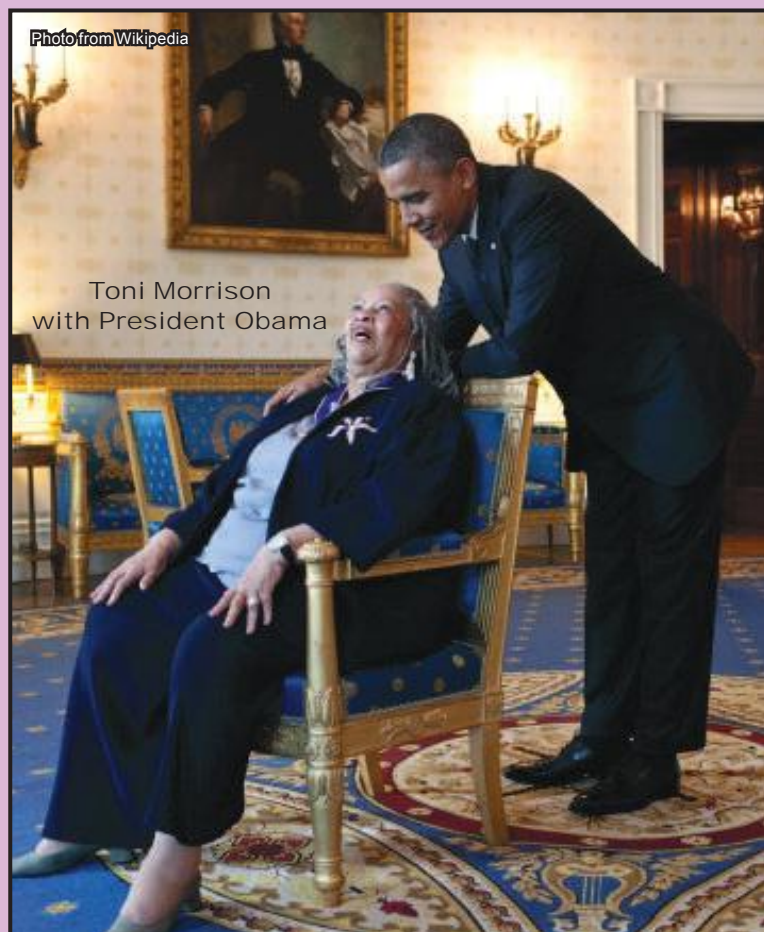


Photo from Wikipedia

Toni Morrison with President Obama

Toni Morrison, author and novelist, help sparked what has been called the second African American Renaissance that emerged in the early 1980s, when Black women writers took over the production of Black literature. Morrison became the first Black to win the Nobel Prize for literature. She also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom award from then-President Obama. Morrison's novels tackled racism, sexism and the Black woman's experience with an energy, honesty and imagination that haven't been seen before, according to 1001 Things Everyone Should Know about African Americans, by Jeffrey Stewart. Morrison penned the book "Beloved" about a enslaved woman who ran away from slavery and killed her two children to keep slave hunters from recapturing them. Oprah Winfrey turned the book into a movie. In "Beloved," Morrison weaved the voice of anger, sympathy, and the horror felt by the entire community as they witnessed slavery's inhumanities. The novel detailed the struggles Black women faced to achieve a sense of dignity, the moral question of infanticide and the ultimate question: Is a slave life worth living? Morrison's other notable works are: The "Bluest Eyes," "Sula" and "Song of Solomon, which is consider her masterpiece, according to 1001 Things. Morrison's power of language, scene setting and emotional intensity elevate her work to the highest level of writing.

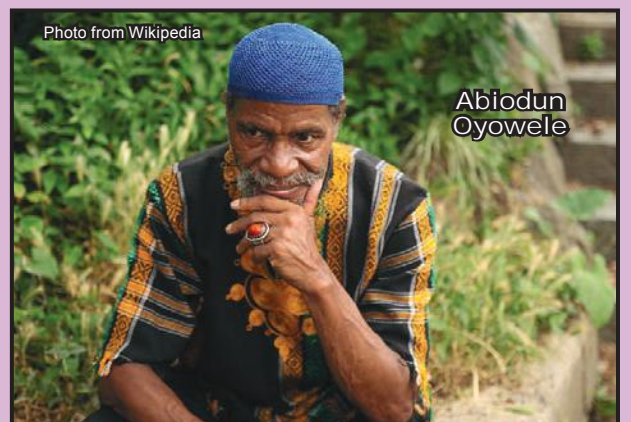


Photo from Wikipedia

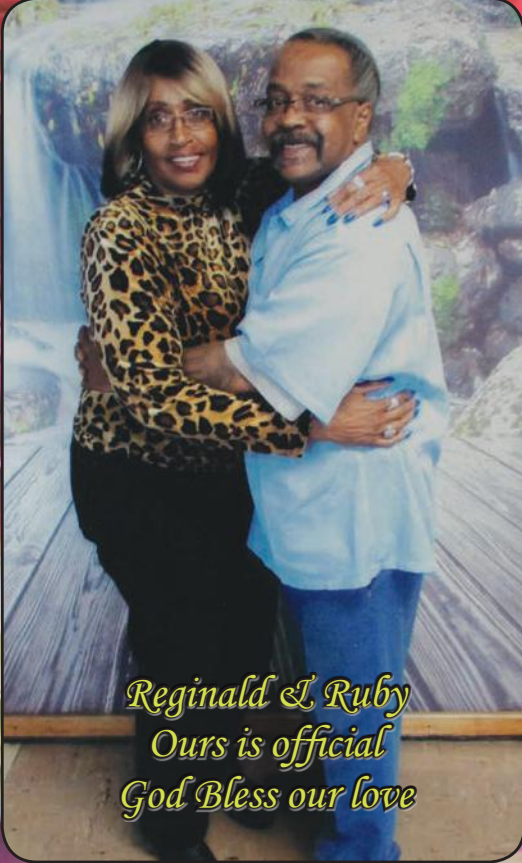
Abiodun Oyewole

The Last Poets

The Last Poets were a varied group of poets and musicians from the late 1960s civil rights and Black nationalism movements. They produced politically charged poems over taut rhythms dedicated to raising Black consciousness. The group took its name from a poem by South African revolutionary poet Keorapetse Kgotsitsile, who believed poetry was the last stop before guns would take over. The group consisted of various lineups of poets throughout the years. The original members were Abiodun Oyewole, Gylan Kain and David Nelson. Later members such as Gil Scott-Heron, Gary Byrd, Jalaluddin Mansur Nuriddin and Umar Bin Hassan helped make the group more popular. With songs such as "Wake Up N#ggers," "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised" and "If There Is a Hell Below, We All Going to Go" bought the group success. The groups album "This Is Madness" resulted in the group being placed on the FBI's anti-terror COINTELPRO list under Richard Nixon's administration, according to published reports. Oyewole was incarcerated at the time.

The poets follow-up album "Chastisement" introduce a new sound the group called "Jazzoetry" using jazz and funk instead of the spare percussion of previous albums. The Last Poets' raw vocals and innovation were early influences on hip-hop. They are often called grandfathers and founders of the new movement of rap/poetry. In the 2000s, the Last Poets members gained refresh fame by collaborating with hip-hop artists. Umar Bin Hassan was featured on Common and Kanye West to produce the song, "The Corner." Oyewole performed on "The Final Call," a song by Black Market Militia, a Wu-Tang Clan affiliate group. Oyewole was also a featured poet on the Welfare Poets' compilation CD "Cruel And Unusual Punishment," which protested the Death Penalty. The group is also featured on the rapper Nas album "Untitled" on the songs "You Can't Stop Us Now" and "Project Roach." Since most of the members have passed away, the group now consist of Oyewole, Bin Hassan and Baba Donn Babatunde. The have performed tribute concerts for the late Gil Scott-Heron and all former members. The group's first album since 1997, "Understand What Black Is," was released last year.

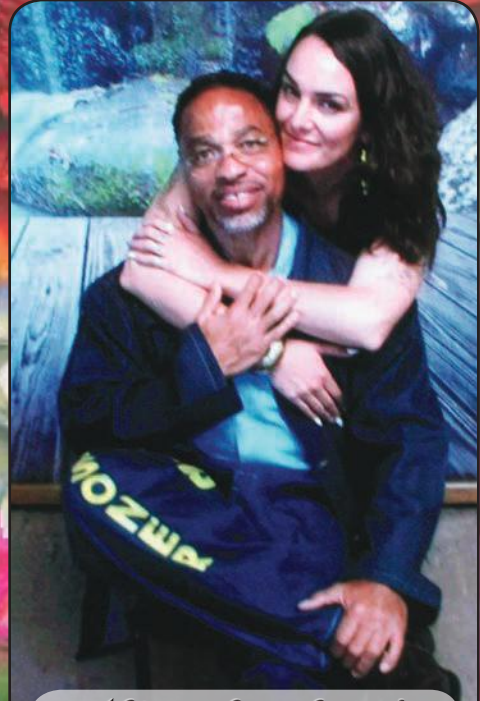
Happy Valentine's Day to th



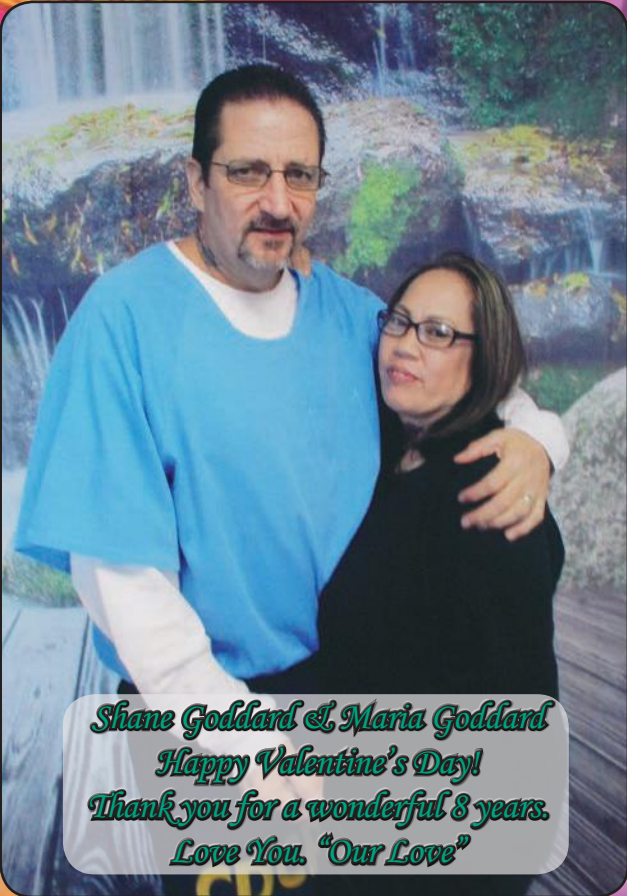
*Reginald & Ruby
Ours is official
God Bless our love*



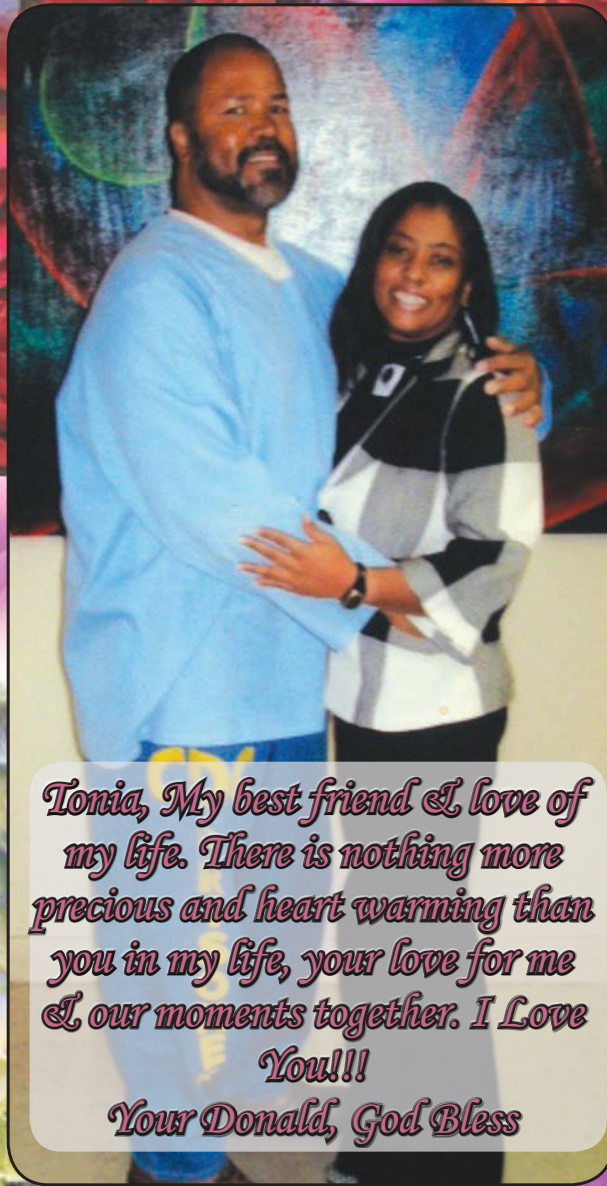
*On behalf of your new and improved son
and brother. Happy Valentine's Day!
Thank you for all your love and support*



*Adrienne Skye Roberts &
Tommy "Shakur" Ross
My Girlfriend, My wife, My
Woman, My Partner, My Ride or
Die-The Love of My Life*



*Shane Goddard & Maria Goddard
Happy Valentine's Day!
Thank you for a wonderful 8 years.
Love You. "Our Love"*



*Tonia, My best friend & love of
my life. There is nothing more
precious and heart warming than
you in my life, your love for me
& our moments together. I Love
You!!!
Your Donald, God Bless*



*Lovell and Tracy Keller
Mark 10:9*



*Yahya & Fahy
Engaged to be married.
Staying close to each other's hearts*



*From Michael John
Happy V-Day*

The special people in our lives



Thonnie Simon and Cahantelle Simon



Son Nicholas with Domenica & Harry Goodall

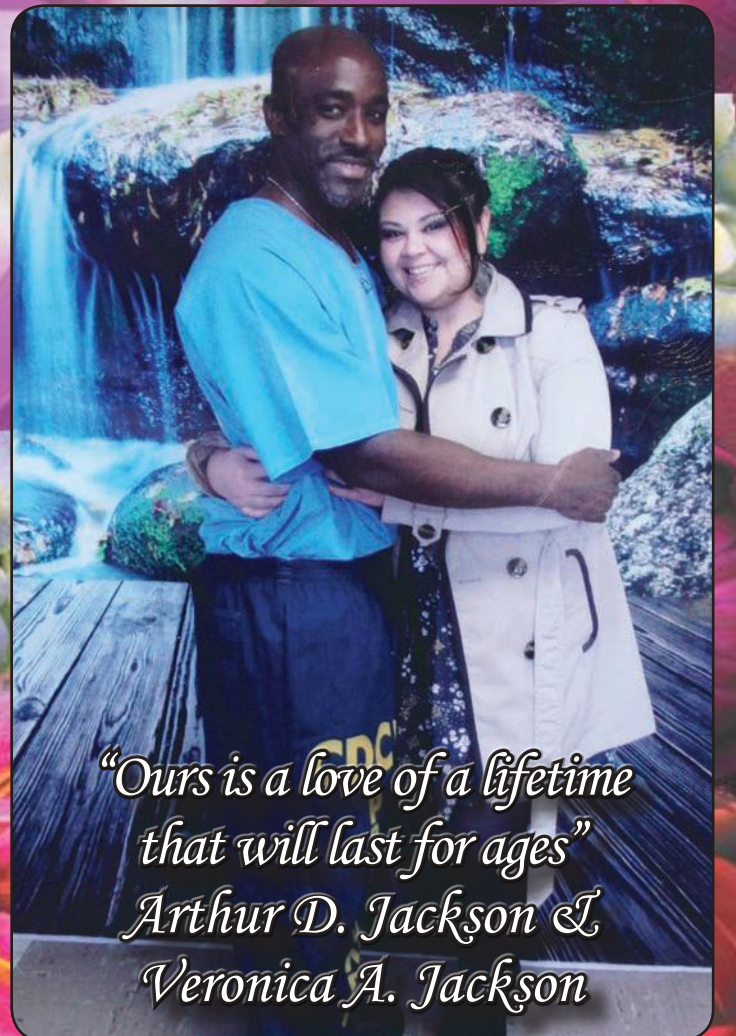
*Mikey to Alina Ferris
To my beautiful wife you always bring
out the best in me. I love you to the
moon & back!
Happy V-day Boo-Boo*



*From Carlos Smith to Michelle Smith
I love you! Happy Valentine*



*You are my everything, my most
amazing dream come true.
I Love You, Vince*



*"Ours is a love of a lifetime
that will last for ages"
Arthur D. Jackson &
Veronica A. Jackson*



*ason to his mom
ay Mom!*

AROUND THE WORLD



Photo courtesy of Richard Cohn

Buddhist Monk in the Himalayas at the Tiger's Nest Monastery in Bhutan approximately 12,000 feet above sea level

Andy Alpine, co-facilitator of Developing a Positive Attitude - underwater in Roatan, Honduras

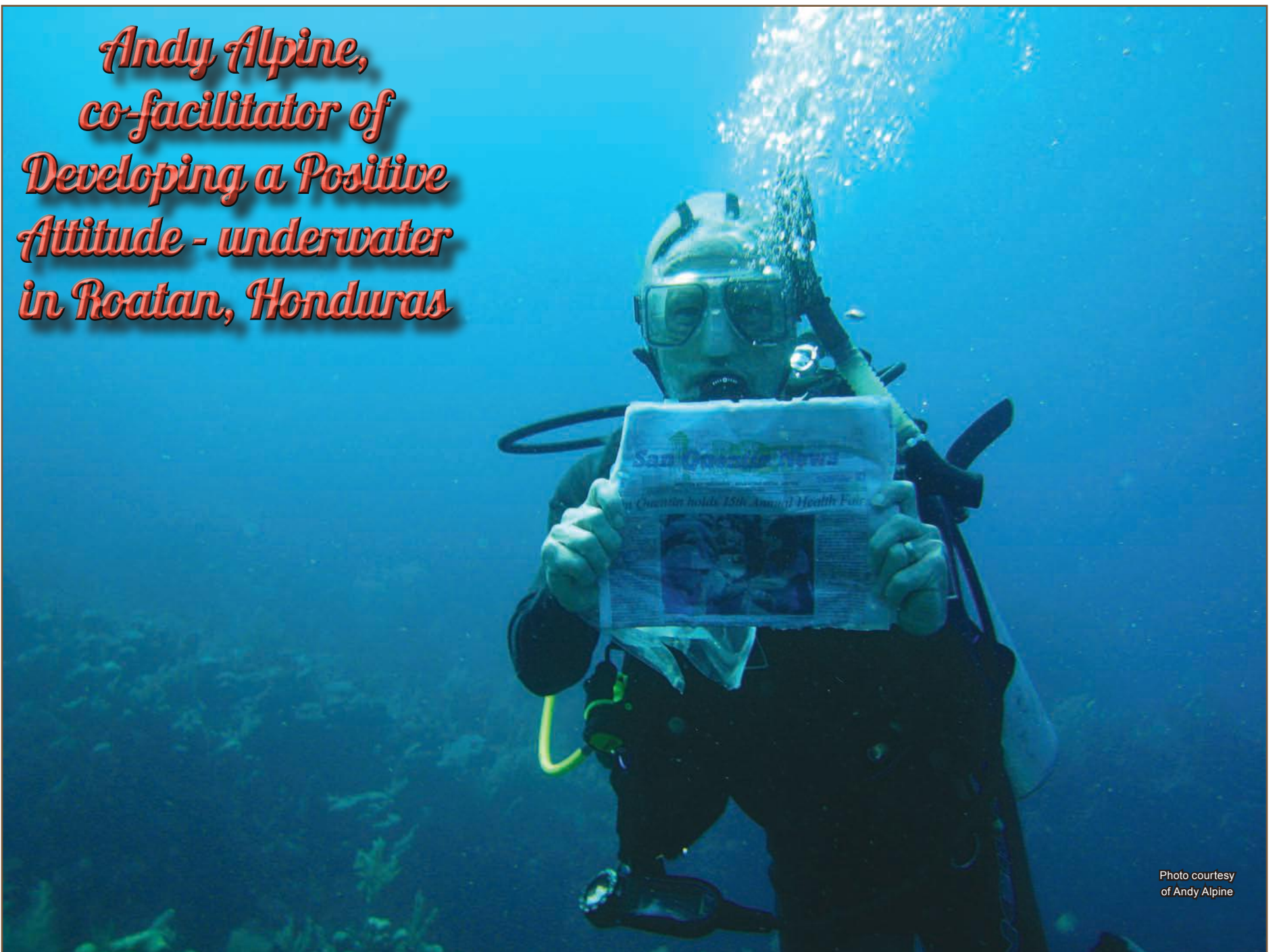


Photo courtesy of Andy Alpine

Snippets

After World War II, a federal state of six republics was formed: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia.

Uruguay is the second-smallest country in South America (after Suriname) and is slightly smaller than the state of Washington.

Giancorno Cassanova, the infamous womanizer, was born in 1725 in Venice.

Unpurified water can contain a microorganism known as "Gardia", which can cause diarrhea, cramps, and other health problems.

Rice is traditionally thrown at the bride and groom at weddings, as it symbolizes life and fertility.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

By Jonathan Chiu / Edited by Jan Perry

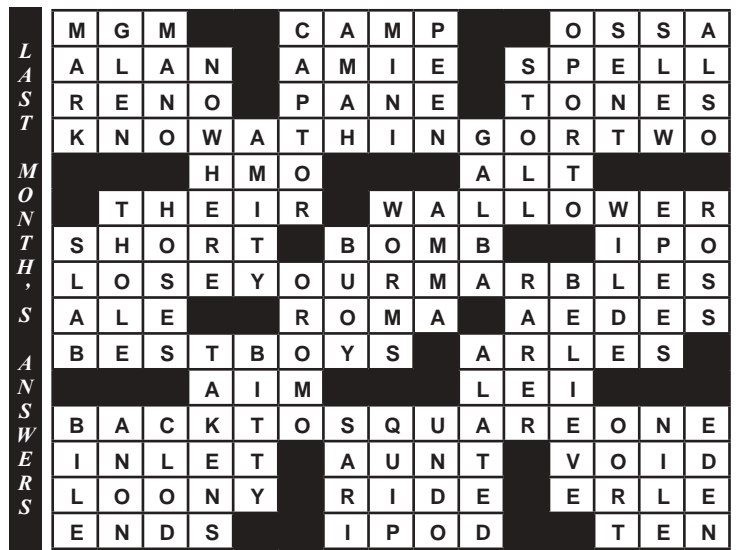
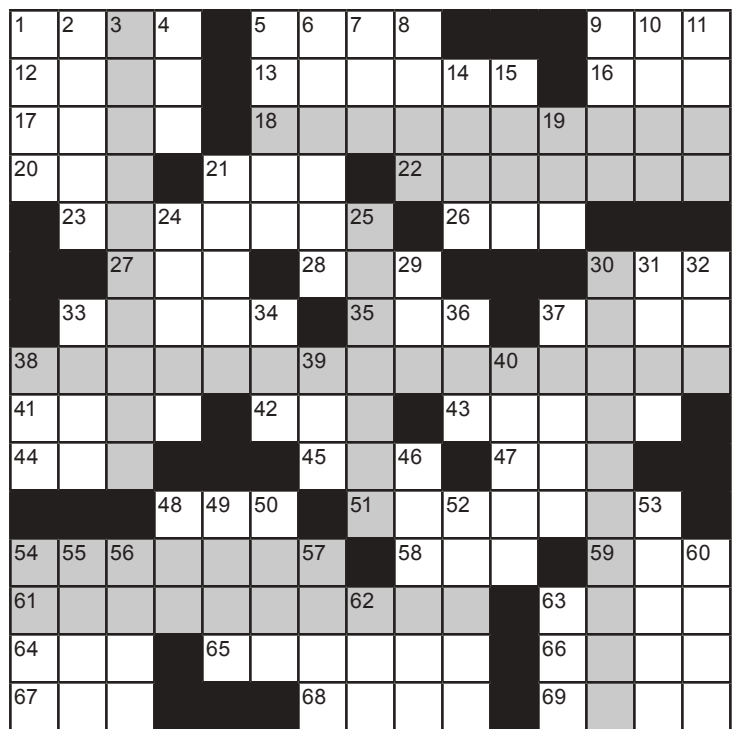
Title Artist: Ed Sheeran

Across

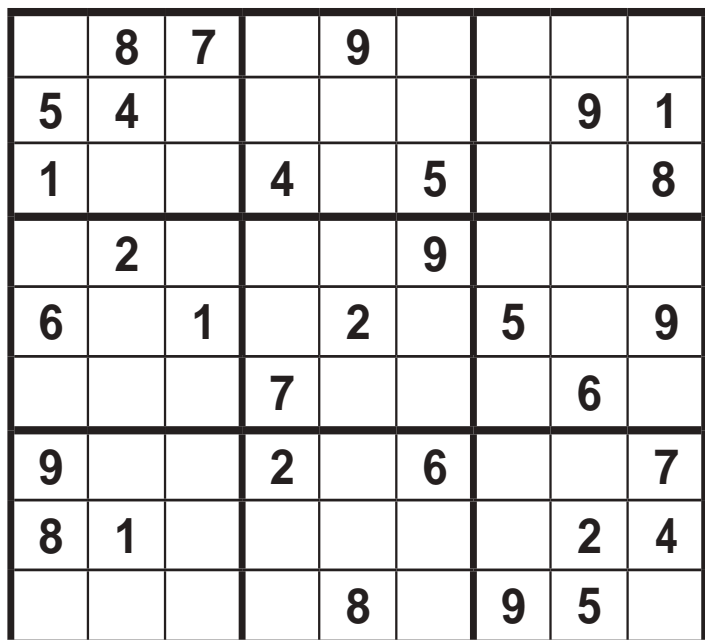
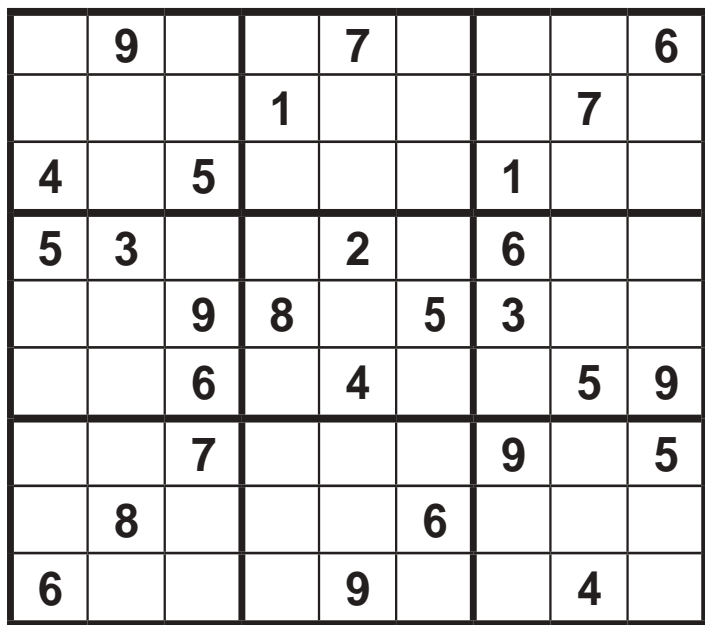
1. Loose dress wear
5. Bomb squad's worries (Abbr.)
9. 2000s TV show featuring Kristen Chenoweth and Leslie Bibb (Abbr.)
12. Presentation style
13. Hugh Laurie movie _____ *Little*
16. Dep. opp.
17. Famous soccer player
18. Title artist's tune or figure in a mirror
20. Plant
21. City by the ____
22. Title artist's tune or what she is
23. Cardboard snack
26. Thompson of *Caroline in the City*
27. Alright
28. Michael Che show (Abbr.)
30. Show filler (Abbr.)
33. In pain
35. MS-____
37. Monetary unit in N. Korea
38. Title artist's tune or just spitballing
41. Goddess of marriage
42. Sweet ____
43. Composers
44. Web language
45. Communication exchanges (Abbr.)
47. A Southeast Asian person
48. ____ Dhabi
51. Make bigger
54. Title artist's tune or what you say when you're over the place
58. Noun ender
59. Place to be stuck in
61. Title artist's tune what a hopeless romantic would say
63. Formal event
64. Type romance (Partial)
65. Cherished
66. Drove passed
67. Chinese chef Martin ____
68. Friends
69. Speeders' org (Abbr.)

Down

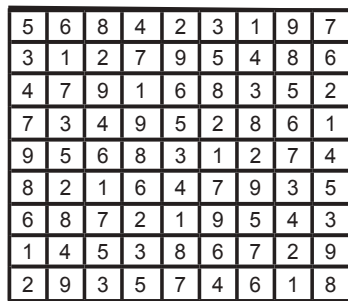
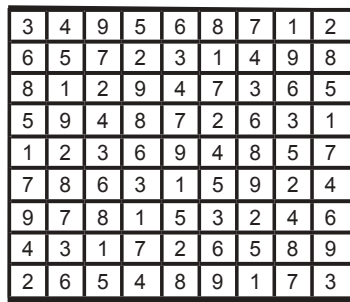
1. At most
2. Black and white cookies
3. Title artist's tune or a young adult from Ireland
4. Newcastle, e.g.
5. A Japanese immigrant in US
6. Actor Hawke and Director Coen
7. "New Moves" singer Lipa
8. Football player Warren
9. Singer Marvin
10. A popular clog-style shoe
11. A type of force
14. Spool
15. Ripped
19. High schooler's org. (Abbr.)
21. Nasty smell
24. Former millionaire Helmsley
25. Taylor Swift, Future & title artist's tune or what the final stage is
29. Toilet
30. Title artist's tune or a memory on paper
31. ____ vide
32. +
33. "Excuse me"
34. Bark
36. Prison hi
37. See thru
38. Movie sound comp.
39. Actor Beatty
40. Monetary unit in Slovenia
46. False sympathy
48. Initials assoc. with some Christian churches
49. Ancient Greek podium
50. Done with
52. City in N. England in W. Yorkshire
53. 1700s Swiss mathematician Leonhard
54. Susan Sarandon movie ____ *Goes Down*
55. Sorvino of *Psych*
56. Cosmetics company
57. Pig food
60. "This is it"
62. Singer Rita
63. Interactive cable channel



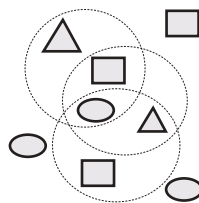
Sudoku Corner



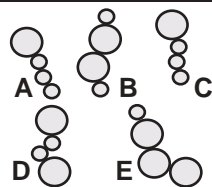
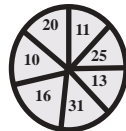
Last Issue's Sudoku Solutions



Answers to the brain teaser form last month



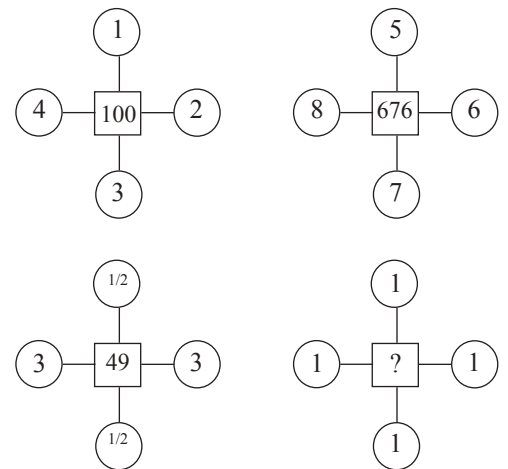
start at 10 and jump to alternate segments, adding 1, then 2, then 3 and so on



Little and Large
C, B and D, and A and E are the same, with large and small circles reversed.

This month's Brain Teasers:

A particular plan has been followed to determine the middle number in each diagram. fill in the missing number.



By using all the digits 1 through 9, it is possible to construct four addition examples with the sum 873. Reversing the top and bottom numbers is not permitted. Each combination must be different. One number in each set has been filled in to give you a head start.

X	X	4	X	X	9
X	X	X	X	X	X
8	7	3	8	7	3
X	5	X	X	X	4
X	X	X	6	X	X
8	7	3	8	7	3

You just dumped a bag of fruit into the deepest end of the fruit bin, and now you can't see what you have. They're all smooth skinned, and about the same size, so you can't tell by touch either. You know you have five large plums, five nectarines, and five small smooth-skinned peaches. How many pieces of fruit must you take out to be absolutely sure of getting a plum?

If you would like to submit a photograph to be placed in SQ News just because, please send it with name(s) and a brief message to go with your photo. Please understand, we may not be able to return your photo so send a copy and address the letter to:

San Quentin News, 1 Main Street, San Quentin, CA 94964

La nueva ley conocida como 1170 beneficiará a muchos internos en prisiones de California

Español

Por Juan Haines
Senior Editor

Casi todos los prisioneros del Departamento de Correcciones y Rehabilitación (CDCR) de California pueden ser elegibles para que un tribunal reconsidere y reduzca su sentencias, por medio de recomendaciones del liderazgo de CDCR, o de las agencias de las fuerzas del orden, acuerdo al Código

Penal de California 1170 (d). Reglamentos de las prisiones describen el procedimiento en el Código de Regulaciones de California (CCR), Título 15, Sección número 3076, titulado *Recall of Commitment Circumstances*.

La sección del Código Penal de California 1170(d)(1) permite que el Secretario del Departamento de Corrección y Rehabilitación de California (CDCR) o un administrador autorizado para recomendar

en cualquier momento, pida que el tribunal del juicio original retire el castigo de un preso anteriormente impuesta, y ordene una nueva sentencia reducida, siempre y cuando la nueva sentencia no sea mayor que la sentencia inicial.

“El CDCR está en el proceso de desarrollar un proceso oficial con respecto a 1170(d)(1) de retirar y reducir Sentencias,” dijo Krissi Khokhobashvili, jefe Adjunto de la Oficina de Asuntos Externos.

Los internos que califiquen deben demostrar “conducta excepcional” una “discrepancia de Sentencias” o que estos se beneficien de “Los cambios retroactivos en la Ley.” Algunas referencias en virtud de todas estas categorías ya han sido realizados en varios tribunales del estado.

Para que un preso sea considerado para conducta Excepcional, un miembro o empleado del personal institucional puede proporcionar el nombre y número de un preso al Guardian está de acuerdo, él o ella enviara la consideración a la Unidad de Servicios de Clasificación (CSU). Agencias de las fuerzas del orden (policía, aguacil, etc.) u otras entidades del gobierno externas, tales como la oficina de un fiscal de distrito, también pueden hacer recomendaciones. El personal de departamento no tomara la recomendación de los ciudadanos privados, abogados o miembros de la familia del reo. En esos casos, ellos deben enviar una

petición al tribunal original de sentencia.

El Comportamiento Excepcional se muestra a través de los esfuerzos de rehabilitación de un interno que también demuestra que sera un miembro activo de su comunidad.

La evidencia que demuestra un comportamiento excepcional será revisada por la CSU. La evidencia debe incluir, pero no se limita a:

- La participación en grupos de autoayuda, vocacional, y programas educativos.

- Comportamiento, incluyendo violaciones graves al reglamento o términos en la Unidad Especial de Seguridad.

- Evidencia de Cronos laudatorios y carta de apoyo.

- Recomendaciones del personal y voluntarios.

“La conducta excepcional es sólo una pequeña fracción de las referencias.” Dijo Khokhobashvili. “La mayoría de las solicitudes son para la corrección de sentencias como ejemplo, la vieja ley que aumentaba el castigo por uso

de armas de fuego; podemos repasar la justificación de una sentencia que se impuso antes del cambio de la ley y considerar si la persona fuera condenado hoy, si seria la misma sentencia acuerdo a la nueva ley.”

Para los internos que deben considerados para una discrepancia de Sentencia, la demanda debe basarse en la autoridad acuerdo a la ley. Discrepancias de sentencias se identificadas por la información nueva o viejo llevado adelante a través de las apelaciones de presos, la información presentada a través de a Unidad de Proceso Legal, o información suministrada a través de la Oficina de Asuntos Legales (OAL por sus siglas en ingles).

Para los internos que han de considerados una modificación retroactiva de la Ley, la solicitud debe basarse en una nueva legislación o jurisprudencia con aplicación retroactiva.

—Traducido por
Angel Alvarez
contribuyente

Jueces federales y estatales buscan prohibir los arrestos en los juzgados

Tare Beltranchuc
Escritor Contribuyente

En un esfuerzo para garantizar la seguridad de la comunidad inmigrante en los tribunales de justicia, ex-jueces estatales y federales solicitan al Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) la prohibición de arrestos en las cortes de justicia.

Escuelas, hospitales, y lugares de adoración han estado prohibidos para los oficiales federales de inmigración por 25 años. Ahora un grupo de exjueces estatales y federales unen esfuerzos para añadir los tribunales de justicia a esta lista de “lugares sensitivos”, Informó el National.

Como resultado de los arrestos por parte del ICE, los tribunales de justicia se han convertido en lugares a “eludir” para muchos inmigrantes, según un artículo de Matthew Schwartz del npr. “Los arrestos del ICE en las cortes de justicia crean temor en clientes e impide que busquen justicia”. Además está afectando a

sobrevivientes de violencia doméstica, a padres que buscan protección para sus hijos, e incluso a víctimas del tráfico humano.

“Los jueces simplemente no pueden hacer sus trabajos y nuestro sistema judicial no puede funcionar efectivamente si víctimas, demandados, y familiares no se sienten seguros de ir a los tribunales de justicia”, informó el artículo. Los jueces estipulan que para servir y asegurar el bienestar de la comunidad, y para que los tribunales puedan realizar su trabajo efectivamente, es necesario garantizar el libre acceso a los tribunales sin temor al arresto, subrayó el National.

Los jueces citaron reportes del incremento de arrestos en las cortes de justicia en los últimos dos años. En un estudio realizado por Immigrant Defense Project descubrió un incremento del 1200% en arrestos e intentos de arrestos a través del estado de Nueva York del 2016 al 2017.

En un comunicado ICE

comenta que “los arrestos en los tribunales de justicia parece ocurrir más frecuentemente” debido a que las agencias policiales ya no colaboran con los oficiales del ICE tan fácilmente como lo hacían anteriormente.

En un memorándum de enero, ICE mencionó que los arrestos en los tribunales de justicia estarían limitados a ciertas personas, tales como pandilleros, personas con antecedentes criminales, o personas que representan una amenaza a la seguridad nacional. Oficiales de Inmigración no arrestaran a los familiares a menos que traten de intervenir en el arresto, informó el artículo del National.

Sin embargo, los jueces escribieron, “después de casi dos años de mucha actividad en las cortes de justicia por parte del ICE, únicamente garantías seguras y protección podrán restaurar la confianza de la comunidad inmigrante que es posible buscar justicia en los tribunales de esta nación”, Concluyó el artículo.

Propuesta de Trump busca marcar a los inmigrantes como carga pública

La nueva propuesta de la administración de Trump para renovar el Sistema de Inmigración en América “con base al mérito” (merit-based), pone en peligro el sueño Americano de los inmigrantes.

La determinación del Presidente Trump para renovar el sistema migratorio de América parece no tener límite. La reforma migratoria bajo la administración de Trump inicia con una propuesta para volver a definir qué beneficios públicos podrían utilizar los inmigrantes sin ser etiquetados una “carga pública”. Posteriormente, el retiro del estatus legal a inmigrantes de países como el Salvador y Haití, al igual que su reciente inquietud para terminar la ciudadanía por nacimiento. Actualmente, la administración de Trump parece estar dispuesta a cambiar e incluso quebrantar la leyes de este país en su empeño por crear una inmigración a América basada en el mérito.

América, bajo esta propuesta, solo aceptará a los “mejores” inmigrantes (a los mejores deportistas, a los

prestamistas más ricos, a las modelos más bellas, a los científicos más inteligentes, etc.). Aquellos que ameriten estar y permanecer en este país.

Los inmigrantes tendrán que decidir entre utilizar los programas de ayuda social (Medicaid or food stamp) o retener sus estados legales, no habrá espacio para ambos. Incluso Inmigrantes naturalizados podrían llegar a perder su estado legal bajo esta nueva propuesta. En caso de lastimarse en el trabajo y tener necesidad de los beneficios del seguro social por incapacidad, podrías perder su naturalización. Si su familia llega a ser una carga para el sistema educativo debido a la necesidad de obtener un préstamo para pagar la universidad, también podrían perder su estado legal, Informó The Guardian. El sueño americano podría terminar para muchos inmigrantes bajo estas propuestas de la administración del presidente Donald Trump.

El sueño americano siempre ha sido claro. Se trata de obtener una oportunidad para crear una vida mejor a través

del trabajo diligente. América se ha caracterizado por ser un refugio para inmigrantes con deseos de superación.” Ser americano no se trata de merecerlo, sino de tener una oportunidad”, mencionó Williams en su artículo.

Los inmigrantes y sus hijos han fundado gran parte de las más grandes compañías americanas. “Los trabajadores inmigrantes, creadores de fortunas y contribuyentes a la nación, son tan americanos como los pantalones de mezclilla. Los inmigrantes han jugado un papel fundamental para el dominio de la tecnología americana”, subrayó The Guardian.

Es indiscutible que existe la necesidad de una reforma migratoria que ofrezca claridad legal para inmigrantes como los Soñadores y otros residentes sin documentación. Sin embargo, la propuesta de renovar el sistema migratorio basado en el “merito” no ayuda en lo mínimo y va contra los principios y valores que han caracterizado esta nación.

—Tare Beltranchuc
Escritor Contribuyente

¿La mayoría de los inmigrantes entran por México? Trump dice que sí

Por Juan Espinosa
Diseñador Gráfico y escritor

Las continuas declaraciones del presidente Donald Trump acerca de que la mayoría de los inmigrantes indocumentados entran a los Estados Unidos a través de la frontera con México parecen estar infundadas.

De acuerdo a un artículo de NPR de junio del 2018, “la mayoría de los inmigrantes indocumentados no entran al país por Tijuana, a donde todas las imágenes capturadas por las cámaras de televisión apuntan en los recientes meses.”

El artículo indica que la mayoría de las personas que están indocumentadas en el país entraron legalmente. Según el artículo cerca de “700,000 personas que viajaron con visas en el 2017 a los Estados Unidos se quedaron.”

“En ese mismo año, solamente hubo 300,000 aprehensiones al respecto,” de los que se quedaron; las otras 400,000 personas permanecieron en el país

ilegalmente, señala el artículo.

El artículo de NPR citó un estudio del Centro de Estudios para la Inmigración que aseguró que la cifra es “más de 600,000 más que la suma total de personas que cruzaron la frontera en el 2014.”

Se especula que el número de personas que se quedaron ilegalmente después de haber entrado con visa podría sobrepasar la tercera parte de nuevos inmigrantes indocumentados que están en el país.

Trump ha dicho que la construcción del muro es la solución a la entrada ilegal de inmigrantes y un asunto de seguridad nacional.

La Secretaria de Seguridad Nacional Kirstjen Nielsen expresó que “en cada lugar en donde se ha levantado un muro, la inmigración ilegal se ha reducido del 90 al 95 por ciento,” según el artículo.

Sin embargo, cifras de La Patrulla Fronteriza parecen desmentir esa información ya que indican que “el número de personas detenidas por agentes de la patrulla fronteriza ha

disminuido, no solamente en donde el gobierno ha construido muros.”

A pesar de esa disminución, el número de inmigrantes centroamericanos que quieren cruzar a Estados Unidos se ha incrementado en los últimos meses.

Por el momento miles de inmigrantes se encuentran varados en la frontera norte de México. La mayoría de ellos esperan su turno para someter su petición de asilo y así poder entrar a los Estados Unidos de manera legal.

Según el artículo, los esfuerzos por detener la inmigración van a tener que incluir más acción que construir un muro, ya que la falta de seguridad y la peligrosidad en algunos países centroamericanos ha catapultado el éxodo de sus ciudadanos con miras a encontrar un mejor futuro en los Estados Unidos.

En el mes de enero otra caravana de inmigrantes partió de Centroamérica con esperanzas esta vez de buscar asilo en México.

California Correctional Peace Officers Association emerged during 2018 election

By Achilles Williams
Journalism Guild Writer

After almost a decade out of the spotlight, the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) re-emerged when they bought two television commercials for two Democrats: Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom for governor and Assemblymember Tony Thurmond for superintendent of public instruction. The commercials cost the union \$1 million dollars, the *Los Angeles Times* reports.

Though it has remained politically active, the CCPOA flew under the radar during the last decade, compared to a previous strategy involving bold statewide campaigns. While the price of the ads

isn't high for California, it serves as a reminder that the union still has what it takes to bring attention to its issues.

The union historically aligned itself to Republicans but switched loyalties in 1998 when it donated \$2 million dollars to then-candidate for governor, Gray Davis. It had a strained relationship to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger after he demanded salary concessions.

The union's relationship with former Gov. Jerry Brown, who approved pay raises in five of the last six years, was more cordial. Estimates are that the latest contract will raise prison costs by \$116 million.

The contract expires in July 2019 and the CCPOA

bet on Newsom, rather than the GOP's John Cox. As for Thurmond, he previously supported the union while his opponent, Marshall Tuck, recently criticized the level of spending on prisons over schools.

The CCPOA has a long standing alliance with crime victims and that alliance could boost a 2020 ballot measure that's designed to undo California's recent expansion of parole, a possible conflict with Brown who backed the expansion. Whatever their strategies, the union will, no doubt, continue reminding the public and elected officials that the 27,000 prison officers “walk the toughest beat in the state.”

Recall of sentence may allow time reduction for prisoners

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

Nearly all California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) prisoners may be eligible to have a court reconsider and reduce their sentence, according to new rules.

The prisoners' rulebook outlines the procedure in the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 15, section number 3076, Recall of Commitment Recommendation Circumstances.

California Penal Code Section 1170(d)(1) allows

the Agency Secretary of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) or its designee to recommend, at any time, that the sentencing court recall an inmate's sentence and commitment previously imposed and resentence an inmate, as long as the new sentence is no greater than the initial sentence.

"CDCR is still in the process of developing an official process regarding 1170(d) recall and resentencing referrals," said Krissi Khokhobashvili, Deputy Chief, Office of External Affairs. Qualifying inmates must

demonstrate "Exceptional Conduct," a "Sentencing Discrepancy, or that they benefit from "Retroactive Changes in Law."

For an inmate to be considered for Exceptional Conduct, any institution staff may provide an inmate's name and prison number to the institution's warden. If the warden agrees, he then sends the consideration to the Classification Services Unit (CSU). Law enforcement agencies or other outside entities, such as a district attorney's office may also make referrals. Departmental staff does not take recommendations from

private citizens, attorneys or family members. In those instances, the requesting party should send the request to the sentencing court.

Exceptional behavior is shown through an inmate's rehabilitative efforts that also demonstrate that they would be an asset to their community.

Evidence that demonstrates exceptional behavior will be reviewed by CSU. The evidence includes but is not limited to:

- Evidence of participation in self-help groups, vocational, and educational programs.
- Positive programming,

including no serious rules violations or security housing terms in the past five years.

- Evidence of laudatory chronos and letters of support.
- Recommendations from staff and volunteers.

"Exceptional conduct is only a small fraction of the referrals," Khokhobashvili said. "Most of the referrals are for sentence corrections—as an example, take the change in gun enhancements; we can take a look at the sentence that was imposed before the law took effect and consider if that person was sentenced today, whether the enhancement

would have been given."

For inmates to be considered for a Sentencing Discrepancy, the claim must be based on statutory or case law authority. Sentencing discrepancies are identified by new or old case law information brought forward through inmate appeals, information submitted through the Legal Processing Unit, or information provided via the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA).

For inmates to be considered a Retroactive Change in Law, the request must be based on new legislation or case law with retroactive application.

Thu Hôi Án Phạt

Vietnamese

Tác giả: Juan Haines

Dựa theo luật California Penal Code 1170(d) mới được ban hành, hầu như tất cả tù nhân ở California đều có thể hội đủ điều kiện được tòa xét lại án và giảm án.

Phương thức luật mới này cũng đã được ghi rõ trong sách quy luật dành cho tù nhân, sách California Code of Regulations (CDCR), Title 15, section 3076, Recall of Commitment Recommendation Circumstances.

Quy luật án phạt mục 1170(d)(1) của California cho phép Bộ Tổng Trưởng của Bộ

Học Tập và Cải Huấn (CDCR), hoặc người đại diện của bộ được đề nghị với tòa thu hồi án phạt và yêu cầu tòa kêu án lại, miễn là bản án mới phải được ngắn hạn hơn bản án cũ.

Trưởng phòng của Văn Phòng Quản Lý Nội Bộ nói rằng, "Bộ Học Tập và Cải Huấn vẫn còn đang làm việc để đưa ra những giải quyết chính thức về quy luật thu hồi án phạt mục 1170(d).

Những tù nhân hội đủ điều kiện phải chứng minh được rằng họ có "hành vi tốt," hay họ bị "án phi lý," hoặc họ nằm vào diện "đặc ân lâu dài vì luật đã được thay đổi." Có nhiều đơn được giới thiệu ở tất cả những diện trên cũng đã được gửi đến nhiều tòa.

Đối với tù nhân được xếp vào hạng hạnh kiểm tốt, bất cứ nhân viên hay tình nguyện viên nào của nhà tù cũng có thể cung cấp tên và số báo danh của tù nhân cho tù trưởng nơi giam giữ họ. Sau đó nếu tù trưởng đồng ý, tù trưởng sẽ gửi lời đề nghị trên đến với Ban Xếp Hạng (CSU). Những ban ngành luật pháp bên ngoài, chẳng hạn như văn phòng công tố, cũng có thể gửi lời đề nghị giảm án đến với tòa án. Nhân viên nhà tù sẽ không nhận lời yêu cầu từ người dân, luật sư hay gia đình của tù nhân. Trong Những trường hợp này thì họ phải gửi lời yêu cầu đến thẳng với tòa nơi đã tuyên án tù nhân.

Bộ Học Tập và Cải Huấn

đang làm việc để đưa ra những điều kiện tiêu chuẩn, cũng như cách thức để trình báo với nạn nhân và tòa về việc duyệt xét đơn xin giảm án.

Đề được liệt vào hạng hạnh kiểm tốt có nghĩa là tù nhân đã tỏ ra có cố gắng để cải tiến bản thân và đồng thời họ cũng sẽ là nguồn hữu ích cho xã hội.

Ban Xếp Hạng sẽ duyệt xét hạnh kiểm của từng tù nhân. Hạnh kiểm tốt bao gồm những điều như sau:

- Biểu hiện tham gia trong những chương trình của nhóm học tự cải tiến bản thân, học nghề, và nâng cấp trình độ học vấn
- Tích cực tham gia chương trình của nhà tù đưa ra, không bị kỷ luật hay bị biệt

giam

- Nhận được giấy khen hoặc thư ủng hộ
- Nhận được lời yêu cầu giảm án từ nhân viên hoặc tình nguyện viên của nhà tù

Bà Khokhobashvili phát biểu rằng, "Hạnh kiểm tốt chỉ là một phần nhỏ trong số những đơn được giới thiệu, phần đông là đơn xin giảm án – ví dụ như trong thay đổi tăng án về luật súng đạn, chúng ta có thể xem xét bản án từ góc độ trước khi luật được ban hành và xét lại nếu người đó bị tuyên án hôm nay họ có bị tăng án hay không."

Đối với những tù nhân nằm trong diện bị án phi lý, đơn thỉnh cầu của họ phải được dựa trên điều lệ pháp lý hoặc

dựa trên các vụ tranh tụng hình sự đã được xét xử và đã trở thành luật. Những tù nhân có án phi lý sẽ được nhận diện dựa trên dữ liệu của các vụ đã được xử cũ và mới và được đệ trình qua đơn kháng cáo của họ (inmate appeals), hoặc qua dữ liệu gửi cho Legal Processing Unit, hay qua dữ liệu được cung cấp bởi Office of Legal Affairs.

Những tù nhân được duyệt xét dưới diện đặc ân lâu dài vì luật đã được thay đổi, đơn thỉnh cầu của họ phải được dựa trên quyền lập pháp mới được ban hành hoặc dựa trên các vụ tranh tụng hình sự đã được xét xử có áp dụng liên hồi.

—Dịch giả: Danny Nha Hồ

Parole and probation create huge drain on state resources

By Lloyd Payne
Journalism Guild writer

Parole and probation are creating a huge drain on some state resources, according to *The Crime Report*.

"Probation and parole were envisioned to help reduce the prison population and provide some structure and aid to those re-entering society. However, these systems have metastasized into

a monstrous drain on state resources, even as they have damaged the lives of the formerly incarcerated," the Nov. 19 story stated.

The report cited the Pennsylvania system of supervised release as an example of draining state resources. Pennsylvania has the third-highest rate of supervision in the country, with a quarter of a million people under probation or parole, according to

The Crime Report.

One out of every 34 adults in Pennsylvania is on probation or parole, which creates massive caseloads for probation and parole officers, the story said.

Those massive caseloads can be a contributing factor to recidivism, according to Jesse Kelley, a Criminal Justice policy analyst, and Arthur Rizer, Director of Criminal Justice and Civil

Liberties Policy at R Street.

R Street studied how large caseloads, extended periods of probation and parole have worsened the outcome for persons affected.

"Approximately one-third of all beds in (Pennsylvania) state prisons are occupied by people who have violated the conditions of their probation. These are often individuals who pose no real danger to society," said Pennsylvania

State Sen. Anthony Williams, a Democrat.

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) reported that extended lengths of probation or parole does not increase public safety, and the risk of a person reoffending while under supervised release dwindles after the first year.

The NIJ said of the prisoners who were re-arrested while on parole, about 57

percent were re-arrested within the first year, but it was mostly technical violations and not serious violent offenses.

Senator Williams introduced Senate Bill 1067 in an effort to reduce the number of re-arrests, limit the length of probation, and place limits on judges' ability to detain people on probation in jail for technical violations that are not a threat to public safety.

San Quentin News hosts fundraiser gala for community supporters

By Kate Wolffe and Madeleine Gregory
Contributors

The award-winning *San Quentin News* has become one of the few prison projects ever to hold its own fundraising gala in California.

The Nov. 23 inaugural event, hailed as "historic," took place at Marin Shakespeare Company's headquarters in San Rafael and was attended by 43 supporters, who donated more than \$2,000 for the newspaper.

The dinner, which was well attended despite the rain, attracted formerly incarcerated persons, current volunteers and community members interested in social justice.

Although the paper's staff members were absent (they were at chow or in the media center—all behind walls at San Quentin State Prison), the writers and editors made an appearance in videos watched by the audience.

"An event like this is unprecedented in San Quentin history," Associate Editor and Business Manager Kevin Sawyer said on video. "The way we've always done donations has been through inserts in our paper, word of mouth. This has been our first time communicating with donors."

According to Sawyer, the gala was a form of first contact, a donor outreach event meant to drum up outside

support. The News' current goal is to expand its reach to all 50 states.

In addition, attendees heard the plans to increase the reach of the monthly newspaper to all the correctional facilities in California and beyond. The staff also produces a web site (sanquentinnews.com) and a magazine, *Wall City*.

Since the newspaper was founded in 1940s, the publication expenses were covered by the state. When Warden Clinton Duffy started the newspaper, it could rely on the Prison Industries Authority printing press and prison labor to print each issue. When the print shop shut down in 2010, the News



Photo courtesy of Kate Wolffe

Lisa Adams speaking at the gala with Aly Tamboura, Angela Sevin, Dameion Brown and Jody Lewen



Photo courtesy of Kate Wolffe

Donors and supporters in attendance

had to find its own source of funding, which has taken the form of grants from foundations, to pay the costs of printing the newspaper in a commercial printing company in San Rafael. The newspaper is seeking to expand its donor base to include the social justice community.

Former inmate Dameion Brown, who has successfully pursued a career in acting, gave a moving tribute to how the prison's theater group helped him find purpose while incarcerated. To the delight of the room, Brown recited a speech from Othello, a role he portrayed as the Moor of Venice in a Marin Shakespeare Company production. Aly Tamboura, one of the

original *San Quentin News* staff members who revived the newspaper in 2008, spoke to the group. Employed by the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, a social justice advocacy organization, Tamboura spoke of the history and power of the *San Quentin News* as a force for good in the prison. He stressed the importance of finding direction behind bars.

Other volunteers and advisors also spoke about the impact that the News has had on their lives and perspectives. They reflected on how far the newspaper had come and expressed their excitement to watch it grow. Lisa Adams, director of development for the Friends of *San Quentin News*, called the gala a "his-

toric event" in the growth of the News.

Adams stressed that the *San Quentin News* has served to educate men and women both within and outside of the criminal justice system. The men who create it have found purpose, community and invaluable training for when they re-enter society, she said.

Speaking via video, Jesse Vasquez, editor in chief of the *San Quentin News*, said, "We show them the education, the services, the groups the guys have access to in here — show them that if they're better in here, they'll be better out there. There isn't a difference between the inside and outside community."

San Quentin settles lawsuit with psychiatrist over mental health care

A settlement of \$822,000 for the plaintiff, Dr. Christopher Wadsworth

By Anthony Manuel
Carvalho
Journalism Guild Writer

A lawsuit alleging retaliation against a San Quentin psychiatrist who warned of inadequate mental health care in the prison has led to a settlement of \$822,000 for the plaintiff, Dr. Christopher Wadsworth, reports the *Sacramento Bee*.

The fast-track career of

Dr. Wadsworth, the former Chief Psychiatrist at SQ, was damaged after he informed state officials that reducing beds for the acutely mentally ill would consist of actions that, according to an email Wadsworth sent to a corrections leader, "...will have knowingly put ourselves into a critically irresponsible position that will invite even more firestorm..." In that same email, Wadsworth added that

"...it would set the stage for unacceptable patient care of the acutely mentally ill..."

Dr. Wadsworth's lawsuit, filed in 2015, also stated that he was attempting to comply with the Court's mandate from *Coleman v. Brown*. This decision demanded CDCR and the State provide a basic level of mental health care to inmates. Budget strategies revealed CDCR's intention to use some of its existing men-

tal health crisis beds for lower level needs. Dr. Wadsworth objected.

His lawsuit alleges his objections led to immediate retaliation by his supervisors and CDCR. The retaliation led up to, and included, a demotion and a threat that would have him, "...re-assigned to a prison in the middle of the (expletive) desert..." the *Bee* reported.

According to the plaintiff,

the decision by San Quentin to implement the reduction of crisis beds in May of 2014 led to a suicide by a mentally ill inmate and another failed suicide attempt two months later.

Wadsworth's lawsuit settled in July of 2017. The settlement of this suit strengthened the legal basis of an ongoing federal dispute between CDCR and Chief Psychiatrist Michael Golding.

Dr. Golding asserts officials have provided misleading and inaccurate information to a federal overseer regarding the state's mental health services.

Upon the settlement agreement between CDCR and Dr. Wadsworth, he was transferred to Folsom State Prison. Dr. Wadsworth has since refrained from public discussion of his case due to his worries about further career repercussions.

OPTIONS

Continued from Page 1

Tom Gorham, founder of Options, came up with the idea to allow mainline prisoners trained as substance-abuse counselors to work in reception.

"We're trying to get them on the rehabilitative path right out the gate," Gorham said. "We're giving them a choice but they have to realize they have a choice."

The program is taught by counselors serving life sentences. They all completed California A Drug Treatment Program (CADTP), a state-certified program which trained them to help people overcome addiction.

"I greatly appreciated the environment created in the Options substance abuse program," Mohammed Ahmed, 28, a reception resident, said. "The addiction recovery counselors were men whose shoes I could be in. To be able to relate with men leading the groups allowed me to open up and be honest in a way I have never before allowed myself."

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation granted Options the contract to facilitate its program in three facilities – DVI, the women's facility at Chowchilla and San Quentin. Options started its pilot reception program at San Quentin because it already had state-certified drug and alcohol counselors on the yard ready to go.

"This is what this program is for, to have the men teach other men, to be role models, mentors, to have that same type of style and success," said Options Recovery Program Director Kathy Narasaki. "They're experts at what they are doing. We need their brains."

Two groups of men took the program on either Wednesday or Thursdays for nine weeks. Narasaki escorts the lifers into the reception chow hall to facilitate the program. Participates re-

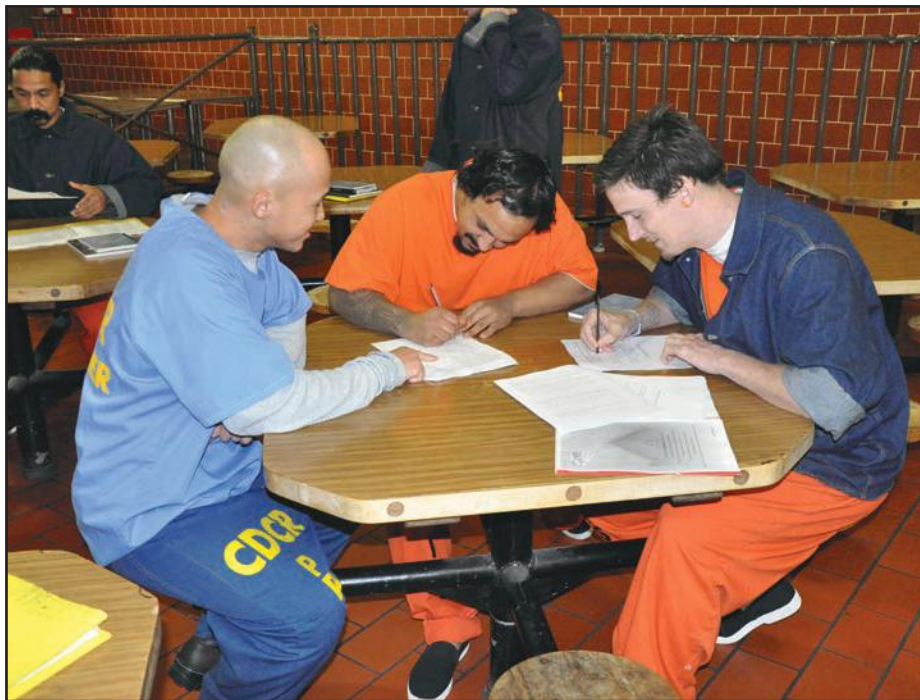


Photo by Steve Emrick

Facilitator Chan Lam assisting students with their work

ceive the book *Denial Management Counseling Workbook: Practical Exercises for Motivating Substance Abusers to Recover*, by Terence T. Gorski and the *Sober Living* book by Alcoholics Anonymous, as gifts.

"Best material I've seen in 20 years of doing this work; (Denial Management) is all about giving them insight into how they tick," Gorham said.

The book helps incarcerated people identify denial patterns.

"It's been truly valuable to be given tools to better recognize and address issues associated with denial," Christopher "Jack" Jones, 27, a participant and graduate, said. "Personally, I find that my thinking patterns are reforming in terms of denial management to a great degree and I owe that to this class."

On Jan. 9, the Wednesday group graduated and, on Jan. 24, the Thursday group graduated.

Narasaki told the class, "It's the first group in any prison where we are mixing populations. I depend on the

mentors to really help you and help me get this program going."

The graduations were held in an icy chow hall with murals on the wall. The counselors wore standard prison issued blue uniforms while the reception guys had on dark orange.

Each graduate received an opportunity to speak before receiving a certificate, a *Sober Living* book, a composition notebook, a pen and a five-page list of resources. Many endorsed the idea of having a peer-to-peer mentor made.

"I just wanted to get out of my cell, but once I heard what was being taught by inmates, I related and opened up a little more; I found it pretty helpful," Raymond Chavez said. "I want to thank y'all."

When counselor George "White Eagle" Coates, 61, heard half of the class signed up for the program just to get out of their cells, he was worried.

"I had misconception about how the guys would take the information," Coates said. "I remember

how I was when I was young – still angry, not ready for change and that's how I thought these guys would be. They totally surprised me. Even the younger guys were ready for something different. Not only have they done their homework, and we assign a lot of homework, they read the material and called each other on denial management."

The graduates of the Thursday class were mostly serving sentences under four years with half-time, while the mentors have all served decades in prison. The fact that the mentors have overcome addiction and never given up inspired graduate Ronald Hills. He's been locked up five times over 12 years in a battle with addiction and criminal thinking.

"Seeing the mentors, all of them have been faced with life sentence and they're still holding strong," Hills, 33, said. "I feel like if they're able to turn it around to a positive view and keep fighting, who am I not to attempt to get my mind right and keep fighting. It made me look at life and



Photo by Steve Emrick

Kathy Narasaki with graduate Mohamed Ahmed

gain a new strength."

Counselor Martin Walters, 50, who is serving his 31st year of a 25-to-life sentence, added, "I'm hopeful that I can share my experience so these guys don't suffer the same mistake that I make. I'm excited about it."

For graduate Alejandro Montes, 26, who is serving half of four years, an older man told him eight years ago that he was on the path to end up serving life. Still, addiction to meth and blaming an absent father for his choices fueled his going in and out of jail where he has spent his last eight birthdays. Meeting actual lifers, he said, gave him a new perspective.

"Now I realize I really am headed towards a life sentence and I don't want that happening," Montes said. "It's an eye opener."

The incarcerated facilitators of the program had some concerns about going into reception.

"We are taking a risk doing this job in reception," Johnny Lam said. "We are the first ones in CDCR going to do this. We don't know what's going to happen. De-

spite the fears, we are going because we wish we had a program when we were in reception."

Facilitator Thao Nou Pang added, "When I started my recovery from criminal thinking, part of it is to be of service. I am hoping that what I am sharing with the men helps them start recovery now instead of 10 years down the road."

A few graduates expressed that they will need more.

"I need a lot more work but this is a stepping stone in the right direction," Fernandez said.

Among the Wednesday class graduates were: Ezra Williams, Daniel Joey Visek, Jorge Martinez, Troy Davis and Ahmed.

The Thursday class graduates were: Alejandro Montes, Raymond Chavez, Delmar Donahue, Thomas Johnson, Derek Dankston, Robert Hamby, Ronald Hills, Jorge Dela Rosa, Brandon Simpson, Louis Butler, Darryle Moore and Fermin.

"This is the first time in my life I ever received a certificate," Fermin said. "My mother is going to be happy."



Photo by Steve Emrick

Kathy Narasaki with graduate Daniel Visek



Photo by Steve Emrick

Kathy Narasaki with graduate Jorge Martinez



Photo by Steve Emrick

Kathy Narasaki with graduate Troy Davis



NEWS BRIEFS

1. Adelanto, California

— Last November, 11 U.S. senators, including 2020 presidential prospect Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, sent letters to Geo Group and CoreCivic criticizing the “perverse profit incentive at the core of the private prison business,” reports Reuters. Detainees are paid \$1-a-day salary at the privately run Adelanto Detention Facility, however, a can of tuna sells for \$3.25 in the facility’s commissary — four times the price at a Target store near the small desert town of Adelanto; ramen noodles sells for more than twice the Target price; and a miniature deodorant stick, at \$3.35 costs more than three days’ wages.

2. Rome, Italy — Last August, Pope Francis declared the death penalty morally unacceptable in all circumstances. Aliza Plener Cover wrote in *The Washington Post* that “This pronouncement broke from previous Catholic teaching, which permitted the death penalty in ‘very rare’ cases of ‘absolute necessity.’” The pope’s call to action may sway the American public, Cover wrote. A change in public opinion could also influence the U.S. Supreme Court, which considers society’s “evolving standards of decency” in evaluating whether a punishment is “cruel and unusual” under the Eighth Amendment, Cover concluded.

3. USA — New death sentences and executions in the

U.S. remained near historic lows in 2018 and a twentieth state abolished capital punishment as public opinion polls, election results, legislative actions and court decisions reflected an erosion of imposing capital punishment, the Death Penalty Information Center reports. Key Findings: Fewer than half of Americans believe that the death penalty is applied fairly; for the first time in 25 years, fewer than 2,500 people face active death sentences; and no county imposed more than two death sentences for the first time in the modern era.

4. Georgia — Growth in the state’s prison population has slowed, *The Atlanta Journal Constitution* reports. However, the inmate population is expected to rise by more than 1,200 in the next half-decade, according to a new state audit. The state pays two private prison companies almost \$140 million a year to house 15 percent of its inmate population — roughly double what the state spent on private prisons 12 years ago.

5. Birmingham, Ala — Since 2016, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) has been conducting an investigation of “unparalleled scope” into Alabama’s 13 maximum-security prisons for men, WBRC reports. Court papers show that Alabama’s Department of Corrections (ADOC) has engaged in a pattern of delay and obstruction during the agency’s two-year investigation, refusing to turn over records regarding extraordinarily high rate of murders, assaults and suicides. Fed-

eral investigators are hearing about the incidents first hand through a toll-free hotline set up in the facilities under investigation, through which inmates can directly contact the DOJ.

6. Maine — Nearly 200 inmates in the Maine State Prison system will soon have access to secure, digital tablet technology and limited texting, reports *Maine Public*. It’s part of a new initiative at the Department of Corrections to enhance educational programming and prepare prisoners to reenter society. More than 18 states have adopted some form of specialized tablets for its incarcerated population.

7. Springfield, Missouri — Six 52-foot semi-trailers are surrounded by chain-link fence topped with swirls of razor wire where 108 men are confined in a space that, per man, is less than half the size of a Ping-Pong table, according to *The Crime Report*. Most are awaiting trial. County officials called it the first of its kind in the country, and a cost-effective temporary solution to a jail overcrowding problem that has plagued Greene County for more than a decade.

8. Leavenworth, Kansas — Jermaine Wilson served three years in prison before being elected mayor of Leavenworth, *The Associated Press* reports.

9. Arlington, Va — Stand Together reports that a \$1.25 million commitment will be made to The Last Mile and The Other Side Academy in order to assist incarcerated and formerly incarcerated men and women after release from prison.

Death penalty dying according to author John Grisham

By **Anthony Manuel Carvalho**
Journalism Guild Writer

Seventy-five percent of the 141 prisoners on North Carolina’s Death Row would face radically different prosecutions today under reforms enacted in recent years, *The News & Observer* reports.

“Almost none would get the death penalty. For some, the charges would be dropped,” wrote John Grisham, a best-selling author and former defense lawyer who now is on the board of the Innocence Project of New York.

“The death penalty is dying, not because of the courage of lawmakers or judges, but because of the

compassion shown by jurors who are fully informed in trials that are fair.” Grisham noted in an Oct. 12 op-ed piece for the newspaper. “Jurors are easier to convince that life without parole is harsh enough.”

Grisham summarized five capital cases between 1993 and 1997 that he said contained egregious unconstitutional infractions.

The infractions included a capital defense attorney practicing under the influence, ineffective assistance of counsel, prosecutorial misconduct, misuse of the press, and a defendant who should have been deemed incompetent/insane.

Most all of the 141 are Black and nearly all of them

are destitute.

Grisham lauded the demise of the death penalty, when he stated how attitudes of the public are changing due to the high-profile DNA exonerations, which have made jurors and the public wary of investigative and procedural strategies used by law enforcement and district attorneys.

Grisham maintained most of the prisoners on Death Row did not receive a fair trial.

His books have sold in the billions. Some of his books have been turned into movies that include stars such as Denzel Washington, Tom Cruise, Samuel L. Jackson, Sandra Bullock, and Matthew McConaughey.

Writer draws inspiration from incarcerated pen pals

BOOK REVIEW

By **Juan Haines**
Senior Editor

If your writing is to be believed, experience is the best teacher. However, that’ll be a tragedy, if you’re writing about prisons. Nonetheless, C.P. Henderson, a retired federal employee, tells very interesting stories without the incarceration experience.

What I’ve learned about Henderson is that she took an old fashion way to get information about fictional characters—she took pen to paper and became pen pals with some incarcerated people.

She did a good job in the 11 short stories that brings readers into the closed life of prisoners who reformed themselves through spirituality.

Take Two: A Collection of Short Stories (2018) begins with a story about a crime, difficult to comprehend and forgive the offender of committing. However, Henderson’s writing style gets readers to understand that people have the capacity to change and that once that has happened, the person is no longer the crime that has landed them in prison.

“Should we forget the person is still a human being despite having committed a crime (sometimes even the most heinous of crimes)?” Henderson writes in the book’s prologue.

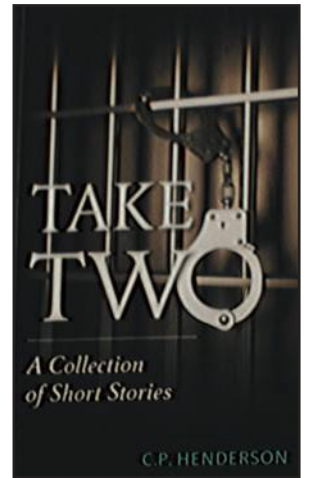
Each story finds redeeming qualities in its characters to show what remorse looks like through actions and the willingness to give back to commit themselves to their community.

The story topics range from surviving the prison experience, the wondering mind of what prison life is like, such as living in a confined space with a stranger to the efforts that one might take to prevent another person from going down the same path of destruction. The result of free readers reading these kinds of stories is access to a foreign world with authenticity.

As an example, the following description is relatable to the coffee drinking incarcerated person:

The one thing he’d been able to enjoy during his time behind the walls was coffee. It was always instant, but he’d mastered the best recipe on his tier. Two packs of Taster’s Choice house blend, a splash of 2% milk and a couple dunks of a honey bun to add sugar. The way the icing would slide off the honey bun and made a white spiral of goodness made his mouth begin to water.

Not all the stories fall into the feel good mode as the reality of prison life, getting out and adjusting to the free world



are all challenging, has its difficulties and every rehabilitated person knows that relapse is a part of recovery. With that, incarcerated readers get a glimpse of what to expect and some of the obstacles to a successful reentry.

Take Two is “filled with dreams, aspirations, and goals of men and women who’ve made a mistake and are currently paying for it with something most take for granted... time,” its back cover reads.

C.P. Henderson graduated from Angelo State University with a bachelor’s degree in Medical Technology. While on active duty in the United States Air Force, she earned a Master’s in Forensic Science.

Take Two is her third novel. C.P. and her charismatic Cavachon Steve currently resides in Central Connecticut.

Louisiana strikes down one of the last remaining Jim Crow laws

By **Carlos Drouaillet**
Journalism Guild Writer

Louisiana’s justice system is moving into the 21st century after voters struck down one of the last remaining Jim Crow laws allowing juries to convict people with split verdicts, according to *NOLA.com/The Times-Picayune*.

Louisiana was the only state in the nation where a verdict of 11-1 or 10-2 from a 12-person jury could result in a person receiving a life-without-the-possibility-of-parole sentence.

The new law now requires juries to have an unanimous decision for a conviction, which ended this 138 year Jim Crow practice.

“This would literally change what mass incarceration looks like in Louisiana” said Norris Henderson, who spent three decades at Louisiana State Penitentiary. “This is probably the most important ballot measure ever in my lifetime.”

Henderson was granted parole in 2004 and has

become one of the state’s most prominent advocates for ex-offenders, said the article.

By approving Amendment 2 in November, all felony convictions that occur after 2018 will be required to reach unanimous decision.

“Our goal is always justice, not guilty verdicts,” said Paul Connick Jr., Jefferson Parish district attorney. “I don’t anticipate any substantial difference in jury verdicts in Jefferson Parish with the passage of Amendment No.2.”

As of 2016, Louisiana led Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas and Alabama combined in people serving life sentences, according to The Sentencing Project.

Criminal justice reform advocates hope the new law will lead to fewer convictions since jury deliberations would have to be more thoughtful, said the article.

“I’m hoping if they have to deliberate to a full consensus, they would have to be more mindful of having to discuss whether the state proved their case beyond a reason-

able doubt” said Jee Pak, who heads the Innocence Project New Orleans, an organization that seeks to exonerate people who are wrongly convicted.

With the clear purpose of disenfranchising Blacks, the Jim Crow split-verdicts law was instated in Louisiana in the late 19th century, said the article. In 1974, the state raised its jury verdict from 9-3 to 10-2 for a conviction.

Over the years advocates have unsuccessfully sued the state about the split-jury law. In 2017, even the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear a case.

The new law was supported by conservative and left-leaning groups, said the article.

Sen. J.P. Morrell (D-New Orleans) sponsored the legislation that resulted in the amendment.

“You, now, ladies and gentlemen have ended 138 years of Jim Crow,” Morrell said, at a campaign victory party. “You have fundamentally changed criminal justice in Louisiana.”

Bondsmen seek to overturn SB 10

By **Lloyd Payne**
Journalism Guild Writer

A coalition of bondsmen has gathered signatures seeking to overturn California’s bail reform law, according to the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

The coalition said it submitted 200,000 more signatures than the 365,888 verified registered voter signatures required to place the repeal on the 2020 state ballot.

“The bail industry and its

corporate insurance backers have spent millions qualifying this referendum to protect their ability to profit off a system that prioritizes imprisoning, regardless of guilt or innocence,” said Roxanne Sanchez, president of the Service Employees International Union of California.

Former governor Jerry Brown signed SB10 into law in August 2018, granting judges the power to decide who could be released without posting bail, based on

their risk of reoffending and potential of returning to court for trial or escaping justice.

“SB10 is the perfect example of last-minute deal-making by the governor, the Legislature and labor unions absent input from all stakeholders,” said Jeff Clayton, a spokesman for the coalition.

Critics say the bail system keeps poor offenders locked up, while those who can afford to post bail are released, regardless of the serious nature of their crimes.

Incarcerated athletes celebrate the new year through sports

By **Rahsaan Thomas**
Staff Writer

Men at San Quentin watched the New Year come in on small television sets locked inside their cells, but when the yard opened the following morning, basketball players and runners celebrated 2019 through sports.

"It's a great start to a New Year," said SQ Warrior Dontay "Twin" Harris. "It's like being out of prison for an hour."

The championship game for a full-court basketball tournament took place on the Lower Yard on New Year's morning. Team "Put It Together" won, 38-35, after coming back from down nine points in the first quarter.

Harris and teammate Montrell Vines picked up Warrior veteran Allan McIntosh, SQ Kings Joshua Burton, Brian Asey and Abdul Malick plus Dontay Turner to form their team.

They played against team A-Game. Laval Gordon, Warriors Dejon Joy and Isaiah Love played with Kings Charles Sylvester, Jamal Harrison and Kenneth Lew-



Photo by Jonath Mathew courtesy of Christine Yoo
Darren Settlemyer leading 1000 Mile running Club members on the Lower Yard

is.

With five minutes left in the first of two quarters, A-Game led 11-2. Then Harris turned up, starting by nailing a three-pointer. Meanwhile, Love went so cold he air-balled a free throw.

"I ain't played ball in three months; I was out of rhythm," Love said about his performance. "When you're over 30, you have to play consistently, but this game lit my desire for the game again."

By the end of the first

quarter, Put It Together led, 16-13.

Gordon went on a scoring mission and Love gathered himself in the last/second quarter to bring A-Game back. Love nailed a three-pointer and got to the line twice on foul calls when he attempted more threes. With 24 seconds left, the score was tied at 34.

McIntosh, a good free-throw shooter, was fouled to stop the clock. He made one free-throw. On the next play, Harrison was called for a foul while blocking McIntosh from scoring. McIntosh put his team up another point from behind the line.

Down by two with 19 seconds left to play, Love shot a three that missed, but his teammate Joy rebounded the ball. Joy missed the layup, got his own rebound and went up strong but missed again. This time Put It Together ended up with the ball and D. Harris iced the game from the free-throw line to get the win.

"My New Year's resolution for the Warriors is to have a winning season and it started with a win with some of my

teammates," Harris said.

McIntosh led all scorers with 16 points; Harris added 12.

Gordon led his team with 11 points; Love followed with 10.

"This reminds me of being at home," Turner said. "We used to celebrate the holidays playing ball."

As the basketball game went on, about 25 members of the 1000 Mile Running Club went by on their way to complete a half marathon, 13.1 miles -- 52 laps.

Before the race, the men met in front of the "Field of Dreams" baseball scoreboard under a clear blue sky. Darren Settlemyer beat his personal best half-marathon time by four minutes with a 1 hour and 58 minute time.

After everyone ran, burritos made by Tommy Wickerd were served. Wickerd left after running one lap to enjoy family visiting time with his wife.

"She blessed me all year; I had to give back," Wickerd said.

Chris Schumacher and Eddie Herena, 1000 Mile Club members formerly incarcer-



Photo by Eddie Herena
Dontay "Twin" Harris on the court

ated at San Quentin, ran outside the gates, in solidarity with the club.

"Today is one of the best days of my -- knowing we can do something so family-orientated and it doesn't stop after we get out," Wickerd said. "Everyone is like my brothers."

For incarcerated player Carlos Ramirez, fútbol is a lifeline

By **Adamu Chan**
Journalism Guild Writer

Sports is often said to be a metaphor for life. For Carlos Ramirez, soccer has been a thread that has followed him through poverty, war, immigration and prison.

For those familiar with the San Quentin soccer community, Ramirez is a beloved figure; a streaking, goal-scoring forward, appropriately nicknamed "Venado," which in Spanish means "Deer." What most don't know however, is that Carlos has been running, on and off the field, long before he ever saw the San Quentin lower yard.

Ramirez came of age in a 1980s El Salvador that was embroiled in a violent civil war. The youngest of six brothers and six sisters, raised in a poverty-stricken family, Ramirez had aspirations of being a professional

soccer player.

For a lot of kids his age, the dream was to be a soccer star, but the reality was that most would either go to fight in war, or, like Ramirez, quit school and work to help feed the family. Growing up, Ramirez idolized "Chelona" Rodriguez, El Salvador's most famous soccer player, who led the nation to its only World Cup appearance.

Ramirez continued to hone his game, moving from street matches to the Juvenile League pitch. As he puts it, "Soccer was a distraction and kept us away from trouble," adding, "Most gangsters don't play the game."

Eventually though, the reality of life in El Salvador would catch up with Ramirez. Decades of war created an unstable political situation, with the MS-13 gang controlling the streets.

Ramirez would flee El

Salvador in 1994, escaping the call of MS-13, and spend almost a year journeying to the United States in search of a better life.

Upon his arrival in 1995, soccer would help ease the transition into his new surroundings and new culture.

In Orange County, California, Ramirez was able to play with a junior team, and there he found community and a support network.

However, not being able to speak the language and having little marketable or hireable skills would ultimately lead him down the path of trouble to prison.

Incarcerated, Ramirez continued to play soccer, and get better as a player. He would also begin to work on himself, improving his English, going to church every Sunday, and completing several self-help groups like IMPACT, Kids



Photo by Eddie Herena
Carlos Ramirez playing soccer on the Lower Yard

Creating Awareness

Together, TRUST, Narcotics Anonymous, and Restorative Justice programs.

When he arrived at San Quentin, Ramirez said there was little equipment and that the soccer program was somewhat unorganized. In the intervening years however, he would see the competition level increase, see the team get jerseys and cleats and battle talented outside teams like the San Jose Earthquakes staffers.

Having players and teams from the outside to play against helped Ramirez and his fellow teammates, as he puts it, "see how the game is supposed to be played."

Ramirez elaborated further saying, "San Quentin is different than other prisons. I can connect on the field with teammates and there is no arguing. There is a respect for the game and fellow players."

Ramirez, who says that he has spent half of his life in prison, expects to be sent back to El Salvador upon his

release.

What he will take with him is the knowledge that soccer has helped him become a more positive person, and when focused, has allowed him to create connections and community.

This knowledge and passion he hopes to pass on to the youth of El Salvador.

"When they play sports, they feel free and have a sense of direction that keeps them out of trouble," Ramirez said.

He currently passes those lessons on to his nephew, who lives in Nebraska, and is a young soccer phenom who Ramirez hopes will one day become a pro.

For Carlos Ramirez, this journey feels like it is in the final stretch, the last minutes of a back and forth game. His team is up, and he is holding on for the victory that is surely close at hand.

Oldest starting San Quentin Kings player still has it

At 57 years old, Oris "Pep" Williams is one of the oldest players on the San Quentin Kings and one of the best. For him, basketball has been life changing.

"I love the camaraderie

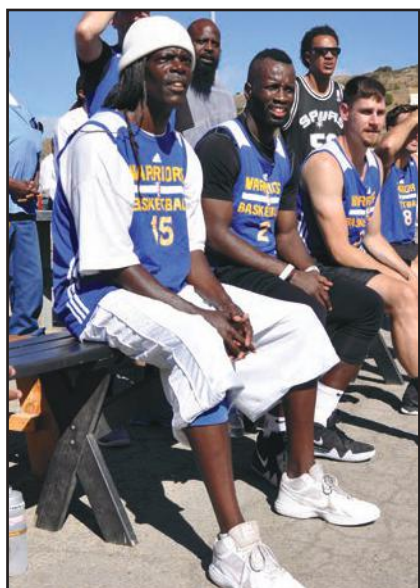


Photo by Jonathan Chiu, SQN
Oris "Pep" Williams (left) suited up as a Warrior for the 2018 San Quentin All-Star game

of the game and it keeps me in good health," Williams said. "It makes me feel worth something again, as oppose to when I was on the streets using. My self-worth wasn't good then at all."

Williams said he started playing basketball when he was seven years old at South Sautilo, right near Marin City. He continued playing and, after graduating from Tamalpais high school in Mill Valley, he made the basketball team at Marin College.

Before suiting up, he transferred to Contra Costa College in Richmond but he arrived too late to play. While waiting for the next season to start, his life spiraled out

of control.

"I got involved with young lady who was using, at the time I wasn't," Williams said. "During the course of that relationship, I start using which lead to my life of crime."

Williams added, "In the end it was my decision to use drugs. I'm glad I met the beautiful young lady but I wish I could have convinced her to stop using instead of me using with her."

He committed crimes to support his drug addiction and ended up struck out under California Three Strikes Law and sentenced to 48-years-to life. He has served 24 years so far, but has a chance to see the parole board in 2021 due to the elderly parole law.

Williams made the best of his time, completing programs like Anger Management, working in the kitchen, but through playing for the King for the last five years, Williams, who describes himself as a shy man, found himself again.

Every Saturday from

March to Nov., outside community members like Bill Epling, Ted Salveit and John Brewster bring in teams to play at San Quentin against the 40-and-over Kings basketball team. Every week a player from each team is asked to give a half-time talk.

"I like them and the people who we play from the outside, they have brought a lot into my life since I met them," Williams said. "In my rehab, as far as ball, I've been a shy person that really didn't communicate with people that much, but here it opened me up to where I am able to talk to people. I've spoken in the circles a couple of times and that was the first time I ever did something like that."

Opening up to outside community members has also helped Williams communicate with the youth on the yard.

"I am able to explain my situation to them and communicate with youth at a level I couldn't do at first," Williams said.

Over the summer, Williams played on an intramural team that had a mix of youngsters and veterans. For him, it was an opportunity to mentor the youth. They don't always listen, but he still does his part.

Playing for the Kings, his most memorable basketball game came about three years ago against Epling's Green Team. Williams hit the game winning shot in the face of Center Patrick Lacey, who is still in his twenties and played for Claremont-McKenna college. The shot gave the Kings their first win against the Green Team.

"I love playing for the Kings and I will continue to

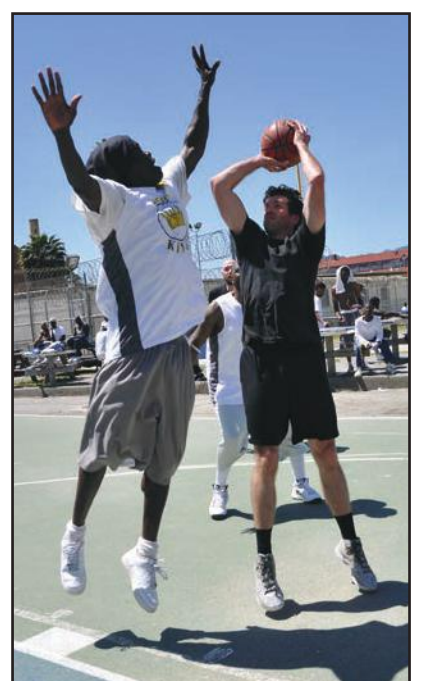


Photo by Jonathan Chiu, SQN
Oris "Pep" Williams trying to block Ryan Williams's shot

play as long as I'm here and the coaches will have me on the team," Williams said.

—Rahsaan Thomas

1000 Mile Running Club's record breaking marathon finishers



Photo by CDCR staff

Markelle Taylor breaking marathon record with 3:10:42



Photo by CDCR staff

Steve Reitz with a time of 3:55:19 and Alberto Mendez



Photo by Rahsaan Thomas

Coaches Kevin Rumon and Jim Maloney counting laps in the rain

**By Rahsaan Thomas
Staff Writer**

Neither delays, wet weather or injuries prevented 1000 Mile Running Club members from recording breaking performances at the 12th Annual San Quentin Prison Marathon.

"It was an extraordinary performance by the club after all the obstacles that we encountered trying to finally run the 12th Annual San Quentin Marathon," Coach and Sponsor Frank Ruona said.

Two records were broken under a cloudy sky with off

and on light rain. Markelle "The Gazelle" Taylor, who hopes to parole in February, broke the Club record he set in 2015 with a marathon completion time of 3:10:42.

The 42-year-old plans to run the April 15 Boston Marathon, which requires that contestants run a marathon in under three hours and 20 minutes within one year of the race. He cleared that goal with sore feet and in muddy prison conditions.

Prior to the race, Taylor complained of tendonitis in his right foot and sore knees. He wasn't going to run but

changed his mind just before race time.

"I didn't expect to break my record sick and injured; the weather and the people helped me do that," Taylor said. "I dedicate this race to the volunteers for believing in prison reform and forgiveness."

Mark Jarosik, 52, was the second of many with a time of 3:31:30.

Newcomer Fidelio Marin, 48, pushed Taylor the first half of the race. He ran in lockstep with Taylor for the first five miles. Marin took third with a time of 3:44:56. It was his first time completing a marathon.

At 8 a.m. the winners lined up with a total of 29 runners at the start line and took off when the coaches count reached one. The club shattered the past record of 13 members to complete a marathon when 23 completed the full distance of 26.2 miles or 105 laps around the prison yard, which included eight new members.

"Twenty three finishers out of 29 starters in the race is excellent!" Ruona said.

The race was originally scheduled for Nov. 16, but had to be postponed until Dec. 14, because of poor air quality due to the tragic wildfires in Butte County. Then the December race was canceled due to a lockdown. Rain threatened to again reschedule the Jan. 11 date, but it was light and mostly off more than on.

"All of these delays and the inability of the San Quentin 1000 Mile Running Club to continue with their marathon training routine lowered expectations for the race," Ru-

ona said. "We were going to run the race, but expectations were low. What a pleasant surprise it was to see record breaking performances."

Steven Brooks lived up to coach Ruona's prediction that he would finish in the top five when he took fourth place in 3:45:36, about 15 minutes faster than he ran last year.

Vincente Gomez, running with his typical large smile took fifth place in 3:52:27. Gomez slowed considerably the second half of the race and finished almost 10 minutes slower than he did last year.

Tommy Wickerd looked like he recovered from knee injuries that had been plaguing him in the last year. He took sixth place with a strong 3:55:18.

Steve Reitz took seventh place with a 3:55:19 and was the only runner in the race to run at a faster pace for the second half of the race than he ran in the first half. It was his first time completing a marathon after three previous tries.

Chris Scull finished in eighth place with a time of 3:59:36. Scull twisted his ankle early in the race and struggled the second half.

Alberto Mendez, 63, after several years of health problem and at least two knee replacements, ran strong and was the first 60 plus finisher. He took ninth with a time of 4:03:39.

Bruce Wells, who is waiting for union surgery and did not plan on running the marathon on its original Nov. 16 scheduled date, had a good race taking eleventh place in 4:14:19, 18 minutes faster than his previous marathon finishes.

John Levin tied the previous club record by being the thirteenth runner to finish behind Moua in thirteenth place at 4:25:34. Levin was fighting a bad cold and faded considerably the second half of the race, but he toughed it out.

Brett Ownbey, a brand new club member, broke the most finishers record at fourteenth with a time of 4:36:15.

Prior to the race, club member and twenty-third finisher Nicola Bucci handed out to team members his "Bucci Bars" cell-made with oatmeal, peanut butter, jelly, bananas, protein powder, sea salt, frosted flakes, cinnamon and raisins. Bucci finished with a time of 5:33:36 utilizing the Jeff Galloway's run-walk-run method.

"I made the bars to give back to my team," said Bucci, whose parents owned a restaurant from 1980-85. "I was inspired by the fish burritos Tommy Wickerd gave out for

the New Year's half-marathon."

Just after the race, Ruona was honored by the club members.

"Here's a plaque for the guy who changed my life forever," Wickerd told Ruona as he handed over the award.

Member Tone Evans added, "He makes us better runners and better people."

First time volunteer Cindy Goh, an ultra-runner, helped the coaches count laps and give out water. Filmmaker and director Christine Yoo, whose movie about the 1000 Mile Club called 26.2 Miles to Life is due out later this year, attended the race to support the runners.

Several film crews documented the race including ARD GERMAN TV, KTVU Channel 2 and Anna Katherine Clay writing for LONGREADS.

**-Frank Ruona
contributed to this story**

12th Annual San Quentin Marathon, January 11, 2019

Place	Name	Age	Miles	Time	Pace
1.	Markelle Taylor	46	26.2 MI	3:10:42	7:17
2.	Mark Jarosik	52	26.2 MI	3:31:30	8:05
3.	Fidelio Marin	48	26.2 MI	3:44:56	8:36
4.	Steven Brooks	46	26.2 MI	3:45:36	8:37
5.	Vincente Gomez	44	26.2 MI	3:52:27	8:53
6.	Tommy Wickerd	50	26.2 MI	3:55:18	8:59
7.	Steve Reitz	42	26.2 MI	3:55:19	8:59
8.	Chris Scull	39	26.2 MI	3:59:36	9:09
9.	Alberto Mendez	63	26.2 MI	4:03:39	9:18
10.	Jonathan Chiu	36	26.2 MI	4:05:29	9:23
11.	Bruce Wells	56	26.2 MI	4:14:19	9:43
12.	Moua Vue	39	26.2 MI	4:25:16	10:08
13.	John Levin	54	26.2 MI	4:25:34	10:09
14.	Brett Ownbey	44	26.2 MI	4:36:15	10:33
15.	Darren Settlemeayer	52	26.2 MI	4:36:25	10:34
16.	Al Yaseng	49	26.2 MI	4:41:13	10:45
17.	Erik Rives	47	26.2 MI	4:44:38	10:52
18.	Michael Keeyes	71	26.2 MI	4:50:47	11:06
19.	Michael Ybarra	32	26.2 MI	4:58:55	11:25
20.	Ramon Ruelas	28	26.2 MI	5:09:34	11:49
21.	Lee Goins	61	26.2 MI	5:23:49	12:22
22.	Ismael Altamirano	31	26.2 MI	5:26:13	12:28
23.	Nicola Bucci	45	26.2 MI	5:33:36	12:44



Photo by CDCR staff
Finisher Mark Jarosik



Photo by CDCR staff
Finisher Fidelio Marin

Evaluating the impact of Black activist athletes

For over 50 years Black professional athletes have used their platforms to fight for equality, often at the cost of their careers, but are they making a difference?

"I've been talking about this s--- for fifty years and ain't nothing changed since Mexico City in 1968. Nothing!" John Carlos told a *Sports Illustrated* writer in a 2018 telephone interview.

On Oct. 16, 1968, during the start of the The Star-Spangled Banner, John Carlos stood on the Olympic podium before the world with a bronze medal around his neck on top of black beads, black glove on his left fist held straight up above his short afro, and his sneakers off, showing black socks. Next to him, 200-meter gold medal winner Tommy Smith had his right black glove fist raised to the sky, with no sneakers, black socks and an added black scarf.

"They didn't make a difference, they made a political



Photo by Eddie Herena

Dr. Harry Edwards speaking at a Roundtable event at San Quentin with Forty-Niners in the audience including Eric Reid

statement others like Colin Kaepernick followed almost 50 years later," *SQ News* Associate Editor Kevin Sawyer,

whose a huge Black history buff, said.

Smith and Carlos knew it would be the end of their track

careers before they made the move. U.S. Olympic officials sent Jesse Owens to speak to the athletes about the prospect of protest in the air. Owens warned them that, "If you guys do, you'll never get a job," according to Dr. Harry Edwards as reported by *Sports Illustrated*.

Edwards organized the 1968 Olympic Project for Human Rights protest.

About 48 years later, in an era where a hashtag was created to remind the world that Black life is also sacred, Colin Kaepernick followed the footsteps of Smith and Carlos. Kaepernick, along with safety Eric Reid, took a knee during the singing of the National Anthem at National Football League (NFL) games. They took a knee, knowing from history it could destroy their careers which conveyed the ultimate message – that Black lives are more important than making millions of dollars.

Kaepernick was not signed to another NFL team since he opted out his contract with the San Francisco 49ers.

Even still, the question remains, did the statements made by the professional athletes make a difference?

"His (Kaepernick's) movement was viewed by the media as being a stance taken exclusively as a black issue, in an attempt to marginalized his stance against social injustice, and to appear exclusionary," San Quentin resident John "Yahya" Johnson said. "It didn't gain momentum in my opinion because of this. He should have worked harder to push back against the media's marginalization of what his protest stood for. Social justice is a bigger issue than just Blacks. It's a LGBTQ issue, a Latino issue, a rent control issue and a criminal justice issue. I do think doing what he did creates a debate to talk about all of society."

Something has changed from 50 years ago – both Reid and Kaepernick found employment despite standing their ground against the NFL and President Donald Trump on the issue of taking a knee. The Carolina Panthers picked up Reid and Nike has given Kaepernick an endorsement deal worth millions.

Also, Kaepernick's movement has gained some traction. Several superstar musicians have refused to perform at the 2019 Superbowl including Rhaina.

Plus, Kaepernick brought national attention to the unfair treatment of Black people in America.

Edward said in the *Sports Illustrated* article, "Struggles that are not victories do generate change."

Maybe Edwards is right. Lately, for several reasons, the criminal justice system is making changes for the better.

—Rahsaan Thomas

Prison University Project celebrates the year with Open Mic

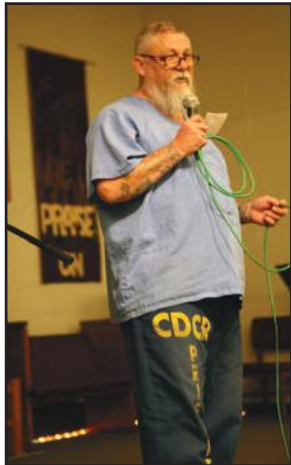


Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
David Schiltz



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Derry Brown



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Andrew Gazzeny



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Kamsan Suon



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Delvon Adams



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
James Jenkins

By Juan Haines
Senior Editor

Personal stories, comedians, singers and dancer entertained an audience made up of about 300 incarcerated men and 40 local volunteers late last December at the Prison University Project (PUP) annual open mic.

San Quentin State Prison's Christmas decorations were still on display in the Protestant Chapel as more than two dozen inmates, who attend PUP classes, entertained the audience that included many of their teachers.

Jonathan Chiu (*San Quentin News* staffer) began the show with a standup monologue that about the PUP students who won a debate against a local college. Things turned serious when Chiu changed the topic to a recent academic conference held at the prison as well as the university's collaboration with the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative to create ideas for criminal justice reform.

Chiu wandered the audience asking questions.

"How many times have you come into San Quentin and been mistaken for an inmate?" he asked PUP Coordinator Derrius Jones. "Like twice," he said laughing.

Brian Asey showed a welcoming short documentary that explained the source of the event — B. Knowledge, a poetry instructor, brought in the idea nearly two decades ago.

Various acts reflected an appreciation to higher learning.

David Schiltz performed a comedic piece, *Sketch on Algebra & Numbers*.

"I'm a math addict," Schiltz said as he told a series of jokes

that referred to time reduction credits. "My favorite part of algebra was the pie chart," he said. He rubbed his belly and said, "Marie Calendar has pretty good pies."

Other acts reflected the power and insight gained from a higher education.

R. "Nephew" Bankston performed *See What I See* -- an incarcerated person's point of view referring to love and beauty throughout the prison grounds.

I see tears that won't drop off the mask of elders who've been incarcerated longer than you and I been alive. I see trash, gun rails, faded signs and wonder if guys notice it too. I see men preserved, reserved, listen to, but not heard.

Delvon Adams performed *Fatherless Child*.

Life seemed much better when there was a role model in the house until my role model began to fade away and me becoming mad. Then, it felt comfortable doing things out of madness until I realized I had to be a better parent than the one that raised me. A father is there to provide, protect, teach, love and to never leave your side in any situation life brings you.

David B. Lê performed, *A Moment Reconsidered*. It is a very provocative personal essay about a 14-year-old boy's encounter with an older girl. The audience members were on the edge of their seats, whooping and hollering at the tantalizing details that Lê gave about what was in his young mind. However, Lê made clear even though that moment stays with him decades later, it was more about the person, who he never saw

afterward, than the moment.

There were acts that had a social justice message, while others were pure comedy.

Oran Artwork Hutson and Donald Rauch Draper performed *Reluciated*, a satire that began by Draper bringing up a social justice idea such as peace or equality and having the thought end by Hutson saying, in dramatic form, conform or, "I will stab you." After each exchange, the audience would erupt in laughter.

"The best way to get people to listen to a story is to make them laugh," Hutson said. "You could tell the person the most horrible thing, and they'd listen, as long as you make them laugh."

Stu Ross performed *MiG* -- the comedic reading of a screenplay, based on an imagined observation. It brought chuckles throughout the audience.

James Jenkins performed *Is It Funny?*

"Does God have humor?" Jenkins joked about passing gas in the small cells at San Quentin. He went on to joke about the art of passing gas and having other people blaming each other for doing it.

Many of the acts showed off musical talents.

Gregory "White Eagle" Coates and Courtney Rein performed a duet with Coates on wood flute and Rein on violin.

"Last year ... it didn't go too well with Susan Hirsch on banjo," Rein said. Rein said that Hirsch asked her to redeem the act through her violin.

This year the combination between a free violinist and incarcerated flutist received

a standing ovation after their well-polished exchange of trading short interludes and bursts that seemed like a conversation.

Eric Maserati-E Abercrombie performed *Can't Hold Me Back*, featuring Phillip "Kels" Kelly. About halfway into the performance, Kelly was led down the center aisle blindfolded with images of social justice figures taped to his blue shirt as the duo sang, "One day everything is going to change from feeling like a slave."

After the performance, Kelly announced that he recently received a sentence commutation. He spoke about the social justice icons on his shirt and his responsibility to carry on their legacy.

"I never got good grades after grade school; however, with the help of PUP, I got my first A," recording artist Jeffrey Atkins said before performing #1. "In here, I'm Free. This song is about all you guys, making yourself number one."

Spoken word personal, essays and poetry were in abundance.

Richard "Rock" Lathan read a poem, *Heaven Take Me There/Encouragement*. The poem was written to honor the 36 lives lost in the Ghost Ship fire, but he said that it could honor anyone's passing. He also read a letter that he wrote to himself about waking up and honoring his own life. "When you speak from the soul, the real power within you will exude," the poem ended.

Kamsan Suon told a story, *Uncharted Memories (Justice is Rape!)* The dramatically told story vividly depicted his witnessing of the Cambodian

Kumar Rouge genocide — "I feel the young boy's tears, and I weep for them," he said in closing.

Michael Mackey's spoken work, *All...For You* was about respecting the efforts of incarcerated men.

Clark Rockefeller read, *Opportunity, a sonnet*.

"Who wouldn't want opportunity to come one's way?" Rockefeller asked before adding, "How many of us are in blue because of opportunity?"

Andrew Gazzeny's *One Man* focused on resentments. "That's not good," Gazzeny said. "Why can't you forgive?" he asked himself. "Nobody ever taught me how to forgive. I stand on the far end of life trying to find peace. Is it possible for the whole meaning of life is to forgive?"

Anthony Watkins read two poems about respecting people and being present in relationships.

Meredith Sadin: Why are we doing this? To honor the premier prison educational model in the world. She came to talk about her survey to study what is going on in the college program at SQ.

George "Mesro" Coles read *Mesropiece Theatre*. It told a fantasy story about a hero's quest for redemption.

Derry "Brotha Dee" Brown performed *Why I Write*. The spiritually based spoken-word piece was performed passionately with pop-dance moves. The hook: I write to reveal light.

Aaron Taylor performed the rap "*Paid in Full*" by Rakim. The piece had the audience standing and singing along.

"Once I got my guitar, I got in

tune with myself," Tim Young said before playing *Music From My Soul*. The Latin/Salsa beat was smoothly played, had fingers snapping, hand clapping and heads bobbing.

James Vick read *Forsaken in Paradise*.

Osburn Walton read *The Power Within*. It was a remembering about his neighborhood and how "seeing a void, absent of joy and celebration that turned violent and disrespectful!" Walton reminded the audience that the power within is love.

Kevin Valvardi read *Utopia*. Valvardi said he wrote this piece for someone that he loves dearly. He also read *Lights on the Horizon*.

Markelle "The Gazelle" Taylor performed *Vintage Dance Therapy*. Taylor's break-dancing had the audience yelling "Go, Go, Go Markelle!" and "Hey, Hey Hey!"

Antwan Banks Williams closed the event with *Look*.

"The vulnerability and power of emotion to communicate truth is what stood out for me," PUP teacher Courtney Rein said. "The Cambodian piece about the Rohmer Gouge genocide and Tim's guitar — those moments welcomed the audience into their experience."

Jill Azevedl, an English teacher, added, "Rauch is one of our students, and his performance was amazing; it was all really good and amazing." It was her first time to a PUP Open Mic.

Music was provided by: Terry L. Slaughter, Bass; Aaron "Showtime" Taylor, Guitar; Jeffrey Atkins, Keyboard; Leonard "Funky Len" Walker, Bass.



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Antwan "Banks" Williams closing the show



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Gregory "White Eagle" Coates on flute and Courtney Rein on violin



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Donald Rauch Draper and Oran "Artwork" Hutson



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Aaron "Showtime" Taylor engaging the audience



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Host Jonathan Chiu talking with PUP coordinator Derrius Jones



Photo by Javier Jimenez, SQN
Phillipe "Kels" Kelly and Eric "Maserati-E" Abercrombie on stage